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ORIGINAL STUDY

The interrelation between technology and art in “Brave New World” and “Never let me go”

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the role of technology and art in dystopian literature and their interrelation in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005). Both dystopian novels depict the societies where technological advancements profoundly influence and control human life, creativity, and individuality. In *Brave New World*, technology is used to control and dehumanize individuals and to achieve social stability. Art is limited to suppress humans' emotions and self-expression as the world controllers want to do everything that they can erase the past. In *Never Let Me Go*, technology plays an important role in controlling the lives of characters who are bred to donate their organs. Within this context, art, particularly the students' creative work at Hailsham, serves as an emotional symbol of expression, identity, human dignity, and value. This paper argues that both novels employ the relationship between technology and art to criticise the dehumanizing consequences of technological progress and highlight the role of art as a space for resistance, self-expression, and the preservation of individuality. Through a comparative literary analysis, the study explores the tension between creativity and technological control in dystopian societies. It concludes that *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go* encourage readers to consider how art might preserve human dignity in the society dominated by technological innovations. Both novels can make us think about how technology and art coexist and influence each other in shaping the future of humanity.

Keywords: Technology, Art, Dystopia, Creativity, Dehumanization, Control

Introduction and background

The representation of technology often tells the reader about the ethics of the author, or what the author thinks about progress or how technology changes people and their society. Far more commonly, literature portrays technology as a means of dehumanisation, alienation, or oppression. Dystopian is generally used as a prefix to the word novel, and it has a meaning that encompasses technology and the loss of freedom, individuality and

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morality that can result from its abuse or lack of control. In dystopian fiction, art is often a symbol of resistance, and a way of reclaiming one's own humanity in the face of technological domination. Thus, the relationship between art and technology is one that dystopian science fiction and contemporary society has considered thoughtfully. Art has consistently functioned as a form of escape, resistance, or living on despite society, and technology often presents us the possibility to progress and control. In the tradition of dystopian fiction, technology is seldom portrayed as a neutral force. Rather, it is often viewed as a vehicle for political systems to control individual behaviour, limit freedom and reconfigure human identity. At the same time, art often functions as a means of maintaining personal expression and resisting ideological control. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and Ishiguro (2005) are examples of these concerns in different historical and cultural contexts. While Huxley imagines a technologically engineered society in which individuality and art are sacrificed for stability, Ishiguro investigates the ethical implications of biotechnology through the story of cloned individuals whose humanity is systematically denied. Examining these novels offers valuable insight into the complex relationship between technological power and artistic expression in dystopian literature. Aldous Huxley's dystopian fiction *Brave New World* is set in a society that is controlled by technology in all aspects of life. The entirety of society's problems, from birthrates to labour to negative emotions, are solved by this advanced technology. The people in *Brave New World*, governed by a World State Government, are not naturally born from mothers, but they are created as embryos within test tubes and through Bokanovsky and Podsnap processes within a genetic centre called London Hatching and Conditioning Centre in year 2540. In this world, Ford has taken the place of God, and Fordism has taken the place of Christianity. Technology is also a cushion for happiness, equality and stability. So that the people may not get any ideas about intellectual, social, and cultural disagreements not to mention social protest and complaints, the government's executive directors offer the people so much amusement and diversion —so many things to take their minds off their problems. People are made happy by consumerism and a drug known as "soma". High culture is supplanted by the feelies (touch and sensation movies) as Shakespeare may lead to instability. In the process of standardization, and economically also the reduction of cost, the living personal connection with art, deep feelings, and tradition of art has been ignored. Religion, art and literature are regarded as dangerous, as stirrers of deep passions and breakdown of the social peace. The novel explores the cost of technological progress and challenges what it is to be truly human.

Never Let Me Go is a prominent work by Nobel Prize laureate Kazuo Ishiguro. This dystopian narrative unfolds in late 1990s England, where cloned children are raised in isolation from their peers. The setting of their school, Hailsham, is a secluded environment governed by peculiar rules, where these clones are educated in the arts and humanities. This focus on creativity stems from their designated purpose as organ donors for the non-clone British population, with their lives expected to culminate in donations when they reach their late twenties. As they transition into adulthood, their organs are systematically harvested to treat the ailments of others, a process referred to as a "donation." Before becoming donors, many clones serve as carers, providing health support to those undergoing procedures. It is common for donors to "complete," or die, following their initial or second donation, with fatality typically occurring by the fourth. The story is narrated through Kathy's viewpoint, a thirty-one-year-old caretaker, who reminisces about her childhood experiences with friends Ruth and Tommy at Hailsham. The narrative resembles a diary, recounting nostalgic memories while exploring how art, love, and memory contribute to the clones' sense of identity and humanity, all within a technological system that views them merely as biological entities. In this context, art emerges as a multifaceted domain where human identity is both validated and undermined.

Objective

The objective of this research paper is to examine the complex relationship between technological dominance and artistic expression in dystopian settings by examining how these novels depict the manipulation of creativity and individuality. This study focuses on specific characters, scenes, and thematic elements that illustrate the interaction between these two forces.

Research questions

This research is guided by the following questions:

1. In what ways does technology influence the creation and value of art in *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go*?
2. How are individual creativity and self-expression affected by technological control within both societies?
3. How do the two novels differ in their portrayal of the relationship between art and technology?

Literature review

The relationship between art and technology in *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go* has been the object of much scholarly attention, especially in relation to the dystopian fiction. Researchers have explored how Huxley and Ishiguro employ these elements to comment on identity, control, and human autonomy. Numerous researchers have examined how scientific innovations like genetic engineering and social conditioning are employed to establish a perfectly stable society in *Brave New World*, where individuality is suppressed in favour of collective happiness. Higdon (1968) argues that Huxley's dystopia exposes the dangers of technological determinism and the suppression of individual creativity through technological advancement. Another critic Bursa Aslan (2020) emphasizes that while Huxley depicts a flawlessly functioning world, there are some issues related to social, psychological, and individual aspects. Studies of *Never Let Me Go* focus on the ethical implications of technological practices through the prism of biotechnology and cloning. Robbins (2007) contends that, as the clones are both created and manipulated by technology, they are denied meaningful agency. He further suggests that art is encouraged to distract the students' attention from the dark reality of the upcoming donations. Expanding this argument, Guo (2019) and Pereira and Pereira & Karunaka (2024) argue that art at Hailsham functions as a mechanism of control and classification rather than genuine self-expression. Scholars have also examined art as a means of resistance to the dehumanising impacts of technology. In *Brave New World*, the suppression of literature and culture serves to prevent individual reflection, maintain conformity and preserve political stability (Higdon, 1968), while characters such as John the Savage and Bernard Marx have an unconscious desire for authentic art and emotional experiences (Meckier, 1969). In *Never Let Me Go*, art appears to offer the possibility of individuality and self-expression, yet its ultimate function remains shaped by institutional power, restricting its emancipatory potential.

Although a great deal of research has looked at how technology and art function in both novels, most studies tend to address these topics separately. Similarly, the symbolic function of art in both novels has been examined, especially in connection to rebellion, memory, and identity. However, the interrelation between technology and art, in particular

how technological mechanisms in both novels actively modify, restrict, or appropriate creative expression as a means of retaining control, is still little understood. Furthermore, few comparison analyses consider how both novels represent art as a place of both possible resistance and institutional exploitation, despite having different historical and narrative settings. This study aims to fill that gap by examining how technology in *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go* transforms and constrains artistic expression, thereby diminishing human agency, emotional depth, and individuality.

Methodology

This research has been conducted to investigate how the relationship between technology and art is established in two dystopian novels, *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go*. The research is based on a qualitative research approach, and the comparative literary analysis method is employed. Additionally, thematic analysis and contextual analysis methods have been applied in the analysis of the works. The thematic analysis employed in this research allows the categorization of the interaction between technology and art into codes and themes. The analytical process consists of three important stages: first, identifying recurring notions within the texts such as “biopolitical control”, “instrumentalized art”, and “individual rebellion”, second, organizing these codes into wider thematic categories like “Technological Dehumanization” and “Art as a Medium of Resistance”; and finally, examining these themes through the theories of Michel Foucault and Theodor Adorno. Through this methodology, the study examines how technology influences human life and art in both novels. The works have been analysed in terms of technological control, bioethics, creative freedom, and the transformation of human emotions. The selection of the novels is based on the following criteria: the use of technology and art as a central theme in the novels, the authors’ raising questions about human nature and civilization through dystopian societies. Despite being written in different periods, both novels revolve around common themes. The scope of the research is limited to these two novels, and the findings are not intended to be generalized beyond them. Primary sources include the close reading of the texts, while secondary sources consist of scholarly articles, literary criticism, and theoretical works on dystopian literature, biopolitics and aesthetics.

Theoretical and conceptual framework

Theoretically this research paper is grounded in Michel Foucault’s notion of biopower (1978) as well as on Theodor Adorno’s aesthetics (1970). In the book of *the History of Sexuality* (1978) Michel Foucault introduced the concept of biopower to describe a new type of power that has grown up in modern times. In this type of power, the state and its institutions try to control people by controlling their bodies, health, reproduction, and biological life. In technological and biological control of the body Foucault notes that in modern period, state power seeks to educate the human body as a machine and control its biological life. To incorporate Michel Foucault’s concept of *Biopower* into *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go*, it’s necessary to focus on the two main fields of this theory-anatomopolitics which means the regulation of the individual body and biopolitics which means the biological control of the population. Together, these concepts explain how power operates not only through coercion, but also through the production of compliant and self-regulating subjects. Foucault’s theory is particularly useful in analysing how technological systems affect individual identities, behaviours and social relations.

The study also refers to Theodor Adorno’s aesthetic theory, particularly his views on artistic autonomy and the culture industry. In *Aesthetic Theory* (1970) Theodor Adorno

argues that genuine art is autonomous and cannot be reduced to economic entertainment, political propaganda, or moral instruction. For Adorno, authentic art maintains a critical distance from dominant social structures and encourages reflection rather than conformity. Adorno further develops his critique of modern culture through the concept of the culture industry, introduced in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947). According to Adorno, advanced technological and capitalist societies tend to transform culture into a commodity that can be mass-produced, standardized, and consumed for entertainment. In such cases, art loses its critical and emancipatory potential and functions to reinforce existing social structures. Consequently, cultural products are more often used as instruments of conformity rather than spaces of critical reflection and resistance.

Foucault's concept of biopower and Adorno's theory of aesthetic autonomy provide the principal theoretical foundations for this study. Foucault's framework of analysis enables an exploration of how systems of technology and institutions govern human bodies, behaviour, and social identities, while Adorno's theory offers a means to analyse the relationship between art, technology, and social control. Together, these approaches provide analytical tools to investigate the effects of technological power on artistic expression and individual subjectivity in *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go*. The application of these concepts in the textual analysis aims to investigate how the technological mechanisms influence the characters' experiences and establish the function of art in the dystopian societies.

Comparative literary analysis and discussion

This research paper compares how technology and art are portrayed in the two novels to determine how each author examines or considers these concerns within the framework of their own cultures. Though both *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go* portray dystopian societies dominated by technology, the role and treatment of art in each shows different approaches for suppressing individuality and emotional truth.

Biopolitical control and the regulation of human life

In *Brave New World*, technology is everywhere, it completely controls human life right from birth. It is used to solve all the problems of the society. Behind this ideal world, Huxley conceals the reality, which is that people are becoming ignorant and viewing themselves as mass production. People are generated in laboratories via a process known as the Bokanovsky Process, which turns them into machines or other mass products. It aligns perfectly with Foucault's idea of the anatomo-politics of the human body as a technology of power that treats the body as a machine. In the World State, people are created through genetic engineering, much like Henry Ford invented mass manufacturing of cars. Increasing the number of population is the purpose of this process. In an anatomo-political framework, the purpose of increasing the population is to offer a "parallel increase of usefulness." The state doesn't simply want more people; it wants more standardized units of energy. The laboratory method ensures that the "multiplicity" of a population is organized into a disciplined, productive, and predictable workforce. The director of the plant states; "if we could bokanovskify indefinitely the whole problems would be solved" (Huxley, 1932, p. 3) and this process coincides with "World State's and the planetary motto of "Community, Identity, Stability." Throughout the novel, technology is the foundation of the excellent life in the World State; "Science was something you made helicopters with, something that caused you to laugh at the Corn Dances, something that prevented you from being wrinkled and losing your teeth (Huxley, 1932, p. 97)". This is how science impresses John the Savage from his

mother Linda's mouth. Science is everything because the whole World State depends on it. In the World State, technology exerts control over individuals' thoughts both physically and mentally. As a primary means of influencing the human mind, it directly impacts the educational process. There are two predominant techniques employed: hypnosis and electric shock. Hypnosis is asleep-teaching method and used to brainwash people. They are taught what to think while they sleep. Hypnopaedia is not just an educational method, but the most powerful totalitarian tool that takes away the free will of the individual through technological means. As a result, it becomes the Conversion of Consciousness into "tape recording" where a language is no longer a tool for understanding the world, but simply a set of automatic reactions. People are not voicing their own thoughts, but "tape recordings" that have been repeated thousands of times. Bernard Marx, an expert in hypnopaedia, noted, "*One hundred repetitions three nights a week for four years*" leads to the establishment of a truth, with "*sixty-two thousand four hundred repetitions*" required to solidify this understanding (Huxley, 1932, p. 21). Hypnopaedia also fills the inner world of man with the slogans of the state. Hypnopaedia prevents man from being alone with himself, because even when the individual is alone, the voice of the state echoes in his brain. Additionally, technology plays a crucial role in stifling personal freedom and hindering the genuine development of artistic abilities. The society is structured around a caste system, where each class is identified by distinct colours. The main classes include Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons. This caste hierarchy is intended to ensure social stability and control, effectively designating individuals to specific roles from birth while restricting their access to art and creativity based on these predetermined categories. Alpha embryos are designed to become the leaders and intellectuals within the World State, while each subsequent caste is conditioned to possess slightly reduced physical and intellectual capabilities. Deltas, categorized as the non-intellectual class, are conditioned to develop an aversion to the sources of knowledge, such as books. In one example, the director instructs nurses to place infants on the floor where they can see prepared flowers and books. As the children begin to crawl towards these attractive items, the director signals for electric shocks to be administered when they reach them. This causes their faces to contort in distress, effectively teaching them to avoid pursuits of beauty, literature, and nature. Consequently, they grow up with what psychologists would describe as an "instinctive hatred of books and flowers; *They will grow up with the psychologists used to call an "instinctive "hatred of books and flowers. Reflexes unalterably conditioned, they will be safe from books and botany all their lives"* (Huxley, 1932, p. 9)

Control of human emotions through technology is another key aspect of technological domination. As long as individuals possess mental reflections and biological needs, they will have emotions. Individuals' actions can be influenced by emotions in a variety of ways. Some can be negative, while others might be positive. It is forbidden to do anything that will destroy the World State's stability and daily operations. To maintain the stability and smooth functioning of the World State, any actions that could jeopardize it are prohibited. Consequently, technology designed to foster happiness has been created to ensure that citizens experience continuous pleasure. A prevalent example of such technology is Soma, a substance that is devoid of adverse side effects and functions like a medication. Soma is not just a drug, but the latest technological form of the metallized pleasure that Adorno advanced in his critique of the 'Culture Industry'. While for Adorno art and pleasure were supposed to detach man from the system, in Huxley's world soma acts as a chain that binds man more tightly to the system. This is the complete commodification of art and feelings through technology and the biopolitical control of man. Whenever citizens face irritating situations, they are encouraged to take a "soma holiday" to recover and refresh themselves. Additionally, they participate in a routine gathering known as "solidarity service," where

individuals come together to consume soma. This substance also serves as a means to render citizens oblivious to the challenges within the World State, keeping them content and deterring feelings of discontent or rebellion; *“there is always soma, delicious soma, half a gramme for a half holiday, a gramme for a weekend, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East, three for a dark eternity on the moon”* (Huxley, 1932, p. 26)

Death and aging are also controlled by technology. Another role of technological advancement in this novel is staying young. No citizen in this world ages. To maintain individual productivity for the benefit of the entire world, everyone maintains their youth, beauty, and most importantly energetic. People in this world never get old because they take special pills that keep them young even at the age of sixty: *“it only remained to conquer old age”, “gonadal hormones, transfusion of young blood, magnesium salts”* (Huxley, 1932, p. 26) Here, the author applied Foucault’s concept of biopolitics which is the regulation of the body as a machine (docile bodies). For the World State, old age is a “system error”. The human body is considered an economic unit (capital). Old age reduces the efficiency (productivity) of this unit. The state, using its biopolitical power, detaches the body from biological laws (the aging process) and subjects it to a technological timeline. Here, youth is not an ideal of beauty, but the “maximum lifespan” of the body. Biopolitics is about going beyond the individual body and controlling the biological life (birth, death, health) of an entire population. It is no coincidence that death is fixed at 60 years of age. This is a biopolitical regulation implemented to maintain the demographic structure of the population. By providing youth, the state reduces “healthcare costs” and “social burden” to zero. People work for 60 years like “repairless” devices and then their bodies are utilized after their deaths. People are cremated when they die naturally. The organic chemicals that are extracted from their bodies, including phosphorus, will be recycled and reused on plantations. In the World State, religion is another way that technology has taken over people’s minds. Everybody in the World State believes in “Ford,” which in this context refers to the magnificent automaker. They replace “Fordship” for “godship” and “orgy-porgy” for “god bless you.” To honour the magnificent “Ford,” they compose poetry and stanzas, which they recite during the Solitary Services which are the ritualistic gathering designed to promote social unity and suppress individuality.

In contrast, *Never Let Me Go* presents a quieter but equally systematic form of biopolitical control. Here, Ishiguro creates a unique 20th-century world where people misuse technology to find happiness, health, and longevity. Cancer and other diseases that are thought to be incurable have been successfully healed by medical advancements. The culture’s greedy consummating side turned to using the clones’ organs to extend human life. The primary goal of the widespread use of cloning is to provide organs to those who require medical assistance. So, in this novel technology controls human life more quietly but tragically. In this novel, the harvesting of organs conceals truth. In actuality, the students such as Ruth, Tommy, and Kathy are clones who were made specifically to donate their organs. Raised in remote schools like Hailsham, students are encouraged to be creative, but only as an experiment to prove they have “souls.” The students are never free because the system is so firmly set that they silently accept their fate while having the ability to think and feel. Therefore, the students are taught no religion, no identity, no national belonging and no independence are among the things students are taught. Students rarely interact with outsiders under strict surveillance and the only opportunity to obtain the things from outside is through “sales.” One of the characters of Miss Lucy who regularly reminds pupils of the special charges in the event that there is a risk of breaking the rules:

“The problem as I see it, is that you’ve been told and not told. . . . None of you will go to America, none of you will be film stars. And none of you will be working in supermarkets as I heard some of you planning the other day. Your lives are set out for you. You’ll become adults, then before

you're old. Before you're even middle-aged, you'll start to donate your vital organs. That's what each of you was created to do. You were brought into this world for a purpose, and your futures, all of them, have been decide" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 65) This shows how biopolitical power operates through silent acceptance rather than force. The students think that giving up their life is natural and inevitable, which is a moral and emotional form of control, in contrast to *Brave New World*.

Foucault's description of biopolitics as the power to "make live and let die," is directly applied into the lives of the clones, as the society in the novel treats the clones not as "human beings" (personas), but as "biological material" Their education, nutrition, and health regimes are not for their own well-being, but to preserve the quality of the "product" (the organs). As the students are treated as biological materials, their health is one of the government's main priorities. Strict regulations, such as the requirement to take medication, are imposed on the children as they are growing up in this seemingly idyllic environment. Kathy recalls how smoking was strongly discouraged at Hailsham; *"Even if we were being shown a picture of a famous writer or world leader, and they happened to have a cigarette in their hand, then the whole lesson would grind to a halt. There was even a rumour that some classic books—like the Sherlock Holmes ones—weren't in our library because the main characters smoked too much, and when you came across a page torn out of an illustrated book or magazine, this was because there'd been a picture on it of someone smoking. And then there were the actual lessons where they showed us horrible pictures of what smoking did to the insides of your body"* (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 55) It shows that to ensure that organ donations are successful, the government wants the clones to have healthy bodies free of diseases. The aim is not the students' well-being, but the production and maintenance of healthy bodies suitable for organ donation. As a result, the power of the state penetrates not into the soul of the individual, but directly into their cells and organs.

In the novel, Gallery functions as a symbolic humanistic response to technological dehumanization. The idea of the Gallery has been imposed by Hailsham in the students minds as a place where all their best creative works goes. The clones live under the assumption that the gallery a place that is only fully described by the end of the novel, turning out to be a collection of all the clones 'hard work and which is mostly comprised of paintings. The character Madame is the only connection they have with the gallery. She is the person who chooses the best works and takes them to the gallery. The gallery has been set to keep the students working hard and busy and to distract them from any thought of a possible rebellion in the near future. "The Gallery is not just an aesthetic space, but an apparatus of power operating in the light of Michel Foucault's panopticon and archive concepts. The Gallery, like a panoptic mechanism, constantly keeps students' creativity under control and creates an internal discipline (self-regulation) by forcing them to produce 'good examples' in accordance with the system's requirements. At the same time, this space functions as a biopolitical archive that documents whether the clones have a 'soul'. However, this archiving is not intended to save the clones, but to ensure subordination to the system by wrapping their biological exploitation in a 'humanist' shell and creating a false hope of 'deferral'."

Instrumentalized art as a tool of social control

In *Brave New World*, art is suppressed; emotional art like Shakespeare, classic poetry, and deep music is banned because they evoke strong emotions that could cause instability. It is clearly can be seen in the dialogue between Mustafa Mond and John the Savage. When John Savage asks, Mustafa Mond why is forbidden to read Shakespeare, Mustafa Monds responds; *"because it's old, that's the chief reason. We haven't any use for old things here"*

(Huxley, 95). This aspect of the novel can be interpreted through Theodor Adorno's theory of the Culture Industry. He argued that in the capitalist system, art, rather than inspiring individual thought, standardizes and passivizes it. In *Brave New World*, art is no longer an aesthetic value, but a "product" produced to appease the masses. Shakespeare's tragedies shock and provoke questioning; the system does not want shock, but only a stable and happy consumer.

Mass entertainment replaces genuine art; individuals consume soma and then attend performances of "synthetic music," which constitutes the sole form of music that people derive enjoyment from. This genre provides listeners with artificial gratification, allowing them to dance and sing collectively, thereby helping them escape from their reality. Another form of entertainment is known as feelies, which are films designed to evoke touch and sensation. The aim of feelies is to ensure that the populace remains content and unthinking.

A similar process appears in *Never Let Me Go*, although art is encouraged rather than suppressed. Art is depicted as a testament to humanity within the novel. Students at Hailsham are encouraged to create poetry, drawings, and various art forms, which play a significant role in their existence. Their artwork is regularly collected, with Miss Emily curating the best pieces for an enigmatic "Gallery." This practice installs a sense of pride and intrigue, later revealed to serve as a moral justification for the clones, essentially asserting that they possess souls through their artistic expressions. "*We took away your art because we thought it would reveal your souls. Or to put it more finely, we did it to prove you had souls at all.*" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 201)

Art also serves as a medium for propaganda, with various artistic forms conveying messages. One notable instance occurs during the students' primary education, where Miss Emily instructs them about the counties of England. She employs a large calendar adorned with photographs of each county, presenting their images while discussing them with the class. These visuals depict England as a picturesque and idyllic landscape, featuring "little villages with streams... white monuments on hillsides... beaches crowded with seagulls, cliffs with seagulls." The children become acquainted with these images, which later inspire them to create their own artwork. The chosen representations of England evoke a sense of beauty and happiness, contrasting sharply with the grim reality faced by the clones, who are subjected to a life of servitude and exploitation. This stark distinction underscores the propagandistic nature of the imagery. Furthermore, this artistic portrayal profoundly influences Kathy's perception of the world during her travels across England. Another instance of propaganda through art is the absence of a visual representation for the county of Norfolk. Lacking an image, students regard it as a "lost corner," reminiscent of the lost property area in Hailsham. As Miss Emily notes, "Norfolk becomes the lost corner of England—where 'all the lost property found in the country end up'" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 53). The narrative surrounding Norfolk is intended to stimulate the children's imagination, allowing them to envision it in any manner they desire. The students are only taught one method of creating and enjoying art, but this doesn't alter the emotional bond they form with it, which is typical of most people's aesthetic experiences today. In actuality, art plays a big role in students' interpersonal relationships. For one, the school arranges Exchanges, where the students receive a set number of tokens based on how valuable the teachers think their artwork is. They then use these tokens to buy other people's artwork because they can hardly ever get goods from outside Hailsham. These purchases frequently turn into some of their most treasured belongings. Naturally, the representational, derivative art that these students exchange with one another—giraffes, ceramics, and calendars featuring "pencil sketches of Hailsham life"—only serve to reinforce their narrow ideas about the

importance and significance of art. But more significantly, Kathy writes that the students are profoundly affected by simply showing these pieces of art:

“...the Exchanges had a more subtle effect on us all. If you think about it, being dependent on each other to produce the stuff that might become your private treasures—that’s bound to do things to your relationships. The Tommy business was typical. A lot of the time, how you were regarded at Hailsham, how much you were liked and respected, had to do with how good you were at “creating”. (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 15) However, Exchanges is a kind of “the Culture Industry” that is used to passivize individuals and make them accept the system. Through exchange, the clones feel like they are free. This is an ideological manipulation that hides their slave status and binds them to the system. Thus, while Huxley portrays a society that suppresses art and Ishiguro encourages it, both novels reveal how artistic practices can be instrumentalized by institutions of power. In no society is art truly autonomous; rather, it functions as a means of regulating behavior and maintaining social order.

Art, identity and human subjectivity

Both *Brave New World* and *Never Let Me Go* show how art is an important way in which people try to construct and to express their identities. Both societies are formed by powerful technological systems, but artistic expression continues to be closely tied to questions of selfhood, individuality and human subjectivity. In both novels art is shown as a reflection of universal human feelings like loneliness, longing, and a search for purpose. In *Brave New World*, John the Savage uses Shakespeare’s plays to express his desire for something different from the artificial, sterile society he lives in. John Savage acts as the last refuge of “natural man” in an environment where technology has completely commodified the human spirit and culture. His unwavering interest in Shakespeare’s work is not just a literary preference, but a fundamental protest against the biopolitical standardization imposed by the World State. In terms of Theodor Adorno’s theory of the “Culture Industry”, John’s interest in Shakespeare is an attempt to restore the autonomy of art. John, on the other hand, exposes the “false happiness” offered by society through Shakespeare’s tragedies. As Adorno said, true art must be “negative”, that is, it must deny the existing status quo. John’s criticism of the system by quoting Shakespeare demonstrates this negative and critical power of art. Creativity is acknowledged due to its capacity to influence individuals’ thoughts and emotions. Characters such as George Bernard Shaw and Helmholtz Watson, a talented writer, struggle to harness their abilities creatively within a society devoid of pain. Both Bernard and Helmholtz perceive themselves as outsiders, yearning to experience genuine emotions, yet they feel constrained in expressing their true feelings. They recognize the inherent danger in doing so, as they are constantly monitored and at risk of being overheard. Helmholtz says; “I’m thinking of a queer feeling I sometimes get, a feeling that I’ve got something important to say and the power to say it, only I don’t know what it is and I can’t make any use of the power” (Huxley, 1932, p. 32) As a result, here art becomes another tool of control. In *Never Let Me Go*, one of the limited avenues available for students, especially Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth, to convey their inner experiences and uniqueness is through their artistic endeavours. The protagonist, Kathy, particularly enjoys creating and appreciating art during her time at Hailsham. For her, art serves as a way to delve into her personal identity and emotions, rather than merely fulfilling an academic requirement. Although she may not be regarded as the most talented artist, she takes pride in her work, which allows her to express feelings that are often difficult to articulate. Conversely, Tommy faces ridicule at Hailsham due to his perceived lack of artistic ability. This bullying stems from the belief that his drawings are immature, resulting in feelings

of anger and confusion. He often experiences intense emotional outbursts, struggling to comprehend why Hailsham places such a significant emphasis on creativity and why he is subjected to harsh critiques for a talent he does not possess. Tommy's imaginary animal paintings can be evaluated as an "aesthetic refuge" against biopolitics. Tommy does not serve any biological or practical function when making these paintings. These paintings do not heal anyone, nor do they increase the efficiency of the system. These paintings are a refuge for Tommy, because in this moment of creation he is not an "organ donor", but simply a "creator". This is an aesthetic protest against the metallization of the body by biopolitics. As he matures, Tommy begins to grasp the profound significance of art at Hailsham, particularly the idea that it can embody a clone's spirit or inner essence. This realization prompts him to pursue drawing with renewed seriousness. He dedicates himself to his craft, producing a collection of intricate animal illustrations. His unusual and detailed representations of imaginary creatures reflect his desire to illustrate that he possesses a soul. This indicates that Tommy's artistic creations stem from his own imaginative efforts rather than being the result of external pressures or expectations. Clones create art that reflects their inner understanding of their destinies, but they do not have the ability to fully express their feelings or live meaningful lives. In these novels, the relationship between art and technology highlights the characters' loneliness and their efforts to connect through their artistic works. One of the most powerful symbols of Kathy's emotional connection to art is her love for the cassette tape *Songs After Dark*—especially the song "Never Let Me Go". Kathy repeatedly listens to on a cassette tape when she's a teenager at Hailsham. When Kathy listens to this song, she imagines: "*What was so special about this song? Well, the song was, I didn't used to listen properly to the words; I just waited for that bit that went "Baby, baby, never let me go. . ."* and what I'd imagine was a woman who'd been told she couldn't have babies, who'd really, really wanted them all her life. Then there's a sort of miracle and she has a baby, and she holds this baby very close to her and walks around singing; baby, never let me go. . . partly because she's so happy, but also because she's so afraid something will happen, that the baby will get ill or be taken away from her" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 57) Her desire for motherhood, love and connection—things that are denied to her as a clone—is symbolised by imagining it.

The limits of artistic resistance

Art appears as a means of personal expression or as a subtly expressed act of resistance in both novels. In *Brave New World*, the state tightly regulates and commercialises art, however, the interaction between characters like John the Savage and Shakespeare symbolises a kind of rebellion against the regulated world. Shakespeare's writings are a presentation of passion and uniqueness, contrasting with the fleeting pleasures offered by technology. Later the characters John the Savage and Heimholtz become friends, because both are in love with literature and they can discuss poetry with each other and express their feelings through the poems. In *Never Let Me Go* the clones can express themselves through their artwork, which gives them a sense of purpose and independence in a world over which they have little influence. Even if society disregards their labour, it is a silent protest against their predestined lives. Even though their work demonstrates their humanity, society will still use them to harvest their organs. Nearly twenty years after leaving Hailsham, Kathy and Tommy now donor and carer, try to get a deferral by presenting to evidence that proves they are really in love, perhaps through their artwork, they might delay their donations. Thus, it becomes Tommy's new commitment to improve his art. His art becomes a means of hope. They find Madam's address, the retired head of their old school and visits her to ask about deferrals existence. They discover that deferrals is a myth. When Madame

and Miss Emily, one of the former guardians who now lives with her, disappoint them by telling them there isn't such a thing, Tommy responds, *So there's definitely nothing. No deferral, nothing like that*. "Tommy" I murmured and glared at him. But Miss Emily said gently: "No, Tommy. There is nothing like that. Your life must now run the course that's been set for it" (Ishiguro, 2005, p. 205) When Madame tells them that there are no deferrals, she indicates that not only the hope of more time is shattered, but also the belief that art could prove their humanity. After this heartbreaking discovery, Kathy and Tommy return to the hospital centre, where Tommy is ready for a donation. After a fourth operation, Tommy dies.

Titles as artistic and emotional symbols

Another important role of art in both novels is related to the titles of both novels. Although the societies in both novels are controlled by technology, the names of both novels have been taken from the art. The title "Brave New World" is derived from William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* (1611). O Brave New World is first said by the character Miranda when she meets people from the outside world. In *Brave New World*, when John the Savage sees Lenina for the first time on his isolated island he says; *"How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world, O brave new world!"* (Huxley, 1932, p. 60). Here, he uses "brave" as something's is admirable or splendid, and the phrase expresses naïve optimism and wonder, but later when John becomes a member of the technologically developed societies, he sees the negative sides of this society, he starts to use this phrase ironically; *"O brave New World, o brave new world"-in his mind the singing words seemed to change their tone "O brave new world! Miranda was proclaiming the possibility of loveliness, the possibility of transforming even the nightmare into something fine and mobile, O brave new world" It was a challenge, a command* (Huxley, 1932, p. 91). In never let me go the title comes from a song called "Never Let Me Go" that Kathy repeatedly listens to on a cassette tape when she's a teenager at Hailsham. Kathy listens to it in private in her Hailsham room, acting as a baby and clutching a cushion. The words, which speak of love, grief, and clinging to emotional ties, she sees as a woman yearning never to be apart from her kid. Madame watches the scene and suddenly begins to cry, implying that even the guardians know the great compassion and longing in the students — thus challenging the cold system they support.

Thus, Ishiguro depicts a world in which art has no power, while Huxley depicts one in which art is dangerous. *Never Let Me Go* uses art to test and define humanity, while *Brave New World* suppresses it to control people. However, in both situations, society fails to consider people as completely human.

Conclusion

Aldous Huxley and Kazuo Ishiguro examine the complex relationship between technology and art in "Brave New World" and "Never Let Me Go", using these aspects to criticise the dehumanising impacts of technological development on personal identity, creativity and social values. Both authors illustrate how technology gradually restricts human freedom, creativity and emotional depth while simultaneously promising advancement and control through their dystopian worlds. Nevertheless, both novels demonstrate the timeless power of art to convey human desire, individuality and resistance in spite of the repressive technological environments. By comparing these novels, this study expands contemporary dystopian scholarship to show how "aesthetic resistance" operates under different modes

of technological control. In *Brave New World*, technology is used to govern society by regulating desires, behaviours and emotional experiences, art becomes a shallow tool of social stability rather than a tool of subversion. In *Never Let Me Go*, while technology is less overtly repressive, it has an equally insidious effect, reducing human life to a biological function and institutionalizing artistic expression to control the inner lives of the clones. Consequently, beyond the tragic plot outcomes of Wild John and Hailsham clones, this comparative framing dynamic fully demonstrates how aesthetic resistance is heavily conditioned by the dominant technological infrastructure.

Huxley and Ishiguro encourage readers to consider the possible risks of technological progress when it comes at the price of ethical principles, human dignity and creativity. In the end, both novels challenge us to think about how censoring artistic expression might result in a society where people aren't able to express themselves truly, lose their individuality and view human life as nothing more than a function. These dystopian depictions serve as a strong warning against a future in which human creativity is sacrificed in the name of efficiency, control and stability. Even in the face of technological domination, we are reminded of the value of maintaining the space for genuine artistic expression and human freedom by looking at the struggles of individuals within these worlds. Finally, this analysis contributes to the development of modern science by showing that, while art remains an important component of human experience, its capacity for critical thinking is continually tested, neutralized, or commercialized as technology takes over society.

Conflict of interest

The author declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contribution

The author conceived the study and wrote the manuscript.

Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

AI usage statement

The author declare that no generative AI tools were used in the conception, writing, analysis, interpretation or preparation of this manuscript.

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