

Comparative Analysis of Human-Robot Relationships in *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*
and *Robot and Frank* Through The Posthumanist Lens

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Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled Comparative Analysis of Human-Robot Relationships in *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank* Through the Posthumanist Lens is a bona fide record of sincere work done by, Ajai Tomy, Register Number: 210021000924, Bharata Mata College, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature under the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam during the year 2023-2024.

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Declaration

I, hereby declare that the presented dissertation *Comparative Analysis of Human-Robot Relationships in Android Kunjappan Version 5.25 and Robot and Frank Through the Posthumanist Lens* is based on the research that I did on under the supervision and guidance of Ms Maria Sharol Cherian, Guest Faculty, Research Centre and Postgraduate Department of English, Bharata Mata College, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature from Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam. This is a report of my hands based on the research done on the selected topic and it is my original work and interpretations drawn therein are based on material collected by myself. It has not been previously formed basis for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship or other similar title or recognition.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In an era marked by rapid technological progress, the once rigid boundaries separating humans from machines are steadily eroding. This shift has sparked a surge in intricate connections and interactions between humans and robots, as the distinction between the two becomes less defined. This introductory chapter serves as a gateway to explore these intricate human-robot relationships through the lens of posthumanist theory on the films *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank*. Maybe our understanding of humanity needs to evolve to encompass not just humans, but also cyborgs, artificial intelligence, and other entities we've brought into existence or will create in the future.

The emergence of posthumanist theory marks the profound transformation in the realm of literature and cultural discourse. It signifies a fundamental shift in how we perceive the human condition, challenging the anthropocentric perspectives of traditional humanism. Posthumanism makes us reconsider the conventional distinctions between humans and nonhumans. Posthumanism invites us to reconsider the boundaries between the human and the non-human, emphasizing the interconnectedness and entanglement of humans, animals, machines, and other entities. When we go through the works of scholars like Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, and Katherine Hayles, it is visible that, how posthumanism questions the anthropocentric notions. Traditional human concepts are no longer important in an age of posthumanism.

In recent years, the sudden increase of humanoid robots across various facets of human life has ignited widespread interest and debate regarding the nature of human-robot relationships. Whether as caregivers or companions, these technological creations are increasingly integrated into our daily routines. Consequently, the study of human-robot relationships has emerged as a central focus across disciplines like philosophy, sociology, psychology

The film has been a powerful medium for exploring complex social and philosophical concepts, offering narratives that resonate deeply with audiences. Through compelling storytelling and rich characterization, films like *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank* speak are about the complexities of human-robot relationships, and invite their viewers to confront their preconceptions about the nature of humanity and technology.

Android Kunjappan Version 5.25 is a 2019 Indian Malayalam-language science fiction comedy-drama film written and directed by Ratheesh Balakrishnan Poduval, produced by Santhosh T. starring Suraj Venjaramoodu, Soubin Shahir, Sooraj Thelakkad, Kendy Zirido, and Saiju Kurup. Designer-turned-director Ratheesh Balakrishnan Poduval distinguished himself as one of the most unique and sought-after voices in contemporary cinema. In the film *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*, “to take care of his stubborn, ailing father while he is away working in Russia, engineer Subramanian employs a robot. Though initially reluctant, his dad Bhaskara Poduval gradually warms up to the robot, whom the local people name Kunjappan. But, it only complicates things further”(Soman).

Robot and Frank is a 2012 American science fiction comedy-drama film directed by Jake Schreier from a screenplay by Christopher Ford. The film stars Frank Langella, Susan

Sarandon, Peter Sarsgaard, James Marsden, and Liv Tyler. *Robot and Frank* was the first feature film for both Schreier and Ford and received critical acclaim for its writing, production, and acting. It won the Alfred P. Sloan Prize at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival, tying with the Kashmiri film *Valley of Saints* by Musa Syeed. The robot was created by Tony Gardner's special effects company Alterian, Inc. *Robot and Frank* is a science fiction film and it deals with the story of an old man who was a burglar. In old age, he fights with memory loss. His son and daughter are not with him. So his son brings a humanoid robot to the house as an assistant to help him. Though initially hesitant, Frank forms a bond with the robot and enlists its help in returning to his former life of crime.

This project conducts a comparative analysis of human-robot relationships depicted in the films *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank*. Through critical examination, we aim to explore how these films address posthuman concepts such as cyborgs, posthuman subjectivity, and posthuman ethical considerations. By closely analyzing the narratives, character interactions, and thematic elements of each film, we seek to uncover the nuanced ways in which they engage with these concepts.

In the upcoming chapters of this project, we delve into the realms of posthumanism, cyborg theory, and ethical considerations. Chapter Two provides an account of these theoretical frameworks, establishing a foundation for understanding the concepts. Chapter Three offers a detailed analysis of the films, *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank* exploring their treatment of posthumanist themes. In Chapter Four, a comparative study of the two films is conducted, highlighting their similarities and differences. Finally,

the concluding chapter synthesizes the findings, offering insights into how these films contribute to our understanding of human-robot relationships in a posthuman context.

Chapter 2

Beyond Humanity: Posthumanism, Cyborg Theory, and Ethical Perspectives

Humanism emerged during the Renaissance as a culture and philosophy that celebrated human worth and dignity and encouraged reason, creativity, and human abilities while promoting a worldview based on human experience rather than divine authority. The core principles include human responsibility, freedom, the importance of imagination, emphasis on education, critical thinking, and the pursuit of knowledge for personal and social development. However, humanism has been criticized for its bias, Eurocentrism, and neglect of diverse groups, non-human beings, and environmental issues. According to the bylaw of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, “ Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance that affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. It stands for the building of a more humane society through ethics based on human and other natural values in a spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities. It is not theistic, and it does not accept supernatural views of reality”(*IHEU Bylaws, Internal Rules, General Assembly Regulations and Membership and Dues Regulations*). In the book “Posthumanism” by Pramod K. Nair, gives a remark on the concept of humanism as follows:

More importantly, concepts of human dignity, Human Rights and debates over the human ‘condition’ are premised upon this idea of the universal human. It treats the common human condition. Morality, ethics, responsibility in the modern era (roughly post-1600) all emerge from this view of the autonomous, self-conscious, coherent and

self-determining human. The essence of the human lies in the rational mind, or soul – which is entirely distinct from the body. Change and improvement therefore are deemed to be possible through this power of the rational mind. Rationality is also this ‘essence’ of the human – his ability to think about himself, be sure of himself – that distinguishes him (supposedly) from all other forms of life, and aliens (16).

When it comes to Posthumanism there is a shift from the human-centered world to the faded boundaries between humans and non-humans. Posthumanism emerged during the second half of the twentieth century. The term "Posthumanism" was coined by the postmodern theorist Ihab Hassan, who provided a seminal definition in his article titled *Prometheus as Performer: Towards a Posthumanist Culture?*

The roots of the posthumanist thoughts can be traced in the various intellectual movements like Existentialism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Feminism. Posthumanism got its identity through the works of Donna Haraway, Katherine Hayles and Rosi Braidotti. These writers wrote about the fading boundaries between humans and non-humans and the flexibility of human identity.

Posthumanism puts forward various concepts which make us reconsider our notions about humanity and its relationship with technology and the environment. Cyborg is a concept which transcends the traditional human identity. Posthumanism challenges the notion of human centrism and it reframes the ethical considerations. It creates complexity between humans and machines. The concept of Posthumanism challenges the traditional notions of subjectivity. The boundaries of humanity and its place in the world are redefined. The binaries like human, animal organic, and inorganic are replaced. Now technology has a

role in shaping human subjectivity and experience. The embodied nature of human existence is questioned by the posthumanist ideology. Pramod K. Nair, in “Posthumanism” gives a definition on the Change in human subjectivity,

Posthumanism as a philosophical approach involves a rethinking of the very idea of subjectivity because it sees human subjectivity as an assemblage, co-evolving with machines and animals. It also calls for a more inclusive definition of life, and a greater moral–ethical response, and responsibility, to non-human life forms in the age of species blurring and species mixing. Posthumanism therefore has a definite politics in that it interrogates the hierarchic ordering – and subsequently exploitation and even eradication – of life forms. Normative subjectivity, which defined and categorized life forms into ‘animal’, ‘plant’ and ‘human’, is now under scrutiny for its exclusivism, and it is this that more than anything else marks critical posthumanism. Critical posthumanism draws the connections between traditional humanism's exclusionary strategy and women, races or ethnic groups, but also animals, being kept out as slaves, monsters or mere providers of meat, entertainment or labour. It is in the exclusionary definition of the human that we can find the origins of sexism, racism and other exclusionary practices(19,20).

“Posthumanist theory claims to offer a new epistemology that is not anthropocentric and therefore not centred in Cartesian dualism. It seeks to undermine the traditional boundaries between the human, the animal, and the technological”(Bolter 2016).

According to the Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication, a Cyborg is A hybrid being: half human, half machine. The term was first coined in 1960 by the Austrian-

American space scientist Manfred Clynes , though such creatures had featured in science-fiction since the 1920s and they have long been with us in everyday life in the form of mechanical elements (such as prosthetic limbs) incorporated into the human body.” A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction. Social reality is lived social relations, our most important political construction, a world-changing fiction” (Haraway). Cyborg theory speaks about the integration of humans and technology. This theory helps to find how important is machines and technology in the life of humans. This theory is visible in many films and literary works like Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, William Gibson’s *Neuromancer*, and Alex Garland’s *Ex Machina*. In these narratives, we can see that Cyborg is depicted as a figure of ambiguity and transgression. This challenges the conventional notions of human subjectivity.

Cyborg subjectivity is the complex nature of both human and non-human elements and hybridity. Cyborg theory raises different ethical questions about humanity, agency and responsibility in a technologically guided world. Surveillance of privacy and control of the body become important issues in the cyborg's existence. The fading boundaries between humans and cyborgs challenge us to reconsider our moral obligations to both humans and cyborgs. Haraway developed the idea of a Cyborg as a genderless entity.

It is also an effort to contribute to socialist-feminist culture and theory in a postmodernist, non naturalist mode and in the utopian tradition of imagining a world without gender, which is perhaps a world without genesis, but maybe also a world without end. The cyborg incarnation is outside salvation history. Nor does it mark time on an oedipal calendar, attempting to heal the terrible cleavages of gender in an oral symbiotic utopia or post-oedipal apocalypse....The cyborg is a creature in a post-

gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labour, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity(150).

As we advance in automation, we're confronted with the prospect of Job displacement. Take trucking, for instance, employing millions in the US alone. With the advent of self-driving trucks, there's potential for massive job loss. Yet, there's also an ethical argument for such automation, notably in reducing accidents. This shift extends beyond physical labour to cognitive tasks, impacting office workers and more. Consequently, we're compelled to reconsider how we spend our time, aiming for fulfilment beyond labour, such as in familial care and community engagement. Moreover, the rise of AI-driven companies exacerbates wealth inequality. While hourly wages remain a cornerstone of our economic system, AI can drastically reduce the need for human labor, concentrating wealth among a few. This trend underscores the urgency of structuring a fair post-labour economy.

Furthermore, AI's impact on human behaviour and interaction are profound. Machines are increasingly adept at mimicking human conversation and triggering emotional responses. However, this capability poses risks, such as addiction and manipulation. Yet, if harnessed responsibly, AI could steer society towards positive behaviours. Guarding against AI errors and biases is crucial. AI systems, while powerful, are susceptible to errors and biases inherent in their design and training data. These flaws can have significant consequences, from misidentifying individuals to perpetuating societal biases. Addressing these issues requires rigorous testing and ongoing vigilance. Additionally, ensuring AI safety from adversaries is imperative. As AI becomes more powerful, it becomes a target for malicious use. Cybersecurity becomes paramount in safeguarding against these threats. Unintended

consequences also pose a challenge. Advanced AI systems, while not inherently malicious, may misinterpret human goals, leading to harmful outcomes. This underscores the importance of careful oversight and control. Moreover, the concept of singularity raises concerns about losing control over AI. As AI approaches or surpasses human intelligence, traditional methods of control may become ineffective, necessitating new approaches to ensure human dominance. The treatment of AI raises ethical questions akin to animal rights. As AI systems become more complex and lifelike, considerations of their well-being become pertinent. Questions regarding AI suffering and legal status parallel debates around animal rights, urging us to contemplate the humane treatment of these entities.

Intersectionality is a concept that finds its roots in feminist theory. It reminds us of the connection between social categories like gender, race, class, sexuality and ability. In Posthumanism, intersectionality discusses the blending of human identity with technological identity which revises human subjectivity and embodiment. Cyborg theory gives more chances to combine interdisciplinary approaches to develop new perspectives over technology and cyborg subjectivity, embodiment and ethics.

Throughout this chapter, we embarked on an exploration of theories and concepts such as Posthumanism, Cyborg Theory, and ethical considerations regarding human-non-human relations. Traditional perspectives of anthropocentrism have been challenged by Posthumanism, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of identity in a technologically guided world.

Cyborg theory elaborates on the idea of posthumanism and it deals with the hybrid nature of cyborg subjectivity and the ethical considerations in human-machine relationship.

Ethical considerations raise questions about autonomy, power dynamics, privacy, surveillance, responsibility and accountability.

Intersectionality and interdisciplinarity are very important in understanding human-machine relationships through various perspectives. It helps to find solutions for complex ethical challenges posed by human-machine relations.

In the context of these theories and concepts, the upcoming chapter delves into an analysis of the films *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank*. These cinematic works serve as case studies to explore the implications of Posthumanism and Cyborg Theory on human-technology interactions. Through the examination of these films, we aim to deepen our understanding of how these theoretical frameworks manifest in cultural representations. The narratives presented in these movies offer valuable insights into the evolving dynamics between humans and machines in contemporary society.

Chapter 3

Android Kunjappan version 5.25 and *Robot and Frank*: Navigating the Dynamics of Humans and Machines on Silver Screen

Films *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank* are two movies that can be read based on Posthumanism. These films revolve around two robots, which are considered caretakers of the two aged men in the absence of their children.

The cinematic masterpiece *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* defies easy categorization into conventional stripes. Under the direction of Ratheesh Balakrishnan Poduval, this film expertly blends wisdom fabrication, comedy, and drama factors to offer a moving examination of interpersonal relations and the changing interplay between people and technology. “Malayalam's first film to predominantly feature a robot isn't even set in a city. It happens in a tiny village near Payyanur”(Menon).

Constitutionally, the film centres on the complex relationship between Soubin Shahir's Subramanyan and Suraj Venjaramood's outstanding definition of Subramanyan's aged father, Bhaskaran. Bhaskaran feels abandoned and alone as Subramanyan decides to take advantage of a work occasion overseas. As a result, Subramanyan enlists the backing of Kunjappan, a robot caregiver, to look for his father while he is down. The film's director, Ratheesh Balakrishnan Poduval, expertly weaves a story that explores themes of love, fellowship, and the need for connection while diving into the depths of mortal emotion. The film invites reflection on the nature of knowledge and the fuzziness of the lines between

humans and machines through the developing fellowship between Bhaskaran and Kunjappan. Cult is moved by Venjaramood's definition of the ferocious but helpless Bhaskaran and feels empathy and compassion for him. In a similar tone, Shahir's definition of Subramanyan expertly and authentically conveys the cerebral conflict between obligation and particular ambition. The rich shade of mortal experience is further enhanced by the supporting ensemble, whose characters all add to the film's narrative drollness. Saiju Kurup's definition of Prasannan offers the main protagonists a sense of domestic support and understanding amid their struggles. The character of Hitomi, played by Kendy Zirido, contributes a position of cultural diversity and viewpoint to the exploration of identity and addiction. Indeed in its funnier sequences, the movie explores deep philosophical questions that go against popular ideas about humanity and identity. When Kunjappan, the robot caretaker, is introduced, it acts as a springboard for agitating posthumanist issues and for spectators to think critically about the nature of knowledge and the moral consequences of relations between humans and machines.

The philosophical Frame of posthumanism, which reassesses the mortal-technology commerce, is the base of the film's exploration. It implies that the lines separating humans from machines are getting further hazy as a result of technological advancements, casting distrustfulness on established ideas of identity and agency. This posthumanist viewpoint is embodied by Kunjappan in *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*, who questions conventional ideas about what it means to be mortal.

The film explores issues like the nature of knowledge and the possibility of emotional connections outside of conventional mortal connections through his relations with Bhaskaran

and the community. The movie also explores societal themes like the monetization of care, domestic arrears, and ageism. Bhaskaran's disinclination to accept Kunjappan as a caretaker highlights the need for empathy and understanding in mortal-machine alliances and is reflective of broader cultural stations toward ageing and reliance. Poduval's choice to construct the robot himself gives Kunjappan a genuine on-screen persona and heightens the immersive quality of the movie.

A memorable soundtrack, gorgeous cinematography, and scrupulous attention to detail combine to produce a cinematic masterpiece that leaves spectators looking long after the credits have rolled. *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* is a moving keepsake of the continuing value of empathy and connection in a society growing more digitally connected in a time of rapid-fire- technological advancement. The film encourages spectators to consider the ethical ramifications of technological advancement as well as the complications of mortal connections through its thoughtful blend of humour, drama, and philosophical inquiry. In the end, *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* serves as a monument to the converting power of narrative, encouraging spectators to review how they perceive people in general and how technology will affect our society in particular.

The movie reminds us of the immense value of empathy, connection, and the mortal spirit as we cut an uncertain future. It's a light of expedient. The story of the movie is told through several important sequences that stay with the observer. Scenes ranging from Kunjappan's prolusion as a robot caretaker to the resolving of moral mystifications involving mortal-machine connections add to the overall themes and character development of the movie. The first moment in the movie where Kunjappan appears as Bhaskaran's robot

caretaker is one of the most affecting bones, This scene introduces the main conflict of the story and lays the root for the exploration of mortal-machine relations. Bhaskaran's original disinclination and mistrust pave the way for a passage of emotional growth and discovery as Subramanyan enlists Kunjappan's backing in minding for his father. Conflicts between Subramanyan and Bhaskaran are a major plot point in the movie, illustrating the gap between generations and the difficulties of furnishing care for an aged population. Scenes showing their arguments and miscommunications illuminate the complexity of family dynamics and the universal need for acceptance and understanding. A vital turning point in the film occurs when Bhaskaran gradually accepts Kunjappan as a friend and caregiver as the story progresses. This sequence challenges spectators to reevaluate their conceptions about mortal-machine connections and the possibility of true emotional bonds beyond regular mortal relations by pressing the power of empathy and emotional connection.

In addition, the movie poses moral questions about the use of AI in caring, encouraging cults to consider issues of concurrence, autonomy, and the commodification of care in a society that is getting further and further dependent on technology. spectators are encouraged to consider the ethical scores that come with furnishing care as well as the difficulties of mortal-machine connections in scenes that show Bhaskaran's relations with Kunjappan. Characters face the consequences of their choices and conduct in the film's climax, furnishing an occasion for contemplation and soul-searching. This scene encourages spectators to speculate on the larger consequences of connections between humans and machines as well as the moral dilemmas raised by new technological developments.

To add up, *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* is a masterwork of film that forces observers to rethink their comprehension of both humans and technology. The film presents a sophisticated disquisition of mortal connections and the ethical consequences of technological progress through its mix of drama, humour, and philosophical inquiry. The movie is a timely memorial of the enduring power of empathy, connection, and the mortal spirit as we navigate a decreasingly digital world.

“Robot and Frank starts with an irritable old man Frank Weld (Frank Langella) with losing memory trying to live life his way” (Tom et al.). *“Robot and Frank* tells the story of the relationship between a retired burglar and a household appliance more relentless than an alarm clock” (Ebert). The main character of the story is Frank, who is played to perfection by Frank Langella. He represents the intricacies of growing older, battling the slow loss of identity and memory. Frank first opposes Robot, but in the end, he finds comfort and meaning in their friendship, demonstrating how technology can offer company and support when one is alone.

The movie also makes viewers think about the moral ramifications of relationships between humans and robots, especially in light of concerns about memory and autonomy. The film raises important questions about the nature of consciousness and personhood by challenging traditional ideas of selfhood and agency through the figure of Robot, who is voice-acted with tragic depth by Peter Sarsgaard.

Furthermore, *Robot and Frank* presents a fascinating future in which cutting-edge technology coexists with age-old human problems. The study of topics like ageing, family relationships, and the changing connection between people and machines is framed by the near-future context.

Through its examination of identity, loneliness, and technology, *Robot and Frank* defies its lighthearted exterior to offer an insightful reflection on the state of humanity. Through a seamless blend of science fiction, drama, and comedy, the movie asks viewers to consider how they relate to technology and how it affects their lives.

Throughout the whole movie, the idea of Posthumanism is there, pushing spectators to reconsider their preconceived ideas about what it means to be human in a world where technology is mediated more and more. According to Posthumanism technological progress causes humans and machines to become less distinct, leading us to reevaluate the nature of identity, agency, and consciousness.

One particularly interesting scenario that sums up the Posthumanist conversation is when Frank struggles with the concept of robot autonomy. Frank strongly objects to the idea that authorities are trying to retrieve Robot's memory to use it as evidence in a criminal investigation because he knows that deleting Robot's memories would effectively kill him. This sequence challenges stereotypes of humans and agency by asking viewers to consider the moral implications of treating robots as sensitive beings. We face the idea that robots like robots are sentient beings, having a sentient and respected identity .

In addition, *Robot and Frank* provide a moving observation on how human-machine relationships are changing in a world where technology is mediated more and more. In the future shown in the movie, robots become a part of daily life, obfuscating the distinction between companionship and function. Viewers are prompted to reevaluate their assumptions about the place of technology in society and how it affects interpersonal relationships in light of this portrayal.

In conclusion, *Robot and Frank* offer a sophisticated depiction of the nexus between technology and mankind while stimulating critical thinking about Posthumanist topics. The film challenges audiences to consider their ideas about identity, autonomy, and the moral consequences of developing technology through its gripping plot and endearing cast of characters. As such, it serves as a compelling illustration of how movies may encourage reflection and discussion regarding the nuanced relationship between people and machines.

In the cinematic analysis of *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank*, profound insights on Posthumanist subjects emerge, challenging conventional notions about humanity and technology. These films challenge viewers' preconceived notions about empathy, identity, and moral responsibility by delving into the nuances of relationships between people and robots. Their challenging narratives and nuanced characterizations serve as painful reminders of the cinema's enduring ability to evoke empathy and spark critical discourse in an increasingly digital age. As we navigate the complexities of contemporary life, these cinematic masterpieces compel us to reflect on the evolving intersection of humanity and technology. Additionally, they exhort us to treat one another with care and understanding.

Chapter 4

Comparative Analysis of Human-Robot Relationships

In *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*, the depiction of family dynamics enriches the film's examination of human-robot relationships. Bhaskaran has a strained relationship with his son, Subramanian. Subramanian serves as a focal point, underscoring the generational gap and the difficulties of preserving traditional values amidst societal changes. Subramanian's decision to introduce Kunjappan as a substitute for his absence reflects not only contemporary pressures but also the unconventional approach to fulfilling familial duties. This dynamic underscores the broader theme of tradition versus modernity as Bhaskara and Subramanian navigate familial expectations and societal norms amid technological advancements.

Similarly, *Robot and Frank* delve into the ethical implications of human-robot relationships, particularly concerning caregiving and companionship. Frank's reliance on robots for daily tasks prompts contemplation about autonomy, consent, and the boundaries of human-robot interaction. As Frank increasingly leans on Robots for companionship, the film prompts viewers to ponder the ethical consequences of seeking emotional fulfilment and social connection from Artificial Intelligence. This exploration deepens the film's thematic exploration of Identity, Friendship, and the potential of technology to humanize, emphasizing the complexities of human-robot relationships in a digital era.

Furthermore, both films offer poignant reflections on Identity and the quest for meaning amid rapid change. In *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*, Bhaskaran's journey parallels Kunjappan's quest for autonomy and understanding. Bhaskara's struggles with ageing and loneliness lead him to find solace and purpose in his relationship with Kunjappan, challenging conventional notions of identity and companionship in Indian society. Similarly, in *Robot and Frank*, Frank's bond with Robot prompts introspection and growth as he confronts mortality and reevaluates his priorities. Through their interactions, both protagonists uncover unexpected reservoirs of resilience, showcasing the transformative potential of human-robot relationships in navigating life's uncertainties.

Moreover, the cultural contexts of both films significantly shape their thematic explorations and narrative arcs. *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* offers a nuanced portrayal of Indian society, emphasizing family, tradition, and community values. Set in rural Kerala, the film delves into the complexities of human-robot relationships within the framework of familial dynamics and cultural norms. Conversely, *Robot and Frank* provide an American perspective, focusing on individualism, technological innovation, and personal freedom. Set in a small American town, the film juxtaposes tradition and progress, autonomy and dependence, against the backdrop of technological advancement.

Android Kunjappan Version 5.25 and *Robot and Frank* offer nuanced reflections on the evolving dynamics between humans and robots within their cultural and narrative contexts. Through their thematic explorations of tradition, family, identity, and the ethical implications of human-robot relationships, these films prompt audiences to contemplate the

complexities of human-robot interactions and the evolving nature of our relationship with technology.

In both *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank*, the robots play significant roles beyond mere assistance to the elderly protagonists; they become substitutes for absent loved ones, influencing relationship dynamics and narrative trajectories. In *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25*, Kunjappan is introduced as a replacement for Bhaskaran's son, Subramanian, initially met with resistance but gradually integrating into Bhaskaran's life, providing companionship and support akin to a caring family member. Similarly, in *Robot and Frank*, Robot fills the void left by Frank's estranged family, taking on roles traditionally associated with loved ones and forming a genuine bond with Frank, offering both practical assistance and emotional companionship.

Despite their mechanical nature, the robots manipulate the role of the dearest ones by providing crucial companionship, care, and support to the elderly protagonists in both films. They adapt to the needs and preferences of the protagonists, seamlessly integrating into their lives and replacing the void left by absent or distant loved ones. However, while Kunjappan's relationship with Bhaskaran is characterized by a sense of duty and obligation, driven by programmed directives, Robot's bond with Frank in *Robot and Frank* evolves organically, rooted in mutual respect and shared experiences. Despite these differences, both films explore themes of family, companionship, and the evolving nature of human-robot interactions through the unique dynamics of their central relationships.

These films underscore universal truths that transcend cultural and technological differences, highlighting the shared human experiences that unite us all.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Our fascination with robots extends far beyond the realm of science fiction. Films like *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank* transcend mere entertainment, offering a profound exploration of human existence and technological advancement. Through a Posthumanist lens, we embark on a comparative analysis journey, delving into the complexities of human-robot relationships depicted in these films. This exploration sheds light on our evolving understanding of identity, agency, and morality in a world increasingly intertwined with technology.

In the rustic landscape of rural Kerala, *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* masterfully captures the poignant clash between tradition and technological advancement. Bhaskaran, an ageing patriarch, personifies the generational struggle to embrace change. His son, Subramanian, introduces Kunjappan, a robot designed to assist and transform his life. This move not only addresses practical needs but also probes the redefinition of family relationships in the digital era. As Kunjappan bridges physical distances, his presence raises questions about the boundaries between human connection and machine interaction.

The film delves deeper, asking if robots are a genuine answer to ageing and isolation, or a concerning shift towards commodifying human interaction. As Kunjappan becomes integrated into Bhaskaran's life, the narrative tackles fundamental questions about identity and control. In a world where machines increasingly influence our lives, who ultimately calls the shots? Does technology define us, or can we retain our agency? These lingering questions force us to confront the essence of humanity in a society increasingly reliant on machines.

Android Kunjappan Version 5.25 goes beyond entertainment. Through its exploration of family dynamics and the ethical grey areas of human-robot relationships, it compels us to consider the profound impact of technological advancement on who we are and how we connect.

Set against the backdrop of a bustling American landscape in stark contrast to rural India, *Robot and Frank* takes us into the complexities of the relationship between humans and robots. Frank, a retired jewel thief struggling with fading memories, finds himself in an unexpected partnership with a robotic companion ostensibly designed to provide care. Their interactions catalyze to exploration of questions about the ethical complexities of using artificial intelligence for human autonomy and support.

As Frank becomes increasingly dependent on robots for tasks ranging from daily errands to assisting in a burglary, the once clear lines between humans and machines begin to blur. The film raises the issue of the degradation of human morality in the technologically advanced society. Frank's struggle with amnesia serves as a poignant metaphor for the fragility of human identity in an age of rapid technological change.

As the story unfolds, the film forces us to confront fundamental questions about influence and control. Even though these two films depict two countries and cultures, it reveals core human themes. Despite being machines, the robots forge connections beyond their programming. They fill the void of absent loved ones, shaping narratives and character dynamics. However, the nature of these bonds differs. Kunjappan's relationship with Bhaskaran is strictly programmed, fulfilling tasks with a sense of duty. In contrast, Robot's

connection with Frank blossoms organically. Their interactions build mutual respect, fueled by shared experiences. This difference highlights the spectrum of human-robot relationships: one rooted in pre-defined functions, the other evolving through lived experiences. *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank* offer more than mere entertainment. By exploring themes of tradition, family, identity, and the ethical considerations surrounding human-robot relationships, these films provide rich insights into the complexities of human existence and our evolving relationship with technology in the digital age. These films act as powerful mirrors, reflecting our humanity through storytelling. They spark reflection and conversations, shaping the path of human-robot relationships in the future. Both the directors are successful in revealing the manipulation of human relations by robots.

This comparative analysis embarks on a fascinating exploration of human-robot relationships in *Android Kunjappan Version 5.25* and *Robot and Frank*, examined through the posthumanist lens. By delving into the complex dynamics between humans and robots in these films, we reveal intriguing insights into the blurring of boundaries between humans, machines, and animals. The analysis exposes a narrative where both movies subvert traditional notions of human exceptionalism, highlighting the intricate web of care, empathy, and companionship that binds humans and robots together. Ultimately, this study provides a rich understanding of the implications of human-robot relationships in our increasingly technologically mediated world, inviting us to reevaluate the essence of humanity and consider the ethical and societal consequences of our interactions with artificial intelligence.

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