

## 95. A eugenic attempt to create “upper class”: *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro

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### Abstract

During the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientific advances in genetic research led to an alarm for the modern world and mankind. Under the coercion of artificial intelligence and sterilization programs sponsored by the state, cultural values have been deeply influenced. British author Kazuo Ishiguro, along with his latest novel *Klara and the Sun*, poses several pertinent questions about the moral standards of existence and humanity. *Klara and the Sun* is a dystopian novel that offers a speculative future through which the effects of advanced technology, science, and artificial intelligence concepts may be decoded. Ishiguro's serious concerns about a new society and changing social relations question human insecurity in different layers of the community. The desire to create a master race through a gene-modification process forms the main structure of the narrative. Therefore, based on eugenic attempts in the modern world, this study, addresses the violation of ethical standards that cause inequality, marginalization, and miscommunication. This study seeks to present important insights into the science of genetics and eugenics through the characters of the novel. Josie, a lifted girl, and Rick, an unlifted boy, exemplify the superiors and inferiors of the community that punctures the goals of a biocapitalist and technology-dependent society. In this sense, this article aims to uncover the results of eugenic programs that force people to modify their genes for social improvement, especially social relations.

**Keywords:** Technology, eugenics, gene modification, Kazuo Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*

## Üstün bir sınıf yaratmak için öjenik bir girişim: Kazuo Ishiguro'nun *Klara ile Güneş* romanı

### Öz

20. yüzyılın ilk üç çeyreğinde, genetik arařtırmalardaki bilimsel ilerlemeler, modern dünya ve insanlık için alarm vermektedir. Devlet destekli yapay zekâ ve kısırlařtırma programlarının zorlaması altında kültürel deęerler derinden etkilenmektedir. İngiliz yazar Kazuo Ishiguro, son romanı *Klara ile Güneş* ile varoluşun ve insanlığın ahlaki standartları hakkında bazı önemli sorular sormaktadır. *Klara ile Güneş*, ileri teknoloji, bilim ve yapay zeka kavramlarının etkilerinin anlaşılabilceęi spekülatif bir gelecek sunan distopik bir romandır. Ishiguro'nun yeni toplum ve deęişen toplumsal ilişkilerle ilgili ciddi kaygıları, toplumun farklı katmanlarındaki insanların güvensizliğini sorgular. Ishiguro'nun romanlarının çoęu üstünlük ve ařaęlık konularına dayansa da, bu romanda, kusurlardan insanın mükemmellięine geçiři işaret etmek için egemen yapı tarafından desteklenen farklı bir girişime yer verilir. Gen modifikasyon işlemi ile üstün bir ırk yaratma arzusu anlatının ana yapısını oluşturur. Bu nedenle, modern dünyanın öjeni girişimlerine dayanan bu çalışma, eşitsizliğe,

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ötekileştirmeye ve iletişimsizliğe neden olan etik standartların ihlalini ele almaktadır. Bu çalışma, roman kahramanları üzerinden genetik bilimi ve öjeni hakkında önemli bilgiler sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Genetik olarak yükseltilmiş bir kız olan Josie ve yükseltilmemiş bir erkek olan Rick, biyo-kapitalist ve teknolojiye bağlı toplumun hedeflerine işaret eden topluluğun üst ve alt kademelerine örnek teşkil etmektedir. Bu anlamda bu makale, insanları toplumsal gelişim için genlerini değiştirmeye zorlayan öjenik programların toplum, özellikle de sosyal ilişkiler üzerindeki sonuçlarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Teknoloji, öjeni, gen modifikasyonu, Kazuo Ishiguro, Klara ile Güneş

## Introduction

Eugenics, one of the most powerful cultural and social movements of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century, is inextricably linked to the issues of genetics, evolution, heredity, race, and gender. The term “eugenics” was first used by Sir Francis Galton, the cousin of Charles Darwin, with the aim of improving human heredity and reshaping hereditary capacities (Pernick, 1997:1767). “Widely seen to be a morally acceptable and scientifically viable way of improving human heredity” (Dikötter, 1998: 467), it is implemented in different parts of the world and has gained acceptance among intellectuals, scientists, politicians, and reformers. In the early years of this acceptance, eugenics was popularized to prevent illnesses and improve the capacity of human beings to create a healthy and intellectual human race. Powered by the prestige of science, it would make possible “to multiply society’s ‘desirables’ and get rid of its ‘undesirables’” (Kevles, 2016:45). However, at a deeper level, especially after World War II, it became a dirty word that lost its original meaning as “good in birth” or “healthy genes from birth”.

Eugenics supporters’ allegiance to science and authorities makes it common in different fields of life for the sake of improving the quality of the gene pool. But, by and large, after the Second World War this biological tendency is closely related to race, ethnicity, and sex ideologies of nations. Thus, cultural values of nations, some prevalent prejudices, and racism deeply influence overwhelming eugenic consensus that is not well-intentioned anymore. In pointing out that with its own peculiar dynamics, eugenics is unevenly spread around the world, but remains remarkably silent. As there is now mounting evidence of the emergence of this artificial selection, it is further transformed into sterilizations that encapsulate practices to create “superior” ones. This is certainly the case in the certain marginal groups and organizations that go far beyond achieving high-class people. During the heyday of eugenics, authorities appreciate and legislate justifying the confirmation of this bio-political practice. Directly indebted to eugenic ideologies, these (mostly) forced sterilizations affect people from all walks of life. Dikötter criticizes this process as: “Historically, scientific advances in genetic research have brought not only greater knowledge of human reproduction to mankind but also increased social prejudice against minority groups and sterilization programs against devalued individuals” (1998:477). This new type of eugenics is proof of changing ideologies and reasoning; however, the conclusions remain the same.

While the goals of early 20<sup>th</sup> century eugenics promise the permanent eradication of some diseases, this new type carries racist, sexist aims which are not well-intentioned. The aim of creating more desirables-to say the least is to be offensive under prevailing moral standards and technical reasons. According to some critics, this radical change in eugenics is the result of consumer need. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s modern and capitalist world, with the revolution in human genetics, biotechnology companies have searched for new methods for gene modification. This modification enhances mental, physical, and artistic capacities. It is not wrong to say that throughout the history the meaning and goals of eugenics

have changed in the direction of policies of nations and consumer demands. Conceivably, all goals in terms of eugenics are linked to the idea of making better men to live in the world. Hence, under the name of human biological improvement or gene editing, eugenics supporters commence to create superior men and women, rather than just focusing on racism and some common social prejudices. The aim of this study is to signify the eugenic discourse of Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro in *Klara and the Sun*. Among contemporary British authors, Ishiguro provides a speculative future, familiar to contemporary readers, which forces one to reckon with some important anxieties and fears about biotechnology, biocapitalism, and the future of these trends. In many ways, *Klara and the Sun*, the latest novel of the author, accentuates some significant issues such as humanity, existence, discrimination, morality, and dignity.

Published in 2021, *Klara and the Sun* is superficially the story of the interaction between a child (Josie) and a humanoid (Klara), but there are many unsettling issues as well. Created as an “artificial friend” (AF) for upper-class children, Klara becomes the selected and bought friend of Josie who is undergoing “lifting,” a genetic engineering process for near-future children (Sun, 2022:1). On the one hand, this novel reflects the struggle of humans in the new age; on the other hand it sheds light on technological intervention in different layers of the community. Mentioning that, it seems possible to put it that in this novel technological development has reached an unprecedented level in human history. Apparently, by means of new technologies appearing in the novel, the author makes the reader to think of the true meaning of being an authentic human. Based upon dystopian science fiction, the narrative revolves around the intimate relationship between fourteen-year-old sick Josie and intelligent humanoid Klara whose role, as described in the novel, is to prevent loneliness of Josie and at the same time to serve her. In similar vein, “she has been created by human beings to help them compensate for their fears and anxieties” (Sun, 2022:3). The master-slave relationship between Klara and Josie compensates for human beings’ existential loneliness. In this new technological era, human beings have become more dependent on new technological tools and less dependent on any social interaction or environment. Although there are many different types of robots that are fiercely loyal to their human counterparts, Klara is better than her type in terms of her perfect ability to observe any detail around her and her power to empathize. “Klara may be a machine but a machine with human sentiment and emotions” (Bavetra and Ravi, 2021:297) that make her special to Josie and her mother since she perfectly imitates Josie’s mannerism and this ability makes Josie’s mother hopeful as a guarantee of being Josie’s continuation after she dies. Assuredly, these perfect humanoids are the super symbols of technological and scientific developments which promise endless life for “lifted” or “superior” children, but there is another crucial point that requires critical commentary.

Set somewhere in the near future, the narrative focuses on the eponymous Klara and some other robots that are programmed to attend to the needs of this era’s children and teenagers until university education time comes. Generally speaking, the uniqueness and fragility of the human beings have been confirmed by Ishiguro via these androids. However, the other may be the most significant point about which Ishiguro has deep concerns is the gene editing attempt of this new age and its potential problems. Klara, as a non-human narrator of this story, witnesses the process of defamiliarisation of human nature due to genetic modification. “In the world of *Klara and the Sun*, most wealthy families pay to have their children “lifted,” a genetic engineering procedure that enhances academic performance without which there are minimal educational and professional opportunities” (Hui and Ping, 2021:39). In doing so, this consumer society tries to create a different “upper” class as being different from Darwin’s natural selection theory, but proposes a kind of artificial selection. Ishiguro creates a shift in the normal and attends to illustrate the world anew. In this new anticipated world, human nature is defined by egoist

and utilitarian instincts that force human beings to obey the cruel laws of the jungle to survive (Hui and Ping, 2021:40). Josie is a lifted girl who has an unknown illness due to genetic modification, but her special friend Rick, who has a private contract to live together in the future, is an “unlifted” boy. The emergence of this type of separation in societies causes discrimination and a sense of unease. In fact, this discrimination, as a result of artificial selection of biocapitalist ideologies, reveals the eugenic enterprises of decision mechanisms that aim to select “the best ones” by means of science and technology and of course among the rich ones. Since this dilemma between “lifted” or “unlifted” is directly related to financial situation of the families. Hence, Ishiguro’s clarity here, as elsewhere, yields closer attention to the ethical landscape of the narrative that has thoroughly changed in the recent past. Even more so, the narrative urges the reader to rethink sacrifice and satisfaction, since genetic modification may cause serious illnesses and even death.

### **Eugenic discourse in the *Klara and the Sun***

As a futuristic sci-fi novel, the story poignantly confronts reader with technological logic that have emerged in current capitalist system “that has transformed childhood, education, family, work and even one’s own sense of self, into a product to be bought, sold, and optimized (Mejia and Nikolaidis, 2022:305). Seeing the world through Klara’s eyes provides an objective and obvious point of view of the basic truths of this capitalist community. As with many of the features that appear in highly consumer societies, social rank, hierarchy, and new trends in this upper class are predominantly stressed in the narrative. As such, inequalities and class discrimination prevalent at the time of the story highlight Ishiguro’s attempt to raise ontological and ethical questions about eugenics and abnormal biological human development. In this sense, the gene modification of children, which is not compulsory and mostly depends upon the decisions of families arises is a key point in evaluating the necessity of this process. Zhou and Yang state this necessity as follows:

The state biologically controls the entire population by improving its genetic eugenics as it intervenes, fosters, optimizes, monitors, evaluates, regulates and corrects life to promote the nation’s organisms. In the world of the book, the sovereign excludes those children who have not genetically lifted by blocking them out of the colleges (2021:336).

What’s worth noting behind this fact is that this gene modification project explicitly divides society in two groups: “lifted” or “unlifted” ones, in other words “rich” and “poor” ones. Therefore, to a certain extent, the aim of this project is to exclude poor children from any kind of social network and to create a new master class with these lifted ones. In this reorganized world, discrimination as a result of eugenic attempts by states asserts the unseen pressure of the dominant, marginal groups to accept this gene editing project.

As the novel unfolds, this new brutal world divides people into different hierarchies according to their choices of genetic modification. To elaborate further, since these gene-lifted children will receive high-quality education on the *rectangular board* in their homes with private home tutors and an overwhelming majority of the colleges in this nation will just accept the lifted children, it is not surprising that a bright future will embrace them. In contrast, unlifted children will be deprived of not only educational opportunities but also many rights throughout their lives. Setting this concern aside, gene modification projects, which seem to be left to the choice of families, actually become a necessity when they take into account the future of their children. Moreover, since it is clear whether a child has been genetically lifted, even when viewed from the outside, it also causes a clear separation in social relations. Maintaining the idea of perfectibility, nations disregard the uniqueness of human beings and categorize

them as “superior” and “inferior”. As noted in the novel, scientists seemingly believe that there is nothing special about individuals, and due to this weird belief, humanoids can be a continuation of any human being easily. Since they aim to achieve a standardized superior community by means of gene editing and with eugenic intentions, uniqueness or individualism issues are disfavored. Ishiguro criticizes this tendency of authorities in Klara's words:

Mr. Capaldi believed there was nothing special inside Josie that couldn't be continued. He told the Mother he'd searched and searched and found nothing like that. But I believe now he was searching in the wrong place. There was something very special, but it wasn't inside Josie. It was inside those who loved her. That's why I think now Mr. Capaldi was wrong and I wouldn't have succeeded (Ishiguro, 2021:306).

As noted above, Klara captures important insights about the uniqueness of human beings and how precious and unique each is. There is oblique reference to the fact that humans, in this speculative future, are less capable of empathizing than humanoids. The idea of a highly intelligent society, far beyond individual deficiencies, is relationally grounded by authorities. Arguably, humans, who have a social aspect as well as a biological being, become the target of ideological hegemony with their existence reduced to corporeality.

As mentioned earlier, Rick is Josie's closest friend, with whom she plans for the future. However, Rick is not a lifted child, and this distinction, which has a eugenic origin, is extremely important for adults. Rick, who attends an interaction meeting held at regular intervals so that lifted children can socialize because of Josie's insistence, becomes the representative figure of eugenic discrimination in the narrative. Being aware of the fact that this is now an obligation rather than a personal choice, the families begin to criticize Rick's family about it: “Did his folks just... decide not to go ahead? Lose their nerve?” (Ishiguro, 2021:67) It has been previously stated that gene modification process can lead some serious health problems. For this reason, some families do not approve and accept this practice in order to protect their children's health; and therefore, they are deemed to have accepted the inevitable discrimination and lagging behind society due to this decision. The life that a marginalized community is exposed to in the social spectrum, which is far from harmony and compromise, explains the subject-power relationship between the unlifted ones and ideological hegemony. Trying to regulate this society, whose difference is not accepted, in a eugenic way can be considered illegal reformation. The abstraction of eugenics and similar negative practices as only a biological being is a reality that Ishiguro reflects in this novel. Correspondingly, a more painful reality is that families label children who are not lifted as a loss to society and cannot see this practice as eugenics. “Seems so bright too. Such a shame a boy like that should have missed out” (Ishiguro, 2021:67). This lamentation is actually a confession of people who are aware of the realities of eugenic society and that these unlifted children will be deprived of almost all rights since they do not accept this process. In pursuit of human betterment, eugenics measures have become elimination tools to minimize undesirable genes. This reality, though rarely spoken in the narrative, causes ethical and social dilemmas in the lives of both lifted and unlifted children. For instance, Josie loves Rick and wants to live together with him when they grow up and both Josie and Rick are aware that this decision will raise many social concerns due to their dissimilarities. One could argue that if the aim of this project is to purify society and has good intentions, why does Rick's mother insist on rejecting the gene editing process? This belief is partly based on free will, at least on the surface, and, of course, the financial situation of parents is a determinant factor to accept; the other reason is to protect the health of their children. Taken together, health and money issues are important parameters for avoiding gene editing. However, all these families are frequently forced to be aware of the fact that due to their courageous decisions, it is nearly impossible to raise a successful family

because of varying degrees of social biases that label them as ignorant, selfish, and worthless. Therefore, it is implied that if someone does not accept this indirect legally mandated modification for the good of society, it should resist the possible outcomes. In this narrative, Josie and Rick are aware of all possible crises that will arise in the future; therefore, they do not mention their private plans to anyone. After the interaction meeting in Josie's house where Rick is being criticized as "You shouldn't be here at all" (Ishiguro, 2021:80), the discrimination becomes apparent. Additionally, Rick's confession after this insult "I suppose they have a point, though, he said, I don't belong here. This is a meeting for lifted kids" (Ishiguro, 2021:81) proves the withdrawal of individual desire and courage to attend these kinds of meetings organized for lifted ones. Even though Josie still believes in their mutual future, she hints about the dissimilarities between them:

But your mom, she doesn't have a *society*. My mom doesn't have so many friends either. But she does have society.

Society? That sounds rather quaint. What's it mean?

It means you walk into a store or get into a taxi and people take you seriously. Treat you well. Having society. Important, right?" (Ishiguro, 2021:129).

Although eugenics in Ishiguro's narrative seems to be a less racist movement, it again suggests the very thought of labeling someone as superior or inferior. As Josie points out, "having a society" in this quotation refers to the fact that you are appreciated and accepted by the community in case you have a society. Although those who accept gene modification are defined as courageous in the narrative, it can be argued that those who do not accept this practice have courage, considering that they risk all types of prejudice and exclusion. In addition, there is no definite information regarding the outcomes of this eugenic application or whether it will be successful. As Aultman asserts:

With the development of genetic engineering in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, including developments in genetic screening, gene therapy and enhancement, and various reproduction technologies, public fear and hesitation has ensued, especially since the ethical and social implications of this new science are not completely known (Aultman, 2006:35).

It has been clearly stated in the narrative that this uncertainty, which causes feelings such as fear and anxiety, will cause other problems as well as guarantee the families to protect the health of their beloved children. In this context, while Josie blames his mother for Rick being unlifted, Rick also considers the same as Josie's mother. One day, while Josie draws pictures and Rick adds the appropriate text to the bubbles of the pictures, a common game between the two, he writes:

"I wish I could go out and walk and run and skateboard and swim in lakes. But I can't because my mother has Courage. So instead I get to stay in bed and be sick. I'm glad about this. I really am" (Ishiguro, 2021:131-132).

Notably, this eugenic attitude, which is indirectly enforced by the state, has outcomes that victimize both parties. Rick's mother summarizes discrimination in education, which is one of the main arguments in the narrative:

Even though Rick was never lifted, there still remains one decent option for him. Atlas Brookings takes a small number of unlifted students. The only proper college that will still do so. They believe in the principle and thank heavens for that. Now there are only a few such places available each year, so naturally the competition is savage. But Rick is clever and if he applied himself, and perhaps received just a little expert guidance, the sort I can't give him, he has a good chance. Oh yes you do, darling! Don't shake your head! But the long and short of it is we can't find screen tutors for him. They are either member of TWE, which forbids its members to take unlifted students, or else they're

bandits demanding ridiculous fees which we of course are in no position to offer. But then we heard you'd arrived next door, and I had a marvelous idea (Ishiguro, 2021:147-148).

This call for help states how children who are disadvantaged after gene modification are restricted from obtaining a college education. The objection of Rick's mother holds that other beings, which are unlifted ones, worthy of respect and should have equal rights to demand and aspire for something as lifted ones. The understated tone of the narrative also supports Rick's mother's ideas.

Seen in the first light, the technological patterns of the changing world seem increasingly appealing. As technological tools become smarter, their feelings and emotions seem less special. Mabrouk signatures the atmosphere of this new world in the novel as, "interactions are often stunted and awkward, and tensions run high between enthusiastic converts and human who haven't quite made the jump in embracing the future" (Mabrouk, 2022:453). This gloomy narrative atmosphere is far from reflecting the spirit of a technological breakthrough era. The evolution of technology has led to loneliness, numbness, and separation. "The novel explores what it means to be human through how we connect with others and come to understand ourselves" (Mabrouk, 2022:454). As noted in the quotation, the narrative is rife with existential questions that generally explore humanity. However, apart from these questions about human beings and humanoids, the intimacy of the relationship between human beings changes thoroughly due to the eugenic attempts of the state. In the trademark Ishiguro style, he implicates this attempt within the relations of two children, Josie and Rick, one lifted and the other unlifted. Josie, as being lifted in this dilemma and the non-random sample of lifted ones, has all kinds of privileges for the sake of promising hope for the good of society. On the contrary, Rick, as a sample of the other group, renders inequalities, restrictions, and hypocrisies for not being lifted and unable to promise a bright future. Creepy as this is, the so-called humanistic spirit of modern times aligns with the tone of the narration. Thus, it may be claimed that there is an overwhelming dualism between high technology that encompasses all kinds of novelty and humanity that ignores free will and individual differences. "Humans stand in special relations with other humans because they are the same kinds of beings, part of the same human family" (Jecker et al., 2022:12). By contrast, the novel divides its residents into three categories: lifted people, unlifted people, and humanoids. That is, although they come from the same origin, the dissimilarities between the first and second groups cause them to be different and primitive types. This division sets forth a weak anthropocentric point of view that is unable to sympathize with and sacrifice for someone else's sake. In response, it is highly possible to comment that in the narrative, the status of humanoids is above-human, and the status of unlifted people is below-human since they are not considered to contribute to the future of society. "You're super-intelligent and I'm an idiot kid who hasn't even be lifted. But okay. If you want, I'll try and give you advice" (Ishiguro, 2021:143). This statement by Rick can actually be valued as proof of the thoughts that society has imposed on him. The psychological dimension of eugenics is that Rick sees Klara, who is a humanoid, superior to himself and considers him worthless in the eyes of society because he is not lifted.

If Josie dies from a complication due to a gene modification, Chrise, her mother, wants to have a continuation of her. For this reason, Mr. Capaldi, a scientist, strives to portray Josie, but inside the portrait of this little girl, her AF Klara will dwell on because she is capable of imitating her perfectly. To complete this portrait, Josie and her mother, and the last time Klara, go to the city center and give permission to Mr. Capaldi to take dozens of photos of Josie. In the last visit, they go there with Klara and Mr. Capaldi, who appreciates and blesses humanoids, and explains his ideas about these AFs: "I believe AFs have so much more to give us than we currently appreciate. We shouldn't fear their intellectual powers. We should learn from them. AFs have so much to teach us" (Ishiguro, 2021:199).

These considerations, which stress promoting human abilities once again, point to the correctness of the inaccessible place of humanoids in society and show the effort to reach this ideal with lifted children. Essentially, it has a higher value for humanoids than for unlifted children within a human community. Part of the problem may relate to the fact that human-centeredness ideology, though one of the most popular ideas of the modern world, has changed in a negative way with dramatic changes in technology. The weak Anthropocene, which prevails in that century, and hierarchical approaches cause different kinds of marginalization in the community. In this respect, marginalization in the narrative most carries Ishiguro's unique signature, since it is hard to follow that in this prevailing dystopic society, the main dilemma stems from highly intelligent AFs or from unlifted children.

While the idea of creating a superior race makes humanoids attractive, it also puts those who are not lifted at a disadvantage. According to the consideration of this new world, it is humanoids that will bring the continuation of this superior race, not the unlifted ones.

If ever there comes such a sad day, and Josie is obliged to pass away, I'll do everything in my power. Mr. Capaldi is correct. It won't be like the last time with Sal because this time you'll have me to help. I now understand why you've asked me, at every step, to observe and learn Josie. I hope the very sad day will never come, but if it does, then I'll use everything I've learned to train the new Josie up there to be as much like the former one as possible (Ishiguro, 2021:208).

From this quotation, it is definitely clear that both scientists and families are ready to accept humanoids as individuals in case a bad consequence of being lifted may occur. "Chrisse chose you carefully with that in mind. She believed you to be the one best equipped to learn Josie. Not just superficially, but deeply, entirely. Learn her till there's no difference between the first Josie and the second" (Ishiguro, 2021: 209). In this part, Ishiguro remarks that Chrisse, from the very beginning, prepares herself for the death of Josie. She strives to find ways to endure this pain, since has already lost her elder daughter, Sal, as a result of being lifted. Chrisse, who takes a second risk and allows Josie's gene modification, forces new science practices to imitate her real daughter; on the other hand, Rick's mother, Miss Helen, who is struggling with Atlas Brookings, simply wishes to prove that Rick is a gifted boy and that it is his right to continue his education, even if he is not lifted. When Josie goes to town with her mother and Klara, she spends time with her father, Mr. Arthur, as well, and later when Rick and Miss Helen join them, Josie's father praises Rick's talent. "But this, Rick, is truly impressive and exciting. Then, to Miss Helen: 'Lifted or not, genuine ability has to get noticed. Unless this world's completely crazy now'" (Ishiguro, 2021:230). While Mr. Arthur praises Rick on the one hand, he criticizes the new world order, implying that he is outside of this order. Notably, he is aware that this new world order brings inequalities, injustices, and chaos along with positive developments. Miss Helen, another character with this awareness, expresses her rebellion on this issue as follows:

This might surprise you, but I'm not actually angry about the way we've become. If one child has more ability than another, then it's only right the brighter one gets the opportunities. The responsibilities too. I accept that. But what I won't accept is that Rick can't have a decent life. I refuse to accept this world has become so cruel. Rick wasn't lifted, but he can still go far, do very well (Ishiguro, 2021:236).

This conversation with Mr. Arthur is literally Miss Helen's attempt to explain that she just wants to get something they deserve and that she does not want Rick's life to be ruined because he is not lifted. Miss Helen, like some other people, fears that humanoids will replace them and dominate the workplace as elsewhere, since they are deemed more intelligent and useful than unlifted ones. In the narrative, this reproach is also expressed by an anonymous woman in front of the theater: "First they take the jobs. Then they take the seats at the theater" (Ishiguro, 2021: 242). It may be stated that those who have this fear are unlifted, and marginalization is due to these humanoids as well as gene modifications, causing

people to react to them. In this and other respects, eugenic experiments change the social relations between the inferior and the selected ones, as well as between humanoids. This attempt justifies the shift from imperfections to the human perfectibility in the creation of a master race. As noted above, it is suggested in the novel that the aim of monopolizing education opportunities is another crucial reason that widens the gap between these parts. On these occasions, it is not difficult to imagine that humanoids, which are equipped with high cognitive abilities, limit the life standards and job occupations of unlifted individuals. "In the name of protecting life, the sovereign interferes and intervenes in its citizen's life" (Zhou and Yang, 2021:336), just as Zhou and Yang put it, administrative desires, also capitalist hegemony, result in poor relations between citizens as seen in Josie and Rick's case.

The fact that university education opportunities are very limited for teenagers who are not lifted and that even the Atlas Brookings College mentioned in the narrative allocates only 2% of the quota for such teenagers may be considered as an indicator of how this eugenic attitude monopolizes education in the new world order. With these tendencies, the aim to completely and indirectly exclude those who have not been lifted from society is striking at first glance. The inequalities in the education system due to gene modification are reflected in the narrative when Miss Helen decides to ask for help from Mr. Vance, Helen's ex-boyfriend, to give Rick an opportunity for education:

Atlas Brookings believes there are many talented kids out there, just like you, who for reasons economic or otherwise never received the benefits of AGE. The college also believes society is currently making a grave error in not allowing those talents to come to full fruition. Unfortunately most other institutions don't think this way. Which means we receive vastly more applications from people like yourself than we're able to accommodate. We can need out no-hopers, but after that, frankly, it becomes a lottery (Ishiguro, 2021:249-250).

In these words, Mr. Vance not only mentions the negative consequences of an action taken without full thought but also indicates how much Atlas Brookings, one of the few schools that accept unlifted children, is in demand because of these child victims. These differences in terms of educational opportunities resulting from gene editing affect communication between children's and adults' attitudes towards children. The conversation between Chrise and Rick towards the end of the narrative exemplifies how implicit government-enforced eugenics truly divides people and how volatile their feelings are. Chrise, who has always liked Rick and is ready to support him, even though he is not lifted, tells Rick when Josie is seriously ill because of the gene editing:

Because if you're feeling like the winner, Rick, I'd like you to reflect on this. First. What exactly do you believe you've won here? I ask because everything about Josie, from the moment I first held her, everything about her told me she was hungry for life. The whole world excited her. That's how I knew from the start I couldn't deny her the chance. She was demanding a future worthy of her spirit. That's what I mean when I say she played for high stakes. Now what about you, Rick? Do you really think you were so smart? Do you believe of the two of you, you've come out the winner? Because if that's so, then please ask yourself this. What is it you've won? Take a look. Take a look at your future. You played for low stakes and what you've won is small and mean. You may feel pretty smug just now. But I'm here to tell you, you've got no reason to be feeling that way. No reason at all (Ishiguro, 2021: 280-281).

These harsh expressions, which may be evaluated as Chrise's effort to both relieve her own conscience and determine what Rick thinks, actually indicate how the eugenic desire of the government drags the families into a dead end. In this narrative, in which a small sample of society is given, Josie is portrayed as a child who has gone through the gene modification process but loses her health, while Rick is portrayed as a healthy child who has not accepted gene editing and for this reason, he has no future. In such a dilemma, Chrise asks Rick to reflect the concerns of people from all walks of life, and it is quite

impossible to decide who the winner is. However, Ishiguro, who wants to reflect the belief that the new social order is in favor of eugenics and that the purpose of creating a superior race will be successful, signs that at the end of the narrative, Josie regained her health and went to university, but Rick could not compete with all these challenges and did not continue his education. By depicting Rick's designated inferiority, Ishiguro seeks to uncover the truth that in such a eugenic-centered community, it is not surprising to witness that Rick, an unlifted boy, will not succeed in crossing the borders.

## Conclusion

During the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scientific advances in genetic research led to an alarm for the modern world and mankind. Under the coercion of artificial intelligence and sterilization programs sponsored by the state, cultural values are deeply influenced. To improve the quality of gene pools, states have attempted to apply eugenic programs. Class differences, ethnicity, racism, religious matters, and sex issues, which are among the most controversial topics in the modern world, ranked among eugenic-related matters. The groups of people who are defined as unfit are doomed to social prejudices and forced into the gene editing process. Individuals are devalued in the process of overwhelming pursuit of modern technology. In fact, technology is morally neutral and is utilized for the goodness of humanity. However, in modern times, it has gained a notorious degree due to its discriminatory nature.

Kazuo Ishiguro in *Klara and the Sun* portrays a dystopic future world that allows the reader to pose questions about the effects of high technology on humankind. At first glance, this speculative narration seems to depict the changing social relations between human beings and humanoid robots. However, Ishiguro enriches the discourse from a different point of view, which focuses on gene modification that aims to create a superior race. What lies in Ishiguro's fiction is a long-lasting warning of the excessive use of technology and human dependence on it. Under the name of genetic lifting, they begin to create a different class, that is, master or economically superior, which leads to dividing society into two groups: lifted and unlifted. Ishiguro depicts this new mundane world by creating two children from different economic backgrounds, Josie and Rick. In fact, Josie and Rick exemplify how gene modification has the power to change relationships in the community, and how this modification process excludes children who do not accept being lifted. Therefore, this study, based on eugenics attempts in the modern world, addresses the violation of ethical standards that cause inequalities, marginalization, and miscommunication in the community. Under such conditions, as Ishiguro portrays, human perfectibility surpasses anthropocentric legacy, which favors individual differences and imperfections.

In conclusion, it has been confirmed that the dependence on high technology and science may have devastating results such as grouping them as superiors and inferiors. Accepting individual differences and treating people in equal ways seem to be the moral of the author's narration.

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