

# The Construction of Post-human Society in *Brave New World*

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**Abstract:** *Brave New World* was published in 1932 and became one of the “Dystopian Trilogy” in the 20th century. It raised people’s attentions and concerns about the life in the future. This article starts by analyzing the development process of post human and post-human society. It reveals that post-human society is the inevitable result of social development. But in the process, a serious of problems will also arise at the same time. The post-human society in *Brave New World* just shows a society full of contradictions and problems with post human. Based on analysis of the fiction, the problem brought by the development of post-human society can be taken into consideration. And we should recognize the real progress of post-human society lies in the comprehensive improvement of technology, ethics, civilization and virtue.

**Keywords:** *Brave New Worlds, post-human society, post human*

## 1. Introduction

It has been nearly ninety years since Huxley's *Brave New World* was published in 1932. But researches on *Brave New World* are still going on. From the description of the dystopian society to the rapid development of science and technology, then to the reflection of ethics, the world described by Huxley in the fiction has been around in modern society. And the human beings produced by biotechnology in the fiction have also aroused widespread concern and thinking. As human beings formed by specific gene selection, their reproduction has separated from the traditional viviparous birth but synthesized by artificial technology. Actually, this “synthetic man” is a kind of post human. In the 19th century, the Russian occultist Mrs. Blavatsky first proposed the concept of post human in his book *Secret Doctrine* which led to the thinking about post-human society. [1] Many scholars with optimistic attitudes hope that post-human society can surpass modern society, continuing the excellent achievements of modern society and becoming an ideal utopia. However, the reality of post-human society may not be as perfect as some scholars imagined. It might have a series of problems accompanying it. This article starts by analyzing the development process of post human and post-human society. It reveals that post-human society is the inevitable result of social development. But in the process, a serious of problems will also arise at the same time. Based on this analysis, the post-human society in the *Brave New World* shows a post-human society composed of post human and high science and technology, but full of contradictions and problems. From the post human who constitutes the society to the development model of post-human society, they all show a series of challenges that post human will face in the process of development.

## 2. The Development of Post human and post-human society

Post human refers to some new associations and groups that some developed countries which entered the post-modern era and characterized by the information used modern science and technology, combining with the latest concepts and aesthetic consciousness to artificially design, transform, beautify in the 1960s. These people are no longer purely natural or biological people, but a kind of “artificial human” formed by technological electronic or informative processing. It is generally acknowledged that with the development of science and technology, post human can be “made” by superb scientific and technological means. But Marx More believes that the way in which post human are produced is not only physical, but also psychology. This production method of post human generation is not purely technological “production”, but to rely on the knowledge of genetics, physiology, neurochemistry and other disciplines to improve intelligence, enhance ability and reduce the effects of disease and aging on people. [2] Therefore, the human being constructed by such means will greatly exceed the current human

in intelligence, strength, memory, health level and life span.

For a long time, in a society dominated by humanism, human beings have always placed themselves at the center of social activities. Therefore, in the early stage of the artificial intelligence, people ignore its superpower, thinking that artificial intelligence is only an accessory or a manufactured product of human beings. Although many science fictions and movies have expressed the theme that artificial intelligence poses a threat to mankind after their rise, they almost end up with the victory of mankind. However, with the rapid development of science and technology, the gap between humans and machines has gradually narrowed and the relationship has become closer. In 2019, the International Conference on Artificial Intelligence & Education was held. Xi Jinping pointed out that artificial intelligence is an important driving force. It leads a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation. It is profoundly changing people's production, life, and learning methods, and promoting human society to an intelligent era of human-machine collaboration, cross-industry integration, and co-creation and sharing. [3] This shows that artificial intelligence has been successfully qualified for human work in some aspects, and even performed better than humans. For example, in 2016, Alpha Go defeated the top Go player Ke Jie, which cause people cannot ignore the power of artificial intelligence and to a certain extent reinforce the notion that humans will surely enter a post-human society. [5] Francis Fukuyama once mentioned in his book *Our Posthuman Future*: contemporary biotechnology is changing the nature of mankind and prompting us to enter the post human history. Cao Rongxiang also stated in the book *Post humanity* that whether humans acknowledge it or not, today we have entered the post human era. [4] The trend of post-human society is inevitable. And human beings need to think the value of human existence in post-human society, how to deal with post-human society, how to stick to the bottom line and morality of being a human in post-human society, and how to find a new value standard and ethical measurement system in the new era with flood of science and technology.

In the fiction *Brave New World*, Huxley uses superb biotechnology as the basic background, regarding science and technology as the primary productive force of social development. Meanwhile, through technology, before people were born in there, a kind of process called Bokanovsky divided them into five levels. Alpha and Beta are the most senior class and will be trained to lead and control other classes. Delta and Epsilon are the lowest one and can only do ordinary labor with low intelligence. This shows that post human composed of biotechnology enjoy different social resources. The inequality creates an apparent social stability and a false sense of happiness which provide warning and inspiration for the development of science and technology and the construction of post-human society.

### **3. Human in Post Human Society**

#### **3.1. Human Body in Post Human Society**

Artificial intelligence is regarded as the first post human. But the post human are not limited to artificial intelligence, biochemical human, robot and man-machine compound biology are all the manifestations of post human. Post human is artificial person produced by using science and technology. In the *Brave New World*, human beings have abandoned the traditional viviparous mode and used the Bokanovsky Process developed by high technology to mass-produce human instead. This kind of program can make ninety-six human beings grow where only one grew before which hailed as the greatest invention in the new world. The people made according to this procedure are just like the products manufactured on the assembly line, unified and neat. The convergence of the human body maintains social stability to a certain extent, and improves the efficiency and ability of social work. But the human body has lost its own uniqueness in this mode of reproduction. All human bodies can only be used as a tool to meet the different needs of society. They have been injected with different ingredients at the embryonic stage, so people have differences in their body structure according to the division of labor in the society. For example, people who need to work in outer space have been infused with factors that adapt to the environment of weightlessness in their genes. And the high-level human can enjoy the best appearance conditions and intelligence. The human body produced under such conditions has lost the unknown and unpredictability of sexual reproduction. Science and technology completely manipulates the composition of the human body. The human body has become a product of science and technology which are called post human.

#### **3.2. Interpersonal Relationship in Post-human Society**

In traditional society, human beings who constitute the main subject of society have intimate

relationships. This intimacy is an important factor in maintaining social happiness and harmony. But in post-human society, all intimacy is forbidden. People are not allowed to have a stable partner. Based on the principle of “everyone belongs to everyone”, all citizens must frequently change their sexual partners. Maintaining a single and stable relationship continually will not only be punished by the authorities, but also be regarded as an alien by the society. Therefore, when Lenina wanted to maintain a stable relationship with Bernard Marx, she was taken aback by her own. But she quickly gave up the idea through the advice of her friend and the effects of soma. Obviously, the marriage relationship no longer exists in post-human society. What’s more, because of the “advanced” method of reproduction, the mother in the traditional sense has no longer existed either. In vitro fertilization and cloning procedures have replaced viviparous mode. [6] Mother, father, and family have become dirty, obscene and pornographic words in this society. The family relationship was thus shattered. With the disappearance of marriage and family, the bond that maintains emotions between people is completely broken in the post-human society.

The only close relationship in the fiction is between John and his mother Linda. But Linda, who has been trained in the new world since childhood, did not have strong feelings as John who lives in the Savage Reservation. She is inherently disgusted and ashamed of intimacy. In the contrary, John showed his perseverance and love to Linda when she is dying which shocked and surprised the person in the new world and be regarded as a freak. It can be seen that the stability of post-human society no longer relies on the traditional family model, and social happiness no longer comes from warm and happy family. The relationship between people is purely physical. And there is no emotional communication, bondage of marriage and family responsibilities. Under this kind of interpersonal relationship, people's empathy ability is greatly reduced. They can't appreciate the situation of others, and put themselves in the situation for others. A society composed of such people can only be indifferent, numb and ruthless mechanical society without slightest warmth.

#### **4. Development Models in Post-human Society**

##### **4.1. Pursuit of Technochauvinism**

The improvement of science and technology is the prerequisite and foundation for the formation of post-human society. Many post humanist scholars hope the well-being and benefits that brought by the high technology will help the society. In the *Brave New World*, science and technology have been placed at the center of social development and became the primary condition for maintaining the normal operation of society. People's pursuit of the technochauvinism has reached the level of madness. Science and technology as a new ideology has become a tool for social control and human enslavement. People's thoughts and behaviours are restricted by the abuse of science and technology. [7]

Bokanovsky Process and conditioning are the two top technical methods in the new world. People feel extremely proud of being able to invent such a technology that efficiently produces people and restricts their conscious activities. And the overall trend of the society is further promoting the development of these technologies in order to reach a higher level. However, the development of the technology is at the expense of literary writing and ideological research. A series of literary works such as Shakespeare's works are listed as banned books in the society, and everyone can only read work manuals related to their work. Therefore, when John asked Linda the knowledge about other things, she couldn't answer. The only knowledge she could provide him was how to operate the bottles and tubes in the laboratory. Unlike modern scientific personnel, she does not need to learn biology and chemistry, but only exists as a tool. The extreme pursuit of technochauvinism has caused society to neglect the development of civilization and culture. The development of humanities and technology is extremely unbalanced, forming a deformed social system.

##### **4.2. Stability under the Totalitarianism**

“Community, Identity, Stability” is an important slogan throughout the new world. On the surface, the pursuit of social stability is correct. But in fact, the method which achieving this kind of stability do not rely on the improvement of human morality and the progress of ideology, but the government's totalitarianism.

While technology is changing live standards, totalitarianism has also intensified. Its strength, pervasiveness, and permeability have surpassed the autocratic system in the history. [8] The ruler of the new world controls everything in the society and has absolute authority and supreme power. They use all high-tech methods to control the public and private. Thus, the people in the new world have no

independent thinking and do not need to bear any responsibilities and obligations, because the people do not have the right to choose, as long as they obey and satisfy the basic pleasures of life under the arrangement of the rule. *Brave New World* does not directly show the terrible totalitarian means such as electronic surveillance and consciousness instillation in Nineteen Eighty-Four, but instead directs the consciousness of absolute obedience into people's minds through technology to form a conditioned reflection. Actually, this kind of govern is much worse and creepier. The totalitarians are trying to establish a society without resistance and contradictions in the post-human society. The method to achieve this kind of totalitarian is genetic change under the advancement of science and technology. Therefore, the post human social model has not advanced into a progressive society with equal rights and personal freedom, but it is more serious than the totalitarianism during the autocratic period, and become a society with absolute control over the residents.

### **4.3. False Happier Society**

Huxley named the novel *Brave New World*. He fictionalized a “utopian” world where life is stable and prosperous, and everyone doesn't need to worry about food and clothing. People satisfy their desires through open sexual relations, stimulation of sensory movies and widespread use of soma. This superficial harmony seems to be more advanced than today's society, and the people are also happier. But in fact, this kind of happiness is only on the surface, and can't make people produce real happiness at all.

In the new world, soma is an important tool to maintain happiness. It acts as a hallucinogen, allowing people to forget all the pain and sadness. But the happiness that soma brings to people is same as the stimulation of drugs. It can only maintain the feeling temporarily, but cannot achieve true spiritual satisfaction. The new world permanently provides soma to mankind, allowing them to live in with illusion. They will never have the opportunity to experience the satisfaction and fulfillment of family, love, and friendship. Sadly, no one will question it, but think that they are living the happiest life in the world. [9]

In the post-human society, the problem of feeding and health has been solved, but it has not been able to solve the inner anxiety of people. Post human still can't satisfy their spiritual needs. They get lost in the fast-developing technology and blindly accept the stimulation brought by new things, but can't really get the progress and promotion in thought. In the process of moving ahead the post-human society, people feel happiness should not rely on sensory stimulation, but real satisfaction from heart. When food and clothing need not to be worried, the most difficult thing is how to face one's heart, finding the balance of the soul and solve all kinds of anxiety problems.

## **5. Conclusion**

Post human is the product that human society develops to a certain stage. With the rapid development of science and technology, and the continuous advancement of robots and artificial intelligence, mankind has gradually entered the post human period. This trend is irreversible. But the world created by Huxley in *Brave New World* reflects various problems that may exist in the post-human society. When the people who constitute the main body of society have lost their particularity and become insensitive tools, interpersonal relationships have gradually become weak and indifferent. Even the traditional family and marriage relationships no longer exist. Under these conditions, the social development models have changed: pursuing technochauvinism; using totalitarian methods to maintain social stability; using drugs to maintain false social happiness. Such a post-human society is deformed and harmful.

*Brave New World* has sounded the alarm for the development of contemporary human society. With the development of science and technology, we should always be alert to the emergence of these problems and reflect on our problems in the development. The real post-human society should be a civilized country with both high technology and high quality instead of controlling society through the abuse of high technology. The real progress of post-human society lies in the comprehensive improvement of technology, ethics, civilization and virtue. Only all aspects promoted together, can mankind truly advance into a beneficial post-human society and realize the progress of the entire human civilization.

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