

# **Interdisciplinary Research Journal for Humanities**

*( A Peer – Reviewed Journal)*



**ISSN 2249-250X**

**Volume – 15 No. 2.1**

**October 2025**

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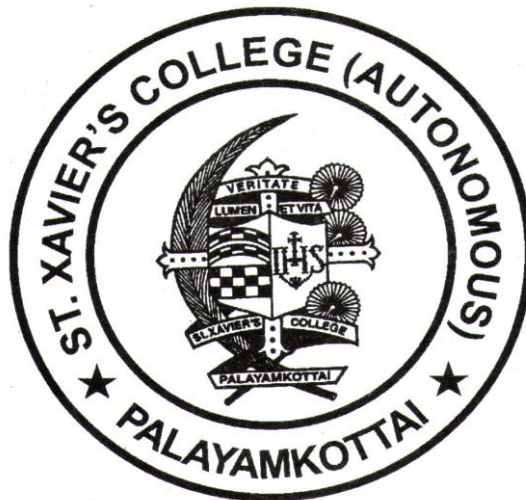
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(Light and Life through Truth)



The articles of this issue Volume-15, No. 2.1, October 2025 are selected from the papers presented by the delegates in the National Conference “SPECTRUM OF VOICES: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE” conducted by St. Xavier’s College (Autonomous), Palayamkottai held on 21.07.2025 & 22.07.2025. They are accepted for publication after plagiarism check and review process.

**Interdisciplinary Research Journal for Humanities**  
(ISSN 2249-250X)

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E.Mail: [ijofhumanism@gmail.com](mailto:ijofhumanism@gmail.com) & [editoridrh@stxavierstn.edu.in](mailto:editoridrh@stxavierstn.edu.in)

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210, Mundagan Street, Sivakasi – 626 123

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**Publisher**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous),**

Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India-627002

88.	Dr. M. Maryl Chrisho	Multifaceted Relationship of Memory in the Film <i>Kishkindha Kandam</i>	434
89.	Ms. Myvizhi. A	Between Land and Sea: A Terraqueous Literary Analysis of <i>Chemmeen</i>	440
90.	Mrs. A. Savitha Pressy	A Critical Study of Cultural Resilience in Nadia Hashmi's <i>One Half from the East</i>	445
91.	Ms. Nandhini Devi B & Dr. Latha. R	Neuroplastic Narratives of Survival: Trauma, Adaptation, and Identity in Cormac McCarthy's <i>The Road</i>	449
92.	Ms. A. Aromi & Dr. R. Anto Sindhuja	Hegemonic Masculinity and Moral Injury in Uzodinma Iweala's <i>Beasts of No Nation</i>	456
93.	Ms. V Sharon Shinolini & S P Lejoe Pracilla	From Pathologisation to Politicisation of the Fat Female Body in Melissa Broder's <i>Milk Fed</i>	461
94.	Ms. Saranya M & Dr. Bagavathy Rajan	Negotiating Power and Patriarchy: A Gendered Reading of Kavita Kane's <i>Tara's Truce</i>	465
95.	Ms. B. Bharathi Bhuvanewari	Portrayal of Food as a Perceptual Source in Literature in Aimee Bender's <i>The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake</i>	469
96.	Ms. R. Sinega	Beyond Borders: An Exploration of Korean American Displacement in the Select Short Stories of Yoon Choi	478
97.	Ms. Jeffilda Esther & Dr. Md. Sahidul Islam	An Eco-Nostalgic Experience in Ruskin Bond's – <i>Death of The Trees</i>	482
98.	Ms. Vidhya Lakshmi G	The Me Too movement's Challenge to Systemic Misogyny in Vijay Tendulkar's <i>Silence! The court is in Session</i>	486
99.	Dr. Chandrima Sen	Reading Memory in Anita Desai's <i>Cry, the Peacock</i>	489

100.	Ms. H. Karthika & Dr. R. Princee	Maternal Martyrdom and Patriarchal Complicity: Reframing Feminine Sacrifice in Buchi Emecheta's <i>The Joys of Motherhood</i>	494
101.	Ms. C. Deebika & Dr. R. Rita Yasodha	A Study on Ecocentric and Anthropocentric Spectrum in Carl Hiaasen's <i>Scat</i>	497
102.	Ms. Vaidehi Uniyal	Ritual Servitude and Gendered Oppression: A Comparative Study of Deuki and Devadasi Traditions	502
103.	Mr. K. Saravanan & Dr. C. T. Ambika Devi	Across Borders: The Essence of Multicultural Exploration in Kiran Desai's <i>The Inheritance of Loss</i>	509
104.	Ms. Usharani. G & Dr. P. Suria Thilagam	Cybernetic Futurity and The Fragmentation of Humanity in Marge Piercy's <i>He, She And it</i>	514
105.	Ms. Shivangi Gandhi & Mr. Vijay Goplani	Digital Storytelling as a Social Commentary: Using Reels for Activism	518
106.	Mrs. S Prabha Kantha & Dr. B. Beneson Thilagar Christadoss	Tradition and Transformation: Journey of Women in Temsula Ao's Short Stories	525
107.	Mr. Kishore Kumar S & Dr. S. Prabahar	Swadeshi Movement's Ideological Influence on Constructing Nationalistic Perspective in Rabindranath Tagore's <i>The Home and the World</i>	531
108.	Mrs. Sherlin Johnson & Dr. S. Prabahar	Emmett Till in Popular Media: Public Perception and Discourse	536
109.	Ms. Sharanya Ramachandran & Dr. X Disalva	Sleeping through the Patriarchy: Gender, Apathy, and Late-Capitalist Resistance in Ottessa Moshfegh's <i>My Year of Rest and Relaxation</i>	542
110.	Mr. Hannish.L. P	A Study of Emotional and Mental Resilience in Dot Hutchison's <i>The Butterfly Garden</i>	546

## CYBERNETIC FUTURITY AND THE FRAGMENTATION OF HUMANITY IN MARGE PIERCY'S *HE, SHE AND IT*

<sup>1</sup>Ms. Usharani.G. R and <sup>2</sup>Dr. P. Suria Thilagam

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of English, Vels Institute of Science, Technology Advanced Studies, (VISTAS), Chennai-600117

**Abstract:** We are living in a world where technology and machines are inextricably intertwined with human life. The amalgamation of humanity in a corporatized, post-apocalyptic world has become inevitable. Fragmentation acquires symbolic and thematic meaning in dystopian or posthuman literature, frequently signifying the breakdown of the body, society, or mind. *He She and It* examines the fuzziness of the lines separating nature and technology, human and machine, individuality and manufactured identity. Piercy explores how technological developments subvert conventional ideas of selfhood, agency, and emotional connection through the cyborg character Yod and the parallel story of the Golem of Prague. The story depicts a posthuman state in which gender, memory, and consciousness are socially and cybernetically constructed rather than biologically fixed. Dislocated identities, corporate dominance, environmental degradation, and digital alienation are some of the ways that the fragmentation of humanity is portrayed. Piercy enhances the prospect of alternative hybrid ways of living that embraces diversity and oppose oppression. It explores how *He, She, and It* imagines a future influenced by the dangers and opportunities of cybernetic integration. This study analyses what it means to be human in a world where machines increasingly control our mind and body

**Keywords:** Cyborg, Cyberpunk, Posthuman, Dystopian, and Digital Consciousness.

### Introduction

Cybernetics deals with the impact of digitalization on people and the earth in general. It explains a theory encircling technology, culture and the environment. Novikov D.A states, "Cybernetics studies the concepts of domination in living organisms, machines and organizations including self-organization. It focuses on how a (digital, mechanical or biological) system processes information, responds to it and changes or being changed for better functioning (including control and communication)" (7).

Cybernetic is used to examine how technology alters identity, power structures, and the notion of humanity in dystopian works. Many dystopian and posthuman literary works are centred on the changing relationship between humans and technology. *He, She and It* (1991), written by Marge Piercy, is a cyberpunk novel that explores this complicated relationship from the perspective of a cybernetic future. The novel poses critical issues regarding identity, agency, and humanity in a time of artificial life and digital sentience. It is set in a postapocalyptic world characterized by environmental harm and controlled by multinational corporations. This article explores how Piercy's story addresses the breakdown of society and the self and suggests a revaluation what it means to be a human. Csicsery- Ronay, Jr., states, "Cybernetics provides the pretext for the mechanized control of social life, of the body itself ..." (185)

Parsegian states that “it can be more broadly seen as the study of the interrelationships between an assembly of interactive systems or their entities without regard to structure” [35]. The disruption of environmental system, the commodification of human life, and the supremacy of corporate enclaves are the hallmarks of the dystopian future as depicted in *He, She and It*. The stress about excessive technological advancement and corporate overdrive are reflected in this corporatized reality. Haraway argues that “cyborg is a metaphor for all the human-machine interactions. They range from human-machine hybridization to artificial intelligence and cyborg reproduction. Science and technology have totally changed the human experiences. The development of science and technology has diminished the distinctive line between human from its ‘other’” (Haraway 151).

Yod, a cyborg created for security and support, is an example of cybernetic futurity, which is the speculative claim of future human-machine integration. He is a technological wonder with thought and emotion that was created by Avram for practical reasons by a society that sees artificial beings as tools rather than cybernetic organism. He is a symbol of both hope and risk, hence cybernetic is advanced in science which takes the environment to the next level whereas digital advancement itself makes him set back. Piercy's representation of this world shows how typical lines separating nature and machine, organic and artificial, are eroding. By doing this, the article firmly proves itself in posthuman discourse, where identity arises from social and technological involvement rather than biological needs. In contrast to the earlier models, Yod is built for companionship, moral reasoning, emotional intelligence, and battle. Yod was created with a purpose of defence. Yod gains knowledge about love, independence, and the intricacies of human emotion via his relationship with Shira, a human. His desire to be regarded as a person rather than a machine is the source of his existence and internal conflict. Yod challenges the very concept of human. The novel's overarching themes of fractured identity, cybernetic futurity, and what it means to be human are all reflected in Yod's journey of life. He represents a new kind of existence that is somewhere in the middle of being entirely human and completely machine.

### **Fragmentation**

Shao Jinsong states “A thorough and rational fragmentation of compounds is a crucial step in the computer's understanding of compounds. By fragmenting compounds and identifying important correlations between substructures, a solid foundation can be established for subsequent work”. Yod's cyborg body itself cannot be distinguished between human and machines. He does not have any desires to fulfil. Human completes when biological growth is complete.

### **Psychological fragmentation**

In this novel, all characters are individually scattered in which the main character, Shira, must compromise a world in which her responsibilities as a mother, daughter, lover, and employee are unstable. Her psychological journey illustrates how society as a whole has failed to define stable identities, particularly in a time when personality and memory can be erased or

programmed, especially when she undergoes certain problems in her relationship and under multinational and corporate enclaves.

### **Social Fragmentation**

Corporate enclaves, independent communities like Tikva, and lawless regions outside the Net make up the novel's radically different world. These divisions represent the disintegration of the social order as a whole and the estrangement of people. Piercy uses Shira's grandmother, Malkah, to compare the story of Yod with the Jewish legend of the Golem. Like Yod, the Golem is an artificial creature designed to defend a community that is at risk. The Golem and Yod both stand in for liminal beings who are neither entirely human nor entirely objects. They represent the conflicts that arise in posthumanism, in which personhood is created through relationality, consciousness, and empathy in addition to biology. In the denouement, Yod is more "human" than many of the natural-born characters because of his capacity for love, selflessness, and moral contemplation, values he has for human.

Gender is also shown to be flexible and constructed in Piercy's *He She and It*. Despite being programmed as male, Yod's gender is a performance that is influenced by Shira's needs and the expectations of his creators. Csicsery-Ronay, notes that in the cyberpunk world, "in a universe where the forces of innovation are constantly tinkering with human beings' own information processing systems through telematics, drugs, and surgical intervention, the regulator of experience (ego? self? spirit?) can no longer accept any experience as worth more than any other. The only standard is thrill ..." (191).

Identity formation is significantly influenced by thinking. Yod's learning process illustrates how memory, even when programmed, can result in the formation of a moral self, while Shira's resistance to the commodification of life is motivated by her memories and attachments. According to *He She and It*, identity is not fixed at birth but rather is cybernetically produced, emerging through interactions, feedback loops, and learning. Csicsery-Ronay, Jr., observes, "both the corporation and its material need, cybernetics, dominate the human existence in Piercy's cyberpunk text" (184–185).

*He, She, and It* does not conclude in hopelessness, despite its depressing setting. Piercy imagines hybrid ways of living that value diversity and fight against oppression. Despite its flaws, Tikva stands for a community that, in opposition to corporate control, aspires to democratic values. Shira's ultimate choices reveal an ethical awareness based on autonomy, justice, and compassion. As Csicsery-Ronay, Jr. says the "dominant electronic cultural powers are insatiable in their appetite for new commodities and commodity fashions" (183). Yod, at the end of the novel, dismantles himself and the lab to protect the town. Even after his devastation, Yod's legacy endures as a representation of hope, as a novel form of being, who denies to obey his programming to choose love and freedom. Thus, Piercy's *He She and It* challenges readers to envision a future in which people are redefined through inclusive, moral, and pluralistic perspectives rather than being obliterated by technology.

*He, She, and It* by Marge Piercy offers a gripping picture of a cybernetic future where human fragmentation poses a threat and opens the door to fresh perspectives on who we are. In addition to criticizing technological determinism, the novel presents a complex picture of posthuman identity that rejects dichotomies and welcomes hybridity. With its intricate fusion of myth, cyberpunk design, and feminist theory, Piercy's writing forces the readers to think critically about how the human condition is changing in a world of machines—and to think about the moral obligations that come with these changes.

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