UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE MINAS GERAIS
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Dissertação apresentada à Faculdade de Letras da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras: Estudos Literários, como requisito parcial à obtenção do título de Mestre em Letras: Estudos Literários.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Luiz Fernando Ferreira Sá

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FACULDADE DE LETRAS

PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS: ESTUDOS LITERÁRIOS

**ATA DA DEFESA DE DISSERTAÇÃO DE PABLO HEINRICH CUNHA PARREIRAS**

Número de registro: 2020656854. Às 14:00 horas do dia 25 (vinte e cinco) do mês de novembro de 2022, reuniu-se na Faculdade de Letras da UFMG a Banca Examinadora de Dissertação, indicada *ad referendum* em 27/10/2022 e referendada pelo Colegiado do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras: Estudos Literários da UFMG em 10/11/2022, para julgar, em exame final, o trabalho final intitulado *Paltry Lives: Posthumanisms, Ideological State Apparatuses, and Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick*, requisito final para obtenção do Grau de MESTRE em Letras: Estudos Literários, área de concentração Literaturas de Língua Inglesa/Mestrado. Abrindo a sessão, o Orientador e Presidente da Banca Examinadora, Prof. Dr. Luiz Fernando Ferreira Sá, após dar a conhecer aos presentes o teor das Normas Regulamentares do Trabalho Final, passou a palavra ao candidato para apresentação de seu trabalho. Seguiu-se a arguição pelos examinadores, com a respectiva defesa do candidato. Logo após, a Banca Examinadora se reuniu, sem a presença do candidato e do público, para julgamento e expedição do resultado final. Foram atribuídas as seguintes indicações:

Prof. Dr. Luiz Fernando Ferreira Sá - FALE/UFMG - indicou a aprovação do candidato.

Profa. Dra. Valéria Sabrina Pereira - FALE/UFMG - indicou a aprovação do candidato.

Prof. Dr. Daniel Serravalle de Sá - UFSC - indicou a aprovação do candidato.

Pelas indicações, o candidato foi considerado APROVADO.

O resultado final foi comunicado publicamente ao candidato pelo Presidente da Banca. Nada mais havendo a tratar, o Presidente lavrou a presente ATA, que será assinada por todos os membros participantes da Banca Examinadora. Belo Horizonte, 25 de novembro de 2022.

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*to Laura*
*and in honor of all of those who lost their lives for being recognized as less-than-humans*

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*Errare humanum est*
—Jorge Ben Jor

**Abstract**

In this thesis, I analyze *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), a science fiction novel written by Philip K. Dick, in light of posthumanist theories and ideology studies. The main hypothesis is that the posthuman predicament, i.e. the encounter between humanist practices and a post-anthropocentric context in an advanced capitalist State is not overcome in the story due to dominant ideology. I examine the ideological State apparatuses present in the novel and my analysis sustains that they restrain humans from accessing any posthuman possibility beyond the humanist values of segregation, individualism, and exceptionalism perpetrated by the State. Furthermore, the Master's thesis focuses on how subjectivity and humanness depend on processes of social recognition.

Keywords: Philip K. Dick; Science Fiction; Posthumanism; Ideology; Subjectivity.

**Resumo**

Nesta dissertação, analisamos *Androides sonham com ovelhas elétricas?* [*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*] (1968), um romance de ficção científica escrito por Philip K. Dick, sob o prisma de teorias pós-humanistas e estudos de ideologia. Nossa principal hipótese é de que a crise pós-humana [*posthuman predicament*], isto é, o encontro entre práticas humanistas e um contexto pós-antropocêntrico em um Estado de capitalismo avançado, não é superada na história devido à ideologia dominante. Examinamos os aparelhos ideológicos do Estado presentes no romance e nossa análise sustenta que eles restringem os humanos de acessar quaisquer possibilidades pós-humanas que vão além dos valores humanistas de segregação, individualismo e excepcionalismo perpetuados pelo Estado. Além disso, nosso estudo foca em como a subjetividade e a humanidade dependem de processos de reconhecimento social.

Palavras-chave: Philip K. Dick, Ficção Científica, Pós-humanismo, Ideologia.

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## Introduction

> *they know things are bad, but more than that, they know they can't do anything about it.*[1]

At times like these, it is irresponsible to write a work concerned about life and future, and avoid the repercussions of the COVID-19. From March 2020 until the publication of this thesis, the death toll of the pandemic has reached 7 million people worldwide, more than 710 thousand of the victims to be found only in Brazil.[2] Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* is a novel of people struggling to live, each character in their particular way. Therefore, this thesis has become the result of unexplainable grief, of human life perceived as lifeless quantification. However, it is not a product of quiet motionless grief.

This is the outcome of rage and hope in a late-capitalist pandemic world.

## Do androids dream?

Life flows through infinite coincidences and unplanned occurrences. "You know, I think a lot of scripts are overwritten," complained the Dutch actor Rutger Hauer in an interview a couple of years before his death. He was responsible for rewriting and starring one of the most iconic moments of the history of cinema. In the scene, his character, a replication of a human being named Roy Batty, is about to pass away, but first he performs a monologue [see fig. 1]. The actor was allowed to change the original script in order to convey to his audience exactly what he felt to be the most accurate sensation of this *death*: "I was hoping to come up with one line where Roy, because he understands he has very little time, expresses one bit of

[1] Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*
[2] Data collected on April 19th 2024 at https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/.

the DNA of life that he's felt." The result can be apprehended through Roy's monologue: "I've seen things you people wouldn't believe... Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion... I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhäuser Gate. All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain... Time to die" (*Blade Runner* 1:46:20–47:15). "How much he liked it. Only one life," concluded Hauer.

Fig. 1: Roy Batty's passing right after his monologue. *Blade Runner*, 1982.

This movie, *Blade Runner* (1982), is an adaptation of Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) directed by Ridley Scott. The monologue aforementioned is not present in the original work; only the character, Roy Batty, can be found in it. In company with other five individuals, in the storyline, they are *androids* on a supposedly androidless Earth of the year 2021. In an opaque position of antagonists, much like Mary Shelley's creature from *Frankenstein*, androids arouse the question of what it really means to be human, a given assumption for many people. Their interaction with the world around them, the introspective and the social issues with which they deal, and their lust for life may seem alien possibilities in an anthropocentric paradigm.

Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, from here on abbreviated as *Do Androids*, is a science fiction novel presenting a post-nuclear-war, dystopian world. *World War Terminus* has made life on Earth partially impossible and a large group of human beings

emigrated to space colonies. In order to incentivize and reward the ones who fled Earth, "each emigrant automatically received possession of an android subtype of his choice" (16). The androids were designed to be companions or selfless working robots to the human beings and "by 2019, the variety of subtypes passed all understanding, in the manner of American automobiles of the 1960s" (16). Consequently, as technology advanced, the humanoid androids became more and more human-like in their appearance and personality. They were designed with intricate artificial intelligence and would frequently understand their situation as servants to human masters. As a result, some androids would kill their owners and escape to Earth seeking a new life. However, their presence was prohibited outside the colonies, which meant that they were to be chased by bounty hunters such as Rick Deckard, the protagonist, whose job was retiring—i.e. terminating—the escaped androids. Working as an android pursuant, the worst thing Deckard could have in his mind would be empathy toward his foes, and everything around him was supposed to work to prevent him from seeing electrical others as *beings*. Eventually, he developed feelings for the androids and he started questioning his doings and his relation with them, which thickens the plot.

In order to develop this thesis, I have approximated *Do Androids* to different spheres of knowledge. Interdisciplinarity is unavoidable in discussions around posthumanism, one of the methodological paradigms adopted in this work, as the multiplicity of subjects that constitute its backbone is vast. Rosi Braidotti proposes interdisciplinarity as one of the most important objectives for the evolution of the humanities. According to her, such approach

> affects the very structure of thought and enacts a rhizomatic embrace of conceptual diversity in scholarship. The posthuman method amounts to higher degrees of disciplinary hybridization and relies on intense de-familiarization of our habits of thought through encounters that shatter the flat repetition of the protocols of institutional reason. (*The Posthuman* 169)

Following this path, the methodology chosen to develop the thesis will rely on three fronts: literature, philosophy, and sociology.

Hence, in *Do Androids*, Philip K. Dick develops a "posthuman" context with its own moral and social issues regarding humans and animals, and their electric counterparts. In this master's thesis, I approach the *posthuman predicament*—the crisis of humanism in a scenario where alterity and dehumanization prevail—and possible causes for this problem. Therefore, I analyze the novel in light of philosophical and critical posthumanism and demonstrate how ideology and ideological apparatuses in the story prevent the leap from posthuman denial to a possible posthuman resolution.

**Do androids dream of year two thousand and twenty-one?**

Recent years have been marked by uncertainty. People were still experiencing a deep process of isolation and while some could avoid the hazardous world outside, many could not. Regular actions such as going to work were dangerous enough to cause permanent damage. In this scenario, technology has played a great part connecting peers in their concrete islands. Softening seclusion through a virtual medium, devices helped not only with basic necessities of communication, but also with emotional needs. As a consequence, *empathy* became a relevant key to comprehending people's relationships.

Studies and metrics encompassing such an abstract concept have focused, for instance, on the impact of being empathic towards the less favored in critical moments. Pfattheicher and colleagues have examined the positive influence of empathy in people's decision making regarding social safety. They have demonstrated that "providing individuals with mere background information … was not enough to significantly increase the behavioral motivation; only if empathy was added did motivation increase" (1370). In other words, it takes more than

simply knowing that the other is a human being to feel any sort of compassion. Recognition depends on empathic bonding.

Year 2021 in *Do Androids* does not seem very distant from its counterpart in a pandemic world. Of course, the science fiction (SF) genre is the main reason why everything in the novel appears to be aggressively different, bizarre, and ahead of its publication time, the faraway 1968. However, amongst the fictional elements the story portrays, many have been around for quite a while. Has Philip K. Dick predicted anything, such as video calls and complex devices that allow people to share their emotions through a worldwide connection? Alternatively, have our technological gears been deeply inspired by ideas given by authors like him? These are dead-end speculative questions. Indeed, 2021 was the year in which the events narrated in *Do Androids* took place. The COVID-19 pandemic has surely worsened our non-fictional world's dystopian-like advanced capitalist context. Furthermore, concealed issues concerning humanity, inhumanity, State, ideology, work, class, gender, race still linger.

At its core, *Do Androids* is a SF novel that depicts a world affected by a devastating nuclear war. People continued their lives as they could (or could not): "no one today remembered why the war had come about or who, if anyone, had won. The dust which had contaminated most of the planet's surface had originated in no country and no one, even the wartime enemy, had planned on it" (Dick 15). Therefore, those who can afford it, flee from Earth in a space colonizing effort. Abandoned, those who could not emigrate are controlled through propaganda and a pseudoreligion named Mercerism. Rick Deckard, the main character, for instance, does not emigrate, "I can't emigrate, he said to himself. Because of my job" (8). He is a bounty hunter and his profession does not exist in the colonies. There, androids[3]—human-like beings, designed to be servants—are sentient and conscious commodities. On

[3] Dick also refers to androids in the novel as "andys," a comic yet humanizing way of looking at them.

Earth, they are illegal. Deckard stays on his mother planet and hunts these escaped androids for a living.

The main reason for androids to be prohibited outside the colonies is the crime they might have to commit to run away: murdering their owners. Hence, when androids arrive on planet Earth they are supposedly guilty already. "Do androids dream? Rick asked himself. Evidently; that's why they occasionally kill their employers and flee here. A better life, without servitude" (Dick 169). Francesca Ferrando comments that in the history of the United States, Dick's homeland, something similar happened: "[i]n the American system of slavery, for instance, captives were considered property to the extent that, in some cases, owners had legal rights to kill them. In 1740, South Carolina passed the 'Negro Act,' which made it legal for slave owners to kill rebellious slaves" (77-78).

Thus, the *better dead than loose* logic applies to those considered subhuman or inhuman, the ones typically classified as the non-humans on the novel. Dick has indicated a strong historical connection between androids and enslaved people making a clear reference to the subject:

> The TV set shouted, "—*duplicates the halcyon days of the pre-Civil War Southern states!* Either as body servants or tireless field hands, the custom-tailored humanoid robot designed specifically for YOUR UNIQUE NEEDS, FOR YOU AND YOU ALONE—given to you on your arrival absolutely free, equipped fully, as specified by you before your departure from Earth; this loyal, trouble-free companion in the greatest, boldest adventure contrived by man in modern history will provide—" It continued on and on. (17; emphasis added)

More than serving as *trouble-free companions*, androids are designed and constructed to be slaves.

Yet the bounty hunter's perspective is the predominant one in the narrative. Written in third person, but filled with streams of consciousness, *Do Androids* presents a myriad of characters. As not all of them are relevant to the scope of this thesis, I am going to note briefly those to whom I will reference throughout the study. On the one hand, besides Rick Deckard, the human nucleus has got two other characters. First, Iran Deckard, Rick's wife, is a depressed woman who never leaves their house. Her relationship with Rick has harsh conflicts and several times, he mistreats her. Second, John J. R. Isidore is a human deeply affected by the nuclear winter, the aftermath of *World War Terminus*. He lives alone in an abandoned building. Isidore is known as a *chickenhead*—a degrading terminology—, i.e. a person with low intelligence levels who is not allowed to emigrate to space colonies. In some chapters, he takes the floor and it is through his eyes that readers follow the narrative.

On the other hand, there is the Nexus-6 android nucleus, composed of eight characters. The most important one is Rachael Rosen. She belongs to the Rosen Association and is used to trick Deckard; the two of them eventually have an amorous relationship. Next is Buster Friendly, a public figure responsible for most of the broadcasted media on Earth. Readers only find out he is an android at the end of the story, after he reveals the scheme behind Mercerism. The other six androids are the ones who escaped from Mars and have been living disguised on Earth. They are, namely, Max Polokov, Luba Luft, Garland, Pris Stratton, Roy Baty, and Irmgard Baty. Two of these have crucial influence in the plot. Luba Luft is an opera singer and the first Nexus-6 android who completely shocked Deckard in his duty with her formidable skills as an artist. Pris Stratton is the exact same model of Rachael Rosen, a fact that disturbs him in his final hunt.

Because these androids are extremely similar to human beings in their appearance, after years of fine development, Deckard's job becomes more complicated and more dangerous. How could he distinguish between humans and non-humans if they were created to be

impossible to differentiate? Intelligence tests have become obsolete, thus empathy becomes the new metric. Theoretically, only humans can be empathetic, whilst androids cannot. "Empathy, evidently, existed only within the human community," reflected Deckard, "whereas intelligence to some degree could be found throughout every phylum and order including the arachnids" (29). To examine this feature, Deckard and other bounty hunters perform the Voigt-Kampff Empathy Test. In this way, officers can measure the subjects' most subtle physical responses while exposed to a thorough interrogation. All of the questions are hypothetical and involve some type of brutality concerning humans and animals. In a world where living became almost impossible, most creatures have lost their lives due to the nuclear winter.[4]

This occurrence has generated the religious belief around the figure of Wilbur Mercer, an old man on the top of a hill who suffers for humankind. On Earth, most people are adepts of Mercerism and they possess a gadget named *empathy box*, as John Isidore, exemplifies:

> The visual image congealed; he saw at once a famous landscape, the old, brown, barren ascent, with tufts of dried-out bonelike weeds poking slantedly into a dim and sunless sky. One single figure, more or less human in form, toiled its way up the hillside: an elderly man wearing a dull, featureless robe, covering as meager as if it had been snatched from the hostile emptiness of the sky. The man, Wilbur Mercer, plodded ahead, and, as he clutched the handles, John Isidore gradually experienced a waning of the living room in which he stood; the dilapidated furniture and walls ebbed out and he ceased to experience them at all. He found himself, instead, as always before, entering into the landscape of drab hill, drab sky. And at the same time he no longer witnessed the climb of the elderly man. His own feet now scraped, sought purchase, among the familiar loose stones; he felt the same old painful, irregular roughness beneath his feet

[4] Although there is much to be discussed about the non-humans in *Do Androids*, the role of animals and electric animals is not in the scope of this thesis. For analyses of the novel focused on animal studies, see Heise, Ursula K. "The Android and the Animal" and Vint, Sherryl. "Speciesism and Species Being in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*."

> and once again smelled the acrid haze of the sky—not Earth's sky but that of some place alien, distant, and yet, by means of the empathy box, instantly available. (21)

Through this *humanizing* experience, people share their suffering and exercise empathy. At the end of the story, Mercerism is exposed by Buster Friendly as a scam, a mere symbolic system developed to control human beings who stayed on Earth based on religious-like faith.

From all the given assumptions regarding humanity in the novel, empathy and collectiveness seem to stand out. Both prove to be wrong conceptions, as Rick Deckard starts to observe in his foes more elements of humanness than he could ever dream of finding in his peers. This becomes one of the central conflicts of the novel: what it means to be a human. Deckard has to face this dilemma when he is inquired about it in his encounter with Luba Luft:

> "Do you think I'm an android? Is that it?" Her voice had faded almost to extinction. "I'm not an android. I haven't even been on Mars; I've never even *seen* an android!" … "I'd be glad to help you, and if I were an android would I be glad to help you?"
>
> "An android," he said, "doesn't care what happens to any other android. That's one of the indications we look for."
>
> "Then," Miss Luft said, "you must be an android."
>
> That stopped him; he stared at her.
>
> "Because," she continued, "Your job is to kill them, isn't it? You're what they call—" She tried to remember.
>
> "A bounty hunter," Rick said. "But I'm not an android." (93-94)

For many years, the discussion about Deckard's own nature had been a hot topic in debates around *Do Androids* in its adaptations. In Ridley Scott's picture, *Blade Runner*, this became one of the most vivid polemics. Until today, Scott and Harrison Ford, who played Deckard in the motion picture, continue arguing about it. Dani Di Placido wrote that while the director

affirms the character is a replicant (the alternative name given to androids in the film adaptation), the actor defends he was a human after all.[5]

For the plot of the novel, however, what is truly important is the empathic feeling Deckard develops towards the androids after meeting Luba Luft. He supposedly needed to find and retire each of the escaped subjects, i.e. kill them, a duty he performs until the end of the story. Yet, in order to do it, he undergoes a process of reevaluation of his own beliefs, learning for the first time the contradictions behind human exceptionalism. He is exposed to the inconsistencies of a system based on exclusion and ultimately has his own broken and tired epiphany: "The electric things have their lives, too. Paltry as those lives are" (222). This is the context and the starting point for the discussion of the thesis. Hereinafter, I enter the paradigms that help reading and reacting to *Do Androids*.

**Do androids dream of posthumanism?**

Describing a portion of Dick's novels, including *Do Androids*, N. Katherine Hayles has identified several of the themes present in the works of the author:

> Dick's narratives extend the scope of inquiry by staging connections between cybernetics and a wide range of concerns, including a devastating critique of capitalism, a view of gender relations that ties together females and androids, an idiosyncratic connection between entropy and schizophrenic delusion, and a persistent suspicion that the objects surrounding us—and indeed reality itself—are fakes. (161)

In order to comprehend the context of the societies depicted in his novels, concepts normally taken for granted have to be examined in their complexities. Thus, three distinct categories have to be exposed and discussed: the human, the non-human, and the posthuman. Each of

[5] See Harrison Ford's change of opinion in https://screenrant.com/blade-runner-movie-deckard-replicant-harrison-ford-response-confirmed/

these has slippery and questionable definitions or determinations, but they are equally important to one another. The "human" requires more abstraction and deeper socio-historical and philosophical panoramas to shed light on the following two; therefore, it has to be the first in line for discussion.

In fact, there are one too many possibilities to define "human" or "humanity." The mutability of these words, Tony Davies notes, helps to reinforce the idea of aggregation; however, they can easily segregate (24). The scholar claims that the philosophical representation of humanity in humanism has a "very complex history and an unusually wide range of possible meanings and contexts" (2). Thus, being attached to a single viewpoint when adopting concepts such as human or humanism may not be wise, especially for the political implications their definitions can potentially encompass. Philosopher Rosi Braidotti argues that humanism, as a whole, is a human movement aiming at individualism and collectivism in their perfection (*The Posthuman* 13). This view is rather relevant when we face the principles embodied in the characters of *Do Androids*, because the dialectics between individuality and collectivity sets the tone of their attitudes.

Besides the human beings and the androids, there are also animals and electric animals inhabiting Earth in *Do Androids*. Some of these groups have to live disguised as humans, in the case of the androids, or to be kept in secret, in the case of the electric animals, due to their ersatz nature. "Owning and maintaining a fraud [an electric animal]," Dick writes, "had a way of gradually demoralizing one" (9). One of the main premises of the novel ends up being the social segregation of these two groups for they are considered inauthentic, inhumane, and antinatural, which opens the discussion on the non-human and the posthuman. From Michel Foucault's anti-humanism to Donna Haraway's Cyborg, subsequent studies focused on alterity and non-humans gained a qualitative twist by the deconstructive approaches towards the apparently solid concept of "human"—or more specifically "Man." It was not until the 1990s

that the term "posthuman" was formally tackled by philosophers and critics such as N. Katherine Hayles, Neil Badmington, and others[6] who aimed at the disruption of the human/non-human dichotomy. Lisa Yaszek and Jason W. Ellis highlight that "authors of science fiction … have told stories for well over two centuries about technologically enhanced and augmented people" (71), but the *posthuman* is a recent category in philosophy, literature, and cultural studies. The non-human, on the other hand, exists long enough to determine the many faces of the others opposed to the so-called "humanity."

Within the posthuman studies, philosopher Francesca Ferrando claims, there are several different lines and "posthuman" can point to more than one single strand (1). Among the perspectives embedded in the term, to name a few, we may include: anti-humanisms, new materialisms, transhumanisms, and posthumanisms. According to Ferrando, the subdivision can go further and the latter strand, for instance, can be dismembered into critical, cultural, and philosophical posthumanisms (24). She defines the posthumanist approach in general terms as "a praxis, as well as a philosophy of mediation, which manifests post-dualistic, post-centralizing, comprehensive, and 'acknowledging' types of approaches, in the sense that they acknowledge alterity and recognize themselves in alterity" (3).

Since the possibilities of the posthuman are vast, I narrowed the options down and mostly adopted philosophical and critical posthumanisms in order to approximate them to *Do Androids*. On the one hand, "Philosophical Posthumanism," as Ferrando defines it,

> is an onto-epistemological approach, as well as an ethical one, manifesting as a philosophy of mediation, which discharges any confrontational dualisms and

[6] Besides Michel Foucault and Donna Haraway, philosophers Martin Heidegger, Simone de Beauvoir, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Luce Irigaray, and Judith Butler are key influences for the development of posthumanism, see Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, and Ferrando, *Philosophical Posthumanism*. After the "Cyborg Manifesto," Donna Haraway has continued her production related to posthuman studies expanding discussions on animal studies, gender, and capitalism; Cary Wolfe has also been an active voice in the fields of posthumanism and animal studies; Bruce Clark and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen have been strengthening the connections between posthumanism and literature.

> hierarchical legacies; this is why it can be approached as a post-humanism, a post-anthropocentrism, and a post-dualism. (22)

Philosophical posthumanism is one of the navigation tools to understand the posthuman predicament in the novel, i.e. as Braidotti describes it, "the convergence, across the spectrum of cognitive capitalism, of posthumanism on the one hand and post-anthropocentrism on the other" ("Theoretical Framework" 31-2).

On the other hand, Stefan Herbrechter defines critical posthumanism, the complementary strand of posthumanism headed by Braidotti, as

> a theoretical approach which maps and engages with the "ongoing deconstruction of humanism" (cf. Badmington 2000). It differentiates between the *figure* of the "posthuman" (and its present, past and projected avatars, like cyborgs, monsters, zombies, ghosts, angels, etc.) and "posthumanism" as the contemporary social *discourse* (in the Foucauldian sense), which negotiates the pressing contemporary question of what it means to be human under the conditions of globalization, technoscience, late capitalism and climate change. (Braidotti and Hlavajova 94)

Aware of the endless struggle found in *overcoming* humanist tradition through the so-called posthuman approaches Badmington proposes an epistemological solution to tackle the problem. In his view, critics must recognize that "the 'post-' of posthumanism does not (and, moreover, cannot) mark or make an absolute break from the legacy of humanism. 'Post-'s speak (to) ghosts, and cultural criticism must not forget that it cannot simply forget the past" (21). Bearing that in mind, the humanist tradition calls for an examination through posthumanist lenses, aligning philosophy and criticism to literature.

In his novel, Dick portrays several characters who consciously or unconsciously do not seem to comprehend their situation in the world. This confusion is key to the analysis of characters such as Rick Deckard, John Isidore, and the androids. In the literary context,

philosophical and critical analyses may rely on language use to offer insights. Language, then, allows the approximation of posthumanisms to the object of study. As Ferrando reminds us, "nomenclatures are not neutral, but they are part of a wider apparatus of sociopolitical as well as economic and symbolic signification" (98). A myriad of attitudes, relations, taboos, prejudices, and fears traverse the encounters among them all.

Deckard, the main character, refers to androids in different ways throughout the story, not being able to choose between their humanity and their *inhumanity*:

> Up it glided *a woman*, toward him, and he knew *her*; he recognized *her* and lowered his laser tube. "*Rachel*", he said, perplexed. Had *she* followed him in *her* own hovercar, tracked him here? And why? "Go back to Seattle", he said. "Leave me alone; Mercer told me I've got to do it". And then he saw that *it* was not quite *Rachel*.
>
> "For what we've meant to each other", *the android* said as *it* approached him, *its arms reaching as if to clutch at him*. The clothes, he thought, are wrong. But the eyes, the same eyes. And there are more like *this*; there can be a legion of *her*, each with *its* own name, but all Rachel Rosen—Rachel, the prototype, used by the manufacturer to protect the others. (Dick 203; emphasis added)

The outcomes of the confrontation of unstable humans and non-humans, then, is a fruitful example for posthuman studies. Yaszek and Ellis comment on the presence of this posthumanist debate in science fiction as a long process, with significant changes after World War II. If, at first, the objective was stretching the limits of science, later, "inspired by cognitive science and computational technologies, SF writers have explored the mutability and multiplicity of the human condition, treating the organic body as just one of several mediums for one or more reengineered, posthuman species" (71). Moreover, Yaszek and Ellis claim the "work of Philip K. Dick connects earlier mutational romances to New Wave SF through explorations of the posthuman as both a cognitive and a physical transformation" (77). Thus,

the alignment of Dick's work and posthuman studies already has its own productive history, one to be continued.

**Do androids dream of ideology?**

If posthumanism is one of the paradigms from which to investigate *why* there is a posthuman predicament in *Do Androids*, ideology comes in to expand explanations of *how* the conflict is sustained. Being yet another slippery and overused concept, ideology needs careful understanding. "The ideology of the text," claims Terry Eagleton, "is not an 'expression' of authorial ideology: it is the product of an aesthetic working of 'general' ideology as that ideology is itself worked and 'produced' by an overdetermination of authorial-biographical factors" (*Criticism* 59). In this thesis, I do not analyze *Do Androids* or Philip K. Dick, particularly, as producers of ideology. The objective is to investigate the *materialization of ideology* in the society depicted in the novel. Although the questions could be initially "is there ideology portrayed in the fictional context?" or "is this ideology unique and separated from the non-fictional world?,"[7] by comprehending the invisible mechanisms on which ideology depends for its manifestation, the problem becomes *how* it manifests and yet remains unseen even in fiction.

"It is preferable on the whole for power," argues Eagleton, "[for ideology] to remain conveniently invisible, disseminated throughout the texture of social life and thus 'naturalized' as custom, habit, spontaneous practice" (*Ideology* 116). The alternative methodological choice made here to discuss the theme in *Do Androids*, then, concerning the effects of the ideological context happening in the story, favors the identification of this so-called *natural* or *invisible* practice. Therefore, ideology should not be (un)seen simply as a hidden-to-the-naked-eye cloak

[7] Moriarty reviews in "Ideology and Literature" the presence of ideology in literary studies, as well as the problems, relevancy, and evolution of the concept, which is not a unanimity in the field.

covering the real social fabric. On the contrary, it appears in its spots, loose threads, and unexposed filaments. Hardly visible elements of materiality may not always be noticed. The close look of the observer who inspects ideology may only spot hints of it interwoven deeply with the fiber. This means that, eventually, ripping off the social fabric is an available procedure.

Subscribing to the Marxist tradition in ideology studies, French philosopher Louis Althusser proposed two theses on the matter aiming at advancing the discussion raised by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in *The German Ideology* (1846). First, Althusser claims, "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to the real conditions of existence," an illusion alluding to reality ("Ideology" 162). Second, "Ideology has a material existence" and according to him it can be found in "an apparatus and its practice, or practices" (165-66). These famous formulations take into consideration not a unilateral ruling ideology, but juxtaposed, competing, and multilateral ideolog*ies*.

Furthermore, Althusser adds that "ideology *has no outside* (for itself), but at the same time *that it is nothing but outside* (for science and reality)" (175). His contribution on the constitution of ideology and the behavior of subjects toward it is key. The quest for the ideological instances materialized in the society depicted in the object of this study puts the focus on the characters of the novel. Their presence represents "*material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject*" (169). It is a matter of comprehending the characters' existence and the ways ideologies interpellate[8] each of them as subjects in a dystopian society.

[8] Interpellation is yet another important concept discussed by Althusser in his essay, relevant to many works on subjectivity and questioned by critics subsequently. See Dolar, "Beyond interpellation" and Butler, "Conscience doth make subjects of us all" for comments and criticism on interpellation.

Then, how to position *Do Androids* and Althusser's contributions on ideology side by side? Ideally, it would be relevant to trace ideology in the novel, looking for the apparatuses from which it emerges. In his essay, Althusser highlights the connection between the State and its apparatuses, and their difference from the "repressive" ones (142). The "Ideological State Apparatuses," then, would be linked to families, schools, literature, and other instances of an expanded State [*Estado ampliado*].[9] They are "a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions" (143). More than finding solely institutional ideology in Dick's novel subjectivity plays an important role for the understanding of how individuals receive and propagate ideology. Therefore, close attention to the subjects and their beliefs, ideas and certainties can help establish the several instances of ideology of which they are passive and active parts. Thus, stemming from Althusser's theses and propositions, in this thesis ideology is discussed keeping in mind its materiality and the subjects who are traversed by it.

**Do androids dream of criticism?**

In the literary field, there are studies on SF theory and literary criticism crucial for any reading of *Do Androids*. The main sources to examine science fiction in the thesis are Darko Suvin, Fredric Jameson, and Carl Freedman, complemented with insights by Samuel Delany. One of the most important starting points of academic discussion on SF in literature comes from the theorist and critic Darko Suvin. According to him, SF is "*a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment*" (*Metamorphoses* 7-8). In his view, SF can be detached from

[9] Alysson Leandro Mascaro examines the notion of expanded State aligned with Althusser's contributions and claims that one should not inspect the State only by its most obvious legal descriptions (68). See Mascaro, *Estado e Forma Política*.

other literary traditions in terms of estrangement and cognition because it pushes away both realism and fantasy at once (8).

Although Suvin's contribution represents a qualitative shift in the academic analysis of SF, highlighting its potential, other critics have questioned or revised his terms. Carl Freedman, for instance, suggests the articulation between SF and critical theory as a step further. By doing so, SF becomes less of a literary label and more of a "tendency" (181-82). Therefore, the insights on estrangement and cognition expand to wider social and philosophical questions and to their possible approximation to literary texts. It is in light of critical theories that the potential of SF can become more impactful.

Fredric Jameson, subsequently, calls attention to the varieties of SF produced in the twentieth century and how they can be seen as "stages," as well as how they "overlap" and interact with one another (*Archaeologies* 93). According to him, Philip K. Dick's novels published between 1961 and 1968 represent what he calls the stage of "subjectivity" in SF (93). Bearing in mind the expected overlapping of the stages, Dick is also associated with the so-called "New Wave", in which the puzzles of subjectivity also meet the aesthetic enthusiasm around SF texts. Jameson notes, however, that the term "aesthetic"

> is not meant to convey a return to aestheticism or art-for-art's sake in any traditional or regressive fashion, but rather to mark the new centrality of dilemmas of perception and representation as such: dilemmas which foreground the status of language as such, but also the problematization of the Real, as that decenters old-fashioned, formerly stable subjects in Dick, but also generates the marginalities of Delany's social world and the catastrophic instabilities of a whole global system in Ballard's aesthetics of disaster and in the relativisms to which alien visitations and cultures condemn our own parochial values. (93)

Accordingly, writer and critic Samuel Delany reinforces how the aestheticized "literary code" of SF plays an important role in the discussion of SF texts (27). Therefore, my analysis of *Do Androids* encompasses not only a close reading of the content and a thorough analysis of the form, but also an association with the theoretical grounds of SF and the critical panorama in which the novel is inserted.

Although sometimes indirectly, the posthuman predicament is a common topic in literary discussions about *Do Androids*. Hayles' analysis of the novel through the lenses of posthuman studies represents one of the main sources for this matter.[10] Others, such as Jill Gavan, Tony M. Vinci, and Ursula K. Heise have also developed different works related to posthumanism and Dick's work. However, there are cases in which the posthuman is not in the center of the discussion. Studies by Carl Freedman, Kevin R. McNamara, Sherryl Vint, Christopher A. Sims, Maria Brand, Jennifer Rhee, Nima Behroozi Moghadam and Farideh Porugiv, and Gregory C. Flemming, to name a few, privilege other theoretical frameworks.[11] Still, subjectivity, reality, empathy, psychoanalysis, individuality, technology, and animal studies are among the main issues on which critics and theoreticians concentrate, relying or not on any of the posthuman strands.

Hayles has produced one of the most influential sources for the investigation of the posthuman predicament in Dick's novel. Besides her especially effective contribution on the approximation of posthuman studies to *Do Androids* and other stories, she also puts together the influence of biographical events and non-fictional texts written by the author in his own fiction. Although the objectives of my thesis do not rely on tracing Dick's biography for elements to explain certain features of his novel, Hayles' insights still resonate with my

[10] In *How We Became Posthuman: virtual bodies in cybernetics, literature, and informatics* (1999), Hayles discusses Philip K. Dick's works while approximating his fiction to his essays and his biography.
[11] In addition to the posthuman paradigm, scholars have examined *Do Androids* following mainly the frameworks of comparative analysis, psychoanalysis, transgender studies, technology studies, robotics, and intermediality.

research. An example of that can be found in her examination of how society affects subjects portrayed by Dick:

> The interpellation of the individual into market relations so thoroughly defines the characters of these novels that it is impossible to think of the characters apart from the economic institutions into which they are incorporated, from small family firms to transnational operations. (162)

The boundaries of the ontological and the collective are common extensions in analyses of the novel.

Following this path, Jill Galvan discusses the communal aspects of *Do Androids*, which contains a "narrative [that] repudiates the idea of a confined human community and envisions a community of the *post*human" suggesting a sense of union (414). The scholar also emphasizes the presence of the government as a disturbing element for the collectiveness of characters (418). In other words, it is by fighting against the government that characters could be able to achieve balance in their society—something that does not happen at the end.

Carl Freedman comments on this aspect common to utopian texts in science fiction. Although *Do Androids* is widely known as a dystopia, Freedman suggests that "every work of SF is a utopia, a text whose initial act … is to refuse the status quo in favor of a social alternative which is not ours but … could, at least in principle, become ours" (188). Drawing on this affirmation, other views can emerge to identify breaches in which characters such as the androids could be regarded as more revolutionary. Although not in the same direction, Tony M. Vinci does argue in favor of a more optimistic take on *Do Androids*. In his reading, the "posthuman trauma" has the "potential to enact an ethics of radical openness and vulnerability" (93). Vinci believes that the subjects in the novel are invited to reevaluate their worldview, and "traumatic deconstructions" change their standards of reality (105).

In a different scope, the field of animal studies adds relevant observations about *Do Androids* as well. Discussing speciesism in the novel, Sherryl Vint states that it "develops its ideas about being human through *two* comparisons: animals and androids" (111). Thus, instead of counting on their own existence, humans would need counterparts to become humane. In her bachelor's thesis, Maria Brand inspects how this process happens through otherization and how empathy and dyspathy in the context of the novel point to a scenario in which "it may be morally unacceptable to suppress" the non-humans (19).

Vint argues that the role androids occupy in Dick's novel is the same animals have in society: they are nevertheless suppressed (113). Moreover, animals themselves do not have a better place in *Do Androids*. In fact, Vint claims that they are "treated as commodities rather than as part of living nature with whom humans share being" (119), reproducing *normal* human behavior. On the other hand, Ursula K. Heise opposes Vint's observations. According to Heise, if Dick is or is not criticizing common human behavior toward animals, they are still the ones that certify humanness (506), thus there is an ambivalent character in their existence. At last, closing the most common issues regarding *Do Androids*, in an analysis focused on the dangers of individualism, Christopher A. Sims relies on Heideggerian theories about technology. According to his reading, in the novel "humans have moved so deeply into their own individuality that they no longer experience the reality of other humans" (71). Although posthumanists do have Martin Heidegger as a primary source to discuss technology in the scope of posthumanism, Sims does not operate in this framework. On the contrary, technology to him is a means of humans regaining humanity in the novel (86). Initially, his view may indicate a progressive approach on technology, but it reveals a conclusion more conservative than the ones offered by other critics navigating similar epistemologies.

Ideology, although reported in several essays, papers, and books related to *Do Androids*, is not an issue often closely inspected. Peter Fitting, for instance, discusses reality by aligning

simulacrum and ideology in his readings of Dick's *Eye in the Sky* (1957), *Time Out of Joint* (1959), *Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (1964), *A Scanner Darkly* (1977) and *Valis* (1981).[12] Gregory C. Flemming, on the other hand, focuses on *Do Androids* and on the two films it inspired: *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Blade Runner 2049* (2017) to discuss reality. In his analysis, following Slavoj Žižek's combination of Marxism and psychoanalysis, ideology is associated with fetishism, which ends up being a force to push the protagonists forward—or backward (527-28). However, Flemming's main objective in his article is merely to examine the ending of each of the analyzed works. According to him, the films walk in the direction of being more reactionary than the novel, but *Blade Runner 2049*, mainly, drops completely the potential of questioning the status quo commonly highlighted in Dick's works (531).

Acknowledging the potential of discussing ideology, Nima Behroozi Moghadam and Farideh Porugiv investigate *Do Androids* also in light of Marxist psychoanalysis as how it can be a tool to criticize "late capitalist ideology" in the novel (11). Stemming from a similar Freudian background, they claim that

> Dick's novel is symptomatic of the ideology of global capitalism and multiculturalism, and the rise of racial tensions at their core. In this regard, androids (as "the inhuman") stand as an ideal example for the ethnic Other, while the novel can be read as an allegory of the late capitalism and its discontents. (13)

What is significant in the three previous studies is the progression of the study of ideology as an issue to be investigated in the societies depicted in Dick's work. At first, ideology was examined in multiple stories by the author. In recent years, scholars have focused on ideology in the context of the novel.

[12] The author does not analyze *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, but his paper is one of the first to consider ideology as a social instrument in Dick's novels. See Fitting, "Reality as Ideological Construct: A Reading of Five Novels by Philip K. Dick."

The task of examining a work of SF such as *Do Androids* is not simple. Among the several complexities offered by the author himself, scholars have also enhanced the story with decades of critical contributions. Since the premises of this thesis depend on interdisciplinary and not always complementary theoretical viewpoints, I have chosen a simple structure for the study to avoid formal traps. Except for the introduction and the final considerations, there are two main chapters for the discussions raised throughout this Master's thesis.

In the first chapter, I focus on the theoretical and critical considerations. Similarly to this introductory section, there are comments on SF, posthumanism, and ideology. The first part offers some important outlooks of the discussions regarding SF. In it, I bring relevant historical unfoldings related to the critique of the genre, as well as formulations that affect the upcoming examination of the plot. Besides the foundational insights of Darko Suvin and his cognitive estrangement and novum, I add Frederic Jameson's, Carl Freedman's and Samuel Delany's contributions for a broad and interdisciplinary take of SF. Their critical and theoretical propositions help the articulation of dense topics such as posthumanism and the study of ideology.

Still in chapter one, in the discussion of posthumanists theory, scholars Rosi Braidotti and Francesca Ferrando are the main sources. Their works on critical and philosophical posthumanisms, respectively, question the exceptionalism of humans while offering radical materialist possibilities for the future. At the end, the last section speaks of ideology. I bring an overview of the beginnings of the investigation of the theme to contemporary discussions in light of the work of Louis Althusser. Thus, ideology helps to explain the interaction of individuals and society in the novel.

In the second chapter, I turn my eyes to the object of study. Taking into account the three pillars developed in chapter one, the analysis of *Do Androids* involves three levels: a posthumanist reading, an approximation to ideology, and a resolution. The first moment

revolves around the posthumanist elements found in the novel, as well as the humanist logic that perpetrates it. Then, I offer a justification for the impossibility of escaping humanism in the context of the novel via the presence of the ideological State apparatuses and the operational damage they do preventing a posthumanist worldview. At last, making use of Rick Deckard's own epiphany I discuss the paths that take the story to the problems of the process of subjectification and the process of humanizing. The transformative potential of the novel and the resolution it gives to the posthuman predicament are offers for a good start.

Therefore, my analysis of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* relies on the radical questioning of the idea of what it means to be human. At the same time, I elaborate on the ideological features that reinforce humanist values in the novel, preventing posthuman awareness from taking place—the advances and the limitations. Thus, to offer new perspectives on mediation, I have approximated philosophical and critical posthumanism to the object of study and have discussed the ideological State apparatuses that hold together the pieces of a story filled with characters experiencing the verge of the posthuman predicament.

## 1. Towards complex understandings of science fiction: an interdisciplinary approach to literature, philosophy, and sociology

> *our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert*[13] *but if we want humanity to advance a step farther, ... then we must invent and we must make discoveries.*[14] *nothing is so painful to the human mind as a great and sudden change.*[15]

The first chapter of this thesis consists of the tripartite theoretical nucleus of my examination of *Do Androids*. Here I expose the relevance and up-to-date discussion regarding the science fiction genre, the contemporary viewpoints concerning the category of human and the category of posthuman, and the historical impact of ideology in the formation of thought of subjects. Due to the interdisciplinary status of this study, the neighboring fields of literature, philosophy, and sociology have proved to become a complex mixture when combined. Therefore, for the upcoming analysis of the novel, I opt to use the chosen tools horizontally in their complementary aspects.

### 1.1. Science fiction as an object of study

Born in 1928, Philip K. Dick is arguably one of the most influential writers of SF of the twentieth century. Although dead at the age of 53, Dick wrote throughout his tragically short life more than forty novels and around two hundred short stories. The genre of SF was not exactly his initial objective as a writer. Both his biographers expose Dick's early obsession

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[13] Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century."
[14] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth.*
[15] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein.*

with so-called *mainstream literature* in opposition to *low-paid* and *childish* SF (Sutin 17; Carrère 63). Anne Rubenstein, his third wife, heavily fueled this feeling and it was only after publishing in 1962 the Hugo Award-winner novel *The Man in the High Castle* that Dick finally accepted his position as a SF writer:

> Maybe what he had written could only be marketed as science fiction, but it was something no one but he had the capacity to write. Too bad if he would remain poor and obscure, or famous only among a circle of readers he knew would never be large: he wasn't happy about that, but he figured he might one day count himself lucky that he hadn't had any choice in the matter. (Carrère 84)

SF was not going to make him famous—and while he was alive he could barely break out of the underground literary scene—, but "[i]t was the SF genre, with its hospitable tenet of astonishment above all, that set Phil the writer free" (Sutin 17).

Although historically considered a *minor genre* in opposition to formally realist novels, and hardly appraised by scholars in the years of its blossom, SF has always been a movement closely related to literature. Unfortunately, Dick is only one of the many SF writers who were not alive anymore when their works were finally perceived and appraised by academia. As an academic field, SF studies is a recent trend that has been gaining space in universities since the second half of the twentieth century, only to confirm the fruitful bond between the genre and literature. What has been historically considered SF or not, however, seems to be one of the major concerns for the genre to be formally perceived. The same way literature itself is an idea hard to grasp only with a few words, SF has also proven to be a difficult genre to define and study. Writer and critic Adam Roberts points out that starting in the 1920s more than a dozen of definitions, conceptions, or aesthetic proposals regarding SF have been coexisting (1-3). Moreover, this phenomenon goes beyond literature as SF has grown in popularity in other

media such as films, TV shows, and video games, which complicates even more the quest for a concise answer to the question: *what is science fiction?*

The first one to look at the genre more attentively, as Roberts highlights, was Darko Suvin, whose work influenced many scholars who were interested in SF (1). In 1972, the Yugoslav critic and theorist published "On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre," in which he defines SF as "*a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment*" ("Poetics" 375). In 1977, Suvin expanded his article incorporating it into *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: on the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*—published in English in 1979—, which became one of his most influential works. According to him, the dialectics of estrangement and cognition would be key for the comprehension of a literary genre different, at the same time, from strands of realism *and* fantasy (*Metamorphoses* 8).

Suvin has resorted to Bertolt Brecht to develop the category of *cognitive estrangement* and has drawn on another German, the philosopher Ernst Bloch, to conceptualize what he calls the *novum*. In Suvin's words, the novum does not have a "static definition" even though it "is possible to distinguish various dimensions of the novum" (*Metamorphoses* 64). Bearing this in mind, Roberts claims that Suvin has helpfully isolated the narrative novum as a

> fictional device, artefact or premise that focuses the difference between the world the reader inhabits and the fictional world of the SF text. This novum might be something material, such as a spaceship, a time machine or a faster-than-light communications device; or it might be something conceptual, such as a new version of gender or consciousness. (1)

In *Do Androids*, for instance, the androids and the technological devices—the Voigt-Kampff test, the mood organ, and the empathy box—can fit the space of the novum. By identifying the

novelties, it is possible to have a different outlook on science itself, since many of the technological *impossibilities* existing in a work of SF do not necessarily find their foundation in current scientific *possibilities*.

What Suvin has discovered and analyzed is not the final period for the discussions about SF. In the same manner, the genre is not static; criticism and theories are continuously advancing. Following the roads paved by Suvin, theorist and critic Fredric Jameson has also helped with the process of isolating specific features of SF. He calls attention to the *varieties* of SF produced in the twentieth century and how they can be seen as "stages" and how they "overlap" interacting with one another. Namely, these stages are Adventure, Science, Sociology, Subjectivity, Aesthetics, and Cyberpunk (*Archaeologies* 93). According to him, Dick's novels published between 1961 and 1968, for instance, represent the turn to subjectivity in SF (93). However, it does not mean that these novels have not been written around a myriad of themes and provocative motifs.

With the expected overlapping of the stages of SF, at the time of the publication of Dick's most acclaimed novels, he has also been associated with the so-called "New Wave" movement. Thus, the combination of the puzzles of subjectivity have met the aesthetic enthusiasm around SF texts. Jameson notes that the term "aesthetic" in this context

> is not meant to convey a return to aestheticism or art-for-art's sake in any traditional or regressive fashion, but rather to mark the new centrality of dilemmas of perception and representation as such: dilemmas which foreground the status of language as such, but also the problematization of the Real, as that decenters old-fashioned, formerly stable subjects in Dick, but also generates the marginalities of Delany's social world and the catastrophic instabilities of a whole global system in Ballard's aesthetics of disaster and in the relativisms to which alien visitations and cultures condemn our own parochial values. (*Archaeologies* 93)

In other words, Dick has been able to embrace instability in his works, especially in *Do Androids*, because of the plurality of aspects upon which SF was built.

With the addition of a new viewpoint, SF writer Samuel R. Delany chooses a different road when he calls the genre a "vast play of codic conventions" (27). Different from the comprehension of the science fictional content of a work and its form as the ultimate means to encapsulate and define SF, there has to be something else. For Freedman, it is the articulation between literature and critical thought; for Delany, it is the implicit participation of the *reader*—or, as Roberts frames it, Delany thinks SF as "a reading strategy" (2). Once there is a pact between the author and the reader via text, the lenses or the reader's strategy through which SF is decoded will reveal what is feasible where anything may be feasible if all parts agree.

Then, according to Delany, *ambiguity* is important, but not the only thing to be taken into consideration in the literary pact for "when there's ambiguity on one side that can only be resolved by finding some overdetermined path to the other side where the ambiguity—if we're lucky—doesn't exist" (27). In order to exemplify what he means, Delany exposes situations that in a non-SF text may exist with metaphorical meaning whilst in a SF story may appear in uncomfortably literal manner:

> Her world exploded.
>
> He turned on his left side.
>
> The point is not that the meaning of the sentences is ambiguous, however, but that the route to their possible mundane meanings and the route to their possible SF meanings are both clearly determined. And what's clearly determined is over determined. (27)

In other words, when one engages with a SF text, the reading task may be more complicated. Reading SF depends on a constant reevaluation of the *reality* portrayed by the author. Dick writes "the dead machines … hadn't worked in all the time Isidore had lived here" (19). If the

machines were once *alive* or if they *worked* meaning that they *functioned and labored*, readers can have a sense of how language plays a great part in SF meaning.

On the same track of complex understandings of SF, Carl Freedman suggests another relevant step to revise and extrapolate the epistemology of the genre, especially regarding cognitive estrangement. According to him, Suvin's contribution is indeed the starting point, but there is much more to be examined (181). A definition or proposal regarding the whole constitution of a genre based on inclusion and exclusion may not be able to encompass what is on the fringe. Thus, Freedman argues in favor of the apprehension of SF less as a literary label and more as a "tendency" departing from the "conjunction of *critical theory and SF*" (181-82; emphasis added). For this conjunction to work, interdisciplinarity is key. Historically, SF and critical theory stand out at the same period: the twentieth century. The questions and debates raised by the Humanities are not to be excluded from the ones portrayed in works of SF. How much of *science* fiction's *science* can also be seen in history, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, sociology and not only in the so-called hard sciences? How much of these areas of knowledge have shaped SF? How much of these sciences can be read in SF?

Therefore, if one wants to read and study SF considering the complexities of the genre, Freedman proposes an *articulation* between SF and the strands responsible for the development of critical theory,[16] because theory and literary text have much more in common than it may look like at first glance. According to him, this can be observed in "a matter of the shared perspectives between SF and critical theory, of the dialectical standpoint of the SF tendency, with its insistence upon historical mutability, material reducibility, and, at least implicitly, Utopian possibility" (186-87). More than simply describing reality, both SF and critical theory aim at the comprehension of the processes to identify the non-trivial, both need the factor of

[16] Although Freedman highlights only Marxism, Psychoanalysis, and Post-Structuralism, other lines could and should be appraised as important constituents of critical theory, especially Feminism, Post-colonialism, and more recently Posthumanism.

the uncommon, the opaque, the misleading, the unstable to thrive. Such a perspective welcomes readings of SF that aim at similar objectives, readings that see in paradoxes and ambiguities the opportunity to investigate the science fictional process in depth.

Fortuitously, Freedman chooses *Do Androids* to exemplify what he means by this articulation between SF and critical theory. The novel opens with the main character, Rick Deckard, in his awakening:

> A merry little surge of electricity piped by automatic alarm from the *mood organ* beside his bed awakened Rick Deckard. Surprised—it always surprised him to find himself awake without prior notice—he rose from the bed, stood up in his multicolored pajamas, and stretched. Now, in her bed, his wife Iran opened her gray, unmerry eyes, blinked, then groaned and shut her eyes again. (Dick 3; emphasis added)

Freedman notes that the only clear reference to expected SF language in this rather normal scene is the mysterious *mood organ*, an important technological device for the plot (185). This small box is capable of transmitting emotions and feelings to its user, but the reader does not know that in the first paragraph. The impacts of such technology may point to innumerous discussions as the story progresses, but at this stage, the mood organ works as a contract for the pact between Dick and his reader. Thus, in the same vein of Delany's take on the reading strategy, the function of the device in the very beginning of the novel "is to signal the SF character of the *language*, and thus to impel us to read the latter differently than we would read the language of mundane fiction" (Freedman 185; emphasis added). It is through this sort of modification in *language* that the impossibility or the novelty in the SF text is eventually decoded into critical reality for the one who apprehends it.

The perspectives highlighted regarding SF here are only a part of the enormous theoretical corpus Roberts notes in his quest for definitions and parameters for the genre (1-3). Still, guided by Suvin, Jameson, Delany, and Freedman there are enough aspects for a robust

analysis of a SF text such as *Do Androids*. Consequently, several categories regarding SF are beneficial for this investigation. Cognitive estrangement and the novum are helpful starting points, and comprehending the stages of development of the genre adds up to a close examination of form and content. Ultimately, SF as a reading strategy and the assimilation of critical theory in it perform an important role establishing the basis for an interdisciplinary approach that does not neglect the object of study as SF work.

### 1.2. The posthuman and posthumanism

What an odd behavior this is: to deal with the doings of the past using the doings of the present. It is a necessary task, one that involves careful and thorough interpretations that avoid anachronisms. When Dick published *Do Androids* in 1968, the "posthuman" was not a methodological tool or any important terminology designating a series of understandings. Actually, he was already dead when the posthuman emerged as a proper field of study. "The work of Philip K. Dick," remark Lisa Yaszek and Jason W. Ellis,

> connects earlier mutational romances to New Wave SF through explorations of the posthuman as both a cognitive and a physical transformation. In many of his stories, nuclear technologies and modern pharmaceuticals produce posthuman beings with physical abnormalities as well as special cognitive abilities including precognition, telekinesis, and telepathy. (77)

Dick's SF, thus, characterizes a relevant and up-to-date site for research in the posthuman studies.

In order to arrive at today's discussion of the posthuman, a detour must be taken and the first destination is the root of all posthumanist problems: humanism. Tony Davies notes that what we call humanism is an idea difficult to grasp that means one too many things (2). Still, if there is one characteristic capable of uniting all of those considered humanists, in

Davies's view, "is their conviction of the centrality of the 'human' itself" (20). This is one of the main concerns that allowed philosophers, critics, and theorists in the second half of the twentieth century to investigate the problems of the capital-letter-Man. Such a viewpoint has been sovereign for ages "formulated first by Protagoras as 'the measure of all things', later renewed in the Italian Renaissance as a universal model and represented in Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man" (Braidotti, *The Posthuman* 13), which indicate that going against anthropocentrism is a hard task.

"Humanism is the achievement of form by human will and agency;" comments Edward Said, "it is neither system nor impersonal force like the market or the unconscious, however much one may believe in the workings of both" (15). Those who do not believe naively in humanism as the beacon that guides humankind throughout history present their criticism in an antithetical manner. Louis Althusser, for instance, in a polemical evaluation of Marx's works, claims that humanism functions as an ideological practice of liberal thought (*For Marx* 229). Post-structuralist philosopher Michel Foucault, on the other hand, preaches the symbolic death of Man aiming at "the unfolding of a space in which it is once more possible to think" (373). In both cases, they profess what is now conventionally called in philosophy *anti-humanism*, a direct response to humanist logic.

British philosopher Kate Soper describes very synthetically a few of the most important divergences regarding humanism and anti-humanism. The first one

> appeals (positively) to the notion of a core humanity or common essential features in terms of which human beings can be defined and understood, thus (negatively) to concepts ("alienation," "inauthenticity," "reification," etc.) designating, and intended to explain, the perversion or "loss" of this common being. Humanism takes history to be a product of human thought and action, and thus claims that the categories of

> "consciousness," "agency," "choice," "responsibility," "moral value," etc. are indispensable to its understanding.

Meanwhile, the other one

> claims that humanism … is pre-scientific "philosophical anthropology." All humanism is "ideological;" the ideological status of humanism is to be explained in terms of the systems of thought or "consciousness" produced in response to particular historical periods. Anthropology, if it is possible at all, is possible only on condition that it rejects the concept of the human subject; "men" do not make history, nor find their "truth" or "purpose" in it. History is a process without a subject. (11-12)

Therefore, the anti-humanist strand becomes a relevant starting point for posthuman practices. Rosi Braidotti evaluates Foucault's viewpoint, especially, and his proposal of the "death of Man" as a crucial step towards the ending of the classical image of the human being (23-24). The radical approach that provokes turmoil in the category of the human is the first spark to decomposing it. In Rick Deckard's words: "Most androids I've known have more vitality and desire to live than my wife. She has nothing to give me" (Dick 88). Perhaps the category of human itself is the reason for that.

Historically, posthumanism arises as the result of the antithetical movements and clashes of humanism and anti-humanism.[17] The next step for a fuller comprehension of posthuman theory, then, is the non-binary deconstructive turn. Philosopher Donna Haraway has had a great impact in this sense with the publication of her manifesto in 1985 and the appearance of the cyborg. In her words, the "cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of

[17] Although dialectics is not the favorite framework in posthuman studies, often accused of a theoretical tool that forces binary resolutions, the posthumanist approach in philosophy does make use of paradoxical stances provided by both humanism and anti-humanism in order to propose solutions to issues at first unsolvable. Bearing that in mind, I believe it is fair to observe how posthumanism has fruitfully synthetized its previous theoretical frameworks. Braidotti herself speaks of posthumanism as "the historical moment that marks the end of the opposition between Humanism and anti-humanism and traces a different discursive framework, looking more affirmatively towards new alternatives" (*Posthuman* 37).

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 worldchanging fiction" (69). As proto-posthumans,[18] cyborgs fulfill the role of the unstable human being in the late twentieth century without considering the causes and effects of this predicament. "Gender, race, or class consciousness," she argues, "is an achievement forced on us by the terrible historical experience of the contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism" (75). The cyborg bursts upon the scene, therefore, as a radical figure closely related to feminist and socialist worldviews.

In her essay, Haraway discusses characteristics and functions of the cyborg, but she also offers insights regarding the anxieties of living in a context of human estrangement and confusion:

> From one perspective, a cyborg world is about the final imposition of a grid of control on the planet, about the final abstraction embodied in a Star Wars apocalypse … From another perspective, a cyborg world might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints. The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other vantage point. (74)

Drawing on the second point of view is what posthumanists have been trying to examine in the past decades. Objectively, they suggest a way out of dualism, a conjoined approach of theoretical thought and active practice. Haraway's advice, *to see from both perspectives*, lives on as a complex activity for critics and theorists.

"Posthuman," however, as Francesca Ferrando advises, is a word that points to a fractured field, with several areas (1). How can someone define posthuman and, eventually,

[18] It is relevant to note that Haraway does not consistently use the word posthuman throughout her work.

posthumanism? One of the first theorists and philosophers to tackle the subject was N. Katherine Hayles who has, at the same time, developed a clear proposition of the posthuman and positioned it intimately close to literature. "First, the posthuman view privileges informational pattern over material instantiation," she begins,

> so that embodiment in a biological substrate is seen as an accident of history rather than an inevitability of life. Second, the posthuman view considers consciousness, regarded as the seat of human identity in the Western tradition long before Descartes thought he was a mind thinking, as an epiphenomenon, as an evolutionary upstart trying to claim that it is the whole show when in actuality it is only a minor sideshow. Third, the posthuman view thinks of the body as the original prosthesis we all learn to manipulate, so that extending or replacing the body with other prostheses becomes a continuation of a process that began before we were born. Fourth, and most important, by these and other means, the posthuman view configures human being so that it can be seamlessly articulated with intelligent machines. In the posthuman, there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernetic mechanism and biological organism, robot teleology and human goals. (2-3)

In her four main claims about the posthuman, Hayles brings to light the necessity of paying attention to given assumptions regarding embodiment, mind and consciousness, body modifications, and the relationship between human and non-human intelligence.

Scholars have constantly revised such claims throughout the last couple of decades. Materialists such as Bradotti, for instance, consider embodiment an essential part of the posthuman epistemology today, in opposition to propositions that aim at overcoming the physical body ("Theoretical Framework" 33). She also highlights the urge for theories of becoming that gained an important space in this framework (*Posthuman* 12), especially backed

up by Judith Butler's and other feminists' insights on gender studies (Ferrando 71). In addition to that, the defining aspects of the classical Man have also undergone a thorough examination in light of European colonialism and imperialism, as well as capitalist exploitation from its root to its later forms and substrates. To exemplify, in Dick's novel, those called *specials* are, due to the nuclear impact, "classed as biologically unacceptable, a menace to the pristine heredity of the race. Once pegged as special, a citizen, even if accepting sterilization, dropped out of history. He ceased, in effect, to be part of mankind" (16). Specials portray *humans* who are socially considered *less-human-than-humans*.

In this vein, defining *humanness*—or what it means to be human—, an apparently simple task, has become a dead-end road. This is not only because of the aforementioned issues regarding humanism and posteriorly anti-humanism. The question "*what is not human?*" has gotten the attention of psychoanalytic and feminist approaches of Otherness. Simultaneously, the critical comprehension of the role of human beings in a world of diverse possibilities offered by multidisciplinary connections with biology, sociology, and other sciences has taken place. In addition to this, the non-binary perspective inherited from post-structuralist and deconstructive apprehensions of philosophy has brought a qualitative update in posthuman studies for the last decades. In this vein, posthumanism and its variants come as possible navigation tools through the waters of the posthuman paradigm.

What qualifies posthumanism as a strand of posthuman studies, and what differs it from other possibilities in the field? "The posthumanist perspective," explains Braidotti, "rests on the assumption of the historical decline of Humanism but goes further in exploring alternatives, without sinking into the rhetoric of the crisis of Man. It works instead towards elaborating alternative ways of conceptualizing the human subject" (*Posthuman* 37). Moreover, Ferrando defines posthumanism more clearly as "a praxis, as well as a philosophy of mediation, which manifests post-dualistic, post-centralizing, comprehensive, and 'acknowledging' types of

approaches, in the sense that they acknowledge alterity and recognize themselves in alterity" (3). The impact of this position is already significant when posthumanism is placed in the posthuman studies spectrum that also includes "Transhumanism … ; New Materialisms … ; the heterogeneous landscape of Anti-humanism; the field of Object-Oriented Ontology; Posthumanities and Metahumanities" (Ferrando 1).

The choice for posthumanism—which includes two prominent strands yet to be discussed in the next paragraphs—and not for correlated approaches such as transhumanism and anti-humanism is immediately related to how each paradigm encompasses the notion of posthuman. Methodologically speaking, in the posthumanist view offered by Ferrando, we have already become posthuman (28). On the other hand, through transhumanist and anti-humanist lenses, the posthuman is still a distant goal, the final objective, being both more dependent on humanism as the starting point (3; 52). Being the object of study of this thesis, a novel of SF, a genre populated by posthumans since its origins, the option for an urgent materialist theory of posthumans becomes a priority. One cannot think about humans and non-humans in *Do Androids* without leaving open the possibility of examining them as posthuman beings.

To expand on the topic of posthumanisms, Braidotti and Ferrando depart from similar starting points. For both philosophers, the root of the posthuman framework is the deconstructive turn headed by Jacques Derrida regarding the aforementioned issues of the category of human. "The human is a normative convention," advises Braidotti,

> which does not make it inherently negative, just highly regulatory and hence instrumental to practices of exclusion and discrimination. The human norm stands for normality, normalcy and normativity. It functions by transposing a specific mode of being human into a generalized standard, which acquires transcendent values as the

> human: from male to masculine and onto human as the universalized format of humanity. (*Posthuman* 26)

The varieties of posthumanism offer the possibility of looking at humans not as *the* measure of all things, but as *a* part of a complex and plural system of lives. Braidotti notes that, although it may cause confusion, "to be posthuman does not mean to be indifferent to the humans, or to be de-humanized. On the contrary, it rather implies a new way of combining ethical values with the well-being of an enlarged sense of community, which includes one's territorial or environmental inter-connections" (*Posthuman* 190). For this reason, the association of posthumanists with post-anthropocentric opposed to anti-anthropocentric worldviews is a recurrent topic.

Ferrando, for instance, places her main concerns in a decentralized, balanced, imaginative, and updated perspective of posthumanism. Thus, she defines philosophical posthumanism as "an onto-epistemological approach, as well as an ethical one, manifesting as a philosophy of mediation, which discharges any confrontational dualisms and hierarchical legacies; this is why it can be approached as a post-humanism, a post-anthropocentrism, and a post-dualism" (22). Moreover, posthumanism has to exist as praxis, aligning theory and practice in order to be a transformative perspective (28). Ferrando's apprehension of posthuman reality reinforces posthumanist and post-anthropocentric necessities. She makes her post-dualist position clear, highlighting her annoyance with binary oppositions.

In Braidotti's attempt to frame critical posthumanism, the philosopher adopts similar categories and positions. Her strand precedes philosophical posthumanism chronologically, but it carries discussions and tools not completely absorbed by Ferrando. Perhaps the greatest difference in their two approaches is the abundance of critical theory. According to Braidotti, adding more layers of criticism to the posthuman practice and focusing on a cross-disciplinary agenda allows critical posthumanism to propose a more feasible comprehension of the subject

in the time of the posthuman predicament (*Posthuman* 169). When objects of study such as society, biology, and culture meet, the results grow into more complex and robust analyses of reality. Besides that and the extra focus given by Ferrando in her post-dualist position, the notion of today's posthuman predicament becomes an important concept in Braidotti's critical posthumanism and in this thesis.

In her words, "the posthuman predicament is the convergence, across the spectrum of cognitive capitalism, of posthumanism on the one hand and post-anthropocentrism on the other. The former focuses on the critique of the humanist ideal of 'Man' as the allegedly universal measure of all things, while the latter criticizes species hierarchy and human exceptionalism" ("Theoretical Framework" 31-32). Such predicament is "framed by the opportunistic commodification of all that lives" (35), which implies that the endless expansion of capitalism walks towards the transformation of everything in products. It is important to notice that the philosopher positions the posthuman predicament historically *today*. Thus time and space for mediation is now, which embeds the future and the steps we are going to take in its direction. With our eyes turned to literature, especially to SF, the posthuman contained in *Do Androids*, although different technologically, displays hyperbolic material characteristics of our own late capitalism.

The *cognitive capitalism* Braidotti evokes owes many of its practices to the context of neoliberalization of capitalism. Both Jameson's account of postmodernism and of late capitalism (*Postmodernism* xxi-xxii; 1-54) and Mark Fisher's recent review of neoliberalism (16-20) highlight that the capitalist logic is the same, but the practices have been consistently changing after Ronald Reagan's administration in the USA and Margaret Thatcher's in the UK.[19] Such different practices, Braidotti remarks, although not associating directly to

[19] Both Reagan's and Thatcher's administrations came more than a decade after the publication of Dick's *Do Androids*. In other words, the similarities of the two capitalist leaders and the capitalist world depicted in the novel are not referential. The transformations in means of production, labor precariousness, and centralization of

neoliberalism, constitute a capitalist "system [that] rests on advanced technologies, the financialization of the economy and the overwhelming power of the media and cultural sectors. The practice of labour in such a system is simultaneously highly sophisticated, as it requires cultural and algorithmic fluency, and also highly unregulated and hence open to exploitation" ("Theoretical Framework" 40). Understanding this social context is a fruitful asset for understanding the depiction of late capitalism in *Do Androids*.

Brazilian scholar Alysson Leandro Mascaro sheds light on the process of mercantilization and exploitation on which Braidotti has commented. According to him,

> In a capitalist society, the identity of everything in its relation to everything depends on the market. It could be said, up to a certain limit, that even the logical and mental notion of identity points to some sort of exchange of objects and people as commodities. The very operation of reciprocity of distinct objects is done or is complete, as a form of thought, departing from the constitution of social relations such as the money. (22)[20]

Considering how capitalism exploits humans and non-humans, and how its theoretically infinite logic of expansion endangers the planet, the posthumanist approach makes sense as a space of radical anti-capitalist praxis. For this reason, one of the pillars of the posthuman predicament Braidotti conceptualizes is the search for a way out of this system of structural exploitation.

Bearing in mind the extensive scope of posthumanism and the direct impact of the posthuman predicament, I shall return to Yaszek and Ellis's observations about Philip K. Dick. They comment on how, in *Do Androids*, "the author problematizes the human–posthuman

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responsibility and fault to the individuals, post-apocalyptic visions in *Do Androids*, are but a bitter coincidence with neoliberal politics.

[20] All translations into English are mine. Original text: "Numa sociedade capitalista, a identidade de tudo com tudo é mercantil, e poder-se-ia dizer então, no limite, que a própria noção lógica e mental de identidade remonta a alguma espécie de intercâmbio de objetos e pessoas como mercadorias. A própria operação de reciprocidade de objetos distintos se faz ou se completa, como pensamento, a partir da constituição de relações sociais como a do dinheiro" (Mascaro 22).

dichotomy by revealing the posthuman androids to be in some ways more empathic than their human creators" (77). Dick's *cognitive posthumans* are introspective figures, although ordinary people, their attitudes and reflections are on the philosophical level, aligned to many of the posthumanists' anxieties. However, they are still inserted in a larger context, which demands a social viewpoint beyond posthumanism. As Braidotti explains, the "posthuman method amounts to higher degrees of disciplinary hybridization and relies on intense de-familiarization of our habits of thought through encounters that shatter the flat repetition of the protocols of institutional reason" (*Posthuman* 169). Therefore, for complex understandings, complex theoretical assemblages are necessary and sociology enters the scene.

### 1.3. Ideology and ideological State apparatuses

Finally, the last methodological choice for the interdisciplinary approach of this thesis relies on the category of ideology. "The term 'ideology'," however, "is not especially fashionable in literary studies" (53), says Michael Moriarty. In the twentieth century, the category has been both an object of feverous dispute among Marxists and a target of heated criticism from figures such as Paul de Man and Michel Foucault (Moriarty 44; 53). In this thesis, the objective is not to analyze the extent of ideological impact of the novel *Do Androids* in readers' societies. Instead, the focus befalls entirely on the fictional ideology—if it is possible to call Dick's portrayal *merely fictional*—provided by the author in order to characterize sociability in the work itself.

To examine literary works as possible sites for ideological dispute, theorists such as Terry Eagleton have proposed perspectives regarding the topic and the production of literature. He identified six different ideological instances related to the productive chain of a literary work: a "General Mode of Production," a "Literary Mode of Production," the "General Ideology," the "Authorial Ideology," the "Aesthetic Ideology," and the "Text" itself (*Criticism*

44). Each of these steps contain a multitude of possibilities in the sense that, as a complex matter, they generate a web of crossed influences and impacts.

Eagleton's perspective culminates, then, in the assumption of literature not as "the 'expression' of ideology," the same way "ideology [is not] the 'expression' of social class" (64). Literature production *cannot* encompass the entirety of ideology, but it can point to smaller repercussions of it in sociological understanding. Accordingly, by considering literature as *one* of the many spaces that can conceal ideology, the theorist calls attention to the silent nature of ideological production, which may be one of the most fruitful territories for analyses. In his words, "there are certain things which must not be spoken of. In so putting ideology to work, the text begins to illuminate the absences which are the foundation of its articulate discourse" (90). One must search for these *absences*.

Although Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were not the coiners of the word ideology, the modern conception of it, inherited by Eagleton and many others, has much to do with their work. Written in 1846, but only published in 1932, the manuscripts that became what we know as *The German Ideology* contain one of Marx and Engels's clearest definitions of what ideology would be:

> The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas; hence of the relations which make the one class the ruling one, therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as

> they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an historical epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch. (59)

In this well-known excerpt, the authors note that the *intellectual force* in a society is directly connected to the *ruling class*. This is a basic premise in Marxist epistemology of *base* and *superstructure*, i.e., in the existence of a dialectical model that frames and maintains society.

Cultural critic Raymond Williams explains that, on the one hand, the base "is the real relations of production corresponding to a stage of development of the material productive forces" (33), it has to deal with "processes" (34). On the other hand, the superstructure is the place where "all cultural and ideological activities" meet (32), not necessarily being a "direct reproduction" or reflex of the base (33). Therefore, according to Marx and Engels, ideology occupies an important space in the superstructure as it helps in the maintenance of its lower and productive level. In their words,

> [t]he production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men—the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men at this stage still appear as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of the *politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc.*, of a people. (36; emphasis added)

This is how the word ideology was reinvented and gained its first materialist shape since the *mystical* approach of the terminology, Eagleton highlights, used by the French ideologues (*Ideology* 63-4).

Before Marx and Engels's manuscript had finally seen the light, other thinkers and political figures such as Vladimir Lenin[21] and Antonio Gramsci had also struggled with definitions of ideology, a force, at the same time, invisible and opaque. While Lenin followed an approach similar to his predecessors, Gramsci opted for an entirely new view. He developed a different category, *hegemony*, which consisted of a cultural turn, but rapidly gained usage that is more complex.[22] In his *Prison Notebooks*, written in the time he was a captive of the fascist government in Italy, he spread the noun "hegemony" and the adjective "hegemonic" throughout the work.

The exact definition of the category, then, is a convoluted matter, which seems to be the practice for science fiction, posthumanism, and now hegemony/ideology. Perhaps the clearest instance of the word appears in Gramsci's evaluation of intellectuals. According to him, they are workers of the superstructure who can exercise hegemonic dominance in the base and climb up to superior levels of social organization (12). Thus, intellectuals depend on

> 1. The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.
>
> 2. The apparatus of state coercive power which "legally" enforces discipline on those groups who do not "consent" either actively or passively. This apparatus is, however,

[21] Although Lenin has never discussed the category of ideology in depth, the word is present in many of his works. In a 1914 article, for instance, he associated ideology to a negative connotation, close to the notion of false consciousness, i.e. his notion of ideological struggle ("Ideological"). Meanwhile, in other texts, as Wanas Piyakulchaidech highlights, ideology also gains neutral or positive value (57-61).

[22] Giuseppe Cospito points out that the refinement of Gramsci's comprehension of hegemony in the *Prison Notebooks* advances towards a discussion beyond cultural hegemony. Cospito claims that it is "political, politico-intellectual, social, politico-social, civil, intellectual, moral and political, political and moral, intellectual and moral, ethical-political, cultural, economic, commercial, and financial" (59). Original text: "*politica, politico-intellettuale, sociale, politico-sociale, civile, intellettuale, morale e politica, politica e morale, intellettuale e morale, etico-politica, culturale, economica, commerciale e finanziaria*" (Cospito 59).

> constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed. (12)

Departing from this analysis, ideology—although under a different name—can be observed for the first time as a tool associated with *state apparatuses*.

In this vein, Althusser's essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)" arises as an unavoidable source. Published in 1970, in this text the French philosopher expands and consolidates his examination of ideology. Previously, in *For Marx*, Althusser had already discussed the category *en passant*, without fully developing the topic. Moriarty claims in *For Marx* the word seems to have too many meanings and loose strings (44). Perhaps the most significant contribution Althusser presents in this work is exactly through his criticism of humanism, to which he attributes an ideological status, as addressed beforehand (*For Marx* 231).

Another relevant piece of advice Althusser offers concerns the existence of ideology as something *normal*. According to him, "ideology is not an aberration or a contingent excrescence of History: it is a structure essential to the historical life of societies" (*For Marx* 232). Normalizing the existence of it before evaluating any negativity allows a calmer assessment of its impacts in concrete reality. Self and social awareness regarding ideological thought can avoid what Eagleton humorously points out, "[i]deology, like halitosis, is … what the other person has" (*Ideology* 2). To expand on how ideology exists and functions in societies, Althusser has gone beyond his previous diffuse commentary. Besides the state apparatuses, categories such as the state and the subject take place and his two game changing theses emerge.

Concerning the role of the state, Althusser is clear: its main function is repressive. "The State is a 'machine' of repression," he claims, "which enables the ruling classes (in the nineteenth century the bourgeois class and the 'class' of big landowners) to ensure their

domination over the working class, thus enabling the former to subject the latter to the process of surplus-value extortion (i.e. to capitalist exploitation)" ("Ideology" 137). This is a common assumption in Marxist theory, the state comes closer to individuals, as Gramsci had already denounced, through its apparatuses. Althusser's structuralist leap is the identification of two different and complementary forms: the *repressive* and the *ideological* state apparatuses. Therefore, knowing that in Dick's novel "the government in Washington, with its colonization program, constituted the sole sponsor which Isidore found himself forced to listen to" (18) hints to the way through which the State speaks to individuals.

On the one hand, Althusser calls *repressive state apparatuses* the state itself: "the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc" ("Ideology" 143). In other words, the operational instances of state power are exactly the ones that promote violence (143). On the other hand, there are the ones that he calls *ideological state apparatuses* (ISA), "a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions" (143). However, these realities involving schools, churches, families, among others, mainly operate via an ideological sphere of influence. ISAs are not under any cover or secret, but their repressive potential—frequently silent—is not always on the immediate surface.

Even if the main difference between repressive and ideological state apparatuses regards violent behavior versus an ideology driven posture, they are not this simple (144-145). Althusser highlights that "every State Apparatus, whether Re-pressive or Ideological, 'functions' both by violence and by ideology," which means that

> the (Repressive) State Apparatus functions massively and predominantly by repression (in-cluding physical repression), while functioning secondarily by ideology. (There is no such thing as a purely repressive apparatus.) … In the same way, but inversely, it is essential to say that for their part the Ideological State Apparatuses function massively

> and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic. (There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus.) (145)

On the one hand, ISAs may seem a tool of a single ruling group, but as Michel Pêcheux points out, "the ideological state apparatuses are not pure instruments of the ruling class, ideological machines simply reproducing the existing relations of production ... which means that the ideological state apparatuses constitute simultaneously and contradictorily the site and the ideological conditions of the transformation of the relations of production" (142). On the other hand, if the two types of state apparatuses depend on one another to keep exerting, in a balanced and natural manner, their complementary social functions fiercely and quietly, revolutionary action would also depend on controlling the ISAs.

Althusser's development of the ISAs leads to his two theses on ideology, important cornerstones of today's discussion of the category. The first proposition is: "Ideology represents the imaginary relation-ship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" ("Ideology" 162). In a single sentence, the philosopher points out the complex arrangement of ideological relationships: there is a strong connection between the imaginary and the real. Nevertheless, how can one live by the inauthenticity of an ideological system, sometimes voluntarily without breaking it? Althusser claims that comprehending our place in different *world outlooks*, that is, diverse ideological instances, does not mean unmasking or debunking them.

This happens because "while admitting that they [the different world outlooks] do not correspond to reality, i.e. that they constitute an illusion, we admit that they do make allusion to reality, and that they need only be 'interpreted' to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation of that world (ideology = *illusion/allusion*)" (162). Ideology is such a *natural* thing that, in Dick's androids' fashion, it escapes *authenticity*. It becomes

impossible to challenge if ideology is a sort of real or false consciousness since its existence depends on the belief that the non-ideological could be in fact ideological and vise-versa. Against all structuralist logic, ideology cannot elude or allude; it can only do both.

Most of the real and imaginary in Althusser's first thesis, Jameson comments, is a direct influence of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (*Archaeologies* 49). However, the lack of a Symbolic Other means an incomplete usage of Lacanian psychoanalysis.[23] Yet, according to Jameson, this is Althusser's ace in the hole. His "unorthodox" leap from a position that treated ideology as a "sheer error" (49) in social behavior found in Marxian tradition to a position that offers a newer and wider comprehension of the category via an interdisciplinary approach allows paradigmatic change. By doing so, oppositions such as scientific versus ideological knowledge now have to encompass the possibility of science itself being contaminated by ideology.

Advancing to Althusser's second thesis, he affirms something apparently obvious, but difficult to sustain without proper foundation: "Ideology has a material existence" ("Ideology" 165). Due to the phantasmagorical standpoint of ideology and the association of it with the superstructural level of society, as a category that would historically describe *false consciousness*, its realization and materialization may not be transparent at first sight. With the ISA, it is possible to say "an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices. This existence is material" ("Ideology" 166). Then, the dispute concerning ideology does not happen solely in the *realm of ideas*. For any dominant class, methods to spread ideas are still tied to apparatuses responsible for wide dissemination of information and to the figure of the state.

[23] The Lacaninan tripartite scheme considers a relationship around *jouissance* constituted by the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic, the latter an element Althusser leaves out of his second thesis.

In this vein, an accurate interpretation of Althusser's contributions comes in the shape of the "expanded State [*Estado ampliado*]" that Mascaro provides (69). In his view, the interaction of the first and second theses and their completion in the ISA as an expansion of the state allow the crossing of the borders of the state as a merely govern-based institution (69). Mascaro's hypothesis indicates "in the geography of capitalist sociability, the State is always spread beyond its self-declared formal or juridical limits, merging onto social apparatuses" (70).[24] Therefore, the comprehension of the extended presence of the state in non-institutional spaces stands out as a major asset in the understanding of weak state figures. In the case portrayed in *Do Androids*, for instance, the lack of a clear state does not erase its participation in social repression and ideological suggestions, since at least the police and the media fulfill such functions impeccably.

On the other side of the equation, the individuals who populate the state deserve special attention in Althusser's framework of ideology. Subjects, or the formation of subjectivity, according to his point of view, play a great part in how the ISAs strike people. To discuss the matter, he claims, "*all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects*" ("Ideology" 173). Althusser suggests that, through the notion of interpellation, "ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all)" (174). In other words, subjectivity depends on the production, reproduction, and reception of ideology.

Through his materialist discourse analysis, Pêcheux calls our attention to the simple yet subtle effect of recognition among people when the process of interpellation happens. "The *evidentness of the subject* as unique, irreplaceable and identical with himself," he explains, reinforcing Althusser's paradigm:

[24] Original text: "Com isso, na geografia da sociabilidade capitalista, o Estado está sempre espraiado para além de seus limites formais ou jurídicos autodeclarados, fundindo-se a aparelhos sociais" (70).

> the absurd and natural reply 'It's me!' to the question 'Who's there?' echoes the remark; it is 'evident' that I am the only person who can say 'I' when speaking of myself; this evidentness conceals something…: the fact that the subject has always been 'an individual interpellated as a subject'.... Because this is indeed what is involved: the 'evidentness' of identity conceals the fact that it is the result of an identification-interpellation of the subject, whose alien origin is nevertheless 'strangely familiar' to him. (149)

The fact that self-recognition can only occur because subjects themselves are recognized as subjects through the social implication/interpellation of ideology forces the category to exit a model of introspective subjectification. More than examining the expansion of introspection and the placement of the subject in front of their peers, the sociological appraisal provided by Althusser and Pêcheaux impacts the recognition of posthumans as subjects in Braidotti's posthuman predicament.

Althusser's proposals and the evolution of the category constitute a sharp analytical device for the comprehension of the connection of individuals and their society. Studying ideology in the context of a work of art can mean unveiling the hidden architecture of social cohesion and social control. Escaping from State control, as Rick Deckard tries to do, is a hard task. When he finally understands how much he has been intoxicated by ideology, it is relatively late for changing his *past* actions: "What a job to have to do … I'm a scourge, like famine or plague. Where I go the ancient curse follows. As Mercer said, I am required to do wrong. Everything I've done has been wrong from the start" (207). Still, the self-realization of ideological entrapments can point to *future* changes.

Ultimately, the objective of this thesis is not to rethink or to propose a solution to the debate the category of ideology arouses. Here, ideology is a complementary tool to analyze the material conditions of the apparatuses presented in *Do Androids*. It is a methodological choice

that expands the interdisciplinary status of the posthumanist theoretical framework. Proposing new perspectives for posthumanism is also not on the agenda. Yet, we shall finally see how these two analytic instruments can interact with science fiction through the literary analysis in chapter two.

## 2. Do androids dream of becoming humans?

> *quite an experience to live in fear, isn't it? that's what it is to be a slave*[25] and that's why *the slave who murders his owner, in all circumstances, murders in self-defense.*[26]

The second chapter of this thesis is entirely dedicated to the analysis of *Do Androids* in light of the theoretical grounds dissected in the previous section. To begin the examination, I expose the main elements of the novel and the segregational dynamics between humans and androids. Then, I explore the role of the State and the ideological State apparatuses that reinforce the separation and avoid humans to accept their electric counterparts as subjects. This culminates in the complex operations of recognition and self-recognition. They expose how the processes of humanizing and the process of subjectification stumble upon ideological matters that disallow a fully posthumanist society to escape from the posthuman predicament. Eventually, I discuss the melancholy, but resolutive ending of the novel. Rick Deckard's synthetic epiphany points to an exhausted comprehension of life, one that acknowledges androids and their conditions of subsistence.

### 2.1 Posthuman generation, humanist complication

Our world in *Do Androids* is not our world. Even if Dick had chosen to depict Earth in its most realistic details, it would still be a different place with different people in it. This does not mean everything is distinct. If one reflects on SF as a product of specific places and periods and not simply a divination exercise, Dick's settings become less alien than it may look like.

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[25] Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner.*
[26] Luiz Gama, "O escravo que mata o senhor, seja em que circunstância for, mata sempre em legítima defesa."

In fact, ultra-advanced technology and unrealistic passages attributed to SF still represent elements that may point to a sort of *normality*. Carl Freedman notes that the opening scene of *Do Androids*, for instance, carries a "mundane" description of routine. Except for the unknown gadget in it, the *mood organ*, everything seems *usual* ("Science Fiction" 185). It reads:

> A merry little surge of electricity piped by automatic alarm from the mood organ beside his bed awakened Rick Deckard. Surprised—it always surprised him to find himself awake without prior notice—he rose from the bed, stood up in his multicolored pajamas, and stretched. Now, in her bed, his wife Iran opened her gray, unmerry eyes, blinked, then groaned and shut her eyes again. (Dick 3)

Still, it would be plain to state that there is nothing else peculiar in the paragraph Dick composed to begin his novel.

Freedman highlights a few words and expressions that may escape the untrained eyes, but that should not be treated innocently in the SF context:

> Since technology and emotions are apparently connected in ways unfamiliar to us—though not *wholly* unfamiliar or unpredictable, because we do know of mood-altering drugs-the adjective *merry*, as applied to a surge of electricity, may have a sense other than the expected metaphorical one. What does it mean to be "awake without prior notice"? We understand the difference between being jerked from deep sleep to full consciousness and gradually passing through intermediate stages; but the context suggests that a more specific meaning may be operative. Nor is the grammatically simple phrase "his wife Iran" free of ambiguities. Are we here in a world where a man can be married to an entire country? And what of the fact that Rick and Iran seem to sleep in different beds? As in mundane fiction, it may be a detail without profound significance, or it may signify certain sexual problems between the couple; but it might

> also signify some completely novel arrangement of sexual relations that is normal in the society portrayed. (186-87)

Any particular word or phrase may abandon commonsense if the SF author creates an adequate scenario for them. The word *merry* and its reference to something electric, stands out even more when, a few lines later, Dick describes a person as *unmerry*. Have non-human things and beings become *merrier* than humans in this reality?

In Jill Galvan's words a "bildungsroman for the cybernetic age, Dick's novel describes an awakening of the posthuman subject" (414). It is not an exaggeration to say that in the very first lines of *Do Androids* readers have a primary encounter with the posthuman paradigm. Dick opts to include not only a technological device connected to human feelings, but also some strange humane interactions that, aligned with SF, cause estrangement and possibly some intended confusion. The borders of what is human or not start to become blurry.

> "You set your Penfield too weak," he said to her. "I'll reset it and you'll be awake and—"
>
> "Keep your hand off my settings." Her voice held bitter sharpness. "I don't want to be awake."
>
> He seated himself beside her, bent over her, and explained softly. "If you set the surge up high enough, you'll be glad you're awake; that's the whole point. At setting *C* it overcomes the threshold barring consciousness, as it does for me." Friendlily, because he felt well-disposed toward the world—*his* setting had been at *D*—he patted her bare, pale shoulder. (3)

In Iran's sentence, *"Keep your hand off my settings,"* it is not clear, from a SF reading strategy following Samuel Delany's contributions (27), if she is talking about her mood organ or about herself. Could she be a non-human equipped with a manageable interface? Is Rick Deckard

married to a robot-like being? This is what it feels like every time Iran appears; she is dangerously cold and depressed to be a human through a standard viewpoint.

There are no suggestions of Iran not being a human. On the contrary, Deckard actually has problems understanding her way of being humane if compared to androids' lust for life as previously noted: "Most androids I've known have more vitality and desire to live than my wife. She has nothing to give me," he thought (Dick 88). With the turn of the century, Iran and the female androids, especially Rachael Rosen, who is introduced in chapter four, have been relevant characters concerning posthumanist, feminist, and gender-studies-oriented analyses of SF.[27] Hayles, particularly, has approached this theoretical triad in her groundbreaking *How We Became Posthuman: virtual bodies in cybernetics, literature, and informatics*, a reference for posthumanist literary analyses. The author assembled not only important scenes from *Do Androids*, but also other representations of what Dick calls the "dark-haired girl"[28] in his life and texts to discuss their impacting elements in his work (164-65). Consequently, Hayles has taken the first step to investigate posthumanism in Dick's production.

Following the posthumanist path and connecting the world in *Do Androids* to our world, the posthuman predicament emerges. Rosi Braidotti defines it as "the convergence, across the spectrum of cognitive capitalism, of posthumanism on the one hand and post-anthropocentrism on the other. The former focuses on the critique of the humanist ideal of 'Man' as the allegedly universal measure of all things, while the latter criticizes species hierarchy and human exceptionalism" ("Theoretical Framework" 31-32). It is a condition of our time, an era of fast-

[27] For analyses focused specifically on gender studies, see Huebert, David. "Species Panic: Human Continuums, Trans Andys, and Cyberotic Triangles in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*."; Jacobson, Kaydee. "The Inequality of Reality in a Fantasy-Focused Society: Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and the Representation of Women."; and Suij, Lavinia. "From Fear of the Other and the 'New Exotic Lover' to Posthuman Love: The Representation of Female Gendered Intelligent Machines in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, *Galatea 2.2*, *Ex Machina* and *Her*."

[28] The dark-haired girl is a Dickian trope defined by the author himself in his non-fictional texts. It reflects, as Hayles puts it, Dick's obsession for specific women (164). According to Hayles, this sprays in his works in "subterranean connections between the dark-haired girl, machine behavior, and the construction of masculine subjectivity" (165).

changing practices supported by neoliberal capitalist policies. She also believes it can "force a displacement of the lines of demarcation between structural differences, or ontological categories, for instance between the organic and the inorganic, the born and the manufactured, flesh and metal, electronic circuits and organic nervous systems" (*Posthuman* 89). Although technologically ahead, the society in *Do Androids* experiences the exact same predicament; an *almost posthuman revolution* seems to be on the go.

The characteristics that allow this comparison and the usage of the posthuman predicament in the context of the novel involve mainly the conflicts generated by the comprehension of the non-human in the plot. Issues start with the electric animals, low-cost substitutes of the few species remaining on Earth. Not having an animal is socially unacceptable:

> "But they'll look down on you." [said Iran,] "Not all of them, but some. You know how people are about not taking care of an animal; they consider it immoral and anti-empathic. I mean, technically it's not a crime like it was right after W.W.T. but the feeling's still there."
>
> "God," Rick said futilely, and gestured empty-handed. "I *want* to have an animal; I keep trying to buy one. But on my salary, on what a city employee makes—" (Dick 13)

There is a common social agreement that owning an animal is a synonym of *humanness*. It is almost a spiritual practice, fully endorsed by Mercerism. Still, they are expensive due to their scarcity and the fetishism around their commodification process.

Scholars Tony M. Vinci and Sherryl Vint have commented on this transformation of animals[29] (and androids subsequently) in commodities. Vinci highlights that "[a]nimals are

[29] Due to the objectives and the nature of this study, from here on I am not going to distinguish between animals and electric animals unless it is *absolutely* necessary for the discussion.

valued for their ability to register human existence, but non-intersecting gazes between humans and animals position them as objectified commodities'" (100). In other words, they are products that compensate for a supposedly lack of humanness. Animals have their value, capitalist speculation, and market operations around their lives—which is not entirely different from the animal market in a non-fictional scenario, as Braidotti points out (*Posthuman* 70). As these beings do reinforce humanness through the unclear logics of a devastated world, the presence of an alternative, an electric version, comes in handy. Animals, such as Deckard's sheep in the beginning of the story, are cheaper and extremely difficult to distinguish from their flesh and blood counterparts.

Deckard himself constantly flinches about buying a new animal when he compares pricing. In chapter three, for instance, he sees an ostrich that costs $30,000 and tries to bargain for a $2,000 discount (Dick 31-32). Right after failing in his negotiation, Deckard calls a shop specialized in electric animals, one to which he has already resorted before:

> He dialed—by memory—the number of the false-animal shop at which he had gotten his ersatz sheep. On the small vidscreen a man dressed like a vet appeared. "Dr. McRae," the man declared.
>
> "This is Deckard. How much is an electric ostrich?"
>
> "Oh, I'd say we could fix you up for less than eight hundred dollars. How soon did you want delivery? We would have to make it up for you; there's not that much call for—"
>
> "I'll talk to you later," Rick interrupted; glancing at his watch, he saw that nine-thirty had arrived. (32)

It would be an astounding difference of $29,200 if he had chosen the electric ostrich. The fact that owning a *false-animal* is something negative in *Do Androids* cannot be neglected. Deckard's early paranoia about his sheep and his obsession with a *real-animal* indeed

culminated in his acquisition of a goat and an enormous debt—one he would not be able to afford if there were not six androids for him to pursue.

Working in precarious situations, on a constant demand of escaped andys to receive $1000 bonuses, people like Rick Deckard struggle to obtain what they are forced to desire. He barely has enough to make ends meet, but having an animal is always a top priority. This points to Braidotti's choice for *cognitive capitalism* as the landscape of the posthuman predicament ("Theoretical Framework" 31-32). In their neoliberal metamorphoses, capitalist pressures of individuality and merit support perfectly humanist practices of exceptionalism and control over non-human bodies. In fact, Vint contextualizes and summarizes the sort of relation humans have been having with animals throughout history and how it matches with Dick's novel portrayal of non-humans in a late capitalist perspective:

> Animals have long figured in Western religious and philosophical traditions as the other of humans. In many ways, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* simply puts androids in the place historically occupied by animals. They are classified as less-than-human and any evidence of capacities they might possess that runs contrary to the hegemonic ideology (such as Luba's appreciation of art) is ignored. The reasons given for treating androids as disposable are clearly linked to human dependence on exploitable android labour, without which no one would have been able to escape the declining earth. From this perspective, the treatment of androids within the novel comments on our historical and current exploitation of animals, and also our exploitation of those humans who have been animalized in discourse, such as women, the working classes, and non-whites, particularly slaves. The homologous situations of androids and animals draw our attention to the discourse of speciesism. (113-14)

Therefore, the strong connection regarding animals and androids as *less-than-human* categories culminates in a complex understanding of the very social structures of capitalism.

After all, the android category itself arouses many other issues to the posthuman predicament equation in *Do Androids*. As Vint notes above, these non-humans, at first sight, appear in the plot to solve human needs related to work outside Earth. "Under U.N. law," Dick writes, "each emigrant automatically received possession of an android subtype of his choice, and, by 1990, the variety of subtypes passed all understanding, in the manner of American automobiles of the 1960s" (16). Quickly readers learn that this

> *had been the ultimate incentive of emigration: the android servant as carrot, the radioactive fallout as stick*. The U.N. had made it easy to emigrate, difficult if not impossible to stay. Loitering on Earth potentially meant finding oneself abruptly classed as biologically unacceptable, a menace to the pristine heredity of the race. Once pegged as special, a citizen, even if accepting sterilization, dropped out of history. (16; emphasis added)

The android is, then, essential for the compensation plan that involves departing from the devastated Earth to space colonies such as Mars.

After exposing the anthropocentric standpoint related to non-humans and the capitalist matter present in *Do Androids*, the human and humanism come next. The issue regarding humans and androids dwells in the crystalized idea of human exceptionalism and in the notion of humanness—backed up by empathy and Mercerism. However, as the story line unfolds, Dick portrays humans, such as Iran and Rick, who do not seem as humane as they wish they were, even if they use animals or technology to enhance their sense of demonstrating humanity. Vinci claims that "Dick's humans have become what they most fear and despise: 'androids' incapable of feeling for or with others" (92).

John Isidore, the other human character, escapes this logic. As soon as he appears, in chapter two, the contrast between him and the Deckard couple is evident. He remained on Earth, alone. A working-class man, very gentle and attentive to his surroundings, Isidore has

become a "special." Unfortunately, this is not something good or glorious. In Dick's novel, people known as specials are those who, due to the nuclear impact, are "classed as biologically unacceptable, a menace to the pristine heredity of the race. Once pegged as special, a citizen, even if accepting sterilization, dropped out of history. He ceased, in effect, to be part of mankind" (16). From a straightforward perspective, becoming a special means becoming inhumane while still being a human.

Through an optimistic viewpoint, examining this process may indicate a posthumanist breach for the comprehension of the posthuman predicament. The definitions concerning what it means to be human are not truly simple or well defined, but when it comes to labeling those who are non-humans, such as Isidore, the process is uncomplicated. There is a biological excuse backed up by fascist orientation of pure blood to withdraw humanness, even when a human conforms to the norm. It does not matter if Isidore is extremely empathetic towards other beings or if he continues looking forward to working. He is not excluded from society for being less intelligent, he is unwanted because humans like him disturb the ideological standards created to sustain a *purer* kind.

Being human, thus, is a matter of social imposition, especially enforced and sustained by dominant groups. Ferrando explains that "[i]n Western history, for instance, the concept of the 'human' has been re-inscribed within categories marked by exclusionary practices. Sexism, racism, classism, ageism, homophobia, and ableism, alongside other forms of discrimination, have informed the written and unwritten laws of recognition as to who was to be considered human" (4). In *Do Androids*, Dick's humans claim that being empathetic, mostly connecting virtually through their empathy boxes, is what differentiates them from androids. However, they can barely see humanity in their own selves while worried to perform humanness. Yet, Isidore is a prime example of those who can be humane without effort, who do not fit in their society. "Humans" need "non-humans" to feel "humane;" awkwardly all of these social

"categories" are not truly *categories*. They lack ontological materiality and exist only because of the presence of an *other*, who can acquire this status via scientific justifications if necessary.

Concisely, there is room for wide and qualified comprehension of *posthumanness* in *Do Androids*, but characters find seemingly invisible brick walls in their way. Humanist logic is not loose in time, space, and history. It is accompanied by structural beliefs and practices reinforced constantly, not only in the novel, but also in readers' society. In a reality where cars fly and androids perform the roles with which humans do not want to work, how can centuries-old virtues continue obstructing the times to come? Philosophically and socially, even the most distant future impregnated by humanist values feels like the past—or the present. A plausible answer lies in the same means and apparatuses that disallow a posthuman present of our own. Next, ideology bursts onto the scene.

**2.2 An absolute State of ideology**

When I was a child, I learned about vitamin C and its tremendous power to combat the influenza virus. I have heard of it on the radio and on the TV; I have read about it in magazines; I have studied it at school. Concurrently, I have seen my parents—who had heard of it on the radio, on the TV, and everywhere—ingesting vitamin C pills when they had had a bad cough or a sore throat. They have always gotten better afterwards. Recently, as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic intensified, once again, vitamin C was on the menu and people were shortcutting conclusions: *if it is efficient against influenza, it can work against the coronavirus*. Quickly, outdated means of communication have lost space for the internet to spread the news. Many other alternative medicines appeared as potential *safeguards* and *cures* for COVID-19. Scientifically speaking, they never worked, the same way vitamin C had never been effective against the influenza virus. On the contrary, they have made people believe they were safe to

face the pandemic, indirectly increasing the already devastating death toll.[30] Misinformation can be used as a powerful tactic to control individuals.

In *Do Androids*, the filter that validates information does not care about legitimacy. Lies and State-sponsored propaganda are standard and if a character turns on the TV in the novel, there is a great chance they will consume an endless show presented by an eccentric figure. In chapter one, when Iran tells Rick she was alone and blue at their apartment, Buster Friendly, the well-known TV host, is introduced, a virtually spectral presence that endures the entire story (Dick 4-5). From this point on, it gets clear that if someone dials 888 in their mood organ, i.e. "[t]he desire to watch TV, no matter what's on it" (6), they might find Buster and his friendly friends. Although he is a character with whom none of the others truly interacts, his role in the novel is substantial.

Buster Friendly is everywhere. Be it on television sets or on radios, the host has a never-ending program that lasts an incredible run of 23 hours daily (68). John Isidore is the one who is mostly impacted by Buster's appearances. "Buster is the most important human being alive," Isidore thinks, "except of course for Wilbur Mercer ... but Mercer, he reflected, isn't a human being; he evidently is an archetypal entity from the stars, superimposed on our culture by a cosmic template" (65). By watching Buster Friendly and His Friendly Friends, Isidore tries to find comfort for his loneliness.

However, the host is not who he seems to be, or who he is pictured to be. At the end of *Do Androids*, readers find out—or rather confirm—what people did not perceive throughout the novel: Buster is in fact an android; Isidore's opinion about him being *the most important human being alive* becomes ironic to readers. Still, he has divergent opinions regarding Friendly and ponders about his ability to be everywhere, every time:

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[30] See Varella, Drauzio. "Vitamina C previne contra o coronavírus? | Coronavírus #32", Furlan, Leonardo, and Bruno Caramelli. "The regrettable story of the 'Covid Kit' and the 'Early Treatment of Covid-19' in Brazil." and Moore, Austin, and Deepesh Khanna. "The Role of Vitamin C in Human Immunity and Its Treatment Potential Against COVID-19: A Review Article."

> How did Buster Friendly find the time to tape both his aud and vid shows? Isidore wondered. And how did Amanda Werner [one of Buster's friendly friends] find time to be a guest every other day, month after month, year after year? How did they keep talking? They never repeated themselves—not so far as he could determine. Their remarks, always witty, always new, weren't rehearsed. Amanda's hair glowed, her eyes glinted, her teeth shone; she never ran down, never became tired, never found herself at a loss as to a clever retort to Buster's bang-bang string of quips, jokes, and sharp observations. The Buster Friendly Show, telecast and broadcast over all Earth via satellite, also poured down on the emigrants of the colony planets. Practice transmissions beamed to Proxima had been attempted, in case human colonization extended that far. Had the *Salander* 3 reached its destination, the travelers aboard would have found the Buster Friendly Show awaiting them. And they would have been glad. (69)

The reach of Buster's influence is interplanetary, which means his audience is not only the ones who remained on Earth after World War Terminus.

Mercerism is another wide force prevailing the storyline. Nima Behroozi Moghadam and Farideh Porugiv point out that it "is an extension of governmental control which creates a whole new spatiotemporal network in which the illusion of unity and of belonging to a community is experienced by the members as a way of disavowing the Real of the environmental catastrophe that forms the texture of the narrative" (17-18). In other words, mercerist rituals involve an absolute evasion of the true reality that surrounds those who stayed on the war-devastated planet. In fact, Isidore's relationship with Buster is conflicting only when the topic is Mercerism.

While the special man is fully dedicated to his rituals, Buster presents fierce opposition to the empathy box and all other aspects of Mercerist philosophy—considered here relevant

tools for ideological dissemination. “Why did Buster Friendly always chip away at Mercerism?” questioned Isidore,

> No one else seemed bothered by it; even the U.N. approved. And the American and Soviet police had publicly stated that Mercerism reduced crime by making citizens more concerned about the plight of their neighbors. Mankind needs more empathy, Titus Corning, the U.N. Secretary General, had declared several times. Maybe Buster is jealous, Isidore conjectured. Sure, that would explain it; he and Wilbur Mercer are in competition. But for what?
>
> Our minds, Isidore decided. They’re fighting for control of our psychic selves; the empathy box on one hand, Buster’s guffaws and off-the-cuff jibes on the other. (70)

Galvan highlights that “[a]s Buster Friendly insinuates in his own heavy-handed fashion, Mercerism and the ideology of empathy that is its mainstay, far from appealing to innate human characteristics, function merely as the means by which the government controls an otherwise unwieldy populace” (416). Even if Buster speaks against common ideals of empathy or humanness, he is not disallowed.

On the one hand, then, there is Buster. On the other hand, there is Wilbur Mercer. Meanwhile, humans stand in between, fed by both. What have people been *eating*, though? In order to focus on what characters are pushed into, the investigation of providers of ideological modes of thought has to come into play. Who is behind figures such as Buster Friendly and Wilbur Mercer? In his analysis, Louis Althusser places the State and its apparatuses as the main sources of production and distribution of ideology. According to him, the State could be seen both as a repressive force and as an ideological enforcer, two faces of the same coin with their means of coercion, repression, and symbolic control of lives (“Ideology” 145). It is departing from the State that all sorts of common social interpretations and prejudices, for instance, end

up reaching subjects. One of the most effective ways for this to happen is through what Althusser calls “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISAs).

The ISAs, branches of the rhizomatic and adaptive tree of the State, are fundamental for the analysis of subjective exchanges regarding a materialist approach to ideology, especially in a context where the State possesses an advanced capitalist form. Althusser claims that ISAs constitute “a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions” (“Ideology” 143) and that “ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices. This existence is material (“Ideology” 166). A few examples such as schools and families are more obvious in the sense of how these institutionalized nuclei are common perpetrators of meaning and values in society. There is an expected result concerning the impacts of certain beliefs a family may have in the subjects who live by those specific standards. For example, a conservative approach could raise a rebellious attitude, and the enforcers of ideology—parents or guardians in this case—may resort to repressive means of enabling the desired form of thought.

Thus, “Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic. (There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus)” (“Ideology” 145). In the same line, other ideological branches of the State such as the news, TV shows, or the internet perform pressure in an effective, less obvious, and most times less repressive way. They create and disseminate opinions and commands out of people’s individual control or out of the control people *believe* to have over their thoughts and actions. Ads or news spread on easy-to-access means of communication such as radios, televisions, computers, and cellphones do not need apparent repression for the sake of effectiveness. Instead, they can build common beliefs or even truths that become too hard to dismantle from the perspective of a single or a few individuals. If the most trustworthy

companies or people say something, how could it be false? How can specials and androids be treated as sub-classes of life in *Do Androids* if they perform the exact humanness people should indeed possess?

To answer these questions following Althusser's line of thought, the dominance of certain beliefs in a society should be appreciated in light of the influence of the State and its apparatuses. However, *where* is the State and its apparatuses in *Do Androids*? The most important hints to institutional presence in the novel appear in the form of the police, a repressive force that includes the protagonist Rick Deckard, and the State-sponsored media and customs, ideological enforcers that count on the public figures of Buster and Mercer. The control of the agenda at the entertainment and at the religious level allows subjects to receive and propagate the two modes of thought necessary to keep the posthuman predicament in check: scrutiny around non-humans and doctrinal values to guide humanity. Even when Buster, an android, exposes the scam of Mercerism in chapter eighteen, things continue seemingly the same.

In this context of the available modes of thought in the novel, Vinci claims that "the animal and the android become part of an ideological dialectic that defers traumatic experience by reifying the essential human as superior to the android (who cannot empathize) and empathetic toward the animal (whose vulnerability necessitates human care)" (93). In his analysis, this is impactful for a discussion of trauma. Here it is also relevant for the comprehension of hierarchical division among humans, androids, and animals. Through post-anthropocentric lenses, the less humans see themselves as superior, the better it is for a decentralized perspective of reality. However, the lenses offered to characters in *Do Androids* are, at least, blurred by the ideological parameters of the State.

Moreover, the State takes active part in the heavily broadcasted propaganda on Earth and on colonies. John Isidore is subjected to many of the flagrant interventions that sustain

differences and reinforce segregation in the storyline. When he is confronted with androids without knowing they are actually not humans, Isidore cannot make the logical leap of labeling them as androids: "*These people must have done something*. Perhaps they emigrated back to Earth illegally. We're told—the TV tells us—to report any landing of a ship outside the approved pads. The police must be watching for this" (Dick 146). This influence of TV happens as an adviser, a commander, it is powerful because "the government in Washington, with its colonization program, constituted the sole sponsor which Isidore found himself forced to listen to" (18). Androids are not supposed to be on Earth, characters know very little about workers such as Rick Deckard who hunts them. The State omits information from the population.

In other situations, readers learn how strong and uncomfortable it is for a character like him, a special person who could not emigrate, to be exposed to propaganda on television. An example of this is the transmission of the following interview:

> "Let's hear from Mrs. Maggie Klugman," the TV announcer suggested to John Isidore, who wanted only to know the time. "A recent immigrant to Mars, Mrs. Klugman in an interview taped live in New New York had this to say. Mrs. Klugman, how would you contrast your life back on contaminated Earth with your new life here in a world rich with every imaginable possibility?" A pause, and then a tired, dry, middle-aged, female voice said, "I think what I and my family of three noticed most was the dignity." "The dignity, Mrs. Klugman?" the announcer asked. "Yes," Mrs. Klugman, now of New New York, Mars, said. "It's a hard thing to explain. Having a servant you can depend on in these troubled times . . . I find it reassuring."
>
> "Back on Earth, Mrs. Klugman, in the old days, did you also worry about finding yourself classified, ahem, as a special?"
>
> "Oh, my husband and myself worried ourselves nearly to death. Of course, once we emigrated that worry vanished, fortunately forever." (18)

On a single scene, Dick sets the completely institutionalized tone of the common view humans have in relation to androids who are designed to serve *and* specials who are abandoned as sub-humans. Briefly, Isidore reflects, "the ads, directed at the remaining regulars, frightened him. They informed him in a countless procession of ways that he, a special, wasn't wanted" (20).

The feeling of not being wanted is impactful on Isidore, but he still does not know any other way of looking at the situation. The ISAs have provided him an outlook that normalizes the condition in which he is. At the same time, he is not the only one who is bombarded with the prevailing ideological status that perpetuates divisiveness. In the beginning of the story, Deckard reproduces the speech of the State logic as a well-trained subject interpellated by ideology:

> He thought, too, about his need for a real animal; within him an actual hatred once more manifested itself toward his electric sheep, which he had to tend, had to care about, as if it lived. The tyranny of an object, he thought. It doesn't know I exist. Like the androids, it had no ability to appreciate the existence of another. He had never thought of this before, the similarity between an electric animal and an andy. The electric animal, he pondered, could be considered a subform of the other, a kind of vastly inferior robot. Or, conversely, the android could be regarded as a highly developed, evolved version of the ersatz animal. Both viewpoints repelled him. (40-41)

Yet, he knows that "the manufacture of androids, in fact, has become so linked to the colonization effort that if one dropped into ruin, so would the other in time" (43). Thus, this is not a hidden information or a conspiracy. It is practical and profitable for public and private institutions to maintain androids as others. In this sense, companies such as the Rosen organization co-participate in the management of the State and of the social structures.

Therefore, the way public and private domains interact unmasks an expanded State [*Estado ampliado*], a form in which the borders between these institutions become difficult to

delimit, especially considering the role of technology (Galvan 418). In accordance with Mascaro, the State in *Do Androids* is "always spread beyond its self-declared formal or juridical limits, merging onto social apparatuses" (70).[31] Subjects, although interpellated by other subjects, are always facing institutionalized ideology from all parts. Discourses are contaminated by humanist ideology and spread by State-affiliated or expanded-State-affiliated media. As Moghadam and Porugiv sustain, drawing upon psychoanalysis, "technological advances in the narrative of the novel create, shape, and sustain the reality for controlling the mass as well as for commercial purposes, and how different characters perceive this reality in the course of the story" (11). Similarly, Galvan believes this is essential for the reduction of any popular discontent or insurgent movements (416).

Subjects passively consume—i.e. watch, listen, buy, and destroy—and are consumed by the ideas of a so-called *humanness*. It should function socially to propagate a sense of humanity, but with a closer look at it, there is a contrary outcome. A prevailing ideology based on purity, segregation, enslavement, exceptionalism, hierarchy, and control over marginalized lives resonate more as a fascist sense of human, than as humane perspective. From here on, after walking through a broader social level examining the participation of the State in the production and dissemination of ideology, all eyes are turned to people because "there is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects. Meaning, there is no ideology except for concrete subjects, and this destination for ideology is only made possible by the subject: meaning, *by the category of the subject* and its functioning" (Althusser, "Ideology" 170). In the sequence, I discuss the role of the subjects in *Do Androids* in the processes of maintenance of Earth's catastrophe and possible transformations.

[31] Original text: "sempre espraiado para além de seus limites formais ou jurídicos autodeclarados, fundindo-se a aparelhos sociais" (70).

**2.3 Errare humanum est: the beginning of the resolution**

Besides the *merry* / *unmerry* choice of words in the opening lines of *Do Androids*, Dick has written other meaningful word plays and references throughout the novel. For instance, he notes that "the dead machines … hadn't worked in all the time Isidore had lived here" (19), *worked* could mean both *functioned* and *labored*. "The servant had in some cases become more adroit than its master" (29), *adroit* could mean intelligent or skillful and it is cautiously close to *android* in its pronunciation. He also makes use of a few Latin expressions: "*Mors certa, vita incerta*," (19) regularly says John Isidore's boss, Mr. Sloat in a variation of the well-known motto *mors certa, hora incerta*. And "again he perceived himself *sub specie aeternitatis*, the form-destroyer called forth by what heard and saw here" (91-2), which reflects the quasi-Spinozian Rick Deckard after listening to the talented android Luba Luft in her rehearsal of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Another Latin saying, not present in the novel, has strongly oriented this thesis so far. *Errare humanum est, perseverare autem diabolicum*, commonly attributed to the Latin stoic philosopher Seneca the Younger, is a classic answer to minor human mistakes. Literally translated as "to err is human, but to persist is diabolical," Seneca's words have echoed a long way from antiquity to 1974. In this year, Brazilian singer and songwriter Jorge Ben Jor released his song "Errare Humanum Est." The confusing scientific and mystical approach of his lyrics is in tune with the contradictory motifs that surround humans. Exceptionalism appears as an innocent surprise, while the acceptance of an essence of continuous mistake is unveiled. Inspired by the ancient *Emerald Tablet*, Ben Jor tries to narrate the mystery and the influence of ethereal universal forces that culminate in the humane inclination to error and errancy:

> And to think we are not
>
> The first earthly beings
>
> Because we inherited a cosmic heritage

Errare, errare humanum est. (Jorge Ben Jor 01:57-02:30)[32]

Yet, after considering all these referential elements from antiquity to modernity, from the roots of ancient humanism to today's humanist beliefs, who are these humans who are allowed to err?

In his investigation of the topic, Tony Davies highlights how difficult it is to define the human being or even humanist thought itself (125-26). Only a few concrete conclusions emerge from it after all. According to him, "[a]ll humanisms, until now, have been imperial. They speak of the human in the accents and the interests of a class, a sex, a 'race'. Their embrace suffocates those whom it does not ignore" (131). Departing from this viewpoint and from the hierarchical model of humanity portrayed in *Do Androids*, if it is difficult to grasp the idea of the human, the same cannot be said about the *non-human*. Marked by the traces noted by Davies, i.e. class, sex, race, among others, people classified as less-human-than-human have always been marginalized. The androids and the sub-classes of humans in the novel can be found under this label.

Therefore, androids and specials would be the ones who could not commit mistakes. This is the same for workers, women, racialized and LGBT+ people, and any other group of humans-for-convenience who live under the constant fear of not being perceived as subjects. All of those figures who escape the norm find themselves in a position of not being formally recognized by society as humans or subjects. This may be an epistemological problem in a perspective that has combined Althusser's propositions to Braidotti and Ferrando's approach. While for the former the interpellation of subjects or subjectification seems a rather simple mechanism of recognition; for the latter ones, becoming-human or humanizing is a slow, harsh, and socially constructed process.

[32] Original text: E de pensar que não somos / Os primeiros seres terrestres / Pois nós herdamos uma herança cósmica / Errare, errare humanum est (Jorge Ben Jor 00:01:57-00:02:30).

According to Althusser, one of the first Marxists to tackle the complicated matter of subjectivity through materialist lenses, subjectification happens through *interpellation*. In his words, "*all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects*, by the functioning of the category of the subject" ("Ideology" 173). Therefore, subjectification would happen through the encounter of the so-called individuals and their social surroundings. In this sense, *subjects have to become subjects*. Althusser's category of subjectivity depends on the fact that it can only happen if recognition is involved. This leads to the apparently paradoxical conclusion that an individual is, then, an "always-already" subject ("Ideology" 176).

Michel Pêcheux, in his attempt to formulate a materialist theory of discourse, comments on Althusser's propositions regarding the subject and its apparent paradox. In his view, it is possible to state that an individual can be interpellated by ideology into a subject, but the opposite cannot happen (148). The process of becoming a subject happens at the social level, it has a strong connection with ideology, and it is not a two-way road. This assumes that individuals can become subjects relying on sociability *in perpetuum*, but it also guarantees a moment in which they are non-subjects. Therefore, it is not a paradox, but a "discrepancy," as Pêcheaux summarizes (149). How long non-subjects will continue on standby depends, thus, on how effectively society will function ideologically to keep them apart.

In tune with the discussion, Hayles sums up the matter of the interpellated individuals in the process of subjectification in *Do Androids* and other novels written by Dick calling back the presence of the expanded State. According to her,

> [t]he interpellation of the individual into market relations so thoroughly defines the characters … that it is impossible to think of the characters apart from the economic institutions into which they are incorporated, from small family firms to transnational operations. … The ultimate horror for the individual is to remain trapped "inside" a world constructed by another being for the other's own profit. (162)

As a result, Rick Deckard ends up in the entrapment of the systematic wheel of ideology. It interpellates him as an individual who becomes a subject. In this process, he is constantly fed and controlled by the State, the quasi-invisible force that operates to repress and convince subjects.

At first, in the story line, Rick is clearly self-aware of his own convictions regarding the differences between fake or real beings. Consequently, his notion of who the non-subjects are is also clear. "The alleged sheep contained an oat-tropic circuit;" he thought, "at the sight of such cereals **it** would scramble up convincingly and amble over. 'What's **she** pregnant by?' he asked Barbour. 'The wind?'" (Dick 8-9; emphasis in bold added). He distinguishes the usage of pronouns "it" and "she" while thinking and speaking about an electric sheep and a horse. Even animals can provoke some sense of subjectification if the ruling ideology perpetrates it.

However, after undergoing such an intense experience with the Nexus-6 androids, including his sexual intercourse with Rachel Rosen, he loses track of what would be living or not. The boundaries of the non-subject/subject become socially disturbed. In the following passage, through a stream of consciousness, it is possible to analyze Rick in his most confusing moment regarding the distinction between androids and humans in the novel:

> His laser tube thrust out, Rick spun and sank onto his haunches facing the flight of stairs. Up it glided a **woman**, toward him, and he knew **her**; **he recognized her** and lowered his laser tube. … And then he saw that **it** was not quite Rachael.
>
> "For what we've meant to each other," the **android** said as **it** approached him, **its** arms reaching as if to clutch at him. The clothes, he thought, are wrong. But the eyes, the same eyes. And there are more like this; there can be a legion of **her**, each with **its** own name, but all Rachael Rosen—Rachael, the prototype, used by the manufacturer to protect the others. He fired at **her** as, imploringly, **she** dashed toward him. The **android** burst and parts of **it** flew; he covered his face and then looked again,

> looked and saw the laser tube which **it** had carried roll away, back onto the stairs; the metal tube bounced downward, step by step, the sound echoing and diminishing and slowing. … **She**—**it**—would have gotten me, he said to himself, except for the fact that Mercer warned me. I can do the rest, now, he realized. This was the impossible one; **she** [Rachel] knew I couldn't do this. But it's over. In an instant. I did what I couldn't do. (203-4; emphasis in bold added)

"She" and "it," "woman" and "android" become blurry and unconsciously inconsistent when his ideological background returns to surface. *He is not able to recognize her anymore*.

Earlier, when one of the escaped andys Rick has to hunt down, Garland, explains his fugitive status of unrecognition, he demonstrates to know that androids are non-subjects in the eyes of Earthlings. He says: "It's a chance anyway, breaking free and coming here to Earth, where we're not even considered animals. Where every worm and wood louse is considered more desirable than all of us [androids] put together" (113). Before Rick's lapse of confusion, he himself had also somehow understood this status:

> A pharmacist on Mars, he read. Or at least the android had made use of that cover. In actuality it had probably been a manual laborer, a field hand, with aspirations for something better. Do androids dream? Rick asked himself. Evidently; that's why they occasionally kill their employers and flee here. A better life, without servitude. Like Luba Luft; singing *Don Giovanni* and *Le Nozze* instead of toiling across the face of a barren rock-strewn field. On a fundamentally uninhabitable colony world. (169)

In this reflection about androids' lives of servitude, the burden they were designed to carry, he contemplates the question that serves as title to the book and realizes that these non-subjects/non-humans do dream.

The cost of such dreams is high. Unable to be recognized as subjects, could—or should—androids be recognized as humans in any way? This is where the poshumanists are

essential in their alignment to Althusser's operation of subjectification. Ferrando discusses, in beauvoirian fashion, the importance of understanding that the human is not a category acquired at the moment of birth. Instead, the human is a process (71). Meanwhile, Braidotti offers a cutting-edge view of how the radical idea of denying natural humanity is a field for openness. "The novelty of the critical posthumanities," she argues, "their 'newness', if you wish, is defined by the split temporality of the present as both what we are ceasing to be and what we are in the process of becoming" ("Theoretical Framework" 52).

In this vein, Ferrando prefers tackling the word "human" in a verbal form instead of thinking of it as a noun. "*Humanizing*" reinforces the processual status of socially *becoming a human* rather than being a human (84). Since, historically, not even humans have in fact been born humans, the doors for androids to be *humane* are not fully closed in a more optimistic view. Therefore, similarly to Althusser's considerations, in light of posthumanist theories, there is a social influence in the process of allowing individuals to be humans. The convergence of social recognition as the key factor for the operations of subjectification and humanization reveals the deep impact of combining these two processes through perspectives that, at first sight, do not seem harmonious.

Hence, a plausible synthesis to the junction of the subject and the human can be found in the category of the posthuman itself. Braidotti highlights that

> [t]he 'posthuman' is normatively neutral and it does not automatically point to the end of the species, let alone to post-power/gender/class/race/species relations between members of the species. As a figuration, the posthuman is both situated and partial—it does not define the new human condition, but offers a spectrum through which we can capture the complexity of ongoing processes of subject-formation. ("Theoretical Framework" 35-36)

In other words, the door that is not fully closed for the android can be ultimately opened in the face of the posthuman. If andys cannot become complete subjects due to the ideological implications of interpellation, and they cannot become complete humans due to the unstable value of this inconsistent category, they can be or become *posthumane*. This alternative is "a process of redefining one's sense of attachment and connection to a shared world, a territorial space: urban, social, psychic, ecological, planetary as it may be" (*Posthuman* 193). By becoming posthuman, the android could reconnect with the world.

In the posthuman, the high costs of androids' dreams find compensation. Unable to find true recognition in society at large, they discover in self-recognition—or identity—an important force to sustain existence. When the group of andys finally reunites at Isidore's house, after being separated in their moment of escape from Mars, they genuinely encounter themselves: "'We're looking—' the small blond woman began, but then she saw past Isidore; her face dissolved in rapture and she whisked past him, calling. 'Pris! How are you?' Isidore turned. The two women were embracing. He stepped aside, and Roy Baty entered, somber and large, smiling his crooked, tuneless smile" (Dick 141). In this sense, Vinci remembers that "[d]espite the connotations of the term *android* in the novel, Pris has a community. She is indeed an individual among others" (99). Even if the State reinforces androids' lack of feelings or sense of communion, their actions demonstrate the opposite.

Isidore also plays an important role in the validation of the androids' self-recognition process. Although a human, he is not socially recognized as one. Readers slowly watch the frustrating impossibility of the *most humane* character of the novel—considering the so-called humanness as a possibility—failing to achieve the status of a subject. Only after examining the androids' condition can he realize his own predicament:

> "You're androids," Isidore said. But he didn't care; it made no difference to him. "I see why they want to kill you," he said. "Actually you're not alive." Everything

> made sense to him, now. The bounty hunter, the killing of their friends, the trip to Earth, all these precautions.
>
> "When I used the word 'human,'" Roy Baty said to Pris, "I used the wrong word."
>
> "That's right, Mr. Baty," Isidore said. "But what does it matter to me? I mean, I'm a special; they don't treat me very well either, like for instance I can't emigrate." He found himself yabbering away like a folletto. "You can't come here; I can't—" He calmed himself. (150)

Foreshadowing Rick's words, Isidore's life is *paltry*.

At the time Isidore understands his condition, as well as the androids', self-recognition stands out as an important asset in posthuman comprehension in *Do Androids*. The active movement towards subjectivity of the human who is less human than the others allows a horizontal view of his existence side by side with the existence of the non-humans. While Isidore confirms that those people he is helping, the group of androids, validate him—even when they make fun of him—, the impact of the combination of self-recognition and social recognition is complete. He processes this conclusion by thinking: "You can't go back, he … You can't go from people to non-people. In panic he thought, I'm dependent on them" (188). Isolation does not fit him anymore, he "is suspended somewhere between the world of human exceptionalism and the world of posthuman openness" (Vinci 104) and he cannot go back to being less-than-human-than-human.

In an overview of what it means to be or become posthuman, Braidotti stresses that the course that leads to it is not a path to destruction, damnation, or to the end of a species, as it has historically been for the human. On the contrary, the self-realization of the posthuman status is an adequate formulation for the current suspension of the category of human. She argues that

> [a]lthough the posthuman is empirically grounded, because it is embedded and embodied, it functions less as a substantive entity than a figuration, or conceptual persona. It is a theoretically-powered cartographic tool that aims at achieving adequate understanding of these processes of undoing the human. It does not define a dystopian future condition, but provides a frame to understand the ongoing processes of becoming-subjects in our fast-changing times. ("Theoretical Framework" 34)

Yet, this perspective stumbles upon the harsh reality described in the novel regarding the uncertain end of Isidore's participation and the tragic end of the android characters.

From a pseudo-ethical and ideologically biased standpoint, the extermination of creatures—flesh and blood or electric—without guilt, depends on the maintenance of their statuses as non-subjects and non-humans. This is why it is gravely important in *Do Androids* that humans perceive their electric counterparts, for instance, as different and inhumane. In the beginning of the story, Rick and Iran argue about this issue:

> "Get your crude cop's hand away," Iran said.
>
> "I'm not a cop." He felt irritable, now, although he hadn't dialed for it.
>
> "You're worse," his wife said, her eyes still shut. "You're a murderer hired by the cops."
>
> "I've never killed a human being in my life." His irritability had risen now; had become outright hostility.
>
> Iran said, "Just those poor andys." (Dick 3-4)

This is a logic sustained by the State that seems to escape Iran's viewpoint, but that prevails through Rick's actions as a bounty hunter and it does culminate in extermination.

In opposition, the same character who could not feel guilty or bothered about his duties retiring androids ponders at the end: "What a job to have to do, Rick thought, I'm a scourge, like famine or plague. Where I go the ancient curse follows. As Mercer said, I am required to

do wrong. Everything I've done has been wrong from the start" (207). A few pages later, he finds out that his own humanness, which seemed natural and essential to him, has faded away. Rick ponders: "For Mercer everything is easy … because Mercer accepts everything. Nothing is alien to him. But what I've done, he thought; that's become alien to me. In fact everything about me has become unnatural; I've become an unnatural self" (212). The completely decomposing process of becoming less human is accompanied by a severe alienation from his own self and from the world around him. Lives—human and android—equalize to the same level of insignificance before the dominant forces of the State.

Although this perspective should not raise the spark of excitement brought by Braidotti, or the celebrative outcome that Ferrando expects regarding the posthuman, it does fulfill a relevant role. For the comprehension of the subject who is under contradictions, especially those imposed by the State, the brutality in Rick's material reality reflects the progress of the posthuman predicament towards a resolution. As Vinci points out,

> [t]he only way for Deckard to prove that the specialized category of the empathetic human is indeed a lie is to violate himself, or act against his understandings and beliefs. If he feels empathy for the androids and can still kill them, then he proves the human to be inhuman and undoes the "human" part of his subjectivity. Deckard does not hate the androids, nor does he kill them solely for money. He kills them because he feels for and with them; he becomes unnatural and thus becomes open to the radical ethics of posthuman trans-subjectivity. (108)

Finally, as Vint suggests, the whole socio-economic process that Rick goes through in his comprehension of his job, his peers, and his own life "is the first sign that he is becoming a new sort of human, one who cannot separate cognition from affect, and thus is resisting becoming like an android himself" (116).

Lastly, *Do Androids* offers a significant approach to the posthuman status of lives that reveals light at the end of the tunnel, even if it is not entirely optimistic. The fatal resolution of the androids is a cruel touch, but Rick's encounter with his new pet, a toad, is somehow refreshing. Although he gets disappointed to find out the animal is electric, he eventually gets his exhausted epiphany:

> "The legs of toads are weak," Rick said. "That's the main difference between a toad and a frog, that and water. A frog remains near water but a toad can live in the desert. I found this in the desert, up near the Oregon border. Where everything had died." He reached to take it back from her. But she had discovered something; still holding it upside down she poked at its abdomen and then, with her nail, located the tiny control panel. She flipped the panel open.
>
> "Oh." His face fell by degrees. "Yeah, so I see; you're right." Crestfallen, he gazed mutely at the false animal; he took it back from her, fiddled with the legs as if baffled—he did not seem quite to understand. He then carefully replaced it in its box. "I wonder how it got out there in the desolate part of California like that. Somebody must have put it there. No way to tell what for."
>
> "Maybe I shouldn't have told you—about it being electrical." She put her hand out, touched his arm; she felt guilty, seeing the effect it had on him, the change.
>
> "No," Rick said. "I'm glad to know. Or rather—" He became silent. "I'd prefer to know."
>
> "Do you want to use the mood organ? To feel better? You always have gotten a lot out of it, more than I ever have."
>
> "I'll be okay." He shook his head, as if trying to clear it, still bewildered. …
>
> "The electric things have their lives, too. Paltry as those lives are." (Dick 221-22)

After such a long day, Rick proceeds to sleep.

Therefore, when Rick Deckard states *electric things have their lives, too. Paltry as those lives are*, the choice for a synonym of *insignificant* may be a hard punch after going through such an intense and life-changing experience regarding these lives he calls paltry. However, insignificance should not be the immediate focus of an attentive interpretation of his utterance. First, Rick *recognizes* electric beings as living beings, which implies a complete change in the paradigm of non-humans in *Do Androids*. Recognition is one of the most impactful social contracts in subjectification and humanizing processes. As a last second insight, the addition of ", too" arguably places Rick's life, his wife's, and all others on a similar level. Their lives are also paltry. Only after admitting this can he expand his final thoughts on the topic of how non-humans live.

Androids, especially, undergo precariousness and insecurity; they do not have control over their own bodies, being free solely to serve or free to die for not serving. Rick offers a new interpretation of their material conditions by calling their lives paltry. They are not insignificant because he wants them to be. When andys are put in the role of others, they seem insignificant because their *social model forces them to be*. Although apathetic and tired at the end of the novel, Rick's unstable and synthetic conclusion paves the way for a change in outlook. His words ring and echo the motifs of the impermanent state,[33] a quasi-rupture. It is not a revolution, it is painful, but it is the beginning of the resolution of the posthuman predicament.

In conclusion, *Do Androids* does not offer solutions or an entirely optimistic take on the posthuman contemplation of society. It helps translating the anguish into words and ideas.

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[33] The opening lines of the 12th-century Japanese epic *The Tale of the Heike* read:
祇園精舎の鐘の聲、諸行無常の響あり。It can be translated into prose literally as "The sound of the Gion Shoja bells echoes the impermanence of all things" (McCullough) or into poetry as "The Jetavana Temple bells / ring the passing of all things" (Royall). This marks the beginning of a new era.

**Final considerations: resolution and revolution**

> *the world is poor, and man's a shit. we should aim high instead of low but our condition's such this can't be so.*[34] *dying for the right cause. it's the most human thing we can do.*[35] *there ought to be a future we can choose. it's up to us to find it.*[36]

To produce this Master's thesis, I formulated a hypothesis that depended on two different theoretical frameworks traversed by literature. The investigation of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* through the lenses of posthumanism and studies of ideology implied different methodological choices. However, in an interdisciplinary spectrum, their complementary contributions, combining philosophy and sociology, allowed a complex examination of individuals and society in the novel. The final goal was questioning if subjects in a SF story that were on the verge of escaping humanist logics of individualism, exceptionalism, and otherness could fail due to ideological structures. How much dominant ideology prevents subjects from reaching a posthuman status?

In order to find answers to these issues, the study followed a path that started with the discussion of literature, more specifically the SF genre. Drawing on Darko Suvin's elementary concepts of *cognitive estrangement* and the *novum*, the first step was stressing out the plurality of SF in its own openness. In a materialist analysis, it is relevant to comprehend that the genre, as Adam Roberts highlights in his reading of Suvin, does not exist apart from non-fiction (1). In fact, SF makes use of dissimilarity to transport readers to a realm of impossible possibilities.

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[34] Bertolt Brecht*, The Threepenny Opera.*
[35] Denis Villeneuve, *Blade Runner 2049.*
[36] Katsuhiro Otomo, *Akira.*

Furthermore, taking into consideration criticism and interdisciplinary studies in SF, Fredric Jameson, Carl Freedman, and Samuel R. Delany advanced many of Suvin's notions. While Jameson focuses on understanding utopias and categories concerning SF, Freedman turns his eyes to the articulations between the genre and critical theory. In his words, "the insistence upon historical mutability, material reducibility, and, at least implicitly, Utopian possibility" of both SF and critical theories connects them in their statuses (186-87). In addition to that, Delany's intervention closes up the discussion at the level of language use. His idea of SF as a "vast play of codic conventions" allows ambivalence to exist as a merit of the genre, and not as an issue (27).

Thus, the decision of including posthumanist theories in the analysis of *Do Androids* enabled a critical viewpoint in accordance with the proposals of important names of SF criticism. In light of Rosi Braidotti's critical posthumanism and Francesca Ferrando's philosophical posthumanism, I could examine the novel through a materialist, horizontal, and radical perspective. In other words, both strands of posthumanism allowed a posthumanist and post-anthropocentric reading that aimed at what Braidotti calls the *posthuman predicament*. According to her, it is "the convergence, across the spectrum of cognitive capitalism, of posthumanism on the one hand and post-anthropocentrism on the other. The former focuses on the critique of the humanist ideal of 'Man' as the allegedly universal measure of all things, while the latter criticizes species hierarchy and human exceptionalism" ("Theoretical Framework" 31-32). Therefore, inspecting how the posthuman predicament emerges and how individuals cannot escape from it became a relevant aspect in the examination of Dick's work.

Posthumanist tools are also relevant for the study of the social operation of becoming. Braidotti and Ferrando discuss the issue of being x becoming from the feminist viewpoint. Therefore, instead of thinking about the category of human as static, Ferrando proposes that it should be understood as a process (71). Braidotti, on the other hand, highlights the urgency of

the inclusion of posthumanist debate in literary studies and all other fields of academic research. She claims the "limits and limitations of posthuman bodies must become the object of collective discussions and decisions across the multiple constituencies of our polity and civil society, in a manner that does not assume the centrality, let alone the universality, of humanistic principles and anthropocentric assumptions" (*Posthuman* 196).

However, in *Do Androids* the posthuman predicament hits the brick wall of ideological State apparatuses. In this thesis, one of the main hypotheses was the effectiveness of dominant ideology in the maintenance of humanist values. To analyze this issue, I exposed the process of comprehension of the category through Marxist lenses. Departing from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' classical definition, this study reached Louis Althusser's crucial contributions concerning ideology. His two theses are: (1) "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" ("Ideology" 162); (2) "Ideology has a material existence" ("Ideology" 165).

In addition to that, Althusser stresses out the role of the State in the process of materialization of ideology through what he names the *ideological State apparatuses*. He defines them as "a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions" ("Ideology" 143). In the novel, they exist on TV, radio, technological devices such as the mood organs and the empathy boxes, and on private and public institutions. These means perpetrate the ideas that impede individuals to leap from humanist premises of exclusion to the posthumanist sense of aggregation and decentralization.

Moreover, Althusser discusses another process of becoming that fortunately complements the postulations of posthumanist theorists. He introduces the notion of interpellation as a critical operation in the transformation of individuals into subjects. This occurs at the social level when subjects interpellate and recognize each other making use of

ideology. In Althusser's words, "*all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects*, by the functioning of the category of the subject" ("Ideology" 173). The implications of the interpellation of individuals reflect on the non-recognition of some of them—the androids, for instance—, transforming them into disposable non-subjects.

Among the critics and theorists who analyze *Do Androids* focusing on individual and social issues, Sherryl Vint, Jill Galvan, Tony M. Vinci, and N. Katherine Hayles have offered solid posthumanist perspectives to complement this thesis. On the one hand, Vint exposes the capitalist strength to accelerate the process of commodification regarding androids and animals (120). On the other hand, Galvan argues "[t]echnology … drastically compromises an insulated human community in two ways: it separates the individual from human contact; but more significantly, it makes her dependent upon—*addicted* to—the life of the machine" (418). Complementarily, they discuss the effects of capitalism as an anti-enforcer of posthuman practices.

Additionally, Vinci emphasizes that due to their ideological context, instead of becoming more *humane*, "Dick's humans have become what they most fear and despise: 'androids' incapable of feeling for or with others" (92). Hayles proposes, on the other hand, a robust analysis of the function of androids in the social structures of the novel:

> On the one hand, it is a commodity, an object created by humans and sold for money. In this guise it is reified in much the same way that any object capable of being bought and sold is reified, like the animals that bestow high status on their human owners in *Do Androids Dream*. … [Androids] think, feel outrage, bond with their fellows. Given their abilities, they should be able to participate in the social realm of human relations, but in such texts as *Do Androids Dream*, they can do so (legally) only as objects. In this view they are not objects improperly treated as if they were social beings but are social

> beings improperly treated as if they were objects. For them the arrow of reification points painfully in both directions. (168-69)

Therefore, in their impossibility of becoming humans or subjects, distant from recognition, androids find a solution in self-recognition. Only through the eyes of other androids and humans such as Isidore can they establish a communal sense.

Rick Deckard's late epiphany somberly recognizes their paltry lives and opens a possible mediation with a posthuman future. However, it does not point to a complete rupture with the ongoing posthuman predicament. In his exhaustion, Rick offers the frame of reference of a character who has struggled with the material pressure of the ideological State apparatuses. Although melancholically, he could eventually see past the humanist values that entrapped him. At the end of the story, when Rick finds an electric frog, his perspective changes and his wife's help reinforces the beginning of the resolution of the posthuman predicament. The couple "treat[s] the toad with kindness rather than as a possession because it is the social relationship—not the ontological status of the toad—that counts" (Vint 124). It is not an immediate revolution, but change is a constant process.

This thesis furthers discussions in the field of literary studies focused on SF, especially articulating the genre with critical theories. Dick's work constitutes an important milestone in the SF scene of the 1960s and his questions regarding what it means to be human have taken shape and gained space with the rise of posthuman studies. In the last couple of decades, posthumanist readings of the novel populated the academic debate. However, the ideological context in the storyline is not a theme integrally discussed. Future examinations of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* can expand interdisciplinary dialogues among critical theories and investigate the impact of ideology concerning animals. Another relevant aspect that could receive proper attention is how alienation deprives subjects of themselves. In conclusion, the analysis of the novel in light of Braidotti's and Ferrando's posthumanist theories articulated

with Althusser's contributions regarding ideology surges as a novelty, one that allows an intersection between significant and up-to-date debates on diverse humanisms in the twenty-first century.

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