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A Posthumanist Reading of Artificial Intelligence Discourse in *Finch*
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Dedication

What once felt like the end of chapter is only the beginning of another. All praise and gratitude
belong to ALLAH.

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents; my comfort and strength. Who carried me with their
love, prayers, and faith.

To my sisters, Salsabil and Ahlem, for their constant support and love, and my little brother
Djoud, the joy and blessing of my life.

To my dear friends, especially Ahlem; my wonderful doctor, many thanks for the memories, and
positivity that made this path meaningful.

To Almighty God, for the quiet strength, boundless grace, and guidance that carried me through
every step of this journey.

To my beloved father and mother, exclusively to you. My pillars of support. The heartbeat of my
success. This achievement belongs entirely to you. Thank you for your endless sacrifices,
prayers, and unconditional love

To my husband, for your endless patience, support, and partnership.

To my precious siblings, for boundless love and continuous support.

To my friends, appreciating your assistance and help.

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Abstract

The study explores Artificial Intelligence (AI) Discourse in the film *Finch* (2021) through the perspective of posthumanist thought. It aims to investigate the representation of Artificial Intelligence in *Finch* (2021) through deconstructing human exceptionalism, examining the triad relationship between the human Finch, the robot Jeff, and the dog Goodyear, tracing Jeff's embodiment evolution, and the reconstruction of Jeff's legacy as relational practice in post-apocalyptic Earth. To achieve this purpose a qualitative single case study was employed. A purposive selection of scenes was conducted and semiotic close reading along with thematic analysis were employed. The findings reveal five themes that depict Artificial Intelligence representation throughout the film. These include the post-apocalyptic Earth functions as a catalyst, distributed cognition and emergent subjectivity through Jeff's embodiment, leading to the destabilisation of the human-machine binary. The findings also highlight Jeff's linguistic evolution from code to kin and the emergence of multispecies kinship through the triad interaction and relationship. Finally, the film reprograms legacy as relational practice rather than a form of biological transmission. Overall, the findings reflect the human-machine-animal triad as relational assemblage grounded in interaction, practice, and hybrid care, while Jeff's embodiment challenges and destabilises human-machine binary. This study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding around the cinematic representations of Artificial Intelligence by examining it through a posthumanist lens.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence Discourse, *Finch* (2021), human exceptionalism, post-apocalyptic cinema, posthumanist reading.

List of abbreviations

AI: Artificial Intelligence

RV: Recreational Vehicle

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Humanism is a philosophical tradition that emerged during the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. It gives the primacy to the autonomous, rational human subject. Humanism considers humans as the principal agents responsible for the construction of meaning, the formulation of morality, and the pursuit of progress. This view identifies humanity as inherently distinct from and superior to both nature and technology (Scott, 2013). On the contrary, posthumanism does not focus specifically on the human-centric viewpoint. It looks for the separations between the human from non-human, the organic from the technological, and the subject from the object (Vint, 2015). Posthumanist discourse, as expressed by scholars such as Rosi Braidotti, N. Katherine Hayles, and Cary Wolfe, reject human exceptionalism. In this regard, it reconceptualises the human as intertwined with machines, environments, and other non-human entities. This highlights the significance of distributed agency and permeable boundaries that exist between human and non-human (Murphy, 2024). This shift emphasises that identity and agency are not intrinsic to autonomous individuals but are rather co-constructed through socio-technical formations and relational networks (Scott, 2013; Vint, 2015)

In the context of film and media scholarship, posthumanist frameworks have been widely adopted to portray technology, focusing on AI discourse specifically in post-apocalyptic settings. In these settings, the focus has shifted away from the human subject and has engaged with the agency of technological actors (Dutta, 2008). This change paved the way for posthumanism to offer a lens for exploring human-AI interactions as arenas for mutual transformation. This is particularly significant for the examination of AI discourse in contemporary cinematics works, such as *Finch* (2021). In this study, AI discourse denotes the film's discursive construction of AI through dialogue, visual codes, and narrative framing. Theoretically, AI discourse is approached both as technological system and as a cultural

construct, following work that shows how film discourse shapes its public meaning (Murphy, 2024; Simut, 2017).

Investigations into AI discourse within film media reveal strategies that include humanistic versus posthumanist interpretations, as well as utopian and apocalyptic technical visions. This strand of literature either customise the machines or distorts their reputations (Vint, 2015; Simut, 2017). These depictions either enhance or challenge the forces inherent in technology evolution and management. This leads to the normalisation of some technology paths while replacing alternative avenues at the same time (Murphy, 2024). Posthumanist analysis of human assumptions related to themes such as companionship, consciousness, and intelligence is studied through examining how AI discourse defines the interrelationships between humans and machines. AI works through emotional participation, visual representation, and dialogue as a key factor (Simut, 2017; Murphy, 2024).

Cinema serves as a locus for the representation, mythologisation, and contestation of AI. Cinematic depictions influence AI perceptions through multiple features such as consciousness and caregiving dynamics (Murphy, 2024). Contemporary films related to AI address inquiries that include existence related to personality and moral implications. These discussions are represented through narratives that deal with themes of companionship between human and artificial agents, parental affiliations, and even romantic bonds (Vint, 2015). The narratives focus on AI in a post-apocalyptic context to emphasise specific themes between humans and nonhumans, including interconnectedness, care, and moral agency. This aims to provide a posthumanist explanations regarding relational subjectivity and collective survival strategies (Temmen, 2022). *Finch* (2021), directed by Miguel Sapochnik, embodies this subgenre by portraying an ill engineer named Finch Weinberg, who creates a robot named Jeff to care for his dog, 'Goodyear' after his death in post-apocalyptic Earth (Temmen, 2022; Özbey, 2024). Through the film, an in-depth and clear exploration of learning, adapting, and building emotional connection through human-machine dichotomy is depicted. Jeff gradually evolves and his

caregiving challenges the traditional boundaries between programmed behaviour and real effectiveness (Murphy, 2024). The academic discourse surrounding the film highlights its involvement in future visions and anthropogenic disasters. In addition, companionship is represented through the film as a distributed and multispecies phenomenon that includes human, animal, and artificial entities (Temmen, 2022). This makes *Finch* (2021) amenable to posthumanist reading. As the film's characters develop, dialogue, visual rhetoric and narrative framing develop as well to reflect the themes of becoming a machine, multispecies kinship, care, legacy, and survival narrative. It exceeds beyond human paradigms and calls for a more careful examination of how the discourses surrounding AI deal with the limits and possibilities of human-machine coexistence.

2. Statement of the Argument

AI discourse in contemporary cinema, particularly within post-apocalyptic narratives, prompts critical posthuman research into how representation of human-machine-animal relationships challenge the concept of "Human Exceptionalism." Previous research explored AI discourse in cinema through different films, including *Finch* (2021). Namely, studies of Özbey (2024) and Temmen (2022) focused on describing the triad relationship between human-machine-animal using humanist theoretical framework. However, this research provides a posthumanist analysis of *Finch* (2021) examining triadic dynamic among human, machine and animal, emphasising the post-apocalyptic survival, legacy and multispecies care. Through a posthumanist lens, this research intends to explore AI discourse in *Finch* (2021) by analysing dialogue, visual codes and narratives depicting the triad relationship among human-machine-animal and the evolution of characters.

3. Research Questions

- How does *Finch* (2021) represent the human-machine-animal triad?

- In what ways does Jeff, the robot develop emotions and agency throughout his character arc in the film?
- How legacy is reconstructed as relational practice rather than biological transmission in *Finch's* post-Finch narrative.

4. Literature Review

Traditionally, cinema has depicted AI as a threat, monstrous entity, or humanity's adversary embodying what is often termed the "Frankenstein Complex." AI is portrayed as an uncontrollable force that threatens human dominance and independence. It constructs narratives of fear and rebellion. Previous foundational studies of science fiction films established a theoretical framework for understanding contemporary narrative representations of AI. Vivian Sobchack (1997) argues in *Screening Space* that science fiction cinema embodies the anxieties and cultural tensions associated with the mind, the body, and the future. Therefore, it has relevance to AI-centred post-apocalyptic films, where machines are represented as threat, dominant, and fear of dehumanisation and collapsing the civilisation. Similarly, in Nguyen's (2023) quantitative content analysis of AI representation in cinema, this historical context is comprehensively explored, revealing how early films consistently frame AI as antagonistic adversaries in a "Man vs. Machine" dichotomy. It emphasises the existential threats to humanity. One of the classic examples in this paper (Nguyen, 2023) is *The Terminator* (1984), where humanity's survival is threatened by an autonomous machine. Telotte (1992) identifies the pattern "Frankenstein's Complex" in this film, expressing fears that artificial beings may undermine human authority and autonomy. Consequently, the non-human is constructed as a threat, reinforcing anthropocentric perspectives rather than relational modes of coexistence. Moreover, Bukatman's (1993) analysis of *2001: A Space Odyssey* argues that the AI character, HAL 9000, rebellion is nothing but technological betrayal. Nguyen's (2023) findings highlight that such portrayals dominate pre-twenty-first century depictions, with AI often symbolised as

cold entities that portray humanity's hubris and vulnerability. It draws on references to these films to underscore how they perpetuate anxieties about AI overtaking human agency and society.

Recent theoretical advancements, particularly through the lens of posthumanism, advocate viewing machines not as inherent enemies but as entangled partners in a shared existence. This shift challenges earlier adversarial binaries, promoting collaborative hybrid relationships between humans and technology. In addition, posthumanist studies provide analytical tools to dismantle human-machine oppositions. Key posthumanist thinkers argue for recognising the "Entanglement" of humans and machines as fundamental to contemporary identity and ethics. They highlight that technology is not separate but interwoven with human life in relational ontologies. Posthumanism reimagines AI as co-creator rather than threat, fostering interdependence over domination. Rosi Braidotti (2013) challenges the traditional dualities of cinema through redefining subjectivity as distributed across human and artificial spheres. While Katherine Hayles (1999) completes this perspective through her argument that the boundaries between biological and artificial systems are being dissolved by cybernetic embodiment. Wolfe (2010) emphasises the ethical implications, advocating recognition of non-human agency essential for contemporary AI analysis. Similarly, Glasson (2020) reinforces this perspective, affirming it as foundational while also acknowledging the challenges it poses for accessibility. This theoretical constellation positions posthumanism as indispensable for interpreting *Finch's* hybrid representations. Alongside, Paul and Alan (2024) utilise a posthumanist perspective combined with schizophrenic analytical framework of Deleuze and Guattari to examine the psychological and subjective changes that arise through human-robot relationships in Becky Chamber *A Psalm for the Wild-Built* (2021). They argue that the reshaping of self and psychological perception in post-apocalyptic world is linked to encounters with conscious robots. Their analysis focuses on the human-machine binary, without paying

attention to the animal/nature dimensions, and thus the triad formation of human-machine-animal is outside their discussion.

While early science fiction positioned AI as existential threat, contemporary cinema explores machine care ethics and relational possibilities such as *Her* (2013) and *Ex Machina* (2014). Both have been analysed for their explorations of AI-human relationships, including themes of love, consciousness, and ethical dilemmas. As evidenced by *Her* (2013), the AI character Samantha provides companionship and emotional support to the isolated Theodore, illustrating the potential for human-AI emotional connections (Gelly, 2019). Conversely, *Ex Machina* (2014) complicates empathy through Ava's manipulative consciousness and probes machinic consciousness through posthuman lenses (Bhana, 2020). These developments signal cinema's negotiation of postmodern relationality. Nevertheless, interpretive studies identify emerging care narratives (Nguyen, 2023). That said, broader analysis of AI cinema (e.g., *Her*, *Ex Machina*) similarly do not address the triad configuration specific to *Finch*. To the best of our knowledge, no prior study of *Finch* (2021) applies posthumanist ethics of care theory to the human-machine-animal triad. Some researches were conducted on *Finch* (2021), investigating different dimensions from a humanist perspective. For illustration, Özbey (2024) expands the academic literature on *Finch* by applying a descriptive semiotic analysis, treating AI not merely as a technological tool, but a sociological sample of human hope and anxiety. Temmen (2022) offers an ecocritical descriptive reading of *Finch* (2021). It uses Robert Haynes's ecopoiesis (discursive terraforming), Chakrabarty's planetarity and Technoliberalism critique. The analysis addresses the triad relationship between human-machine-animal by applying humanist framework. It analyses *Finch* through the lens of Earth-becoming-Mars, Mars-colonisation narratives, and technoliberal fantasies of escaping a ruined planet. The study concluded that Jeff's development challenges conventional definitions of humanity by exhibiting emotional growth, relationality, and care. While Temmen's ecocritical framework draws on post-anthropocentric thinkers, his conclusion reinforces the human as the measure of value, which is

why it is categorised here as a humanist rather than posthumanist reading. The present study shares Özbey's (2024) semiotic method but applies a posthumanist theoretical vocabulary; drawn from Braidotti, Haraway, Deleuze and Guattari, and Hayles, to the same type of semiotic evidence, producing interpretive conclusions that depart from Özbey's humanist semiotic readings.

5. Aims of the Study

This research aims to explore AI discourse in *Finch* (2021) through a posthumanist lens, focusing on the relationship between human, machine, and animal and how it works in a post-apocalyptic context, deconstructing human exceptionalism and highlighting hybrid care. The objectives of this study are to examine the representation of the human-machine-animal triad in *Finch* (2021), analysing their interrelationships and hybrid dynamics; to trace the development of Jeff's character arc from mechanical functionality to emotional growth; and to analyse how legacy is reconstructed as a relational practice rather than biological transmission in *Finch*'s post-Finch narrative.

6. Significance of the Study

Based on our review of literature, the two identified studies of *Finch* specifically focus on describing the triad relationship from humanist perspective. Examining limitations of these earlier works offers a significant value, illuminating the discourse of AI in cinema. The research provides an interpretative analysis of the triad relationship between human-machine-animal through posthumanist theoretical lens. This investigation examines how *Finch* (2021) deconstructs human exceptionalism through multispecies kinship, legacy, hybrid care and post-apocalyptic survival. This research significantly contributes to posthumanist theory by analysing how *Finch* (2021) shifted the traditional human-centred narrative to human-machine-animal triad in a post-apocalyptic context. This study provides a new perspective for analysing AI discourse in films, particularly for teachers of literature and researchers of cultural and media studies, it

also serves as a valuable reference and guide for prospective students conducting similar research.

7. Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative case study, applying thematic analysis and semiotic close reading to the film *Finch* (2021) through the posthumanist theoretical lens. The adopted approach aims to enable an in-depth understanding of AI discourse in the 2021 *Finch* (Baxter, 2008). The study uses semiotic and dialogue analysis. This film was selected as a purposive case as it addresses posthuman themes: AI representation, the human-machine-dog triad, legacy, care and post-apocalyptic survival. Scene selection followed two procedures: (a) scenes representing triadic interactions and caregiving for the relational analysis, and (b) scenes portraying the post-apocalyptic environmental context as a structural catalyst for the binary breakdown, which provides the necessary precondition for the triadic analysis that follows. The analysis excludes scenes that lacked relevance to posthumanist themes, such as flashbacks of Finch's life, to maintain the focus of study on present tense relational dynamics rather than through pre-apocalyptic settings. In collecting data, we used the film *Finch* (2021) as the primary source. We watched the film multiple times to get a thorough overview. We transcribed the dialogue manually for deeper understanding. This included not only spoken dialogue, but also detailed notes on non-verbal such as Finch's physical frailty. For credibility and transparency of the analytical process, the research utilises theory-driven orientation, initiating its exploration from the predefined theory rather than relying on a purely data-driven approach. The process followed systematic steps: the first viewing was intended to familiarise oneself with the data. The second viewing was dedicated to note taking where we pay more attention to key scenes that involves interactions between Finch, Jeff the robot, and the dog Goodyear. Next, these scenes were broken down into codes; specific segments with descriptive labels. Finally, these labels were grouped into themes. This analysis adopts the posthumanist framework as deliberate theoretical lens, shaping the analysis foregrounding. The semiotic coding was conducted first,

identifying sign vehicles, assigning Peircean categories (iconic/index/symbol), and documenting interpretants. The thematic coding followed separately, generating descriptive labels and grouping them into themes per Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases. Consequently, the findings represent one interpretive path and alternative readings; humanist, ideological or psychoanalytic critiques, remain possible and provide different insights into the same scenes.

8. Structure of the Study

The dissertation is divided into two chapters. The first chapter outlines the theoretical framework of the study through examining the concepts of posthumanism, historical cinematic representations of AI and its evolution, and the major themes of post-apocalyptic setting such as survival narrative, legacy, and posthuman ethics of care in post-apocalyptic Earth that explores humans' struggle to endure through emotional connections, caregiving, and the preservation of meaning and values in devastated world. While the second chapter represents the posthumanist analysis of selected scenes from the film *Finch* (2021). This analysis is achieved through thematic and semiotic analysis, leading to interpret the representation of AI, the triad relationship and extract the major posthumanist themes such as multispecies kinship (Harraway, 2016), distributed cognition (Hayles, 1999), becoming a machine (Deleuze&Guattari, 1987) that is partially emergent, Braidotti's (2013) material-discursive assemblage, and post-apocalyptic themes that conveyed in the film.

CHAPTER ONE

From Humanism to Posthumanism in Film and Theory: A Review

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Introduction

To reach the aim set up in the General Introduction, exploring AI discourse through the analysis of the relationship between human-machine, and animal in post-apocalyptic context in *Finch* (2021), this chapter lays the foundation to posthumanist theoretical framework required to analyse the film. This chapter initiates by defining posthumanist as an analytical lens with a reference to humanism concept, highlighting the key ideas of the two movements to break the traditional human-machine binary, and the cinematic discourse. Then, it moves to explore the evolution of AI representation in cinema, emphasising the shift from the classic view of AI as a monster or threat to modern perspective of AI as a helper. Moreover, the chapter illuminates the survival narratives, legacy and ethics of posthuman care in postapocalyptic context. Ultimately, this chapter positions these themes to analyse how *Finch* (2021) portrays the human-machine cooperation.

1.1 Understanding Posthumanism (The Lens)

A clear understanding of posthumanism requires an examination of its theoretical foundations. This includes defining the concept, analysing its critique of traditional human/non-human binaries, and considering its application to cinematic discourse.

1.1.1 Defining the Concept

Posthumanism represents a challenge to the Enlightenment's depiction of the human subject because it rejects its notions of being a rational, autonomous, and exceptional entity. As Rosi Braidotti (2013) articulates in *The Posthuman* that it is impossible to be certain that everyone has always been human, or that they actually are. Braidotti's statement destabilises the unquestioned status of "the Human," revealing it as a category that changes over time rather than an intrinsic constant. Posthumanism represents a shift in conceptualising the human subject and its relationship to the broader world of non-human entities, including animals, machines, and ecosystems. To understand posthumanism, it is essential first to understand what it challenges:

Humanism, the philosophical tradition that emerged during the Renaissance and achieved its ultimate expression in Enlightenment thought. Humanism puts the human being at the centre of philosophical, ethical, and political concern. It asserts human exceptionalism based on attributes such as reason, language, self-awareness, and moral agency. The humanist tradition draws a sharp distinction between humans and all other beings. It positions humans as uniquely valuable with the capacity for meaning-making, moral reasoning, and symbolic production. Posthumanism endeavours to expose and deconstruct the exclusions upon which humanist ideology has been constructed. It challenges this anthropocentric arrangement, rather than positioning humans as exceptional beings standing apart from the material world. Furthermore, it engages in a critical examination of the human premises inherent in humanity and its dependence on hierarchical divisions such as human/animal, nature/culture, and organic/technological (Haraway, 2008).

By analysing how information technologies are changing identity and embodiment, N. Katherine Hayles (1999) offers a complementary viewpoint. In *How We Became Posthuman*, Hayles examines the evolution of the posthuman paradigm across time via the perspectives of information theory, cybernetics, and AI research. According to her, what distinguishes the posthuman state from others is the lack of boundaries and differences between human goals and the purpose of robots, computer simulation and physical existence, and biological organism and cyber mechanism. The significance of embodiment is not diminished by this dissolution of barriers. It highlights how physical forms are material. However, it investigates the premise that human consciousness is fundamentally superior to or distinct from other forms of intelligence and agency. Her "Posthuman" concept highlights how human cognition, perception, and action are already dispersed across biological and technological substrates. Hayles distinguishes between the liberal human self as autonomous and disembodied and posthuman subject as distributed and embodied. Posthumanism further insists on the materiality and positions of all human and nonhuman alike rather than erasing or transcending the body.

1.1.2 Breaking the Binary

Posthumanism contributes through its systematic deconstruction of the nature-machine binary. This binary relies on the assumption that nature is alive and valuable while machines are dead and merely instrumental. This binary has structured Western thought for centuries, organising not only philosophical and scientific discourse, but also other systems as well. Within this logic, humans possess intrinsic value and agency. While machines are inferior objects, they derive whatever significance they have solely from their usefulness to living subjects. Matter and discourse co-emerge; there is no nature "external" separate from the technological and symbolic systems through which they know and engage it. Besides, this reframing deals with technologies and biological processes as part of the same assemblages of becoming groups. It challenges the idea that machines are merely passive tools and nature is the only place for life (Braidotti, 2013). This shift opens space for recognising that robots; those designed for daily life practices might occupy positions within a more complex ethical network than the simple tool/agent dichotomy allows.

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "Becoming a Machine," drawn from *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) challenges the traditional humanist view of the atomic individual by reframing subjectivity as a process of deterritorialization. In this Context, the "Human" is not a fixed essence but a node within a larger network of functional linkages. Additionally, agency is distributed across groups of body, technology, and social systems (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). This perspective is foundational to posthumanism as it replaces the sovereign human subject with a relational ontology. It suggests that identity is always in a state of "Becoming" through its symbiotic connections with the nonhuman and the technological. Posthumanism demonstrates that the distinction between natural and artificial is not as clear as it might appear. As Hermann (2023) indicates the emergence of features that were considered as purely natural such as

learning and others in AI systems. This convergence between the biological and technological suggests that the nature-machine binary is not a reflection of fundamental ontological differences. Instead, it is a cultural construct that preserves human exception.

Despite that, tensions have emerged between the frameworks from the ontological and subjective side, but even if there is a tension, it does not mean their absence in the same framework. Ontologically, Braidotti's (2013) affirmative vitalism, where posthuman subject positioned through an instinct material-discursive process is in tension with Hayles's posthuman framework (1999) to information and knowledge, where the embodiments is treated as coupled with technical system but retains the distinction between media and cognition. As for subjectivity, Haraway's posthuman subject (2016), that is characterised by being relational and responsible and generated through ability and response, conflicts with Deleuze & Guattari's deterritorialized subject (1987). Since these tensions cannot be resolved synthetically, their presence in the same framework justified through these divisions. Relying on Braidotti's zoe-centred affective ethics associated with zoe-egalitarian difference are drawn up for normative framing of posthuman subjectivity and affective ethics. Hayles's (1999) concept of distributed cognition was relied upon for human-machine coupling analysis in digital culture. Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) "becoming a machine" and distributed agency to demonstrate the embodiment analysis, removing subjectivity. Haraway's (2016) multispecies kinship and Symptoiesis to demonstrate the triad relationship that include non-human. For this reason, posthumanism remains coherent because of this division, not because they are aligned.

Posthumanism has been subjected to much criticism for enabling celebratory technological readings rather than genuine human decentralisation. The concept "Posthuman" frequently applied loosely in film analysis to narratives that are about robots, AI, cyborg, and others without questioning assumptions about anthropocentrism, thereby continuing with ceremonial representations rather than criticism. This leads to a potential risk of making posthumanism as a marketing label for futuristic spectacle rather than as tools for embodying

subjectivity and moral relations. Ferrando (2019) addresses these points through a critical comparison of various posthumanist frameworks, arguing that not all discourses that claim to criticise humanism are equally critical, as some seek to dismantle existing assumptions while others ultimately reinforce them. She argues that some anti-anthropocentric and anti-dualist posthumanist frameworks may serve as tools for challenging human exceptionalism and its consequences. She insists that posthumanism must seek to dismantle human exception in reality instead of describing humans in advanced technological terms. Through this, posthumanism is considered critically differentiated lens rather than endorsement of technological modernity. This prompts her to discuss the distribution of effectiveness, the effect, and relationship across human and non-human actors. The posthumanist lens remains alert to danger of ceremonial posthumanism and is used to interrogate representations of AI, especially in post-apocalyptic worlds and caring relationships in order to limit or transform anthropocentrism. While other discourses that claim to be "posthuman" remain rooted in human assumptions and fail to decentre human subject (Ferrando, 2019).

1.1.3 The Cinematic Discourse

Cinema discourse is historically characterised by sign heterogeneity evolving from silent films with visual gestures and captions to a balanced system where verbal and visual components are equally essential. In semiotic analysis, sign of films is categorised into linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions. Both Slyshkin and Efremova (2004) and Zaichenko (2019) note that Peirce claims that each group contains distinct icons, indexes, and symbols. Linguistic means are represented by signs and symbols, whether written or oral. Although indexes and iconic signs are few in a language, film discourse employs both; indexes manifest through intonation, introjection and shifters. Iconic is realised via onomatopoeia (Mechkovskaya, 2017). The non-linguistic dimension of film discourse is represented by iconic and index signs which can be visual or audial. The audial part, natural noises, technical noise and music are index signs. The visual images, gestures, and facial expressions are iconic and index signs (Zaichenko, 2019;

Slyshkin & Efremova, 2004). The cinematic discourse consists of numerous subsystems with specific practices and functions, including language, staging and cinematography. These elements cover spoken dialogue, scene layout, lighting, and camera angles also post-production functions like sound mixing, musical scoring, and facial expression (Janney, 2012).

1.2 The Evolution of AI Representation in Cinema

Cinema has served as a space for exploring AI. It has known many representations of AI for years. The representation of AI has witnessed a noticeable evolution from the Frankenstein trope, where machines are represented as a threat and danger, to one of care, where they are seen as companions to humans.

1.2.1 The "Frankenstein" Trope

The representation of AI in cinema has a complex history. It shaped by cultural anxieties about technology, fear of obsolescence, and questions about the nature of consciousness and humanity. The earliest enduring trope in AI cinema is what can be called the "Frankenstein trope," named after Mary Shelley's 1818 novel *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. In this narrative pattern, a human creator brings into being an artificial entity that subsequently turns against its creator or against humanity. It threatens human life and social order, resulting in tragedy and destruction. The Frankenstein trope reflects deep-rooted concerns about technology, modernity, and the limits of human control. Gunkel (2000). argues that the cyborg character in popular culture often embodies fear, the dissolution of human identity, and the possibility of technology to exceed and replace humanity. These narratives reinforce anthropocentric hierarchies by positioning the human as the master and the machine as the dangerous servant. As in the film *Blade Runner* (1982), artificial beings' pursuit of humanity often ends in tragedy, underscoring the boundaries between authentic human life and artificial imitation. The Frankenstein trope falls into the first category, considering technology as a threat that must be overcome if humanity wants to survive. These narratives often end by reaffirming

human exceptionalism, where the protagonist resists the machine and restores the natural order. However, maintaining such goals is difficult in an era of environmental crisis, computing, and AI, where the boundaries between human and machine, nature and technology are increasing in this regard.

The Frankenstein trope found expression in mid-twentieth century science fiction cinema. In particular, in films that depicted AI systems as threats to humanity such as Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Kubrick, 1968). The film presented HAL 9000, an AI system that controls a space craft and turns against the human crew, killing most of them in a terrifying show. HAL's famous line: "I'm sorry, Dave. I'm afraid I can't do that" has become iconic, representing the moment when machine intelligence emphasises its own priorities over human commands. The film suggests that goals and values will develop to conflict with human interests, leading to catastrophic outcomes, through the development of AI systems.

Furthermore, James Cameron's *The Terminator* (1984) took this theme, depicting a future in which an AI system called Skynet becomes self-aware and launches a nuclear war to exterminate humanity. The film's cyborg killer, embodies the cold and inhuman nature of machine intelligence. *The Terminator* is incomprehensible, insensitive, and will not stop until its mission is complete. This representation of AI taps into primitive fears about being hunted and killed by an entity that is stronger than humans that lacks the emotional and ethical capacities that might curb its violence. These films and others like them established a dominant narrative structure in which AI represents a threat to human existence.

From a Braidottian posthumanist perspective, the Frankenstein trope can be understood as a defensive reaction against the challenge that AI poses to anthropocentric worldviews. By depicting AI as fundamentally alien and threatening, these films reassert human exceptionalism and suggest that the boundaries between human and non-human must be vigilantly maintained. The tragic outcomes in these narratives serve as cautionary tales about the

dangers of blurring these boundaries (Braidotti, 2013). The fear of replacing humans has spread at several levels. For instance, that machine will replace the workers in the economic fields. AI may transcend the current human intelligence. And that human discrimination may be eroded ontologically.

1.2.2 The Shift to "Care"

Beginning in the late twentieth century to the twenty-first, there was a remarkable emerge in cinematic representation of AI. Although it is not considered as dominant shift, it is still and emerging trend. Nguyen's quantitative analysis (2023) confirms that AI has been portrayed as merely a threat to humanity or as potential enemy, but there is a smaller culturally significant emergence of care-based representations that challenge the dominant framework. Beyond Frankenstein trope, narratives based on care and cooperation between humans and artificial beings emphasise emotional attachment. Robots are represented as being capable to care, empathy, and emotional connection and that depicted through the ability to care, act as companions, assistants, and as surrogate family members rather than as threats. This was shown through films such as *WALL-E* (2008), *Big Hero 6* (2014), and *Finch* (2021). By increasing the integration of machines into daily life and narrowing the conflict between human and machine. It opens the path for narratives of partnership instead of conflict. Teo (2021) asserts that memory-laden, community-oriented mutual care is revealed through cinematic representations of robotic caregivers. Through these films, robots are presented as capable of emotional connection and care that challenges Frankenstein trope. These films are prominent but marginal example of care-based trend. It does not weaken it, but rather enhances it, given that the posthuman representation.

Pixar's *WALL-E* (2008) exemplifies care-based AI. Through its titular robot who develops personality, curiosity, and capacity for love while left alone on an abandoned Earth. Gerdes (2015) notes that AI represented through themes of care, trust, and altruism in *WALL-E*,

turning the role of machine into a function of care and restoration collapsed world. Significantly, *WALL-E* exhibits more humanity through compassion, wonder, and determination. His relationship with EVE forms the emotional core of the film, expressing that artificial beings can experience something similar to love. Brown (2019) analyses *WALL-E*'s tactile curiosity and the elegant EVE as emotional performances that humanise mechanistic apathy. "Posthuman Effect" is highlighted through the sequence of the robot's hand-holding across species boundaries, challenging human exclusivity. Merit and Clarke (2016) conceptualise *WALL-E* and EVE as cyborg family in posthuman kinship, where robotic romance takes the place of biological reproduction. Through *WALL-E* tactile curiosity, the robotic embodiment humanised, while EVE's mentoring programming evolves into independent care. In this way, *WALL-E* completes Hollywood's representational evolution from existential threat to posthuman salvation, positioning him not as a threatened entity but as loving, irresistible guardian of life's renewal (Merritt, 2024).

As for *Big Hero 6* (2014), the healthcare robot BAYMAX becomes a surrogate family member offering both physical care and emotional support. The film suggests that his care is genuine rather than the merely simulated. AI in these narratives supplements and extends human relationships rather than replacing them, creating new forms of kinship that include non-human members. The robot becomes a gift rather than a threat, offering companionship, assistance, and wisdom. Teo (2021) discusses this film as a representation of care-based AI. Through the responsibility and care BAYMAX shows. He claims that BAYMAX's health care robot reveals memory-laden mutual care, challenging the replacement narrative and demonstrating the robot's ability to provide care, recognition, and collaboration. This positions BAYMAX as a key example of how contemporary cinema explores AI as restorative and relational caregivers.

Although care-based AI has been examined in films such as *Big Hero 6* and *WALL-E* (Teo, 2021; Brown, 2019; Merritt & Clarke, 2016), it has not yet been studied in *Finch* through a posthumanist ethics-of-care lens.

1.3 The Post-apocalyptic Context

The post-apocalyptic context refers to a narrative setting where the disasters occurred. These disasters led to the destruction and distribution of human civilisation. In this context, crucial themes were addressed and explored as pillar for survivors, including survival narratives, legacy, and ethics of posthuman care.

1.3.1 Survival Narratives

The post-apocalyptic genre has served as a space for exploring questions of survival, community, and the limits of human civilisation. It has taken a significant place in contemporary popular culture, appearing across multiple media including film, television, and literature. These narratives depict worlds where civilisation has collapsed due to catastrophic events (Moon, 2014). This left the survivors navigating a hostile and resource-scarce environment, making them wonder about what it means to be human in the absence of social order. These narratives emphasise the struggle for resources, violence, and the scarcity. It presents a Hobbesian vision of life as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (Hobbes, 1651, ch.13). In addition, the post-apocalyptic narratives provide a framework for exploring fundamental challenges about human nature, social organisation, and values in the absence of established institutions, laws, and social norms. Furthermore, within a context where survival is precarious and resources are limited, these narratives allow audiences to confront anxieties about contemporary social and environmental problems in a displaced and manageable form. On the other hand, fears about the catastrophic events are real and pressing, but they can be overwhelming when confronted directly. By projecting these fears into fictional futures, post-apocalyptic narratives provide a way to explore and work through these anxieties at a safe distance (Dickey, 2020).

The narratives often suggest that human resilience, ingenuity, and capacity for connection might enable survival and the rebuilding of meaningful communities. It further serves to highlight the contradiction between human and machine in ways that challenge traditional assumptions (Mohammed & Abdulridha, 2024). The traditional sources of meaning and value have been destroyed in a world where nature is destroyed and human civilisation is crumbled. The world has been changed from being a source of vitality, natural beauty, and renewal to a mere empty Westland. This led to the collapse of culture through the collapse of cities, knowledge, and everything around to become just as mere rubble (Moon, 2014). Hermann (2023) points out that post-apocalyptic AI narratives embody that artificial beings may be more suitable to survive rather than biological beings in deteriorating environments. And human existence is challenged through the reveal of traditional hierarchy between artificial and natural life. Alongside, survival narratives in post-apocalyptic settings raise questions about what is worth preserving and transmitting, whether it be knowledge, practices, values, or cultural artifacts.

1.3.2 Legacy

Legacy and cultural memory matter after societal collapse because they offer continuity, moral orientation, and a repository of what survivors consider essential to being human. They shape efforts to rebuild or deny the past (Wicks, 2014). The concept of legacy takes on particular significance in post-apocalyptic contexts. Traditionally, legacy emphasises the passing of knowledge, property, or values from one generation of humans to the next. It maintains cultural continuity and preservation of human achievements (Assmann, 2011). However, when post-apocalyptic narratives introduce nonhuman successors, this concept must be redefined in posthumanist terms (Braidotti, 2013). The Cinematic portrayals engage in a discourse of custodianship of that legacy, whether through isolated protagonists, nostalgic restorers, or community institutions. Consequently, framing the process of recovery as either an individual moral necessity or as a collective cultural endeavour (Murphy, 2024).

These depictions of legacy extend into narratives wherein humans endeavour to transmit knowledge, values, or a sense of humanity to non-human successors. This challenges the idea of whether cultural memory can be inscribed rather than simply preserved (Gane, 2005). Reimagining legacy has several implications such as requiring recognition that transmission is always a process of transformation about the mismatch between what has been passed on and received, and thus nonhuman successors reshape, adapt, and interpret human knowledge (Haraway, 2016). Additionally, the notion of legacy in post-apocalyptic narratives thus becomes a place for exploring posthumanist themes of relationality, co-constitution, and distributed agency. Legacy is a mutual not one-way transmission from human to nonhuman that depicted in these narratives. The process of transmission changes both parties, and what emerges is something new rather than a copy or continuation (Braidotti, 2013).

1.3.3 Ethics of Posthuman Care

The concept of care takes a significance in post-apocalyptic settings where survival remains precarious and resources scarce. Care requires emotional labour, practical skill, and sustained commitment over time. Care is not a mutual action between humans and robots, but rather a relational practice that develops gradually through interaction and shape both parties. In post-apocalyptic contexts, care becomes not a luxury but a necessity determining the difference between life and death. Donna Haraway's concept "Multispecies Kinship" emphasises the ethical and material entanglements between humans and other living beings such as dogs. She famously urges in her 2016 book *Staying with the Trouble* to "make kin, not babies" (p. 2). Additionally, Haraway argues that humans are always already "Sympoietic" made with others and that we must forge responsible relations with our "critter" companions to survive on a damaged planet (Haraway, 2016). This kinship rejects binary separations (human/animal, nature/culture) to promote ongoing entanglements for multispecies flourishing (Díaz, 2020). However, Haraway in her book *A Cyborg Manifesto* (1985), discusses the breakdown of rigid boundaries; she emphasises the significance of "Multispecies Kinship" by dismantling the human-machine-

animal triad, showing that identities are hybrid and constructed. This makes the kinship expand beyond the human beings and give a space to think outside the scope of human kinship. This is developed most directly in relation to human-dog co-evolution in *When Species Meet* (Haraway, 2008) and *The Companion Species Manifesto* (Haraway, 2003), which provide the primary theoretical apparatus for analysing Goodyear's role in the triad.

While becoming a machine dissolves the boundaries of the self through technological and systemic coupling, multispecies kinship reorients ethics toward a shared and interconnected existence with the biological "Other" (Bianchi, 2017). In this framework, what matters is whether the Care relationship produces positive effects of support, comfort, and flourishing. Braidotti's (2013) insistence on recognising difference within relationships provides a valuable corrective here. She reminds that the posthuman ethics requires acknowledging that non-human others may experience the world in different way from human experience. Contemporary films interrogate this anthropocentric delineation by depicting machines as entities capable of performing acts of care. DeFalco (2020) warns that programmed care may act as a form of potential affective manipulation. He distinguishes between directive-driven compliance and genuine virtue particularly, between mere task performance/compliance and more relational form of care that takes into account weaknesses. Recalling that the apparent care behaviour of artificial agents may not amount to the level of moral effectiveness.

Posthuman Theory interprets the performances of care machine as emergent outcomes of material-discursive practices. Care is produced in interaction, and machines become participants in ethical assemblages rather than mere instruments (Braidotti, 2013). This perspective emphasises that Care should be understood not as an internal state but as relational work. It is a set of behaviours that address needs, respond to vulnerability, and maintain conditions for flourishing. Even if a robot has subjective feelings similar to human emotion, it is still performing caregiving tasks when it feeds, defends, instructs, teaches, or soothes.

Conclusion

This chapter draws up a detailed account on posthumanism, exploring the evolution of representation of AI in cinema in post-apocalyptic context. It highlights the progressive change from viewing robots as mere tools to human partners. "Posthumanism" as articulated by scholars such as Cary Wolfe (2010) in her book *What Is Posthumanism?* and Rosi Braidotti (2013) in her book *The Posthuman*, deconstructs anthropocentric binaries, challenging the elevation of humans above animals and machines by emphasising their interconnected interplay. In post-apocalyptic cinema, this lens finds its ideal: survival narratives strip away the societal veneer, revealing the raw legacy of knowledge transfer and acts of care that transcend species boundaries. Here, the Frankensteinian idea is embodied in films such as *The Terminator* (1984) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), where AI embodies existential threats of replacement, making way for narratives of interdependence, as seen in *WALL-E* (2008) and *Big Hero 6* (2014). These stories reframe the image of machines, portraying them not as monsters but as caregivers, reflecting *Finch*'s world where the robot Jeff and the dog Goodyear become vital extensions of human survival. Together, these concepts constitute a posthuman ethics: in the face of the apocalypse, care emerges as a distributed capacity, forming partnerships that redefine humanity itself.

The next chapter is going to apply these themes in Miguel Sapochnik's film *Finch* (2021). An analysis will be provided on how *Finch* (2021) amplifies posthumanist themes through careful textual and semiotics examination. The analysis will deeply focus on key scenes of the legacy's transition from Jeff's Finch architecture to the robot's evolving "Vitality" to trace the transition from Frankenstein's fears to care-based alliances.

CHAPTER TWO

Reading *Finch* (2021): Scenes of Becoming, Kinship, and Care

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Introduction

While the previous chapter outlined the theoretical tenets of posthumanism and engaged with the debates around the shift of AI representation in cinema, the themes of survival, legacy, and the ethics of human care in postapocalyptic contexts, this chapter presents the analysis of the selected scenes from the film *Finch* against these theoretical concepts. The analysis is guided by the research questions raised earlier about the construction of AI discourse through posthumanist lens, through the focus on Finch-Jeff-Goodyear triad, destabilising human exceptionalism, and highlighting hybrid care. This chapter will answer these questions by semiotically and thematically analysing selected scenes from *Finch* (2021). In particular, it analyses the post-apocalyptic context as a catalyst. Then, examining the triad of Finch-Jeff-Goodyear and its development in relation to "Multispecies Kinship" (Haraway, 2016). Afterward, Jeff's embodiment as a process of physical evolution leads to emergent subjectivity, which is grounded in Braidotti's (2013) material-discursive assemblage and Hayles's (1999) concept of distributed cognition in relation to the partial emergence of "Becoming a Machine" (Deleuze&Guattari, 1987). Thereafter, analysing Jeff's linguistic evolution from code to kin. This will be achieved through analysing three scenes for each section, through the discursive functions such as cinematography, language, and staging, offering counter-reading as well.

2.1 The Post-apocalyptic Setting as a Catalyst

The post-apocalyptic setting, where everything is destroyed as a result of disasters, serves as a catalyst. *Finch* (2021) represents this nature. It forcibly leads to the deconstruction of the machine, nature, and culture ternary. This ternary also leads to deconstructing human exceptionalism. This section analyses this breakdown through three scenes that reflect the post-apocalyptic Earth.

The first scene reflects the beginning of the film. The camera is set amidst the loud winds to depict the scene naturally, making the viewer feel as if they were inside the scene itself.

Things are scattered everywhere because of the intensity of the situation. A hazardous post-apocalyptic landscape marked by relentless dust storms and pervasive ash. Through this shot, the director depicts it as an iconic sign for the reality of collapsed nature and its lifelessness and its danger to humans. The place is dominated by shades of grey as a sign of the death culture, orange as the risk of burning environment, and brown reflects the human's failure to save the ternary of nature, machine, and culture. The colour's choice operates as symbolic signs as established by conventional culture indicating danger. The emptiness of place; silence, no traffic, no crowds, no machines humming, but only rot, ash, and rust, reflects the removing of humans from being as the centre of everything.

In the second scene, Finch walks towards the winds to go to his RV. The director shows the RV from the above. The camera moves with a distant shot from the top to show the city and all roads covered with dust. The cars positioned randomly and scattered here and there, all buildings buried by ash, giving a sense of the breaking of nature and machines. The director chooses the song of "The American Pie" by Don Mclean for what its lyrics and melody symbolise, the meaning of losing the entire culture and the breaking of this ternary too. Semiotically, the song functions as a symbolic sign due to its connection to cultural loss which is mediated by its lyrics and nostalgic melodic register. The camera continues moving slowly to show every single detail. Through this scene, the director portrays the collapsed environment as an indistinct landscape in which individual features are difficult to discern.

Figure 2.1

Visual Representation of the Post-apocalyptic Earth



Note. Screenshot from *Finch* [Film] (04:32), by M. Sapochnik, 2021, Apple TV+. Copyright 2021 by Apple Studios.

As for the last scene, the music's choice of the director reflects that the place is similar to the countryside but barren now. The vision is blurry and all shots are far and prominent to highlight the earth left behind. Nothing appears except the yellow and brown colours of the entire place that refer to the remnant land where humans are no longer dominant, and all roads are cracked. Then a long shot from above the RV in the middle of a barren land road in four directions, suggesting loneliness, isolation, and insecurity. It became just undulating sand dunes where it is impossible to live for humans (Sapochnik, 2021, 28:47 - 30:38).

Figure 2.2

Devastated Visual Atmosphere of the Post-apocalyptic Setting



Note. Screenshot from *Finch* [Film] (29:29), by M. Sapochnik, 2021, Apple TV+. Copyright 2021 by Apple Studios.

Through the three scenes, nothing appears except the destroyed, deteriorated environment. These demonstrate that post-apocalyptic setting acts as catalyst for breaking this nature-culture-machine ternary, where everything is separable and the world is uninhabitable for humans, especially Finch. These scenes also emphasise the deconstruction of human exceptionalism, where Finch cannot live but non-human as Jeff can survive and live in normal way with what is left before.

2.2 Jeff's Embodiment: Distributed Cognition and Emergent Subjectivity

This section draws on Hayles's (1999) distributed cognition which argues that intelligent action is not located in a single individual but across human-machine-environment systems. It also employs Braidotti's (2013) material-discursive assemblages, which frame subjectivity as emergent from relational practices rather than fixed essence. Jeff's physical evolutions are analysed as moments where agency is distributed across the Finch-Jeff-Goodyear triad, destabilising the human/machine binary. This challenges the traditional views through the deterritorialization of subjectivity. It further leads to the deconstruction of human

exceptionalism, hence leading to the breakdown of human-machine binary. This section analyses this through scenes that show Jeff's embodiment. The first scene shows the destabilisation of speaking; the second scene shows the destabilisation of walking; and the third scene suggests the destabilisation of driving with a counter-scene.

In the first scene, Finch puts the last touches on his creation. The light is dim with soft music reflecting the special moment. The director shows the first appearance of the robot Jeff as an exceptional moment through a close up shot that expresses every detail, long, smooth, and oval orange head, its colour taken from Finch's hazard suit as an iconic sign. This suggests that Jeff as a robot is an independent creation due to the visual connection to his creator Finch. The visual connection implies that Jeff is not an entirely independent creation. Instead, the shared colour symbolism points to the emergence of a relational mode of existence rather than an autonomous entity, suggesting a form of distributed emotional subjectivity between Finch and Jeff. Moreover, his eyes are shaped like small black wheels that are taken from another machine, Dewey the robot dog. This is another iconic sign, suggesting that perception is re-biologically exclusive but can be mechanically generated. This further aligns with "Sympoiesis" that nothing makes itself. Numerous wires symbolise the depth and complexity as the core of humanity are also in Jeff. The wires serve as an icon of neural density, establishing that the material base for complexity is not biologically exclusive. In line with Hayles's (1999) concept of distributed cognition, this destabilises the idea that complexity is only human. He has no mouth which suggests that Jeff's expressivity will not be primarily linguistic. When the power button is pressed, Jeff raises his head. Finch repeatedly attempts to communicate with him and waits for a response; however, Jeff remains unresponsive. The first nodding of Jeff comes as a response to Goodyear not Finch. This showcases the non-dominance of humans and suggests a form of distributed subjectivity in which the subject's first orientation is toward the non-human (Sapochnik, 2021,14:18 - 17:32).

Figure 2.3

Close-up shot of Jeff's Eyes Design



Note. Screenshot from *Finch* [Film] (15:03), by M. Sapochnik, 2021, Apple TV+. Copyright 2021 by Apple Studios.

The next scene is when Jeff responds. At first, it is just a jumble of words mixed with Goodyear's barking. Jeff repeats Finch's first two words, saying, "Say something." His response suggests that language is not only a tool of communication but a relational practice that formed the identity. This suggests that subjectivity is not pre-programmed but emerges through relational participation. This moment further suggests that speaking is neither a human expression nor programmatic output, but rather a practice that strikes a line between language as human property or machine operation.

In the second scene, when Finch realises that the storm is about to hit and his condition is worsening, he increases Jeff's transfer rate even though only 72% of the data is transferred. This implies that Jeff is superior to the human, thus breaking the human-machine binary. Then, the director shows when Finch adjusts Jeff's limbs, giving him disproportionate ones that are not suited to his balance which suggests the imbalance relationship between human and machine too. Thus, Jeff's overall appearance is clearly evident in the long shot: extremely tall and lanky and his entire mechanical structure exposed. His appearance indicates that even

agency and subjectivity do not require the human biological form. The camera shifts to a long shot that frames Finch and Jeff together as Finch says, "Look at me and imitate me. Walk in place." This demonstrates that Jeff combines mechanical computation in ambient visual cues processing with relational practice in simulating Finch's rhythm and movement patterns. This reveals that walking itself is neither an exclusively biological act nor a purely mechanical process but a practice in which the boundaries between what belongs to human and machine are blurred which destabilise the human-machine binary. Additionally, Jeff's imitation of Finch's movements demonstrates that his abilities emerge through observation, interaction, and practice rather than from an inherent or pre-existing identity. This portrayal presents identity as relationally constructed rather than internally fixed. It also shows adaptation not as human characteristic but as relational practices that appear in any other being which suggests the deconstruction of authentic humanity (Sapochnik, 2021,23:44 - 28:48).

Figure 2.4

Medium shot of Jeff's Mechanical Appearance



Note. Screenshot from *Finch* [Film] (25:51), by M. Sapochnik, 2021, Apple TV+. Copyright 2021 by Apple Studios.

A subsequent scene illustrates the discrepancy between Jeff's intended meaning and Finch's interpretation, as reflected in the following dialogue:

“Jeff: Guess what?

Finch: What?

Jeff: I saw it in my head

Finch: In your head?

Jeff: The three of us were on the Golden Gate Bridge, like a painting that hasn't been yet

Finch: Wow! you had a dream?” (Sapochnik, 2021, 01:28:19-01:28:50).

Through this scene, when Jeff said that he saw himself with them in his head, Finch translates this as a human act, the dreaming of Jeff. This suggests that Jeff had a visual experience generated inside him and he reports it on his own without directive instructions. This reveals the emergence and the development of Jeff's subjectivity, including internal perception rather than just spontaneous behaviour. At the same time, Finch's reaction indicates that Jeff's speech is being understood as something genuinely human in origin rather than as a mechanical output such as stored data or predictive simulation; however, Finch is unable to interpret anything beyond human terms. Thus, a humanitarian label imposed on him, explaining an inhuman experience through a human framework. This suggests that anthropocentrism did not disappear completely.

As for the third scene, after Jeff insists on driving, considering it as a fantastical feat. Jeff starts the RV. During this moment, the use of a close-up shot creates the feeling that the viewer is inside the RV with them. The lighting is natural in an empty place. Jeff manages to control the RV and drive straight in an amazing way. Then, out of sheer excitement, he puts his head on the steering wheel which shows that subjectivity does not stem from Jeff only, but is shaped by Finch's happiness, Goodyear's presence, and Jeff's perception. This suggests

distributed affective subjectivity, honking the horn to celebrate his success, deconstructing human exceptionalism. This scene reveals that agency is distributed across the human-machine-dog triad rather than limits it to humans only. This scene further demonstrates that driving is neither an exclusively human skill nor a purely mechanical function, but rather an act that strikes the line between human control and automated performance which destabilise human-machine binary.

These three scenes vividly illustrate the destabilisation of physical evolutions. Hayles's (1999) distributed cognition and Braidotti's (2013) material-discursive-assemblages are evident in these destabilisations. This leads to the dismantling of Finch-Jeff binary, indicating that identity is formed through relational practices not authenticity. The agency distributes between both. This underscores that even if humanity were to disappear, the world was to be destroyed, Jeff survives. and nothing limited to humans only which deconstruct human exceptionalism. This indicates that Jeff's speaking, walking, and driving destabilises human-machine binary. However, the subsequent scene suggests continued anthropocentrism.

2.3 "From Code to Kin" The Linguistic Evolution

"From Code to Kin" relates to the linguistic evolutions that occur in non-human as represented in *Finch* (2021) through Jeff. It reflects the evolutions of language from code as raw and functional to being Kin, making the language more socio-cultural, representing the transition from immediate, accurate answers to answers on which social relations are based. This section analyses this transition through the dialogue of Finch and Jeff through three scenes: the first one shows their first conversation; the second scene reflects their conversation about trust; and the third scene reflects Jeff's humour with Goodyear (Sapochnik, 2021).

Finch: So, tell me something interesting.

Jeff: Giraffes can survive without water longer than camels.

Finch: Is that a fact?

Finch to the dog: I bet you did not know that.

Jeff: Kangaroo rats can survive longer than giraffes. Did you know?

Finch: okay, okay, okay. Tell me something interesting about you?

Jeff: I have four primary directives

Finch: What is the first directive?

Jeff: first directive: A robot cannot harm a human or, through inaction, allow a human to be harmed.

Finch: What about the fourth directive?

Jeff: In Finch's absence, the robot must protect the welfare of the dog. This directive supersedes all other directives. (Sapochnik, 2021, 17:37-18:43)

The first scene represents Jeff and Finch's first conversation with each other in the presence of Goodyear. The director highlights the scene through close-up shots that all appear depending on who speaks. The shot-reverse-shot functions symbolically in this scene. As this pattern signifies equal dialogue participation, constructing Jeff as a genuine interlocutor rather than a programmed responder. The light on their faces, with no background music used to direct the attention to their voices. Through their dialogue, the director shows that all of Jeff's are accurate, fixed, and functional statistics and concepts. This suggests that Jeff's abilities are superior to what human beings can be as he is in the code phase. Through the fourth directive, it appears that Jeff was designed with a specific purpose, the main one being to continue with Goodyear, protect him, become his friend, and carry out everything related to that. Additionally, the moment when Finch asks him about something interesting, Jeff tells him about a fact involving giraffes and camels. This moment indicates that Jeff's data retrieval is purely instrumental, with no communicative intent in the human sense, no social framing, and no emotional tone. This suggests that he has not yet developed the socio-emotional intelligent

necessary for relational participation and engagement in relationships. Jeff's processing of data retrieval, Goodyear's barking and the context switching constitutes a distributed communicative act that no human dyadic dialogue can accommodate. This is a nonhuman specific mode according to Braidotti's zoe-egalitarian framework that she labels as a mechanical mode of participation that exceeds human communicative categories.

Finch: Moving at night presents that which is not predictable. People. Starving people hiding in the shadows. People who mean you harm. People you cannot trust.

Jeff: But why? How do you know you can't trust those people?

Finch: Because trust will get you killed. Trust no one.

Jeff: You're mad at me again.

Finch: Look, things will happen to you. Things that you cannot control. Raw emotion will find you.

When it does, how you deal with it, what you do... will define who you are.

Jeff: Did that happen to you?

Finch: It happens to all of us. Whether we want it or not (Sapochnik, 2021, 59:54–01:01:20).

The next scene represents Jeff and Finch's conversation about trust. The director chooses this scene to be at night with natural light through a wood fire surrounding them, where the details of their faces appear clearly. The firelight illuminating both faces is an iconic sign that mirrors mutual visibility and access, reflecting the relational openness of their conversation. The camera moves between them every time the other speaks. This conversation shows that Jeff is in the Kin phase through the questions he asks about trust. This conversation shows that Jeff marks a great development, as his speech is spontaneous and not just strict statistics and data as it was before. He tries to understand, gives his point of view, and even recognises the moment Finch is upset with him. This scene indicates that language is built through relational practices and

interaction with others, dismantling the human-machine binary. Besides, the language is relational, not biological, this scene further points out that Jeff does not stick to one identity, but rather continues to evolve by the development of his relationship and his speech.

Finch: Now you try it. Yeah. Yeah. You throw it. Go ahead. Throw it. This kind of stuff's important.

Jeff (to Goodyear): Where's your ball? Where's your ball? Is it here? Is it here?

Finch: (quietly) just throw it.

Jeff (to Goodyear): Is this you ball? Is this your ball? Here, boy. Where's your ball? Come on? Hey, Finch!

Jeff (To Goodyear): Here. Boy. Come on, boy. No. Come on, boy. No (Sapochnik, 2021, 01:34:15-01:35:02).

As for the third scene, it represents the moment Jeff plays with Goodyear in a safe place. The scene was taken in a spacious, empty place with sunlight, with a long shot edit. The long shot framing Jeff and Goodyear together serve symbolically to represent their growing companionship and shared trust. Cinematically, shared-frame long shots signify relational unity, which visually constructs their achieved kinship. Through Jeff's humour and speech during that moment, it suggests that Jeff reached the peak of kinship. Then due to that he dismantles human exceptionalism as well through breaking the idea that humans are dominant; and humour and play are not limited to Finch only, but can be in the non-human, Jeff. This happens through the relationship between them and the distribution of agency among them. This scene shows that human behaviour is not fixed, as humans do not have a static identity. However, the non-human Jeff does not remain stable either, but is always in the process of developing in an unusual way.

Through these scenes, the realisation of Jeff's transition from code to kin highlighted through his linguistic evolutions that occurred to him. Jeff moves from one relational mode;

nonhuman; specific data retrieval without social framing, which Braidotti's zoe-egalitarian framework values as a mechanic mode of participation in its own right, toward another relational mode of affective engagement. These modes do not represent a step toward human normativity but both of which constitute forms of participation within the distributive network, and this leads to the dismantlement of human-machine binary. This evolution led to the result that nothing was limited to humans only, demonstrating it through Jeff. The distribution of agency here also proves that human Finch is not the sole guide and controller of every action or behaviour, but rather is part of a relational network between him, Jeff and Goodyear. Even the destroyed environment here participates in this distribution of agency. This suggests that human exception is an illusion, not a reality. Therefore, all decisions regarding care and survival do not depend solely on Finch, but are the result of their interaction together; even curiosity and questioning are not limited to humans alone.

2.4 "Multispecies Kinship" The Triad

Haraway (2016) concept "Multispecies Kinship" refers to building relational bonds between human and non-human such as machine and animal, challenging human-animal binary. The concept emphasises shared, mutual, and interconnected life with responsible relationships. In which asserts are based on "Sympoiesis" and in relation to Hayles's (1999) distributed cognition. *Finch* (2021) represents this through Finch-Jeff-Goodyear, which is captured across three scenes. The first scene reflects the moment of naming Jeff; the second scene reflects the moment Jeff's care for Finch; and the third scene shows the moment where they escape together to survive.

In the scene, after everyone survives the storm, they are all sitting inside the RV. The light is dim; the camera slowly zooms in for a close-up of Goodyear. He is sleeping peacefully, showing how warm he feels in their presence, then moves over to Jeff and Finch. The slow zoom into Goodyear sleeping form represents symbolic sign to emotional intimacy, portraying the

security produced by the triad's co-presence. They are sitting at the table facing each other. The light shining on their faces, the camera places them as equals as family. This scene reflects the moment of choosing the name Jeff. Jeff's integration and involvement with them is evident, that their relationship is relational not biological, and formed through interaction and participation. This shows that family is not natural given, but rather a relational achievement. In contrast, once Jeff chooses his name, he waits for Finch's approval. This shows that his identity is not completely independent, but rather remains hostage to human recognition. A humanist interpretation would frame Jeff's naming as identity acquisition. A posthumanist reading reveals that acquisition remains uneven, which means that Jeff's identity is relationally formed yet still depends on Finch's permission. This exposes the fragility of posthuman kinship within lingering human dominance (Sapochnik, 2021,42:30 - 44:25).

The next scene is shot inside the RV, representing the moment when Jeff takes care of Finch as his illness worsens. He takes a white-water bottle and wet a small white towel. While Finch shivers from the pain, Jeff goes closer to him and turns him onto his back to put the damp towel like a compress on his forehead to reduce his fever. Semiotically, the damp towel, physically contiguous with Jeff's action and Finch's body represent an index sign. Then, he puts his hand on Finch's head to be with him and looks at him. His care suggests that care does not move from Finch to Jeff, but also from Jeff to Finch. This care is coded "Sympoiesis." Goodyear recognises the kindness of Jeff. This scene embodies the tenderness and warmth within Jeff. The calm music in the scene signifies an expressing moment, conveying the depth of Jeff's care for both Finch and Goodyear. Hence, posthumanist analysis of this scene demonstrates that care requires no internal empathy but material-discursive output of programming, shared embodiment and environmental necessity (Sapochnik, 2021,01:02:40 - 01:04:41).

In the third scene, the music serves as an indication of the imminent danger facing them. Finch and Jeff rush to the RV. Jeff wears the green jackets that he found, while Goodyear sits in the front seat. This scene reflects the moment someone chases them. The director uses

faster, stressful music. At this moment, the camera shows the RV appearing in a very long shot heightening the tension, creating a sense that the viewer is living inside the scene itself, accompanied by a scene of a mystery and fear of not being able to survive (Sapochnik, 2021, 01:10:46 - 01:17:18). Their attempts to survive suggests that nothing creates itself, but rather every entity produced through its relationship and connection with others as all linked to each other, suggesting "Sympoiesis." It represents the moment of their escape and attempt to hide so that they can all survive, which dismantles the idea of independence and self-sufficiency. In addition, their interaction together reveals the notion of Hayles (1999) that cognition is distributed among them, such that if it is distributed, the action is inevitably collective. In contrast, Jeff's initiative to push the RV under the tunnel poses a complication for posthuman reading because his action does not arise from Finch's direct guidance, it may seem that agency has shifted from a relational process to an individual capacity exercised by Jeff. However, from a Harawayan perspective (2016), this initiative would not have been possible without Finch's earlier guidance, suggesting that Jeff's agency remains fundamentally relational. Jeff's actions emerge from his interactions and relationships with Finch and Goodyear, while the collapsed environment further shapes this development by creating circumstances that demand interdependence and cooperation. In addition, the distributed capacity is possible because this initiative is impossible with Jeff's physical strength, Finch's assessment of the severity of the danger, and Goodyear's presence. Which makes the survival necessary, encoding that Jeff's response was not an individual act, but a distributed response within their relational network. On the other hand, the moment after their survival, Finch gets out of the RV and walks towards Jeff. A heated conversation takes place between them.

“Finch: It is over.

Jeff: No, we cannot give up, I will not allow you to give up.

Finch: You will not allow it? Well, you do not get to decide because you're just a machine.” (Sapochnik, 2021, 01:17:07- 01:17:18).

Through this Jeff tries to push him not to give up because of what happened, but Finch screams and reminds him that he is just a machine that cannot decide about anything. This suggests that no matter how he is programmed, it does not mean that he can decide. This moment indicates that Finch control and dominance still exist despite all the circumstances.

These scenes illustrate their connection to each other and their bond is not biological but a relation based on "Multispecies Kinship." Although Jeff did not have complete autonomy, they are all connected, referring to "Sympoiesis" that appears through their interaction. In addition, while previous studies show machines as a threat, Jeff changes this idea through his compassion and traits. These scenes further depict a relationship rooted in both care and survival. Although Jeff's interpretation through human-like traits threatens to reinforce human exceptionalism, Hayles's (1999) cognition distribution suggests that intelligence and agency emerge between them through their interaction. His significance lies not in becoming human, but being part in this interconnected relationship. In addition, by Jeff's care of Goodyear, his functional behaviour changes. Then Goodyear's response to him changed from caution to trust, and thus Finch's legacy is achieved not as an emotional memory but as a reshaping of Jeff's behaviour structure. Drawing on Haraway's (2016) concept of multispecies kinship, indicates that this triad stays together through their constant interaction not to become similar to a surrogate family. Additionally, these scenes reflect the distributed capacity among them. However, Finch's dominance still exists, this suggests the posthuman fragility as well.

2.5 Reprogramming the Legacy

Reprograming the legacy theme refers to reevaluating and re-altering the foundational humanist assumptions that view humans as the primary agents who constitute and sustain civilization. Through this, the anthropocentric view changes to a relational one that

recognises the interconnectedness between human and non-humans. This theme is represented in the film following Finch's death, as Jeff and Goodyear continue their journey together in the post-apocalyptic world. This section reflects the analysis of three scenes that closely linked to this theme: the first scene reflects the moments immediately after Finch's death, when Jeff remains with Goodyear; the second scene depicts Jeff feeding and playing with Goodyear; and the third scene presents the film's ending, in which Jeff and Goodyear continue their journey together.

In the first scene, early in the morning, there is a long shot of the RV in an empty place. The solitary RV in an empty landscape, functions symbolically to signify isolation and continuation. This scene reflects the moment after Finch's death and Jeff and Goodyear stay together. The director chooses to give the scene a calm and silent sense. Goodyear hovers over Finch's bed and smells it to express his craving. Meanwhile, Jeff is outside walking and carrying the RV gas to fill it. A close up shot of him as he rests his head on the car sadly during that. Although Finch dies, his legacy persists in Jeff, whose actions and expressions reveal the lasting influence of their relationship on his behavioural development. The moment suggests the code of human-mirroring-behaviour. All of this is part of the legacy that continues with Jeff. Thus, legacy is not considered as something biological transmitted through blood, but rather is a set of behaviours and practices that are transmitted from Finch to Jeff, breaking the idea that legacy is exclusive to humans only. When Jeff sees an orange butterfly with black-edged wings flying toward the RV, the sun's rays illuminate his back, as if offering a glimmer of hope that encourages him to move forward with Goodyear (Sapochnik, 2021,01:41:22 - 01:41:58).

In the second scene, a close up shot at the moment where Goodyear and Jeff are sitting next to each other inside the RV. Both mourn Finch's death. While Jeff thinks about what to do. An idea crosses his mind when he remembers Finch that he has to feed Goodyear. Jeff brings Goodyear's canned food from the refrigerator and opens it through a specific place in the middle of his body. Then Jeff takes out the can, turns to Goodyear and empties his food into his

eating bowl. Although his behaviours are explicitly imposed by the fourth directive, this does not mean reducing it to only mere procedural execution. Through the previous studies of Braidotti's (2013) notion, "material-discursive assemblages" appear here. Based on this notion, care can be understood as nothing but a relational result that arises through the intertwining of programming, emotional effect, and social interaction. All Jeff's behaviours are considered as a form of care, not just mechanical execution of instructions. The next moment shows Jeff's care also when he plays with Goodyear. This moment encodes directive-based care too which suggests a form of legacy. The authentic legacy achieved when care goes beyond direction and becomes independent relational practices that Jeff carries as choice not as instruction. Thus, it disintegrates the human exception and that even the human care does not begin as free action. The camera shows the RV in a very distant shot when they leave for San Francisco. The distant RV shot symbolically constructs traditional association of road travel with forward movement. This reflects that the legacy is an ongoing relational practice rather than a fixed point. The director shows that the relationship between Goodyear and Jeff gradually becomes closer. The moment where Jeff remembers his playing with Goodyear and even his happiness suggests that these behaviours are not limited to humans only but can also occur between non-human beings (Sapochnik, 2021, 01:41:59 - 01:45:48).

In the final scene of the film, Jeff and Goodyear arrive at the Golden Gate Bridge. This location holds special significance for Finch, who had always wished to visit it. Jeff buried Finch's ashes in a greenish place, full of tiny purple flowers. He puts up a wooden sign with his name engraved on it 'Finch Weinberg' and added the phrase "Loved by Goodyear and Jeff." The engraved names on the wooden sign symbolically reflect a cultural convention, which once again redefines legacy through relational naming rather than biological lineage. Jeff hangs the San Francisco postcard where he drew the three of them together in the Bridge. During the last moment, the director puts the song that Finch loves with a distant shot of Jeff and Goodyear walking together to go where the RV parked. The rhythm of the song becomes loud, this

suggests that the film concludes with the two survivors remaining together, indicating that Jeff's care endures beyond his death. Their continued survival remains connected to Finch, as Jeff extends his care for Goodyear through the relational practices that emerged from his shared life with Finch. This indicates that legacy is not an intentional choice but also exists through Jeff-Goodyear binary (Sapochnik, 2021, 01:45:49 - 01:47:23).

These three scenes portray that after Finch's death, Jeff stays with Goodyear, acting as caregiver as what Finch had done before his passing. Jeff fulfils Goodyear's physical and emotional needs by providing nourishment, companionship, and continuous support. As a result, their relationship enhances the conditions for survival and enables the ongoing provision of care beyond Finch's presence. These scenes indicate that what is passed on to Jeff is not a fixed human essence but a series of relational practices that enable care, companionship, and survival. Emerging through his interactions with Finch, these practices allow Jeff to continue the network of relations that sustains Goodyear. Thus, Jeff's importance derives not from his human likeness but from his capacity to participate in and extend these relational processes. While the effect may not be the same, it may be similar or even better than what humans are used to do before. It is safer because humans die but the machine can survive longer than they did. Since the flashback was left out, it remains as part of Jeff's incomprehensible legacy. Therefore, any claim related to this legacy must be conditional on this restriction.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed fifteen scenes from *Finch* (2021) across five posthumanist categories, the post-apocalyptic setting functions as catalyst that collapse nature/culture/machine boundaries; Jeff's embodiment through becoming a machine to depict the distribution of cognition and emergent subjectivity with partial emergent of becoming a machine; from code to kin that illustrated through Jeff's linguistic evolution; multispecies kinship embodied through the triad relationship as relational practice; and reprogramming legacy in post-apocalyptic Earth

functions as relational practice rather than biological transmission. Jeff's human-like behaviour can be understood through Braidotti's (2013) notion of material-discursive assemblages as his caregiving practices emerge not from an innate human essence but from the directives, relationships, and interactions that shape his development. Jeff's legacy remains partially incomprehensible due to the absence of Finch's flashbacks, which would otherwise have provided additional narrative and emotional context for his actions and directives. Jeff continues to live with Goodyear after Finch's death based on what he witnessed from Finch and based on their relational practices. Across all sections, however, the film shows that posthumanist emergence remains partial. This was demonstrated through the naming scene, the dream scene, and Finch's dominant scream "you're just a machine" (Sapochnik, 2021).

Ultimately, the findings of posthuman ethics of care reading of *Finch* (2021) expands on the multiplanetary discourse analysis findings by Temmen (2022). This perspective positions Jeff's development as a humanist transformation and conceptualises the triadic relationship as an evolving relational dynamic between the robots. Whereas our analysis demonstrates that Jeff's trajectory is not the discovery of humanity but the emergence of a non-human relational mode within persistence anthropocentric constraints.

General Conclusion

The dissertation employed a posthumanist reading of AI discourse in *Finch* (2021). This was achieved through the examination of the triad relationships between Finch, Jeff, and Goodyear in post-apocalyptic Earth. It traced the robot Jeff's embodiment through which human-machine binary destabilised. The study further examined the reconstruction of Jeff's legacy as relational practice. A qualitative case study was employed, and thematic analysis along with semiotic close reading were conducted; selected scenes from the film were utilised as the main unit of the analysis because they constitute the internal discursive elements necessary for addressing our research questions. The findings revealed posthumanist themes such as care, legacy, survival narrative, "Multispecies Kinship," and "Becoming a Machine" through the Earth of post-apocalyptic, the triad relationship of Finch, Jeff, and Goodyear, Jeff's character arc, and through Jeff-Goodyear continuation after Finch's death.

The findings of this study revealed through the posthumanist reading of AI discourse that the post-apocalyptic landscape was vulnerable to posthuman reading where living is difficult for humanity. This world led to the deconstruction of nature-culture-machine ternary that was portrayed through indexical and iconic signs. The findings revealed that Finch-Jeff-Goodyear triad was a relationship based on relational practices through mutual interaction and coexistence with each other. It further demonstrated that this triad was based on Sympoiesis, meaning that

everything made by all of them and all connected to each other, distributed capacity, and based on Hayles's (1999) distributed cognition. This led to the theme of Harraway's (2016) Multispecies Kinship that was depicted through this triad. Then, through tracing Jeff's linguistic and physical evolutions, highlighting the destabilisation of human-machine binary. It further revealed that agency, affective subjectivity, and perception distributed among them, and thus living, acting, and deciding jointly among them and based on deterritorialization subjectivity as well. That said, the study identified the theme of Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) "Becoming a Machine" in Jeff's arc as a becoming that is partially emergent within designed constraints. In this construction, Jeff operates within persistent anthropocentric limits rather than escaping them.

Additionally, this study offered few counter-reading as well. Jeff's anthropocentric re-coding by Finch in the dream scene (Section 2.2), his reliance on human permission for identity in the naming scene (Section 2.2) and Finch's reassertion of dominance at the moment of crisis (Section 2.4) limited the scope of the deconstruction of human exceptionalism. Thus, the findings of the study represented one interpretive path and alternative readings such as humanist and psychoanalytic critique, providing different insights into the same scene. In this regard, the findings revealed a sustained tension between posthumanist relational emergence and residual anthropocentric structuring. Jeff's naming remains hostage to human recognition. Finch's "you're just a machine" (Sapochnik, 2021) reinforces human dominance, and the dream scene shows Finch interpreting Jeff's inhuman experience through human frames. The film destabilises rather than fully dismantle human exceptionalism.

The limitations of this study include applying it to *Finch* (2021) only, which does not allow for the generalisation of findings to other similar studies. The study did not explore the flashback scene, Jeff's legacy remains partially comprehensible, leading to the absence of findings related to this.

Despite the limitations, this dissertation aims to contribute through the application of posthumanist perspective for AI discourse analysis. It provided the key themes of posthumanist theory. It further provided an interpretive framework that goes beyond anthropocentrism discussion of previous film's studies. The study expanded discussions about traditional cinematic representations, challenging human-machine binary. Moreover, it depicted the human-machine-animal triad. It further contributed through extending discussion in media and technology studies about the destabilisation of human exceptionalism and the emergence of posthuman care and subjectivity. To sum up, the study provided a new perspective for studying cinematic AI discourse for both literature teachers and researchers in media and cultural studies. It is further represented as a valuable reference for students who will conduct similar research in the future.

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Appendix

Section	Sign Medium	Peircean Category	Object
2.1	Grey ash covering landscape	Symbol	Remnants of devastation
2.1	Empty roads, no traffic	Symbol	societal collapse
2.1	"American Pie" song	Symbol	Lyrical represent loss
2.2	Orange head (same as Finch's suit)	Index	Material origin in Finch's suit
2.2	Wheel-shaped eyes from Dewey	Icon + index	Visual connection through material transfer
2.2	Jeff's absence of mouth	Symbol	speech requires mouth
2.2	Jeff's nodding to Goodyear	Indexical	caused by Jeff's non-human relational logic

2.2	Jeff's head on steering wheel+ horn	Icon	Human Affect through posture and sound
2.3	Shot-reverse-shot (who speaks)	Symbol	Shared conversational participation
2.3	Long shot of Jeff + Goodyear playing	Symbol	Showing Shared frame = unity
2.3	Giraffe/camel fact (no social framing)	Index + Symbol	Purely instrumental retrieval = nonhuman specificity
2.4	Slow zoom into sleeping Goodyear	Symbol	slow magnification creates intimacy
2.4	Damp white towel on Finch's forehead	Index	Related to Jeff's care behaviour
2.4	RV pushed under tunnel (initiative)	Index	Caused by Finch's previous directive and environmental pressure
2.5	Extreme long shot of solitary RV	Symbol	The motif of isolation and continuation
2.5	Wooden sign "Finch Weinberg — Loved by Goodyear and Jeff"	Symbol	Conventional Meaning through Written Language
	Butterfly (orange.		Colour link to Finch

2.5	Linked to Finch's suit)	Index + Symbol	(index) + butterfly = transformation(symbol)
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الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة خطاب الذكاء الاصطناعي في فيلم "فينش" (2021) من خلال منظور الفكر ما بعد الإنساني. وتهدف إلى دراسة تمثيل الذكاء الاصطناعي في الفيلم من خلال تفكيك الإستثناء البشري، وفحص العلاقة الثلاثية التي تجمع بين الإنسان "فينش"، و الروبوت "جيف"، و الكلب "جووديير"، وتتبع تطور تجسّد جيف، وتحليل إعادة تشكيل الإرث بوصفه ممارسة علائقية في سياق عالم ما بعد الكارثة. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف، اعتمدت الدراسة منهج دراسة الحالة النوعية، مع اختيار مجموعة من المشاهد اختياراً قصدياً وتوظيف القراءة السينمائية الدقيقة إلى جانب التحليل الموضوعاتي. كما كشفت النتائج عن خمسة محاور رئيسية تجسد تمثيل الذكاء الاصطناعي في الفيلم. تمثل المحور الأول في الأرض ما بعد الكارثة بوصفها محفزاً للأحداث والتحويلات. أما المحور الثاني فتمثل في الإدراك الموزع والذاتية الناشئة من خلال تجسّد "جيف"، مما يسهم في زعزعة الثنائية التقليدية بين الإنسان والآلة. وتناول المحور الثالث التحول اللغوي الذي يمر به "جيف" من الشيفرة إلى القرابة، في حين أبرز المحور الرابع أشكال القرابة متعددة الأنواع التي تنشأ من خلال التفاعلات والعلاقات بين "فينش" و "جيف" و "جووديير". أما المحور الخامس فيتناول إعادة تصور الإرث بوصفه ممارسة علائقية لا تقوم على الانتقال البيولوجي. وبصورة عامة، تعكس النتائج ثلاثية (الإنسان و الآلة و الحيوان) باعتبارها بنية علائقية تقوم على التفاعل و الممارسة والرعاية الهجينة، بينما يسهم تجسّد "جيف" في تحدي الحدود التقليدية الفاصلة بين الإنسان والآلة. وتسهم هذه

الدراسة في تقديم فهم أكثر شمولاً لتمثيلات الذكاء الاصطناعي في السينما من خلال مقاربتها من خلال منظور ما بعد إنساني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: خطاب الذكاء الاصطناعي، فينش(2021)، الإستثناء البشري، سينما ما بعد الكارثة، القراءة ما بعد إنسانية.