

Article

The Cybernetics of Gomi: Transhumanism, Materiality, and the Expulsion of the Subject in William Gibson's *The Winter Market* (1986)

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Abstract

Referred to by Julian Huxley in his 1957 work *New Bottles for New Wine*, transhumanism champions the use of science and technology to transcend human biological limits and attain a “posthuman” state. While science fiction frequently familiarizes audiences with these speculative dimensions, William Gibson’s short story *The Winter Market* (1986) exposes the dehumanizing impacts of technological immortality and mind uploading in a cyberpunk world. Rather than presenting a seamless techno-utopian future, Gibson’s narrative centers on the concept of *gomi*—Japanese for trash or junk—to illustrate the literal and psychological expulsion of the human subject. Therefore, this paper argues that *The Winter Market* uses the material reality of *gomi* as its core structural and thematic focus, exposing how advanced capitalism and cybernetic technology reduce the organic body, human experience, and artistic expression to marketable, discarded commodities. Through a close reading of Gibson’s distinct language and narrative form, this study, ultimately, interrogates the trade-offs of technological transcendence, demonstrating how the pursuit of disembodied immortality culminates in alienation and the fragmentation of authentic identity.

Keywords: transhumanism; William Gibson; *The Winter Market*; dehumanization; technology; gomi

1. Introduction

This paper explores the techno-cultural friction between transhumanist aspirations of immortality and the dystopian realities of advanced capitalism in William Gibson’s *The Winter Market* (1986). Moving away from celebratory techno-utopian frameworks, this study is structured around the concept of *gomi*—the Japanese term for junk or trash—to argue that Gibson uses the material reality of waste to expose the literal and psychological expulsion of the human subject. In *The Winter Market*, the transhumanist desire to transcend bodily limits does not liberate humanity; instead, it reduces the organic body and authentic human experience to disposable refuse. To establish this thesis, this text is divided into three major structural movements. First, it distinguishes and contextualizes key theoretical terms—differentiating secular transhumanism from the posthuman ideal. Second, it traces how these ideologies manifest as tools of advanced capitalist exploitation within a high-tech, low-society cyberpunk framework. Finally, it provides a detailed textual analysis focusing specifically on Gibson’s narrative form, street-level vocabulary, and stylistic juxtaposition of data and debris, demonstrating how the text positions the human body as the ultimate form of *gomi*.



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To properly evaluate Gibson's critique, it is necessary to first distinguish the central theoretical terms underlying the movement. Preceding the usage of the term by biologist and philosopher Julian Huxley in 1957 within *New Bottles for New Wine*, the word 'transhumanism' is put forward by W. D. Lighthall as "the idea of humanity attempting to overcome its limitations and to arrive at fuller fruition" (Lighthall 1940, p. 139). It mainly stands for an intellectual movement advocating for the improvement of human capacities and the transcendence of biological limitations. As Huxley states, "the human species can, if it wishes, transcend itself [...] man remaining man, but transcending himself, by realizing new possibilities of and for his human nature" (Huxley 1957, p. 17). Rather than accepting fatalistic views of biological determinism, transhumanism treats human nature as an adaptable baseline. Nick Bostrom suggests that "transhumanists view human nature as a work-in-progress, a half-baked beginning that we can learn to remold in desirable ways" (Bostrom 2005, p. 4). Max More similarly claims that humans are merely a "transitional stage standing between our animal heritage and our posthuman future." (More Year). However, a distinction must be made between the *transhuman* condition and the *posthuman* ideal. As Hava Tirosh-Samuelson notes, the transhuman is an enhanced, transitional state—often symbolized as H+—utilizing neural interfaces, anti-aging therapies, and advanced computing (Tirosh-Samuelson 2010). Conversely, the ultimate posthuman state represents a radical evolutionary departure, envisioned by Ranisch and Sorgner as ranging from "a new biological species, a cybernetic organism, or even a digital disembodied entity" (Ranisch and Sorgner 2014, pp. 7–8).

While contemporary transhumanism presents this shift as a progressive leap guided by the principles of extropy—"perpetual progress, self-transformation, practical optimism, intelligent technology, open society, self-direction, rational thinking" (Cordeiro 2019), the literary imagination has long treated the transgression of natural boundaries with deep skepticism. The human impulse to cross biological limitations predates the twentieth century, appearing consistently in cultural narratives as a series of dangerous trade-offs. For example, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* chronicles a king's failed quest to conquer death, which Jean-Pierre Fillard describes as "the first historical evocation of a 'Superman' [...] to reach immortality" (Fillard 2020, p. 4). Similarly, the myth of Prometheus portrays the deployment of technology—represented by fire—as an act of defiance against natural hierarchies that carries severe unintended consequences. This warning is explicitly modernized in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, where Victor Frankenstein operates as a proto-transhumanist precursor who uses empirical science to eradicate death, only to trigger total domestic and psychological ruin.

As a direct descendant of this literary tradition, science fiction functions, as Benjamin Ross notes, as "a carrier of transhumanist ideas in the cultural imagination" (B. Ross 2020, p. 55) that "far outweighs the reality of technology in shaping and normalizing transhumanism" (B. Ross 2020, p. 55). Within science fiction, the subgenre of cyberpunk provides the most critical space for testing these speculative philosophy systems. Coined by Bruce Bethke in 1983, cyberpunk describes narratives dealing with the information explosion of the 1980s, picturing a "dense, urban, confusing new world in which most of us will find that we have been disenfranchised from any real power" (Clute 2003). By combining high technology with low social infrastructure, cyberpunk interrogates the transhumanist devaluation of the material body. Emphasizing the superiority of information and mind as 'data' in opposition to the material body and its limitations, it appears essentially to be a genre on which a high techno-cultural society, characterized by an imaginary experience of transhumanism, is based in a bleak future. Ultimately, the genre uses its specific narrative form to expose how the technological prioritization of

pure information over physical presence results in deep social alienation and the systemic dehumanization of the individual.

2. Dehumanized ‘Subjects’ and Transhumanism in William Gibson’s *The Winter Market*

Published in the short story collection titled *Burning Chrome* in 1986, *The Winter Market* is a cyberpunk story set in a future and gloomy world in which advanced technology allows people to transfer their imagination personality into the net and ROM by means of *bioelectric wiring*. As stated by Delioglanis, the story fuses humanity and machinery, represents a compelling metaphor, and symbolizes how the digital humanities can resolve the friction between its analytical, computational side and its interpretive, cultural side (Delioglanis 2022, p. 2). Based on a public market in Granville Island in Vancouver, William Gibson’s *The Winter Market* depicts a techno-cultural society where technology commodifies everything, resulting in social isolation, moral corruption, and a pervasive sense of meaninglessness. The story exposes these dysfunctional human relationships through three main characters: Rubin, an artist and inventor; Casey, a studio technician; and Lise, a dying cyborg battling congenital disease and drug addiction. This is mostly because when fueled by overconfidence, transhumanist ambitions can become a threat to human existence by blurring the boundary between humanity and technology (Tamilmani and Sridheepika 2024, p. 314). In the story, Lise is found while dying in a garbage heap by Rubin and meets Casey at Rubin’s house during a party. Following their acquaintance, both Lise and Casey decide to record Lise’s imagination into the computer and the net in order for her to be immortal, and Casey makes an album comprising Lise’s imagination, whose name comes to be called ‘Kings of Sleep’, which provides them with a huge amount of revenue and makes Lise rather famous. Although Lise is yet to die soon, her personality and imagination become immortal and live within the computer, which causes Casey, who is in a way in love with her, to interrogate whether it is Lise herself. The fact that *The Winter Market* comprises such characters as a cyborg, a man-machine system aided by technological components, and that puts technological immortality at the center of the story implies that Gibson’s text appears to be a medium of transhumanist ideas and a depiction of possible worlds and humanity modified by high technology. However, the story, as opposed to the utopian reception of technological and scientific advancements directed towards human transcendence by transhumanism, offers a dystopian society in which there is a desperate view of human relationships and a dehumanized understanding of what it means to be human in a fragmented world. Roy, too, suggests that “the idea of cyberculture and cyborg encapsulates many unnecessary anxious encounters regarding the man-machine, natural/artificial, technological, and biological organism. . .” (Roy 2021, p. 35) Thus, based on the objective of this paper, transhumanism creates a capitalist society leading even individuals to be commodified and marketable and culminates in the acceleration of dehumanization and alienation within the techno-cultural society based on the materialistic relationship between Lise and Casey.

Considering the importance transhumanism attributes to the development of human condition and the extension of human capacities through the agency of advanced technology and science, the term cyborg can be said to represent the concrete existence of this dualistic combination of human and technology, which is the blend of the organic and the inorganic. Here, the concept apparently becomes the embodiment of how humanity whose body is furnished with electronic modifications is intertwined with technology. According to Ross, “cyborg imagery functions largely as an ideal within transhumanism, and offers a model or tool through which to think how humans and technology might one day achieve a seamless merger” (B. Ross 2020, p. 136). Compared with Ross’ statement, Gibson’s story

produces this figure as a means to criticize the idolatrous prioritization of the fusion of 'cybernetics' and 'organism' as the ideal formation of future society: "I couldn't look at her. I heard her disconnect the optic lead. I heard the exoskeleton creak as it hoisted her up from the futon. Heard it tick demurely as it hauled her into the kitchen for a glass of water. Then I started to cry" (Gibson 1987, p. 125). The narrator, Casey, is in love with Lise, but their connection is fundamentally fractured by the technology that sustains her. By stating "I couldn't look at her," Casey reveals a profound sense of horror and alienation. In classic cyber-utopian theory, the merging of human consciousness with machine parts is often celebrated as a liberating evolution, since it encapsulates several perspectives portraying cyberspace as a realm of global communication that is liberated from oppressive forces, thereby allowing people to achieve their full human potential (Dahlberg 2009, pp. 176–89). Gibson, however, subverts this. The cyborg reality here is not sleek, sexy, or transcendent; it is painfully awkward, sterile, and alienating. Casey cannot face the physical reality of the woman he cares about being reduced to a biological component inside a mechanical shell. In contrast to the ideal integrity of technology and human, Lise's posture becomes the embodiment of a dehumanized existence in a technology-driven society which constantly discloses its difference and otherness from other people, a notion also provided by Haraway stating that "the cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence" (Haraway 2000, pp. 291–324). Enamored with Lise yet repulsed by her cybernetic reality, Casey finds it difficult to even look at her; their potential for genuine human connection is fundamentally disrupted by her heavy technological modifications. Casey's tears are the ultimate rejection of the 'idolatrous prioritization' of the cyborg, producing ultimate grief. Casey cries because he recognizes that the technology has not saved Lise; it has trapped her in a liminal space where she is neither fully human nor fully machine. The scene strips away the romanticism of the cybernetic future, exposing the raw emotional desolation left in its wake. What Lise's body justifies in the story is that cyborgs, as opposed to transhumanism's favor of organic fusion of human organisms with a technological circuit, epitomize the artificiality of the figure of transhuman and signify its inadequacy in improving human health and condition. This is mostly because although Lise is a cyborg, she suffers from a congenital disease, which later results in her death, and her digitalized body is the portrayal of unhealthy occurrence of the inconsistency of technology with an organic body, creaking whenever Lise moves. Like Giacomolli contends, "Technology acts as the new God, replacing the needs humans once had for magic, making them much more susceptible to manipulation" (Giacomolli 2024, p. 113). As opposed to the perfect mechanization of human body, anticipated by transhumanist ideals, Lise's body, or her sleeve, becomes the representation of partial improvement with a few deficiencies. What morphological freedom desires to achieve in terms of modifying one's own body freely results in physical form having lost its status as the absolute foundation of selfhood with no intrinsic connection to human consciousness, serving instead as an external, arbitrary, and ultimately disposable vessel (Corby 2024, p. 186). Rather than the combination of man and machine, technology and its singularity turn man into an unfinished machine, which Casey comes to regret in accordance with the fact that they would not maintain a 'normal' and 'happy life' if they were married or a couple. Victoria Pitt also states that "high tech body appears socially plastic" (Pitts 2005, p. 230), which also explains the artificiality of human relationships between the characters such as Casey and Lise, which prevents them from constructing a healthy affair and refers to the plasticity of human life caused by transhumanist technology. This estrangement from one another and the dehumanization of existence are visible when Casey witnesses Lise at a party, interacting with someone else, and reflects on the dark, transactional reality of her existence and her drive to escape her failing body:

But seeing her there, that drunken kid's hand in hers, that hand she couldn't even feel, I knew, once and for all, that no human motive is ever entirely pure. Even Lise, with that corrosive, crazy drive to stardom and cybernetic immortality, had weaknesses. (Gibson 1987, p. 140)

Lise's condition embodies the standard transhumanist critique of the biological body as a flawed, restrictive 'mannequin'—a prison of physical numbness and degenerative decay that must be overcome; however, Gibson's text, relatively, introduces a profound tension by framing this drive not as a purely rational evolution, but as one fueled by deeply human weaknesses and emotional trauma. By highlighting that her desire to upload her consciousness stems from a place of suffering, the text suggests that transhumanist transcendence is often a form of desperate escapism rather than standard enlightenment, leaving the observer, Casey, to mourn the tragic loss of the very flaws and vulnerabilities that define human identity.

In addition to the robotization of individuals and their relationships with one another, transhumanism could be said, thanks to its commitment to advanced technology, to establish a highly capitalist society in which everything including memory, imagination, and human mind can be converted into a sellable product and capitalist commodity out of which to generate profit and exploit the basic emotions of humanity. This mostly derives from the fact that when a human being is reduced to a digital commodity, existing purely as data meant to generate financial profit, their actions lose all intrinsic worth. In this hyper-capitalist state, no action can be done simply for its own sake or for personal fulfillment; instead, every choice, thought, and interaction is stripped of its humanity and forced to serve the single, shallow goal of generating more wealth (L. Ross 2021, p. 97). Casey, working as a technician who transfers artists' dreams, imagination, and mind into the computer at the Autonomic Pilot, epitomizes how they connect to human beings' experience through neuroelectronics:

Dry dreams are neural output from levels of consciousness that most people can only access in sleep. But artists, the kind I work with at the Autonomic Pilot, are able to break the surface tension, dive down deep, down and out, out into Jung's sea, and bring back, well, dreams. Keep it simple. I guess some artists have always done that, in whatever medium, but neuroelectronics lets us access the experience, and the net gets it all out on the wire, so we can package it, sell it, watch how it moves in the market. Well, the more things change... That's something my father liked to say. (L. Ross 2021, p. 123)

In accordance with the fact that transhumanist movement considers human mind as data that can be stored and shared, every component related to human identity appears primarily to be processed and shaped by high technology, giving birth to new experiences and capabilities. This suggestion regarding cyberspace, which allows Lise to become immortal in the virtual space in the story, is also visible in Ross' statements: "Hayles suggests that this normalizes the idea of 'pattern over presence,' where data can be made human with autonomy left intact. Uniting human bodies with computers is a mainstay of contemporary transhumanism. In fact, the emphasis on pattern over presence is one of the theoretical frameworks that makes the uploading of a mind to a computer a possibility—a possibility first suggested by science fiction like *Neuromancer*" (B. Ross 2020, p. 136). In compliance with the transference of mind and dreams on which Casey is expert, Lise's dreams are interpreted as data and a pattern that could be sold in the market enjoyed by the changing society, thereby making the assumptions of transhumanism an advanced capitalism. Here, a dystopian reality is brought into existence where neuroelectronic technology bridges the gap between the human subconscious and cyberspace, only to subjugate both to the dictates of late-stage

capitalism. By using cybernetic interfaces to map and harvest collective unconscious, artists achieve a transhuman expansion of creativity, transforming private dreams into recordable, externalized digital data streams on the network. Nevertheless, this apparent psychological transcendence is immediately undermined by total commodification; once injected into the wire, the deepest recesses of the human soul lose all intrinsic value and are reduced to mere raw materials packaged, sold, and valorized for the global market. This is what Lockhart defines ‘transhumanism’ as the continuation of capitalism as he states that technologies designed to improve human capabilities change from simple instruments into commercial products, turning the human body and mind into ongoing projects geared toward efficiency, financial return, and commercial value, integrating human biology directly into capitalist structures, transforming personal self-improvement into a type of economic involvement dictated by free-market principles (Lockhart 2025, p. 6).

Accordingly, high technology and transhumanist projections start to take the leading role of oppression within the global scene. Hence, Sassen notes that “historically, the oppressed have often risen against their masters. But today the oppressed have mostly been expelled and survive a great distance from their oppressors. Further, the ‘oppressor’ is increasingly a complex system that combines persons, networks, and machines with no obvious center” (Sassen 2014, p. 10). What Sassen suggests is important because transhumanist technology both in real life and Gibson’s *The Winter Market* emerges as a new oppressor and creator of economic relationships. In this context, Lise’s reputation and her earnings are created and conducted by the new boss of capitalism, namely the new technology and the internet as a network. Here, while transhumanist technology embraces the role of the creator of immortality, fame, and reputation, Lise and her dreams become the creation of high tech and epitome of low humanity. Even imagination and personality are considered as Alexander Thomas argues, in *Transhumanism and Advanced Capitalism: Elitist Logics and Dangerous Implications*, that “for cybernetics, we are only information, but whatever the material on which this information exists is an irrelevance and the essential information can be transferred to or carried by other materials or exist independently of any material at all. We are thus minds without bodies or bodies without minds: but not a mind inescapably embedded in a body” (Thomas 2022, pp. 151–80). The fact that humanity and human mind are transformed into a piece of information thanks to technology makes it easier for capitalist system to perpetuate among people without any need for materiality and culminates in the commodification of human experience, mind, and imagination as a product as can be detected in Lise’s dramatic growth into fame by means of her dreams collected in an album titled ‘Kings of Sleep’ by Casey and in the title of the story *The Winter Market*. It metaphorically represents a market in which humanity is exploited by unprecedented technology and cybernetics.

What transhumanist ideology offers in *The Winter Market* is not a utopian framework of the explosion of the internet in the 1980s but a dystopian imagery of how mind uploading and cyberspace result considerably in the dehumanization of human existence. Whereas Lise possesses technological immortality after being processed by the Autonomic Pilot and Casey’s profession, her identity is dragged into a sense of nothingness, as well as her body deteriorating increasingly: “He sighs, drinks. “But what?” “Rubin, if she calls me, is it her?” He looks at me a long time. “God only knows.” His cup clicks on the table. “I mean, Casey, the technology is there, so who, man, really who, is to say?” (Gibson 1987, p. 141). The existential dialogue between Rubin and Casey following Lise’s biological death interrogates the question of whether immortality provided by transhumanism intersects with the real identity of one who chooses to have his/her mind uploaded to a hardwired programme. On the one hand, Casey consciously knows that the programme is not the real version of Lise. On the other hand, he aspires to believe that the mind uploaded in

the programme is the resemblance of Lise, with whom he is familiar and in love. However, in terms of Rubin's saying that whenever 'the technology is there,' it is quite uncertain to predict who is who and recognize one's own identity, which contributes to the blurring of the lines by technology and the loss of human soul and identity. Expanding on this existential dread, the digital preservation of Lise ultimately reveals that transhumanist immortality operates as a mechanism of alienation, stripping the posthuman subject of the very capacity for authentic human connection. By converting Lise's consciousness into a permanent stream of commercial data, the network decouples her identity from the fragile, mortal limitations that originally shaped her creative genius. Casey's agonizing hesitation to accept the digital construct as 'Lise' stems from the realization that the software version lacks the ambivalence of physical suffering and vulnerability, the very traits that defined her humanity. Her transition into the digital ether does not achieve a higher state of being, but rather a profound state of reification, where a living human soul is successfully replaced by a commodified simulation. The tragedy of the story's conclusion lies not merely in the uncertainty of whether the construct is truly Lise, but in the realization that within the logic of cyberspace, the distinction between a real person and an optimized consumer product has ceased to matter.

Likewise, John Gray proposes, in *The Immortalization Commission: Science and the Strange Quest to Cheat Death*, that "immortalism is a program for human extinction, a vanishing act more complete than any that seems likely in the natural course of events. . . . In the immortalist scenario humans engineer their own extinction: intervening in the evolutionary process to create a new species, the animal that yearned to live for ever puts an end to its own existence" (Gray 2011, pp. 218–19). In this respect, Lise's both biological extinction through her death and her immortalism, ensured by the mind uploading, stand, metaphorically, for Gray's notion of human extinction promoted by the hierarchical superiority of human mind when compared to human body aspired to by transhumanist thinkers. Delany also states as follows:

It is "natural," then, in such a world, for the boundaries between the organic human body and the technological works of civilisation to be shifted or even erased. Consciousness can be given an electronic rather than a corporeal base, and the story's heroine, Lise, becomes dependent on machines and synthetic drugs for her vital functions. (Delany 1994, pp. 179–92)

Transhumanism in the story juxtaposes the body and the mind and positions the mind as a superior entity to the body, which can be called as 'gomi', a Japanese term for 'junk' used in the story referring to trash out of which Rubin makes art. This idea primarily functions as the projection of "new transhumanist technologies (perpetual self-constructed trashed bodies, mind-uploading that requires stepping into the "Temple of Moore," the misuse of mind-transforming technologies. . ." (Vizmuller-Zocco 2016, p. 223) as detected by Vizmuller-Zocco in Verso's *Nexhuman*. In a way, the fact that it is through Rubin that Lise is discovered in a garbage heap and taken home means Lise's body is heralded as a 'gomi', that is to say a 'trash' to be molded by an artist:

Her agents brought in medics, who padded the polycarbon with foam and sealed the sores over with micropore dressings. They pumped her up with vitamins and tried to work on her diet, but nobody ever tried to take that inhaler away.

They brought in hairdressers and makeup artists, too, and wardrobe people and image builders and articulate little PR hamsters, and she endured it with something that might almost have been a smile. (Gibson 1987, p. 131)

While transhumanism promises to liberate the human subject by turning the body into an adaptable, heavily upgraded machine, the passage reveals the dystopian reality of

this transition: the body does not become a temple of posthuman perfection, but rather a site of ongoing, structural breakdown. The medics do not cure the subject; they merely patch over the physical deterioration of the organic frame with corporate products like foam, polycarbon, and micropore dressings, transforming the human body into a piece of disposable, poorly maintained hardware. Surrounded by image builders, makeup artists, and ‘PR hamsters,’ the protagonist’s actual physical health and agency are discarded, while her aesthetic surface is commodified and recycled. In this framework, the biological body becomes gomi, an accumulation of obsolete, toxic organic waste that must be aggressively hidden, managed, and patched over by a hyper-capitalist culture that views human form as nothing more than a temporary, interchangeable mannequin. Additionally, in order for Casey to benefit from Lise’s imagination and her unusual talent in the studio while transferring her mind and making the album, the agents strive to take care of her ‘cyborg’ body and her well-being. However, her body is constantly used with the aim of extracting what is significant, namely her consciousness, which makes her body merely a vessel and a tool carrying the mind, which is the data to be sold and to be enjoyed by the public. Central to the transformation of Lise from earthly being to a sense of immortality achieved by Lise’s mind transferred to ROM, the issue of immortality is uttered by Max More as the escape from what is primitive, that is, human body:

We do not accept the undesirable aspects of the human condition. We challenge natural and traditional limitations on our possibilities. We champion the use of science and technology to eradicate constraints on lifespan, intelligence, personal vitality, and freedom. We recognize the absurdity of meekly accepting “natural” limits to our life spans. We expect life to move beyond the confines of the Earth—the cradle of human and transhuman intelligence—to inhabit the cosmos. (More 1998)

Juxtaposed to the superiority and potency of advanced technology, the body is, as stated by nearly all transhumanists, such as Max More, the depiction of what is ‘backward’, natural’, and ‘impotent’. The body is somehow equated with nature itself, which mankind aims to control through technology. In a similar vein, human body is also interpreted as a formation to be invaded and transgressed by technology. That is why Lise’s body is considered to be a ‘sleeve’ as used by Gibson in *Neuromancer* to refer to those bodies utilized as clothing, something to be worn out and changed. This is implicitly highlighted in the story through Rubin’s profession as follows:

He wanders through his jammed, littered space, a kind of mini hangar cobbled to the water side of the Market, followed by the smarter and more agile of his creations, like some vaguely benign Satan bent on the elaboration of still stranger processes in his ongoing Inferno of gomi. I’ve seen Rubin program his constructions to identify and verbally abuse pedestrians wearing garments by a given season’s hot designer; others attend to more obscure missions, and a few seem constructed solely to deconstruct themselves with as much attendant noise as possible. (Gibson 1987, p. 119)

Although Lise is not explicitly named in this specific scene, the excerpt directly illustrates the dystopian reality forced upon her human body, which the previous passage from the story, focusing on hairdressers and makeup artists treating Lise as trash, explicitly categorizes as gomi. Within Rubin’s chaotic ‘Inferno,’ the distinction between human flesh and mechanical junk completely dissolves, meaning Lise’s body is no longer viewed as a temple of individual identity, but as raw, salvageable material trapped in a rogue ecosystem. Just as Rubin programs his machines to perform absurd, non-functional tasks or to loudly destroy themselves, the human form in this environment is reduced to interchangeable hardware subject to the same whimsical, chaotic manipulation. Furthermore, it is highly

possible to emphasize that Lise's technological immortality is provided in return for the loss of her soul and the human body. In Gibson's cyberpunkish world, the data is established as a superior composition when compared to the materiality of the body, belonging to the natural world. Accordingly, in the story, Lise as a human being is symbolized as a 'gomi' before her mind is immortalized: "He brings home more gomi. Some of it still operative. Some of it, like Lise, human." (Gibson 1987, p. 120). That Rubin is an artist making craft out of 'gomi', which is 'trash' in English, unravels how he also regards Lise as a 'gomi' and 'trash' whose mind is exploited by the advanced capitalism of transhumanism and technology-driven society to be sold as a matter of entertainment. Without technology, she is reduced to a state of non-being and a sense of trash. Nevertheless, her soul ultimately becomes dragged from her through neuroelectronics and uploaded into the computer, and what is left of her is a virtual echo of her former and material being, of which Casey is suspicious whether it is her true self.

3. Conclusions

In conclusion, William Gibson's *The Winter Market*, authored in 1986, offers a critical framework of the reflection of transhumanism in science fiction and the consolidation of high technology on modern individuals exposed to a process of alienation and dehumanization. The story, therefore, incorporates the figure of cyborg, the commodification of human experience, and the dehumanization of the body as an impotent and earthly possession, contributing to the dystopian atmosphere coinciding with the boom of the emergence of the internet in the 1980s and the development of computational cybernetics. Lise, as a cyborg girl whose mind is transferred to the computer by the help of Casey, a technician who records and uploads people's imaginations and dreams thanks to neuroelectronics and ROM, becomes the epitome of how cyborgs fail to construct a proper human relationship with other unenhanced people and to meet the idealistic imagery presented by transhumanism because of the fact that being a cyborg does not cure Lise's congenital disease. Furthermore, a transhumanist reception of the story implies that transhumanism tends to create an advanced capitalism functioning through cyberspace causing individuals to see their fellows as 'gomi' or 'trash' whose mind could be marketed as can be detected in Rubin's attitude towards Lise, a cyborg possessing a decaying body. This dynamic is critically underscored by the systematic reduction in the physical frame to disposable hardware, where corporate medical interventions merely mask organic breakdowns while the subject's physical agency is discarded for aesthetic recycling. Moreover, within the chaotic space of Rubin's hangar, the complete dissolution of the boundary between human flesh and mechanical junk manifests as a rogue ecosystem. By programming his creations to perform absurd, anti-consumerist tasks and loudly destroying themselves, Rubin exposes a world where both autonomous machines and the human body are reduced to interchangeable, non-functional components that subvert the corporate logic of efficiency. What immortality presents in a high-technological society within Gibson's story is merely a partial continuation and representation of a human's true self, since Lise, whose body is dehumanized by transhumanist technology, cannot completely be identical and humanely alive in her album 'Kings of Sleep' harboring Lise's mind and dreams. Thus, it can be argued that Gibson's *The Winter Market* portrays a grim future of technological society and dehumanization adorned with a transhumanist reverberance, as well as foreseeing the possible outcomes of high technology and low life in the upcoming years.

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