AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

POSTHUMAN FEMINISM AND LOCAL EMBODIMENT IN *ORYX AND CRAKE* AND *MOXYLAND*

by
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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
to the Department of English
of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
at the American University of Beirut

Beirut, Lebanon
January 2019

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

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Date of thesis defense: January 28, 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my committee advisor Dr. James Hodapp who has mentored me throughout the process of outlining and writing this thesis dissertation. I am sincerely thankful for his patient guidance and his consistent encouragement in every stage of writing. His directions incited me to improve my academic research and writing skills in the field of contemporary world literature. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Jennifer Nish for her generous research referrals and Dr. Adam Waterman for serving on my committee. I would also like to express my extended gratitude for my academic advisor, Dr. David Currell, who guided me during the MA journey. My final acknowledgments go to my parents, my siblings and my fiancé, for their support throughout the process.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Daria Philip Said for Master of Arts
Major: English Literature

Title: Posthuman Feminism and Local Embodiment in *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland*

This research project explores the representations of posthuman female cyborgs in two notable works of fiction, which are Margaret Atwood's novel *Oryx and Crake* as well as Lauren Beukes' novel *Moxyland*. Both speculative narratives depict a form of thoroughly normalized masculine entitlement over the realm of technology and global production. On one hand, *Oryx and Crake* exposes the masculine power of globalized corporations that thrive for excessive consumerism driven by the mad creativity of men in the absence of any form of government. The dystopian setting features an exaggerated future North America wrecked by excessively masculine technologies. On the other hand, *Moxyland* divulges a patriarchal form of subject surveillance initiated by the collaborative work of government and corporations and executed via a web of technological advances. The narrative's speculative time corresponds to a South African post-apartheid setting that reuses many elements of a past dystopia, which is the apartheid era. Furthermore, this research contributes in the discourse on posthuman feminist agency, which emerges more in *Moxyland* than in *Oryx and Crake*. The comparison of both narratives shows that the presence of a form of posthuman feminism requires a local potentiality and a subjective embodiment in relation to figuring masculinist technologies. The female Crakers' physical and mental entirety in *Oryx and Crake* reveals a strong patriarchal technological design that allows the female cyborgs to operate under mild performative tendencies without any sign of subjective striving. Their bodies depict a form of global personhood that is devoid of an agential embodiment. In contrast, the women cyborgs in *Moxyland*, namely Kendra and Lerato, use their bodies as source of knowledge production, agency and re-inscription under strict governmental surveillance. They tailor an anti-cosmopolitan corporeality and a local personhood that recuperate the importance of the Global South in the process of knowledge production.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Overview and Reception

"Writers write about what worries them", says Margaret Atwood in an interview on the Canadian education channel TVO in response to her interviewer's astonishment with the solemn events of *Oryx and Crake* ("Margaret Atwood's Oryx and Crake"), which she published in 2003. In her book, Atwood sketches the details of a sophisticated post-apocalyptic environment featuring a group of biologically engineered cyborgs who live in the presence of one last human being named Snowman. While the speculative plot fluctuates between the present wrecked environment and the past unfolding apocalypse, the most prominent themes that surface throughout the narrative are that of technological and bioengineering projects. In her attempt at providing "a global picture" of what worries her ("Margaret Atwood's Oryx and Crake"), Atwood situates the drastic consequences of madly driven technology on the North American coastal shores (Ridout 33). Her narrative features the effects of toxic masculinity that prevail and propagate via a web of technocapitalist endeavors continuously shaping the human relation to technology in a gendered framework. *Oryx and Crake* figures the drastic effects of a masculinized vision of a globalized world driven by corporations and devoid of any form of government. Built on the promulgation of perfectly built male

and female cyborgs called the Crakers, this vision offers an alternate, masculine entitlement over the female physicality and anatomy.

Oryx and Crake illustrates the mishaps of a technological environment through a sophisticated dystopian context. The dystopian framework, which generally diffuses a "warning about the social realities of the contemporary moment and the loss of human nature through technologization" (Shmeink 38), unfolds via a series of literary themes. The elemental catalyst of dystopia in Atwood's narrative is the excessively influential corporate technology that privileges the work of men scientists, one of which is Crake, the creator of the male and female Crakers. With that said, the unfolding dystopian events emphasize the toll of global apprehensions, two of which are the interacting consumerist corporations and the continuously evolving technology. In fact, reviewers of the novel agree that the apocalyptic disaster in *Oryx and Crake* "stems from global concerns" about the future of excessive consumerism and corporate endeavors (Bosco 1) that jeopardize the future of humanity, especially on the environmental level. Accordingly, the survival of the bioengineered Crakers with one last human being named Snowman highlights the drastic, and undoubtedly exaggerated, consequences of masculinized forms of technology. *Oryx and Crake* depicts a world driven by "faith in technology" and emptied from any form of "ethical guidelines" that limit people's continuous strive for meeting their consumerist desires (Hengen 7). As evoked by Atwood herself, the narrative clearly illustrates an alarming global, rather than local, picture against the uncontrolled effects of globalization.

In the context of *Moxyland*, the events also take place in the midst of a globalized terrain occupied by technological advancements. However, the particularity of the space, which is South Africa, is central to the development of the events and characters. In the extra afterword to her book *Moxyland*, South African author Lauren Beukes addresses her readers as follows: “Don’t let anyone tell you that the apartheid has nothing to do with South Africa now. Those roots run deep and tangled and we’ll be tripping over them for many generations to come.” (312) Beukes’ informal yet indicative statement mirrors the variously recurrent apartheid themes that she decidedly instills in the technology-centered post-apartheid narrative published in 2008. Situated mostly in Cape Town and its suburbs, *Moxyland*’s plot treats the repercussions of a masculinized technological surveillance system on the lives of four characters. Birthed through the cooperation of state and globalized corporations, this surveillance system aggressively monitors the bodies of the characters, namely the two women Kendra and Lerato, who find themselves struggling for self-assertiveness. Moreover, this system alternates the previously present racial segregation of the apartheid with new social ranks that distinguish the corporates from the civilians.

Moxyland’s events echo the historical particularity of South Africa. Critics of the book applaud Beukes’ investment in historically relevant themes within the narrative plot. On one hand, Beukes sketches a “post-apartheid metropolis” that allows the characters to inhabit an urban space (Bethlehem 524). Such literary plot does not only sketch imagined post-apartheid South African city features, but simultaneously restores

“a right historically denied to black South Africans under apartheid.” (Bethlehem 524) The South African apartheid rule, which comprised a heavy racial discrimination, especially manifested its strands in the form of regional segregation that separated black people from the dominant white minority. In that context, white people occupied urban spaces while black people remained confined within suburbs or rural spaces. On the other hand, Beukes succeeds in materializing a “triangulation between sovereignty, spaciality and technology”, whereby the apartheid racial segregation is replaced with an economic post-apartheid segregation (Bethlehem 527). The characters’ relationship to technology in *Moxyland*, as well as their location in the imagined South African environment, highly influences their degree of power. Those who live in corporate realms have a much larger power and influence in the speculative society, unlike the civilians who rather behave as consumers of technological advancements. That said, Beukes reconceptualizes apartheid themes within a technological framework, which ornaments the elements of the global within the narrative with particular historically relevant and local elements from South Africa.

B. Posthumanism and Cyborg culture

Despite the exhaustively different plot spaces characterizing *Oryx and Crake* as well as *Moxyland*, both works of fiction take posthumanism as the unfolding framework of the characters’ presence. Depicted as a “condition…about the vital, self-organizing and yet non-naturalistic structure of living matter” (*The Posthuman*, Braidotti 2),

posthumanism portrays a culture in the field of humanities that destabilizes former definitions of humanity and suggests a heavy reliance on technology in the governance of daily activities. Posthumanist theorist Rosi Braidotti explains that the Renaissance era gave birth to the humanist perspective that valued the human "perfection" and "capabilities", which were mostly reflected in the work of the human consciousness and mind (*Posthuman Humanities*, Braidotti 2). She adds that over the last three decades, "an anti-humanist stance" emerged in reaction to the self-assertive humanist perspective that gives great importance to "rational consciousness" (*Posthuman Humanities*, Braidotti 2). This anti-humanist movement introduced substitute explanations for the human via the usage of disciplines such as "gender, feminism [and] ethnicity" (*Posthuman Humanities*, Braidotti 2). More importantly, this movement questioned the humanities' capability to interact with the newly emerging scientific and global technological innovations that shape the individual's state of living (*Posthuman Humanities*, Braidotti 4). Braidotti explains that posthumanism, which bases its ideal focus on "the anti-humanist legacy" (*Posthuman Humanities*, Braidotti 4), is a new approach in humanities that views the subject as "a process, interactive and open ended…living matter" developing through the effects of globalized capitalism and technological engineering (*Posthuman Humanities*, Braidotti 6). Both of *Moxyland* and *Oryx and Crake* place their subjects in an environment dominated by biotechnological innovations and technocapitalist ventures. In that perspective, the heavy impact of bioengineering that materializes the Crakers in *Oryx and Crake* as well as of

nanotechnology that surrounds the characters in *Moxyland* invites us to consider the subjects' corporeal presence and various interactions in space via a posthuman lens.

In the field of fiction writing, posthumanism forges a new way for the development of fictional characters, namely via the investment in cyborg culture. In fact, "the decline of the primacy of 'Man'" in an era dominated by "high degrees of technological intervention" (*Posthuman Humanities,* Braidotti 15) necessitates understanding bodies from a completely transformative perspective. Donna Haraway, the leading literary investor in the field of posthumanism, views the concept of the "cyborg" as the metaphorical materialization of the posthuman subject who is infused with and extended by technoscience" (Schmeink 36). Haraway explains that a "cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction." (149) The cyborg is the expected posthuman product blending flesh with technological engineering. Moreover, the cyborg is a political agent *par excellence* with its capability of "building [or] destroying machines, identities, categories, relationships, space stories." (Haraway 180-181) With that said, cyborg bodies depict individuals who use technology, who live because of technology or who are exclusively biologically and/or mechanically engineered. More importantly, cyborg bodies are active recipients of any piece of information surfacing within the environment. Accordingly, the labeling of the characters as cyborgs in both of *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland* proves necessary. On one hand, the Crakers are the pure product of technological bioengineering and innovation that blends machinic wiring with human

features. In their daily lives on the North American shore, they replicate through their wired behavior the globalized ambitions of their male human creator. On the other hand, Kendra becomes the host of a nanotechnology that spreads in her veins and dictates her consumerist choices, while Lerato finds herself contributing in the production of daily corporate technological gadgets. Thus, both women's exposure to technology in their daily lives enhances their tendency to act as cyborgs and assess their actions based on the technological system surrounding them.

C. Posthumanism and Embodiment

In both works of fiction, the conceptualization of the cyborg character incites new questions that surface beyond Haraway's work. The most primary questions are those that seek to find a relation between cyborg subjects and other individual categories such as gender, race and class. Building on and going beyond the work of Haraway, Jenny Wolmark asserts that the hybridity of the cyborg as described by Haraway, as well as its potentiality for acting politically, raises concerns about the relation between cyborg bodies and masculinity (4). Wolmark's concern proves evident in both works of fiction. The Crakers' designed features are a paramount example of a model of technocapitalist masculinity. Their male creator did not only infiltrate his own convictions into the separated roles of the male and female Crakers, but also ensured the female Crakers' incapacity towards self-awareness and understanding of their subaltern position. In *Moxyland*, the technological surveillance system that surrounds Kendra and Lerato

unfolds with utmost aggression and control over bodies. This system does not only differentiate between civilians and corporates, but mostly proves detrimental on the lives of the women characters. Wolmark explains that the cyborg "is the product of the masculinist technologies that [began emerging] in the 1980s" (4). The acts of cyborgs are "structured around masculinity", which creates foundational gendered differences that define the cultural dimension of embodiment (Wolmark 8). In that sense, masculine designs of cyborgs, whether in real and actual scientific fields or in fiction writing, contribute in dictating a patriarchal understanding of women's bodies in a technological space. In response to this culturally constructed phenomenon, Wolmark asserts that the contemporary "global political and economic change has precipitated a gradual collapse of cultural consensus about the shape of the future", which necessitated "alternative ways of thinking about embodiment and the self." (9) The increasingly important process of globalization undeniably alters the conceptualization of gender in the midst of technological improvement. Hence, Wolmark's incitement for figuring an alternating understanding of the body invites us to reconsider the influences of contemporary technological capitalism on the definition and spacing of bodies. The cyborg body, which Haraway previously reviewed as a "risk" taking agent (201), becomes an articulator of contemporary thematic concerns like gender in the midst of globalized technology.

The patriarchal nature of technology as illustrated in the narratives of Atwood and Beukes invites us to delve into the relation between posthumanism, cyborg culture and

feminist theory. As mentioned above by Wolmark, the posthuman cyborg body can bear culturally constructed meanings. In that perspective, understanding the discursive contexts that surround cyborg bodies is key for fleshing out the political meanings that this body can engender in a certain space and in response to certain conditions. The body "remains the invariable nexus from where new technologies are engaged" (Du Preez xi), which makes embodiment, or the "non-negotiable physicality" of individuals (Du Preez xi), crucial in producing a contemporary posthuman feminist discourse in the context of *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland*. Elizabeth Grosz explains that the last century witnessed a "crisis of reason", which concerned the dismissal of "the role of the body" in the process of knowledge production (26). The historically "pseudo-scientific" objectivity that prevailed in theory and practice within scientific fields completely obliterated the particularities of the human being/body (Grosz 29). In that context, Grosz asserts that this so-called objective view of "the female body [is] playing a major role in women's oppression" (31). More specifically, Grosz introduces a kind of feminism that no longer adopts "anatomical, physiological, or biological accounts" of the body (31). Rather, she views in the analysis of "sociocultural conceptions of the body" a possible reversing effect that aids in shifting women's locus in the process of knowledge production (31). In that sense, the increasing importance of corporeality and embodiment plays a role in reassessing women's capability of producing knowledge through their bodies. In a posthuman context, such corporeal perspective allows us not only to think about the cyborg's corporeal capabilities, but also to consider the cyborg's

embodied political knowledges. In the context of *Oryx and Crake*, the bioengineered design of the female Crakers' bodies intrigues us to delve into the relationship that those women cyborgs establish with their bodies, as well as their degree of understanding of their limited capabilities. In *Moxyland*, the entrapment of Kendra and Lerato within this patriarchal surveillance system highlights their embodied capabilities. Furthermore, their confinement pushes their ability to produce knowledge about the South African space surrounding them through the movements and actions of their bodies.

D. Research Questions and Argument

The posthuman framework in the plots of *Moxyland* and *Oryx and Crake* enmeshes rich notions of gender disparity and fluctuating embodied capabilities. In fact, the two novels illustrate a constructed patriarchal environment dominating all technological advancements. Nevertheless, the representation of the female cyborg characters in both works of fiction invite the reader to speculate the birth of a type of posthuman feminism resulting from the characters' attempts to produce rich knowledge about their bodies in relation to their location. More importantly, the embodied meanings produced by those characters mirror their significant reactions to the global effects of technology and technocapitalism. With that said, this thesis will address numerous research questions resulting from the mentioned speculations, such as the following: What are the strands of posthuman feminism and how does the location of each speculative fiction inform the definition of this type of feminism? How does each speculative fiction strengthen the

traditional view on technology as being strictly masculine? To what extent does the characters' embodiment in specific locations inform their ability to produce knowledge and how does this knowledge alter the posthuman masculine design of female cyborgs? How are the female characters' embodiment and knowledge production politically significant? What is the perspective conveyed about globalization in both North America and South Africa? How is the tension between locality and globalization manifested in the two works of fiction? To answer the above speculations, this thesis will contain two chapters. While the first chapter focuses on the various disseminating aspects of masculinized technology that feature in both works of fiction, the second chapter will scrutinize the female characters' embodied and highly political potentialities in relation to the spaces they occupy in both narratives.

In the first chapter, I will argue that both *Oryx and Crake* as well as *Moxyland* depict a form of thoroughly normalized masculine entitlement over the realm of technology and global production. On one hand, *Oryx and Crake* exposes the masculine power of globalized corporations that thrive for excessive consumerism driven by the mad creativity of men in the absence of any form of government. On the other hand, *Moxyland* divulges a patriarchal form of subject surveillance initiated by the collaborative work of government and corporations and executed via a web of technological advances. Both works of fiction present the events within a dystopian, speculative framework. However, each narrative sketches the events in relation to a different speculative space and temporality. *Oryx and Crake*'s setting features an

exaggerated future North America wrecked by excessively masculine technologies. In contrast, *Moxyland*'s speculative time corresponds to a South African post-apartheid setting that mirrors and reuses many of the elements of a past dystopia, which is the apartheid era.

The second chapter contributes in the discourse on posthuman feminist agency, which emerges more in *Moxyland* than in *Oryx and Crake*. More specifically, I will argue that in the context of the two novels, the presence of a form of posthuman feminism requires a local potentiality and a subjective embodiment in relation to figuring masculinist technologies. More specifically, I will argue that the presence or absence of intersectionality defines the characters' degree of potentiality in both of *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland*. The more intersectional their bodies are, the further their bodies advance in meanings and actions. For instance, the female Crakers' physical and mental entirety reveals a strong patriarchal technological design that allows the female cyborgs to operate under performative tendencies without any sign of subjective striving. On the other hand, the women cyborgs, namely Kendra and Lerato, use their bodies as source of knowledge production and agency under strict governmental surveillance. The female Crakers' performativity in *Oryx and Crake* seems devoid of an agential embodiment that challenges their male creator. In contrast, the women cyborgs in *Moxyland* alter the masculine knowledge that inscribes their bodies into a resistant, agential and subjective body of knowledge production. With that said, I will oppose the global personhood embroidering the female Crakers' existence in *Oryx and Crake* with

the anti-cosmopolitan corporeality characterizing the women cyborgs in *Moxyland*. Ultimately, I will argue that the local personhood as well as the local embodied potentiality that the women display in *Moxyland,* recuperates the importance of the Global South in the process of knowledge production.

CHAPTER II

MASCULINE TECHNOLOGY AND CORPORATIONS

A. Introduction

The past few decades marked the proliferation of a drastically technologized posthuman culture, which propagated in locations strongly affected by the manifestations of globalization. The most prominent characteristic of those locations is the presence of cyborg subjects, who are “a hybrid species created by crossing biological organism with cybernetic mechanism.” (Hayles 157) The cyborg body, which results from the fast-paced technological progress, blends both flesh and artificial technology. In that perspective, cyborg bodies host artificial limbs, organs, skin parts, and other technological implants (Hayles 158). More importantly, the elemental subjectivity and presence of the cyborg body transformed the field of literary fiction, whereby the representation of the cyborg subject grew in the book culture of those highly globalized locations.

A few contemporary literary theorists took this current book culture as their scope of study, as well as traced the influence of real, globalized technology on fiction writing in those technologically advanced locations. Those theorists questioned the socially and economically dominant parties funding and participating in the generation of technological advancements, as well as studied their heavy influence on authors’

writings. In fact, Judy Wajcman is one of the theorists who revealed the existence of a lengthy and consistent patriarchal domination over the engineering of technological innovations ranging from medicinal drugs to bioengineering projects. Wajcman explains that this traditional power did not only develop "men's monopoly [over] technology" (*Feminism Confronts Technology*, viii), but simultaneously infiltrated into the realm of speculative fiction. The latter genre, which is "similar, but not identical to the concept of possible worlds,…envisions a systematically different world in which not only events are different, but causes operate by logics other than normal ones." (Gill 73) Hence, speculative fiction forges a world that is closely recognizable in reality, yet that operates based on different morals. Ultimately, despite the "estrangement" that speculative fiction cultivates within the reader, it "is intended to bring recognition better characterized by engagement than by the distance caused by estrangement." (Gill 73) With that said, the masculine representational elements of technology and cyborg bodies found in speculative fiction estrange readers, only to invite them towards critically assessing their real life conditions in the midst of globalization.

In the context of posthumanism and global technology, some authors' portrayal of the feminine in speculative fiction stems directly from the masculine culture that monopolizes the field of innovations. Actually, "a fairly insistent history of representations of technology that work to fortify – sometimes desperately – conventional understandings of the feminine" (Doane 20) flourished in light of this patriarchal system. Nevertheless, numerous contemporary feminist writers initiated a

form of speculative writing that subverts the content of this historically conventional culture (Doane 20) and promotes a critical approach to understanding posthuman cyborgs. Following the latter wave of speculative writing, Margaret Atwood and Lauren Beukes respectively portray in both of *Oryx and Crake* as well as *Moxyland* two imagined environments that simultaneously foreshadow a sophisticated form of technological globalization and sustain an excessively masculine control over technology.

On one hand, *Oryx and Crake*'s depicts corporations that sponsor and monitor the engineering projects of men, such as those of Crake. On the other hand, *Moxyland*'s society reveals a patriarchal form of subject control initiated by the collaborative work of government and corporations and executed via a web of technological advances. With that said, this first chapter will trace the excessive masculine entitlement over the realm of technology that is depicted in both works of fiction. While *Oryx and Crake* displays the masculine power of globalized corporations in the absence of any form of government, *Moxyland* reveals a violent form of technological masculinity produced by the bond between corporations and government. Moreover, this chapter will scrutinize the different dystopian frameworks produced in each novel in light of globalization. Undeniably, *Oryx and Crake*'s speculative setting unfolds into a dystopia featuring an exaggerated future North America that is wrecked by excessively masculine technologies. In contrast, *Moxyland*'s speculative time corresponds to a South African

post-apartheid setting that invests many elements of a past actual dystopia, namely the apartheid era.

B. Globalized Corporations in *Oryx and Crake*

Margaret Atwood's post-apocalyptic novel draws the picture of a devastated first world environment. The near apocalypse is the result of the "JUVE, Jetspeed Ultra Virus Extraordinary" (Atwood 341), a plague that spread through pills engineered by a scientist named Crake who strived from a world devoid of uncontrollable fertility rates. Most importantly, the novel reveals the daily struggles of the last surviving human being called Snowman, previously known as Jimmy. Snowman, who is a friend of Crake, finds himself surrounded by a group of biologically engineered male and female cyborgs named the "Crakers". Crake built each of the female and male cyborgs with extremely meticulous physiological characteristics and specific pre-wired settings that allow them to perform their daily activities. Particularly, the female Crakers' design shows little aptness for initiative and agency, as well as emphasizes their procreation abilities. In his daily interaction with the Crakers, Snowman recalls the pre-apocalyptic time, which was operated by globalized corporations that nurtured all sorts of advanced technologies.

The location and the social organization prevalent in *Oryx and Crake* prior to the JUVE plague reveal the infiltration of the elements of globalization into the environment, namely the sophisticated technological advances brought by powerful

corporations. In fact, the speculative fiction assumes a first world environment; more specifically the United States of America. Thus, while the location of the narrative is relatable in reality, the plot offers an exaggerated representation of the United States' highly technologized outlook. In their various encounters, Jimmy and Crake played videogames that mentioned some of the "interstates" (Atwood 216) found in the United States. During the preparatory phase that preceded Crake's launch of the "BlyssPluss Pill" (Atwood 293), he headed with Jimmy to the "pleeblands north of New New York" (Atwood 287) to assess the potential markets for the manufactured product. On numerous occasions, Jimmy's mother "rambled" desperately about the drastically changing climate around "Lake Okeechobee" and the "Everglades" in Florida (Atwood 63). While many states are mentioned in the novel, most of the events in the novel prior to and after the plague take place "on the east coast of North America" (Ridout 33). Thus, the advanced environment that is portrayed in speculative fiction provides a rich field for the fermentation of globalized technologies.

Furthermore, the social and structural organization in the locations mentioned throughout the book exhibits a rigid divide between the "compounds" and the "pleeblands". The compounds consisted of severely gated communities hosting people who work for different corporations that are responsible for the experimentation and the release of technological and medicinal breakthroughs. Inside those compounds, the working executives, scientists and engineers lived with their families in sophisticated "Modules" (Atwood 26), which featured houses equipped with the latest innovations.

Unlike the compounds, the “dingy-looking” pleeblands (Atwood 27) were cities that nurtured highly polluted and diseased environments that the compound residents viewed as dangerous (Atwood 27), yet as an excellent consumerist market place. With that said, the corporations’ exclusive domination over the production and distribution of technology, which is apparent throughout the book, evokes Anthony Giddens’ definition of corporate influence. Giddens asserts in his article “The Globalizing of Modernity” that corporations are the primary and most influential catalysts in the globalizing equation. Giddens explains that the goals of firms and companies surpass the economic act of production or distribution and rather reaches the aim of acquiring political influence (18-19). More importantly, corporations promote in their working a set of “class relations” that distinguishes between those who own the factors of production and those who do not (Giddens 19), thus creating a divide built on power possession. While corporations introduce and continuously upgrade technological innovations as part of the process of globalization, they simultaneously ensure a drastic modification of the “preexisting relations between human social organization and the environment” (Giddens 21). Hence, the work of corporations within the realm of globalization infuses an economic and political form of schism that grants corporations an exclusive and controlling power. For instance, the corporations in *Oryx and Crake* compensate the absence of any form of government with a developed corporate surveillance system known as “the CorpSeCorps” (Atwood 27) who police the compounds and the pleeblands as well as guard the borders between them. Effectively,

the division of the cities between advanced compounds and consumerist pleeblands as well as the politically significant corporate policing grant the corporations an unreserved dominating power over the realm of invention.

The corporations in Atwood's novel establish their full control over the realm of technology through their advancement of extreme innovations in the field of biomedicine and bioengineering. Actually, the fiction unveils unordinary research projects carried in the compound firms. For instance, Jimmy's father initially worked as a genographer for "OrganInc Farms", a company that experiments on animals. He contributed in the development of "Operation Immortality" that experimented on mice, then he became one of the direct designers of the "pigoon project" (Atwood 22). The latter project's "goal…was to grow an assortment of foolproof human-tissue organs in a transgenic knockout pig host...Such a host animal could be reaped for its extra kidneys; then, rather than being destroyed, it could keep on living and grow more organs" (Atwood 22-23). The questionable corporate technologies that the novel portrays are reminiscent of Luis Suarez-Villa's conceptualization of technocapitalism, a new form of capitalism embedded in corporate networks. According to Suarez- Villa, globalization is a "vehicle for the spread of a new version of capitalism that is deeply grounded in technology and corporate power." (1) He views the scientific inquiries adopted by corporations in the current stage of globalization as an invigorating source of financing and authority for those corporations. In the same way, the corporate environment in *Oryx and Crake* is founded on the strands of technocapitalism. Suarez-Villa adds that

the interlocking relation between ambitious corporations and scientific technology has resulted in many research branches such as that of “nanotechnology... bioengineering… biopharmacology and biomedicine” (2). Those branches ensued the manufacturing of products fueled by creativity and eventually infused into the global market (Suarez-Villa 2). Likewise, the creativity that Suarez-Villa describes as a “global resource” (2) in his book *Globalization and Technocapitalism* takes an extreme toll in the novel, where the inventions molded in the compound laboratories are not only ethically questionable, but also extreme in shape and form. For instance, besides the formation of pigoon labs, other OrganInc “biolabs” delved into combining animal species and creating new bio forms (Atwood 51). In fact, the “rakunks”, the “pigoons” and the “wolvogs” (Atwood 38) were among the few bioengineered animal species that survived the JUVE plague. In a similar context, Jimmy’s family moved to the “Helthwyzer Compound” where his father worked for “NooSkins”, a corporation dedicated to the “develop[ment] [of] skin-related biotechnologies” that attempt to regenerate the skin epidermis as well as the cerebral neurons (Atwood 55-56). Hence, the various mentioned corporate products reassert the technocapitalist setting prevalent before the JUVE plague, as well as shed the light on the concealed corporate ambitions ruling the compounds.

In reality, the sustenance of corporate power necessitates the continuous injection of products into the global market. Suarez-Villa asserts that “the increasingly authoritarian control that corporatism exercises over technology… [simultaneously forms a] quest for

profit and power anywhere and everywhere." (8) In other words, the ultimate manifestation of corporate power and profit nests in advertisement and consumerism. In *Oryx and Crake,* Crake's ambitions replicate the ambitions of the corporation he worked for as a bioengineer. Upon finishing his college studies, Jimmy transferred to the "RejoovenEsense Compound" (Atwood 291) to assist Crake in the advertisement for his new "BlyssPluss" birth control pill (Atwood 294). In one of their visits to the Pleeblands, Jimmy noticed the excessive "[n]eon slogans, billboards, [and] ads" everywhere (Atwood 288). The latter technological elements installed in the pleeblands foreshadow a built-in consumerist market that advertises for the compound products. Furthermore, Crake describes the status of RejoovenEsense products in the Pleeblands markets as follows:

> "So this is where our stuff turns to gold… But the competition's ferocious, especially what the Russians are doing, and the Japanese, and the Germans, of course. And the Swedes. We're holding our own though, we have a reputation for dependable product. People come here from all over the world – they shop around…You have no idea how much money changes hands on this one street alone." (Atwood 288-289)

Crake's enthusiastic portrayal of the pleebland market as a global city demarcates his conviction in a necessarily continuous mode of capitalist production. Actually, the rapid nature of technological innovation creates a "systematic" form of production whereby

"creativity…has to be turned into a commodity for corporate appropriation of its results to occur, and for any profit to be extracted from those results." (Suarez- Villa 8) Corporations do not only exaggerate creativity through the manipulation of new technologies, but they similarly objectify creativity to remain in competition. Hence, Crake's envisioning of the economic competition in the pleeblands is highly "systematic". The innovation of products is incessant in order to maintain the schism between powerful compounds and consumerist pleeblands.

C. Masculine Technology in *Oryx and Crake*

More importantly, the technocapitalist behavior ruling the compounds in *Oryx and Crake* highlights and reinforces a form of masculine control over the realm of technology. More specifically, an inherently patriarchal system rules the social relationships as well as the processes of recruitment, design and execution within the compounds. Judy Wajcman argues that technology is cross-historically constructed as a masculine realm of control. She clarifies that patriarchal practices include men's "control of women's bodies, especially their sexuality and fertility" (*Feminism Confronts Technology* 56). She adds that masculine inventions, particularly the biological and reproductive innovations such as birth control methods as well as genetic engineering technologies, violate women's authority over their own bodies (*Feminism Confronts Technology* 58). Furthermore, the maintenance of constructed gender roles throughout history gave birth to "the ideology of masculinity that has this intimate bond

with technology" (Wajcman, *Feminism Confronts Technology* 137). Actually, the natural view of technology as masculine results from a historical accumulation of social and cultural practices (Wajcman, *Feminism Confronts Technology* 137). In *Oryx and Crake*, the prevalent social relationships in the compounds enact this masculine ideology of technology. For instance, Snowman recounts his childhood memories, including the lessons that his father conveyed:

> Women, and what went on under their collars. Hotness and coldness, coming and going in the strange musky flowery variable-weather country inside their clothes – mysterious, important, uncontrollable. That was his father's take on things. But men's body temperatures were never dealt with; they were never even mentioned, not when he was little…Why weren't they? Why nothing about the hot collars of men? Those smooth, sharp-edged collars with their dark, sulphurous, bristling undersides. (Atwood 17)

The father's view of women's bodies as peculiar and untamed incentivizes his experimental work as a genographer. Additionally, the absence of critique towards men's bodies constitutes a live performance of this masculine entitlement over the field of technology. As Wajcman elaborates in her feminist critique, "the female body is being expropriated, fragmented and dissected as raw material… for the technological production of human beings." (59) Women's bodies, in accordance with the father's description, are mysteriously resourceful for men's creativity in the compound

corporations. In a similar context, Jimmy's father justifies his questionable work ethics in the technocapitalist whirlwind launched by corporations and confesses the necessity of "envy…fanaticism and bad faith" (Atwood 28) in the process. With the reputation he built for himself, Jimmy's father was later "headhunted by NooSkins and hired at the second-in-command level" (Atwood 53). Nevertheless, his wife repetitively expressed feeling "like a prisoner" (Atwood 53) and complained that "the whole organization was wrong" (Atwood 56). Yet, Jimmy's father ceaselessly defended his projects and accused his wife of sustaining a "neurotic guilt" (Atwood 57). The father's relatively violent defense mirrors the power that such endeavors reward him with. Wajcman establishes the relation between technology and power as follows: "[M]astery over…technology does bestow some power over...men; in relation to other men and women who lack this expertise, in terms of the material rewards this skill brings, and even in terms of their portrayal as 'heroes' at the frontiers of technological progress." (*Feminism Confronts Technology* 144) Men's control over technology grants them a prestigious superiority built on material and moral rewards. Similarly, Jimmy's father views his skillful position in the compound as an authoritarian fulfilment that his wife will never attain or understand. With that said, the interactive relationships in Jimmy's family illustrate the culturally embedded patriarchal command over technology.

In parallel, the representation of Crake's potentials and personality in Atwood's speculative fiction further divulges a constructed masculine understanding of technology. While Jimmy realized that Crake could be "a little too instructive" (Atwood

70), he also viewed Crake as a "sort of mutant" with incredible analytical skills (Atwood 174). Upon graduating from high school in the HelthWyzer compound, Crake was automatically "snatched up at a high price by the Watson-Crick Institute" (Atwood 173) where he developed his bioengineering skills and began working later in the RejoovenEsense compound (Atwood 291). Noting that Crake's skills were noticeable, the surveilling corporate system at HelthWyzer was keen on investing in his capabilities in the technological field. More importantly, Crake revealed a series of personal convictions regarding the functioning of the human body, including the concepts of love and sexuality. Those convictions instigated the specific characteristics of the Crakers, his biologically engineered cyborgs. For example, Crake repetitively explained to Jimmy that the Crakers project envisions relieving the body from certain unnecessary functions:

> "How much misery, …how much needless despair has been caused by a series of biological mismatches, a misalignment of the hormones and pheromones? Resulting in the fact that the one you love so passionately won't or can't love you. As a species we're pathetic in that way: imperfectly monogamous. If we could only pair-bond for life, like gibbons, or else opt for total guilt-free promiscuity, there'd be no more sexual torment. Better plan- make it cyclical and also inevitable, as in the other mammals." (Atwood 166)

Crake's scientific desires involve a drastic redefinition of natural body functions, such as that of hormonal changes and sexual behavior. Wajcman states that the ultimate masculine exploitation of technology is manifested in "the violent destruction of natural links between living organisms, the dissection and analysis of these organisms down to their smallest elements, in order to reassemble them, according to the plans of the male engineers, as machines" (*Feminism Confronts Technology* 59). Therefore, the control of the human body from a masculine perspective requires a meticulous rearrangement of human behaviors and capabilities. In the same way, Crake's "cyclical" design mirrors his plan to create a new form of love and sexuality characterized by mere mechanisms similar to those of the mammals. In addition, Crake's technological projects ensured a very specific goal, which is "[b]reaking the link in time between one generation and the next" (Atwood 223). For any human, "to be in command of the very latest technology signifies being involved in directed the future" (Wajcman, *Feminism Confronts Technology* 144). Thus, Crake's obsessive domination over technology and his desire to eliminate one generation for the benefit of a newer, specifically designed generation provided him with a sense of superior command over the future of both the natural world and the human body. Ultimately, Crake articulated his compulsive dedication to eliminate the present generation and the projection of a better future through the launching of the BlyssPluss Pill project as well as the creation of the bioengineered Crakers.

The different physical and functional characteristics of the male and female Crakers materialize Crake's masculine entitlement over technology. While all of the Crakers were "thick-skinned" (Atwood 6) and "amazingly attractive" (Atwood 8), the women Crakers held a set of distinct physical features that Snowman describes as follows:

> They're every known colour from deepest black to whitest white, they're various heights, but each of them is admirably proportioned. Each is sound of tooth, smooth of skin. No ripples of fat around their waists, no bulges, no dimpled orange-skin cellulite on their thighs. No body hair, no bushiness. They look like retouched fashion photos, or ads for a high-priced workout program. (Atwood 100)

Crake immensely commodifies the female Crakers with their various designed bodily features. Simultaneously, they emulate "Crake's aesthetic" vision (Atwood 8) of the perfect female body. Actually, the female Crakers' enhanced sexual features echo Crake's ultimate masculine design. Effectively, procreation among the Crakers becomes an act of courtship and mating:

> Courtship begins at the first whiff…with the males presenting flowers to the female – just as male penguins present round stones…At the same time they indulge in musical outbursts, like songbirds. Their penises turn bright blue to match the blue abdomens of the females, and they do a sort of blue-dick dance number…Then, when the blue of her abdomen has reached its deepest shade, the female and her quarter find a secluded spot and go at it until the woman becomes pregnant….The

> five of them will roister for hours, three of the men standing guard and doing the singing and shouting while the fourth one copulates, turn and turn about. Crake has equipped these women with ultra-strong vulvas-extra skin layers, extra muscles- so they can sustain these marathons. (Atwoood 165)

The act of procreation becomes a mechanical, pre-wired performance that necessitates a set of physical features among the female Crakers. Crake does not redesign the women's bodies to meet this new mechanism, but to withstand the violence of the "marathons" that come with it. According to Wajcman, contemporary masculine designs of technology can foreshadow degrees of "aggressiveness" and "violence" (*Feminism Confronts Technology* 143). Unsurprisingly, Crake's model of procreation does not only upgrade the women's bodies, but rather adds a degree of violence in the act involved. In contrast, the "well-muscled" (Atwood 155) male Crakers perform a daily "morning ritual" where they urinate to demarcate their territory (Atwood 154). According to Crake, this act was "special…to men only…they'd need something important to do" (Atwood 155). Despite the mundanity of their act, Crake established a set of different behaviors and practices that differentiate the female and male Crakers. With that said, the gendered heterosexual relations among the Crakers endorse Wajcman's view of technology as a culture with a set of masculine "desires and practices" (*Feminism Confronts Technology* 149). The Crakers' behavior and the differentiation between the mechanical functions of males and females reassert the cultural and social nature of technology as perceived in the corporate world.

D. Dystopia in *Oryx and Crake*

The corporate networks of power in *Oryx and Crake*, including the masculinization of technological innovations, tailor a complicated dystopian framework in the novel. With the propagation of the JUVE plague that Crake initiated through the BlyssPluss pills, Snowman and the Crakers lived through the catastrophe and found themselves in a wrecked, post-apocalyptic environment. With that said, the characteristics of speculative fiction materialize in this abnormal, yet close to reality setting, whereby the future repercussions of a presently Globalized North America are exaggerated. More importantly, the imprinted presence of patriarchy in the narrative strengthens a feminist dystopian reading of the events due to the excessive masculine privilege over corporate technologies. Hence, while the elements of speculative fiction project a future parallel reality that is worth engaging with, this reality thrives with dystopic motifs, namely the propagation of undue technology. As explained by Dunja Mohr, a dystopia illustrates the future, often exaggerated, mishaps of a present, highly technologized society (29). Furthermore, besides figuring the "dehumanizing and destructive" aspect of technology (Mohr 30), a dystopia can ultimately invest in "the end of the world and the post-apocalyptic motif" (Mohr 32). Actually, the characterization of the plot with an ominous ending of the world can concurrently enact a critique against artificiality, mass production and consumerism, hegemonic gender and sexual relations, political regimes, as well as other social aspects (Mohr 33). Besides the sophisticated production process in the compounds and the heavy consumerist plans in the pleeblands within *Oryx and*

Crake, the masculine traits of posthuman artificiality characterize the narrative as a feminist dystopia. Mohr asserts in *Worlds Apart? Dualism and Transgression in Contemporary Female Dystopias* that feminist dystopias developed in the late twentieth century (35) to disclose and critique the modern sources of women's oppression, including "sexual polarization, restrictive gender roles,…the cult of (superior) masculinity and the essential inferiority of femininity,…patriarchal views of femininity[,]…male violence against women,…and sexism inherent in the phallogocentric language." (36) Undeniably, Crake's design of the women cyborgs in *Oryx and Crake* projects his personal conviction in the efficiency of mechanizing the women's functions and polishing their bodies according to specific masculine and consumerist aesthetics. Thus, the narrative thematically actualizes the elements of a feminist dystopia through exposing men's representations of women in the compounds and the pleeblands.

E. Dystopia in *Moxyland*

Situated in South Africa, Lauren Beukes' *Moxyland* sketches a post-apartheid speculative fiction characterized by intense technological features. In fact, the narrative projects a "recognizable" (Gill 73) South African speculative fiction featuring a strong social divide between corporate and civilian domains ruled by strong technological mechanisms, including cellphones that control individuals' movements. Consequently, individuals are constantly threatened to be "disconnected" from their cellphones in case

of any infraction, a measure that disrupts their daily activities. While the narrative unfolds through the eyes of four characters, namely Kendra, Lerato, Tendeka and Toby, the dynamics that the women engage with are predominantly remarkable. On one hand, Kendra becomes a “Sponsor baby” (Beukes 7) for an energy drink called “Ghost” that she becomes addicted to in reaction to a drug injection manufactured by a corporation. On the other hand, Lerato, a surviving “aidsbaby” (Beukes 154), carves her way in the tech world through working in Communique, a leading corporation in Cape Town. As for Toby and Tendeka, each of them comes from a different social background, which affects their behavior and relations to other members of society. Specifically, Toby is in arrogant walking blogger who takes advantage of everyone around him to meet his basic material and physical needs. In contrast, Tendeka is a social activist and street benevolent who finds himself repetitively disconnected for purposefully infringing the public rules.

Ultimately, *Moxyland*’s post-apartheid narrative materializes the remnants of a previous, past dystopia, which is the South African apartheid era. In other words, while *Moxyland*’s time and space correspond to that of the post-apartheid era, the dynamics within that space display the repercussions of past South Africa. Conventionally, a “dystopia presupposes and thrives on the correlation and similarity of the present social order and the near-future scenario.” (Mohr 27) Thus, the chronological framework of a dystopia bounces between present and future actions. Nevertheless, *Moxyland* defies this standard dystopian framework and rather forges a correlation between the present,

post-apartheid Cape Town and its apartheid past. This South African speculative fiction does not display “the worst of all possible futures” (Mohr 27), but rather epitomizes the drastic effects of the apartheid era on the present.

The history of South Africa features a drastic past characterized by the apartheid segregation and a present marked by the abolition of this segregation after decades of struggle. In fact, the unification of South Africa into one country in 1910, followed by the actualization of white supremacy on a broad social and economic spectrum (Barbarin and Richter 29) materialized the apartheid rule in South Africa in the early twentieth century. More specifically, British colonial legislators founded the apartheid dominance on the basis of “‘separate development’”, which granted white individuals an exclusive right over all sorts of economic, professional and social benefits (Barbarin and Richter 26). In return, the established and institutionalized racial segregation enforced a system of restricted jobs and services in the black community, which rewarded and strengthened the position of the whites (Barbarin and Richter 26). With the formation of the African National Congress in 1912 and its gradual rebellious movements particularly towards the mid twentieth century (Barbarin and Richter 27), the Black citizens of South Africa voiced their rejection of the segregation rule. Years after the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela for his active struggles with the African National Congress, and with South Africa’s transformation into a republic after disassociating from the “British Commonwealth”, the new national government carried further discriminatory acts and extreme policing missions (Barbarin and Richter 28).

Gradually, several intense movements led by the African National Congress and labor unions arose in defiance of the apartheid rule, which resulted in the dissolution of the white parliament in 1983 and the release of Mandela from prison in 1990 (Barbarin and Richter 29). With the triumph of the African National Congress in the "multiracial democratic elections" and the election of Mandela as president in 1994, South Africa ended the apartheid rule and eliminated all racist social and economic policies (Barbarin and Richter 29).

The apartheid events and the gradual transition into a multiracial post-apartheid setting inspired the writings of numerous South African writers such as Beukes. In an attempt to "redefine" their space in the twentieth century, South African writers resorted to speculative fiction (Caraivan 114). More importantly, the latter genre "preserved numerous topics from the Apartheid period, combining and connecting them with recent issues in order to provide an invigorating and original wave of South African writing." (Caraivan 127) In other words, South African writers, including Lauren Beukes (Caraivan 113) imported prominent themes from the apartheid period and injected them in contemporary and innovative, post-apartheid writings. Consequently, South African writers genuinely blend apartheid themes like "racism, xenophobia, the banalization of violence…the struggle against illness (HIV/AIDS)" (Caraivan 126) with post-colonial and post-apartheid concerns such as "globalization…and technological development" (Caraivan 126). With that said, *Moxyland*'s dystopic events do not exhibit a future

exaggerated South Africa, but rather speculate the effects of technological globalization on a society scarred by a previous, institutionalized apartheid rule.

F. Corporations and Social Class in *Moxyland*

Undoubtedly, *Moxyland* unveils a series of representations that are reminiscent of the apartheid violence. Far from delving into the racial backgrounds of the four main characters, namely Kendra, Lerato, Tendeka and Toby, the speculative fiction illustrates instead the social boundaries separating them. Hence, while South Africa has been traditionally divided on the basis of race with the apartheid rule, *Moxyland* displays new power divisions dictated by corporations rather than race. For instance, the narrative highlights a strong divide between civilian and corporate lives. Kendra describes her experience when roaming between the busy corporate city and the suburbs:

> The corporate line shushes through the tunnels on a skin of seawater, overflow from the tide drives put to practical use in the clanking watery bowels of Cape Town – like all the effluent in this city. Like me. Art school dropout reinvented as shiny brand ambassador. Sponsor baby. Ghost girl…I could get used to this, seats unmarked by the pocket craters of cigarette burns...But elevated status is not part of the program. Only allocated for the day, to get me in and out again. Wouldn't want civilians hanging around. (Beukes 7)

Kendra, a young photographer, becomes the walking brand of a corporation that produces a drink called Ghost. In her journey in and out of corporate premises, Kendra

points out the strong rejection of “civilians” on corporate properties. Moreover, while the “corporate line” epitomizes the infrastructural divide within busy Cape Town, Kendra emphasizes how such line channels away from “the effluent in this city”. The latter expression draws an unpleasant image of some parts of the city that are unoccupied by corporations. In fact, the impeccably clean seats of the train materialize the “elevated status” that she can temporarily have access to during her journey.

In contrast to the polished corporate premises in the city, the poor suburbs account for the prevalent social class schism. For instance, Tendeka rebelliously reports the situation of Cape Town’s suburbs:

> The taxi rockets around Hospital Bend, which used to feature an actual hospital…before it got turned into luxury apartments, past the nice middle-class burbs…Don’t be fooled by the cosy apartment blocks lining the highway, it’s all Potemkin for the tourists. You just need to go a couple of blocks in to find the real deal, the tin shacks and the old miners’ hostels and the converted containers now that the shipping industry has died together with the economy. All the same shit they’ve been promising to fix since the 1955 Freedom Charter or whatever it was. And despite the border patrols, the sprawl just keeps on spreading. You can’t keep all of the Rurals out all of the time. (Beukes 42)

Tendeka accurately reports the features of the social class system that appeared after the elimination of the apartheid. Beyond the luxurious corporate facilities in the city rises

the middle class apartments. Yet, beyond those apartments lies the community of civilians whose segregation is clearly based on their inadequate economic access. In reality, the "tin shacks" and the "miners' hostels" clearly restore the memory of the eviction compounds that the whites previously built for the blacks. In 1950, "The Group Areas Act…prevented black people from entering, living in, or working in restricted white areas", which led to the propagation of compounds designated for the compulsorily isolated black individuals (Barbarin & Richter 30). Moreover, the Group Areas Act did not only forge separated suburb areas to locate the compounds, but also dedicated those spaces for all sorts of cheap labor that the whites can benefit from (Barbarin and Richter 31). Thus, miners, manufacturers and low wage service providers mostly lived in those suburbs (Barbarin and Richter 31). Similarly, the untransformed poor suburbs that Tendeka describes still host the "Rurals" who did not acquire enough financial support to move out in the dawn of the twenty first century. With that said, one of the most prominent remnants of the racial segregation that promulgated after the apartheid is a new class oriented segregation. In their study of the social and economic conditions years after the election of Mandela, Barbarin & Richter assert that despite the shattering of the formal apartheid rule, "the separation of groups on the basis of race is being replaced by separation on the basis of socioeconomic status…Racism takes on new forms, partly related to class and urbanization" (32). Hence, while the apartheid's racist violence built an actual dystopic environment, the urban and rural characteristics

in *Moxyland* preserve in parallel the effects of this violence in the form of class discrepancies enforced by corporations.

Furthermore, the globalized technological cooperation between the government and the corporations sponsors and reinforces the divide between civilians and corporates in *Moxyland*. Actually, the government's heavy reliance on technology in the daily policing tasks necessitates the state's contracting with multinational (Beukes 16) corporations. For instance, the government established a contract with Communique (Beukes 249), a corporation that manages billboards on the streets of Cape Town as well as develops coding procedures in the cyber and tech worlds. This contract does not only allow Communique to manage the advertisement messages that the government wishes to display on the boards, but also sponsors the birth of corporate spies who use their cyber skills to locate and blackmail potential terrorists (Beukes 296). Hence, the government benefits from the corporate expertise to bestow order covertly. Nevertheless, the government also spreads cameras and cops who are accompanied by Aitos, a generation of genetically modified dogs with enhanced sensory and scenting features (Beukes 9) in an attempt to reinforce the law overtly. Additionally, the government merges this technological surveillance web with a system of cellphone tracking. All individuals carry registered SIMs within their cellphones and can be charged with a "disconnect offense" in case of infraction (Beukes 28). Not only does the disconnection shut down the regular cellphone services, but also eliminates the individual's ability to transfer money or even use the means of transportation.

Accordingly, the members of the society who live in the suburbs, such as the street kids and the rebellious law breakers, often find themselves "homeless and phoneless" in accordance with their belief in "voluntary" disconnection (Beukes 214-215) as a weapon against the globalized surveillance features adopted by the government. Thus, the government's investment in corporate proficiency advances the corporations on the scale of technocapitalism. As put by Suarez-Villa in *Globalization and Technocapitalism*, the mixture of "technology and corporate power" (1) that globalization facilitates in *Moxyland* transforms the society into a "surveillance" setting grounded in the corporations' "computing, telecommunications, intelligent software and biomimetics" services (3). Hence, the corporations become the government's "executors of surveillance, and controllers of public governance." (Suarez- Villa 3) While the corporations carried out their extreme technocapitalist endeavors in the absence of the government in *Oryx and Crake*, the corporations in *Moxyland* strengthened their technocapitalist ambitions through becoming the perpetuators of surveillance in the name of the government.

G. Masculine Technology in *Moxyland*

The cooperation between the government and corporations in *Moxyland* strengthens the reign of a masculine model of sanctioning, which is similarly reminiscent of the rampant surveillance and sanctions system in the apartheid period. In fact, a strong masculine authority characterized the previous South African apartheid state. Daniel

Conway illustrates in his article “The Masculine State in Crisis State Response to War Resistance in Apartheid South Africa” the discursive and applied “white hegemonic masculinity” in the South African apartheid state (423). This form of masculine rule reached its peak when the opposition to the apartheid heightened in the 1980s (Conway 423). Under the reign of white president P. W. Botha (Conway 427), “[c]onscription in South Africa was a powerful social means for…engendering and policing militarized, gendered norms.” (Conway 426) Recruitment of white men into the military army primarily allowed a greater containment of the social upheaval. More importantly, such military propaganda gave birth to a white nationalist masculine identity that is “virile and strong” rather than “weak, compromising, and ‘feminine’” (Conway 428). This identity did not only institutionalize “a heteronormative gender binary” but also revealed the government’s masculine and “authoritarian” investment in various tools (Conway 436) to control bodies. While this circulating discourse of strong masculinity materialized chiefly in the call for male conscription, other hegemonic practices that targeted gender norms emerged, such as the diffusion of homophobia and the “objection” to women’s activism (Conway 436). Ultimately, such discourses and practices generated a heavy form of state violence against resistance that implemented “repressive measures relying on the use of the military, riot police, and surveillance task groups” (Barbarin & Richter 68). According to R. W. Connell, such violent model of governmental sanctioning reinforces the view of the government as a male, “destructive” (516) entity. As mentioned earlier, despite the dissipation of the apartheid,

South African writers continued borrowing apartheid-related themes in their post-colonial and post-apartheid writings (Caraivan 127). Hence, the combined violence of government and corporations in post-apartheid *Moxyland* stimulates references to the wave of masculine violence that contained resistant groups during the apartheid.

Actually, Beukes' speculative fiction displays a sophisticated police system of cellphone tracking, diffusion and disconnection that coerces bodies in ways that are similar to the apartheid context. For instance, Kendra reports witnessing the cops' live diffusion of a woman accused of stealing in an area close to "Salt River Station" (Beukes 133). The shock of the electric diffusion left the woman on the ground, "gasping, her eyes scrunched up." (Beukes 134) Furthermore, the cops resort to the genetically engineered Aitos to search her body. The diffused woman remains submissive to the Aito who "raises a proprietary paw…to claim her" (Beukes 134), "know[ing] enough to keep her arms by her side, hands down, while he snuffles around her." (Beukes 135) The woman's submissiveness to police violence marks her inability to process a different approach to resolving the incident. Actually, when a curious "street kid" approached the scene, the Aitos "crash[ed] him down" to the ground and "twisted [his arm] underneath his body" (Beukes 136-137). The Aitos clearly do not investigate the age or background of the attacked victims, working thus as the ultimate executioners of violence. Undoubtedly, such incidents echo the police violence during the apartheid period. Yet, in the 2018 dystopian events of *Moxyland*, the violence upgrades and intertwines with bioengineered and technological advancements in the

aim of ensuring control of bodies. Moreover, this violence mirrors a model of institutionalized patriarchal governance (Connell 514) that infuses masculine aggressions (Connell 517) in the daily lives of people. Consequently, as a form of speculative fiction, *Moxyland* advances in its invented and highly technologized post-apartheid time a critique of South African state violence.

Certainly, the masculine model of control in Beukes' speculative fiction ensures a systematic and organized control of women's bodies, who simultaneously attempt to forge their paths within patriarchal social dynamics. Kendra and Lerato, the two women characters in *Moxyland*, find themselves entangled in the web of corporations. On one hand, Kendra becomes the walking brand of a drink called Ghost. While the latter drink necessitates advertisement, the launching firms "Prima-Sabine FoodSolutions International, Vukani [and] Inatec Biologica" search for "the perfect ambassadors for the brand" (Beukes 11) and inject them with a "nano" technology (Beukes 13) that makes them simultaneously immune to diseases and permanently addicted to the ghost drink. Kendra suffered from the death of her father from cancer and dropped out from Art school (Beukes 12). In that perspective, her momentary vulnerability sketched the "perfect" profile that the corporations were looking for. With the "nanotech inva[ding]" her body (Beukes 14), Kendra becomes the "property" (Beukes 299) of the Ghost companies. Gradually, Kendra's thirst for Ghost and her consumption of the product publically actualized the corporate advertising ambitions. Nevertheless, her public consumption concurrently attracted the attention of men who reacted to her behavior in

negative ways. For instance, Toby, an ambitious blogger who films and streams exclusive news and pictures via a technologically sophisticated jacket, becomes instantaneously interested in following Kendra. According to Toby, reporting Kendra's behavior and immune status will be "an exclusive…Bigtime traffic. Hits galore. Maybe even syndication." (Beukes 24) Toby views the surveillance of Kendra's body as an open door for glory and recognition as he reports the manifestations of a newly launched corporate product. With that said, the corporate invasion of Kendra's body through the nanotechnology does not only commodify her in the market, but also forces her into certain social dynamics with curious consumers or opportunists.

On the other hand, the narrative illustrates Lerato as a determined woman working at Communique. After the death of her parents from AIDS, a corporate "skills institute" called "Eskom Energy Kids" that caters for surviving "Aidsbabies" took Lerato and raised her (Beukes 154). Lerato admits that this "corporate skills school" displaced her from her culture and environment (Beukes 199). Yet, she believes that her very early "corporate life" forged her way towards "international firstworld opportunities" (Beukes 154-155). In this context, Lerato's ambitious dreams stem from the corporate environment that nurtured her very early on in her life. More importantly, the skills institute that adopted her distilled her character to include a desire for corporate success and growth. Such strategy reinforces the corporations' control of those who work in their realm, in an attempt to reduce any "civilian" or anti-corporate infiltration. In her article "Feminism and Contemporary Culture in South Africa", Ronit Frenkel states that

"patriarchy has been the one constant 'profoundly non-racial institution'" that affected women's present situation in South Africa (1). In her argument about women's transitional position from the apartheid to the post-apartheid period, Frenkel affirms the following:

> While women's struggles were subordinated to the larger anti-apartheid struggle out of the necessities of a nationalist agenda, in a post-apartheid context, the residue of these modes and repertoires of operation coupled with the patriarchal nature of apartheid, has resulted in ambiguous gender positionings that are highlighted by such polarised statistics – where women are clearly both…seen and unseen, included and excluded in different ways. (1-2)

The masculine state that governed South Africa during the Apartheid resisted women's activism for both masculine and nationalist reasons. Consequently, women's social and political positions in post-apartheid South Africa became equivocal, not only in relation to their male counterparts, but within any social or professional setting. In the dystopic framework that *Moxyland* reveals, this apartheid "residue" infiltrates the corporations who take advantage of Kendra and Lerato's background to execute their capitalist agendas. The Ghost company's "repertoires of operation" includes the recruitment of seemingly vulnerable women like Kendra to become brand ambassadors. In the case of Lerato, the "mode" of work followed by Communique includes the early channeling of women's capabilities and ambitions for the benefit of the corporation.

As suggested above, the masculine model of control in *Moxyland* coerces women's bodies and ensures their immersion in patriarchal social dynamics. However, this same masculine model simultaneously controls men's bodies, especially those who come from lower classes and do not hold any corporate privileges. The most prominent example in the narrative is Tendeka, who suffers from the same system that coerces women's bodies. As a young social activist living in the Suburbs of Cape Town, Tendeka built a long history with the South African police. In fact, the police repetitively disconnected or arrested him for "public disruption" and "defacement of corporate property" (Beukes 37). Yet more importantly, upon his "participat[ion] in unlawful, unlicensed protest march" (Beukes 36) with recruited phoneless street kids in a metro station, the state police released a virus in the aim of ending the march. Known as the "M7N1 Marburg variation", this virus is "fatal" to those exposed to it, in case they do not "report to an immunity center for treatment within 48 hours." (Beukes 219) Tendeka resisted this extreme form of body control by refusing to report his case. Instead, he asked Toby to stream-cast his death, which he viewed as a clear result of "an act of government- corporation censorship…[and] [r]epression." (Beukes 289) Ultimately, the horrendous dissolution of Tendeka's body unfolds as an extremist form of body coercion launched through the cooperation between government and corporations. In that perspective, the same masculinist technological mechanisms that the state utilizes to control women's bodies in *Moxyland* simultaneously coerce the

bodies of men, especially those who are socially resistant or those who come from non-corporate backgrounds.

H. Conclusion

This chapter explored the technologically advanced environments depicted in both of *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland.* While those environments highlight the strong corporate networks that act as the main facilitators of globalization, each work of fiction sketches distinct patterns of masculinity within those networks. While *Oryx and Crake* features highly sophisticated corporations who utterly replace the presence of a government, *Moxyland* highlights the ways in which the corporations become the executives of surveillance as planned by the government. In both settings, technology is masculine, in its oppression and control of bodies. Furthermore, both novels display the social schisms engendered by masculine and technocapitalist corporations. In *Oryx and Crake,* the strong divide between Compounds and Pleeblands stems from the corporations' economic and political power. Actually, the compounds host the corporate minds who come up with the most questionable technologies. As for the pleeblands, they make a rich consumerist, yet experimental field for the corporates who seek both profit and growth. Ultimately, the technocapitalist goals of the firms reinforce a masculine control over technology. Between Jimmy's father's view of women as untamed, and Crake's extreme desire for reinventing women's bodies, *Oryx and Crake* outlines the headlines of a North American feminist dystopia. In Contrast, *Moxyland*'s

corporations distinguish themselves from the realm of civilians, enforcing thus a society built on class segregation rather than racial segregation. This discrepancy in economic power and prestige operates in a post-apartheid setting featuring a masculine model of sanctioning that echoes the violence of the apartheid period. This model is the fruit of the government's reliance on corporations to develop a technocapitalist surveillance system that coerces bodies.

With that said, both *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland* draw a form of speculative dystopia fueled by the corporate masculinization of technology. Nevertheless, *Oryx and Crake* features an exaggerated future North America wrecked by questionable inventions, whereas *Moxyland*'s present dystopic model of sanctioning is one of the remnants of a real previous dystopia known as the apartheid rule. More importantly, we must question and scrutinize the representation of the women characters in both works of fiction. The women Crakers highlight Crake's extremely masculine view of the female body. Stripped from feelings or any intellectual ability, the female Crakers' bodies are completely reinvented in the dawn of posthuman globalized technological advancements. As for Kendra and Lerato, both of them similarly suffer from the hidden power of corporations who coerce their bodies and dictate the events and dynamics of their daily lives. With that said, the second chapter will study the responsive behavior of the women characters in both works of fiction, as well as the modes of interaction they engage with, to trace any attempts at regaining agency over their embodiment within those highly globalized settings.

CHAPTER III

EMBODIMENT, KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND LOCALITY

A. Introduction

The previous chapter displayed the patterns of masculine technology within the corporations described in both of *Moxyland* and *Oryx and Crake*. More importantly, the previous chapter traced the embedded effects of corporate technologies on the novels' characters, namely the female figures. Such technological monopolies challenge the female characters' corporeal experiences in both speculative fictions as well as defy their bodily reactions in their respective environment. With that said, this chapter will trace the female characters' embodiment in the specific geographic locations of the novels and their potential ability to recognize and inform their position as well as question the masculine technology coercing their bodies. Embodiment or corporeality as perceived by the feminist theorist Elizabeth Grosz refers to the understanding of the body "in its historical rather than simply its biological concreteness…Bodies are always irreducibly sexually specific, necessarily interlocked with racial, cultural, and class particularities." (*Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* 19) Her view of embodiment describes the body as capable of generating significant social meanings that surface beyond its material flesh.

In light of Grosz's definition of embodiment, this chapter will explore the embodied experiences of the female characters, as well as the significance of those experiences. Particularly in *Oryx and Crake*, the female Crakers are shackled by the masculine technological design of their bodies, and thus display mild performative tendencies with no sign of a subjective generation of meanings from their part. Consequently, this chapter will study the female Crakers' global performativity, which seems devoid of an agential embodiment that challenges their male creator in the proposed North American setting. In contrast, the women cyborgs in *Moxyland*, namely Kendra and Lerato, use their bodies as source of knowledge production and agency under strict governmental control. Hence, this chapter will also scrutinize Kendra and Lerato's subjective and agential alteration of the masculine technology that inscribes their bodies in the speculative post-apartheid South African environment.

Moreover, this chapter will compare the political and corporeal presence of the female characters in both narratives. While the female Crakers' bodies are normatively constructed with global features, Kendra and Lerato fuel their actions with politically significant reactions to their environment. Actually, the women cyborgs' display of locality in *Moxyland* reinforces their anti-cosmopolitan and reterritorializing stands against global corporations and technology. Furthermore, their local resistance contributes in the birth of a form of posthuman feminism that invests local potentiality and intersectional embodiment to deconstruct the heavy influences of global masculinist technologies and corporate technocapitalism.

B. The Female Crakers' Embodiment

With the predominant masculine influence over technology, the female Crakers do not display any form of political consciousness that defines their embodiment and fuels their agency in the posthuman terrain characterizing *Oryx and Crake*. More specifically, the designed features of the female Crakers prevents them from developing a conscious political awareness of their bodies as well as generating an agential corporeal response towards the environment in which they reside. In her article "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression", bell hooks argues that feminism must be a tool against all kinds of oppression that increase the role of economic consumerism rather than individual growth (24). Thus, she states that such struggle requires a "critical political consciousness based on ideas and beliefs" (24). This consciousness, which continuously articulates the collective oppressive experiences of women (27), simultaneously opposes the strong effects of "imperialism and capitalism" that weighted down women's individual contributions in society (28). In that perspective, hooks' "political consciousness" is not a momentary struggle, but rather a historical continuum that builds on individual beliefs and experiences in politically significant locations to oppose all sorts of oppression. Consequently, this "political consciousness" is the manifested instrument of women's corporeal agency. Moreover, this consciousness is the driving force in the historical documentation of women's oppressive experiences as well as in their intellectual and activist responses to those oppressions. In the context of *Oryx and Crake*, Crake ensured that the Crakers are unable to read (Atwood 41) or to reflect a

"self-consciousness" (Atwood 302). In their daily exploration of the world around them, they resort to Snowman who considers them to be "like blank pages" and who thinks that "he could write whatever he wanted on them." (Atwood 349). The female Crakers' inability to read or develop a self-awareness restrains them from developing a critical understanding of the masculine politics of their creation and the consequences in which they find themselves. Furthermore, their lack of cognition reinforces their docility and submissiveness. Described as "placid" (Atwood 100) in the novel, the female Crakers believed all the stories told by Snowman (Atwood 101), as well as responded to his orders unquestioningly.

More importantly, the women cyborgs ultimately display a lack of political consciousness in their ironic dismissal of the important historical names they carry. Actually, Crake gave the female Crakers names of historically significant women (Atwood 100) who influenced their surrounding with their agential initiatives. For instance, he used names like "Eleanor Roosevelt", "Empress Josephine", "Sacajawea" (Atwood 157), "Simone de Beauvoir" and "Madame Curie" (Atwood 161). Paradoxically, Crake's choice of the women's names and his simultaneous control over their cognitive and metacognitive capabilities is yet another sign of his oppressive masculinity. Those female cyborgs, who carry the names of significant historical women figures, seem unable to relate to them historically or intellectually in their subjugated, predesigned existence. Undoubtedly, they do not display any historical awareness of their subjectivity or their position within the wrecked North American

environment. Consequently, the female Crakers' inability to understand the consumerist and masculine consequences in which they were designed and launched strip them from a potential "political consciousness" that is necessary for understanding their existence and opposing their engineered pre-wired features.

The female Crakers' lack of a collective, political consciousness necessitates a new approach to understanding their embodiment in the post-apocalyptic setting they occupy. Far from bell hooks' conceptualization of feminine mobilization, Robyn Wiegman expounds on a more recent perspective of feminine agency in her article "Feminism's Apocalyptic Futures". Wiegman explains that the usefulness of feminist apocalyptic narratives lies in their ability to drift away from previous political traditions in feminist mobilization. Similarly in the narrative, the Crakers' absent reaction to the capitalist and political setting in which they find themselves, significantly urges us to explore other means of embodiment among the women cyborgs. Wiegman explains that feminist futuristic narratives must deviate from the "generational legacy" that dictates the necessity of building knowledge on the accumulated foundation of all conscious historical struggles (811). More specifically, she states that the discontinuation of the generational legacy in feminist writings entails thinking "about feminism's political time as non-lineal [and] multidirectional…[which] means engaging with a highly mobile nonidentical feminism, one whose historicity is not captured by crafting for feminism an identity based on continuities of feminism's political time." (811). Wiegman introduces in the context of futuristic writings a form of "nonidentical" and

differential feminist agency that eliminates the impact of the cross-historically formed collective consciousness of feminists. Furthermore, she accentuates the importance of perceiving feminism in apocalyptic writings as a "counter-narrative" and as a producer of discursive knowledge that neither "culminates in a present" (822) nor sustains the previous political documentation of feminist mobilization. Undoubtedly, Wiegman's approach to knowledge production in futuristic narratives, specifically her conceptualization of a "nonidentical" feminism, enlarges the spectrum of corporal experiences and enactments that we can perceive as agential. In *Oryx and Crake*, the female Crakers, who find themselves in a "nonidentical", highly technologized setting characterized by a post-apocalyptic environment, do not display any form of historical consciousness that optimizes their awareness of their situation. Instead, they sing, dance and perform rituals in their settlements. Hence, the women cyborgs' "nonidentical" feminine behavior in the narrative suggests a potentially available form of knowledge production among them that, as Wiegman suggests, does not reflect any sort of homage to the feminist political knowledge accumulated historically.

Actually, as part of their embodied experiences on the wrecked North American shore, the female Crakers display a ritualistic behavior that suggests their capability of mirroring a marginal form of corporeal agency. Although Crake ensured to design the female cyborgs with pre-selected characteristics such as "beauty", "docility", skin type and "immunity" (Atwood 304), he was unable to eliminate their ability to dream or sing (Atwood 352). Hence, Snowman invested in their understanding of dreams to elaborate

mythical answers to the curious questions they had about their surroundings. As placid as they were, the Crakers believed all that Snowman told them, especially the stories of Oryx and Crake, the creators of their world (Atwood 349). Particularly, the female Crakers established a ritualistic communication with Oryx, their previous mentor and companion in the Paradice facility, who disappeared from their sight after the spread of the JUVE plague. In fact, in his daily interaction with the female Crakers, Snowman realized that the women have developed a certain "reverence" and "communion with Oryx" where they would "perform some kind of prayer or invocation, since they can hardly believe that Oryx appears to them in person." (Atwood 157) For instance, having killed a bobkitten with a rock, the women explicitly explained to Snowman that they will gather and "apologize to Oryx" for throwing the rocks at the mutant animal (Atwood 157). With that said, the female cyborgs' ritualistic performance can appear as a non-canonical display of corporeal agency that they especially carry with their independent desire to communicate with the invisible Oryx.

Nevertheless, the female Crakers' marginal performative rituals fail to challenge their conditions and rather enhance their adaptation process within the environment. In other words, the reverent performativity that the women cyborgs display may seem like an independent bodily agency; yet, their acts insufficiently echo their pre-wired characteristics and do not challenge dynamically their circumstances of living in the environment. Theorist Karen Barad explores in her book *Meeting the Universe Halfway* the working of bodies in a posthuman context. She proposes viewing individuals as

agential generators of knowledge as a result of their direct implication in the world around them (185). More importantly, Barad suggests that this agential generation of knowledge in the posthuman era that the world has reached must dictate a "differentiated" form of behavior (184) among posthuman subjects, particularly women. Accordingly, Barad "rework[s]…the notions of materiality, discursive practices [and] agency" (146) through resorting to the "performativity" approach that acknowledges material representations of power, which are not strictly conveyed through language (133). Hence, Barad highlights the body's capability to display a non-discursive agency that is corporeal and embodied. Barad frames her reconfiguration of agency with the concept of "agential realism" whereby materiality, or the posthuman body, is constantly reconfigured within a location (170) through "open-ended dynamics" (172). In its interaction with space, the posthuman body becomes both productive and agential no matter how this productivity or agency manifests itself. Barad's approach to agency and non-discursive corporeal performativity invites us to consider the female Crakers' spiritual rituals as a non-canonical display of agency. Nevertheless, the women's performativity does not yield any form of representational power or awareness of their material embodiment. If anything, their rituals mark their helplessness. In fact, Crake ensured that they "were perfectly adjusted to their habitat" (Atwood 305), forcing them to live in their environment solely seeking survival and adaptation.

Thus, the female Crakers do not display an embodied relation to the coercive space or "habitat" in which they find themselves. Barad explains the posthuman body's

relation to space as follows: “Spatiality is intra-actively produced. It is an ongoing process of the material (re)configuring of boundaries—an iterative (re)structuring of spatial relations. Hence spatiality is defined not only in terms of boundaries but also in terms of exclusions.” (181) Barad emphasizes that the body is the producer of spacial boundaries. An agential, performative body is responsible for adjusting within the environment as well as continuously reassessing and redefining its boundaries and its capabilities within space and in relation to other bodies. The female Crakers are unable to perceive the boundaries that set them back from metacognitively assessing their situation because they are pre-wired with specific characteristics. Crake ensured that the female Crakers were “retouched fashion photos, or ads for a high-priced workout program”; they were simply “placid, like animated statues” (Atwood 100). Ironically, the female Crakers ceaselessly expressed “their gratitude towards Crake”, which Snowman viewed as “so touching, and [yet] so misplaced” (Atwood 161). The day Snowman announced to the Crakers that he will be shortly gone on a walking trip, Simone de Beauvoir, who is one of the women Crakers, “serenely” expressed that “‘Crake always watches over [them]’” (Atwood 161). Madame Curie added in the same occasion that “‘[Crake] takes good care of [them]’” and that Snowman “‘must tell him that [they] are grateful.’” (Atwood 161) The women’s absurd gratitude reveals their inability to perceive the results of Crake’ masculine oppression, which he conveyed in his technological creations. Instead, they resort to rituals and acts of reverence that mirror their imperceptibility of their situation. Moreover, those women are unable to

modify their “spacial relations”, as conceptualized by Barad. They are not only imprisoned within their pre-configured bodies that “drop dead at age thirty” (Atwood 303), but they are also confined to the monopolized masculine relations with their male counterparts. In that perspective, the women Crakers independently replace their lack of elaborate language with behavioral actions that may seem agential. Yet, their pre-wired life cycle as well as their bodily and intellectual features dismantle their ability to generate knowledge. Instead, they show reverence and gratitude, which are signs of adaptation to their space, rather than a dynamic interaction with that space.

C. Masculinity and Knowledge Production in *Oryx and Crake*

The insufficient performativity of the women Crakers exposes the masculine nature of technological advancements that wrecked the environment in *Oryx and Crake*. As argued in the previous chapter, Crake’ masculine entitlement over the Crakers’ bodies persists in the features he molded into his female cyborgs. Thus, Crake’s masculine imprints into the women cyborgs’ bodily features as well as his control over their mental and performative abilities, reduces their capability of producing knowledge about themselves and their environment through their bodies. In this context, Elizabeth Grosz defines knowledge as “a drive for mastery” and “a product…of bodily impulses and forces” (*space, time and perversion* 37). The source of knowledge generation is the body that strives for assertion. Yet, the “male sexualization of knowledges” promoted the masculine “inscription” of women’s bodies (Grosz, *space, time and perversion* 38).

This representational inscription in return reduces women's bodies "to the status of 'neutral'" or "lacking, and incomplete" (Grosz, *space, time and perversion* 38). According to Grosz, the representation of women's bodies from a masculinized perspective, suffocates the women's agential attempt at producing knowledge with their bodies. Instead, they produce knowledge that is assertive of the masculine superiority over their bodies. Similarly, the female Crakers' bodies have been inscribed with Crake's personal convictions and views of the female body. In the design process of the Crakers, Crake expressed his desire to control love and courtship among his biologically engineered cyborgs. He thought that the body carries a series of unfortunate "biological mismatches" that need to be controlled and changed (Atwood 166). Consequently, he meticulously molded the women Crakers' "physical [and] mental" features (Atwood 304). Yet more importantly, he stripped them from the ability to "create" any tool or "invent" new ideas and concepts (Atwood 305). In that perspective, Crake's design of the female Crakers' bodies does not only sexualize their embodied knowledge production as expressed by Grosz, but also deems their corporeal presence as "neutral" (*space, time and perversion* 38) and ultimately inscribed with masculine convictions.

The Crakers' lack of performativity, especially the women among them, jeopardizes the future of Snowman, the only known survivor in the environment. The masculinist design of Crake prevents the female Crakers from displaying an agential embodiment. More importantly, this preventive measure apprehensively strips Snowman from his historical situatedness. Having lost the sense of "official time" (Atwood 3) after the

apocalypse, Snowman embarked on a journey of metacognitive struggle. His inability to interact with the Crakers left him hopeless (Atwood 339). Consequently, he kept a "scrapbook in his head" (Atwood 10) where he remembered "[r]ag ends of language [that floated] in his head" (Atwood 148). Nevertheless, during his hiking quest in search for food and other survival supplies, Snowman admitted his fear of the increasing absence of history:

> The buildings that didn't burn or explode are still standing, though the botany is thrusting itself through every crack. Given time it will fissure the asphalt, topple the walls, push aside the roofs… Soon this district will be a thick tangle of vegetation. If he'd postponed the trip much longer the way back would have become impassable. It won't be long before all visible traces of human habitation will be gone. (Atwood 221-222)

The bioterrorism that took place with the apocalypse did not only ruin the environment, but also gradually obliterated any human "trace" in the course of history. Snowman fears oblivion in such conditions, especially with his lack of connection with the Crakers. He will neither be "mourned" nor "remembered" (Atwood 224) due to the "[b]reak" (Atwood 223) that Crake established between humans and the Crakers. Indeed, Crake's design and the Crakers' lack of agential performativity endangers the situatedness of Snowman in the wrecked environment and weakens his role as the last human survivor and reporter of the historical apocalypse.

D. Cyberpunk Bodies in *Moxyland*

In the context of *Moxyland*, the prevalent cyberpunk genre features the characters' movement in the midst of high urban disintegration, as well as highlights their corporeal reactions to the present corporate technologies. In fact, the speculative South African reality illustrated in the narrative entails elements of the cyberpunk, a literary genre that intertwines the themes of dystopic technology and urban street life. The conventional elements of cyberpunk genre include the portrayal of a dystopic reality intertwining sophisticated corporate technologies and "a setting of urban decay" characterized by creative "anti-establishment" movements (Wilkinson and Stobie 60). In Beukes' narrative, the characters live in the midst of a surveillance and policing system launched by the cooperative work of multinational corporations and the state. More importantly, the most prominent elements of the cyberpunk figure in traces of urban life in Cape Town and its suburbs. In fact, Tendeka repetitively takes the initiative to gather kids from shelters "to do graffiti murals" on the street walls (Beukes 39) to mark their presence. Nevertheless, as sponsoring corporations judged his projects as lacking "sustainability" (Beukes 40), Tendeka, among other street activists, resorts instead to riot movements with the "bergies and skollies and street kids who all have one thing in common – they're homeless and phoneless" (Beukes 215). Together, they wanted to "demonstrate the divides in [their] society between the Emmies and the Zukos and the corporati with their gold-plated all-access passes and the things they do to keep [them] in [their] place. (Beukes 183) As argued in the previous chapter, the represented South

African society is not divided on the basis of race, but rather on the basis of social class and power. With that said, Tendeka's "anti-establishment" movements, especially the huge riot he initiates in the metro station (Beukes 212), constitute an ultimate opposition to this social divide.

Tendeka's aggression in the context of the cyberpunk genre, as well as his extreme death due to the released virus in the metro station, rigidly masculinize his embodiment. In other words, the behavior of Tendeka and his political movements echo an extreme form of masculine corporeality. Actually, despite its close merger of human body and advanced technology, the cyberpunk genre traditionally fails to undo the rigidity of "gender boundaries" (Springer 41). Hence, "'the roles assigned to men and women remain conventionally hierarchical and bifurcated'" (Wilkinson and Stobie 63). Moreover, "c]yberbodies…tend to appear masculine or feminine to an exaggerated degree" especially through bodily and behavioral representations of the characters (Springer 41). Whether through his aggressive behavior towards the authorities throughout the narrative, or through the hyperbolic melting of his body (Beukes 291), Tendeka's embodiment displays a masculinized form of aggressive rebellion. In his encounter with Kendra in a bar, Tendeka noticed Kendra's Ghost tattoo that marks the corporation's brand. He angrily "[held] her wrist" and called her a "corporate bitchmonkey" and a "freakshow prototype" (Beukes 26-27) in an attempt to voice his repugnance towards corporate technology. In that context, Tendeka's convictions shape his behavior towards others, and in this case, towards a woman that he treats with

aggressive authoritarianism. According to Toby, the melting of Tendeka's body, and his "grotesque death" will make him an either well-know "terrorist" or a "martyr" (Beukes 303), two labels that hyperbolize his corporeality and the rebellious meanings emanating from his dying body. Similarly, the representation of Toby in the context of the cyberpunk genre masculinizes his behavior. He intentionally "frames women as irrational and unreasonable for expecting commitment from him" (Wilkinson and Stobie 65). Additionally, he exploits Kendra's Ghost sponsorship story (Beukes 171) to increase his fame on the blog. He also continuously asks Lerato for money transfers (Beukes 61) to keep up with his expensive lifestyle. Thus, he does not only "search for desirable women in the streets of the city", but he also "objectif[ies] women" (Wilkinson and Stobie 65) and treats them as means for his physical and financial wellbeing.

As for the women characters, namely Kendra and Lerato, they embody corporate imprints that seemingly inscribe their presence in a masculine, gendered setting. Both Kendra and Lerato's corporeal experiences echo the direct influence of the masculinist corporations. Kendra is a "[y]oung, dynamic, creative, on the up" (Beukes 11) civilian (Beukes 7) who qualified for becoming the "perfect ambassador" (Beukes 11) for the Ghost drink. Upon her visit to Inatec, the corporation launching the brand sponsorship program, Kendra received an injection of "three million designer robotic microbes…through [her] veins." (Beukes 13) While the ultimate direct result of this "nanotech invasion" materialized in total immunity from sickness (Beukes 14), this

contractual injection transformed Kendra into a walking, Ghost addict. Thus, despite her belonging to the civilian realm, Kendra's corporate branding literally marked her body with "a faint [green] glow" on her wrist (Beukes 23) and a permanent live marketing job. As for Lerato, her embodied association with corporations began at an early age. Orphaned by the Aids pandemic (Beukes 141), Lerato lived in a corporate "skills institute" (Beukes 154) that prepared her for future corporate life. First, she was "handpicked to go over to Pfizer SA Primary in Cape Town" (Beukes 142). Then, she received a secondary education scholarship from "Telkon, Cisco, Wesizwe and New Mutua" (Beukes 142). Afterwards, she attended "four years of training" before joining Communique as a coder and "strategic" developer of technological gadgets (Beukes 143). With her acquired position, Lerato received a luxurious "Communique residence" house (Beukes 53), among other corporate related privileges. In that perspective, Lerato's experiences exclusively resonated the ambitions of corporations who did not only nurture her technological skills, but profited from them through continuously promoting her within the corporate realm. Without any doubt, the corporate influence on both Kendra and Lerato's embodied experiences mirror a traditional cyberpunk element mentioned earlier, which is the "stereotypical feminine" representation of women's bodies (Springer 41). In other words, the apparent exaggeration of the women cyborgs' corporeal submissiveness to the masculinized corporations is a representational trait of the cyberpunk genre.

E. Kendra and Lerato's Agential Embodiment

Nevertheless, despite the masculinist corporate inscription that marks their bodies, both Kendra and Lerato actively transform their embodied experiences; thus opposing the conventional cyberpunk representations of women. The two women cyborgs realize that the system of technological coercion launched by the state and the corporations inscribes their bodies into mandatory actions. Yet, both women manage in their everyday lives to find embodied struggles that resist the masculine technological system in which they operate. Kendra and Lerato's transformation of their inscribed marks illustrates Grosz's feminist view on body inscription and knowledge production. Recalling Nietzsche's concept of body "branding", she assures that the inscription of the body, be it literal or discursive, can become a mark of one's "location and position" (*space, time and perversion* 33-34). She criticizes the masculine inscription of female bodies and notes that the body can express a form of subjectivity. Based on Foucault's theory on the control of bodies, Grosz argues that the body is "machinic" and "pliable to power" and thus can adjust when becoming a site of struggle and resistance (*space, time and perversion* 35). Accordingly, instead of being inscribed by an outside source, women can actively inscribe their bodies themselves (Grosz, *space, time and perversion* 34); consequently generating knowledge as a "product of bodily impulses" (Grosz, *space, time and perversion* 37). Grosz explains that those impulses oppose the "male sexualization of knowledge" (*space, time and perversion* 38) that has long affected the process of knowledge production about women's bodies. Hence, such opposition

transforms women from “objects of knowledge” to “subject[s] of knowledge” (Grosz, *space, time and perversion* 40). Through their bodies, women can rewrite their expected corporeality through taking command over their experiences, thereby actively producing knowledge about their bodies and their location. In a similar way, Kendra and Lerato instill a purposeful struggle out of the corporate control surrounding their lives, thus transforming their bodies into sights of “subjective” knowledge production.

On the one hand, Kendra invests her non-digital photography skills to mold a subjective reality of post-Apartheid South Africa through the lens of her camera. Kendra’s “everyday filter on the world” is a “Leica Zion” camera (Beukes 67) that she uses to take pictures ranging from the everyday lives of people on the streets of Cape Town, to the restricted corporate premises and the attacks launched by the Aito police dogs on civilians. Kendra’s Ghost injection literally transforms her into a walking brand, while undeniably dictating her addictive drink habits and seemingly controlling her bodily impulses. Nevertheless and as highlighted by Grosz, women’s embodied inscriptions must fuel resistant actions that produce a “subjective” form of corporeal knowledge (*space, time and perversion* 40). In that context, Grosz explains that the “starting point” in the realm of embodied knowledge production begins with women’s scrutiny and deconstruction of the “patriarchal knowledges” (*space, time and perversion* 41). Hence, the birth of an embodied, subjective form of knowledge production materializes in the dissolution of previous masculine representations and discourses of women’s bodies. In *Moxyland*, Kendra opposes the masculine form of government that

relies of the heavy technology of multinational corporations through her manipulation of her camera in the streets and corporate premises of Cape Town. With her "Leica Zion" and "Nikon" cameras (Beukes 10), Kendra takes pictures that she develops using film printing paper, consequently forging a way for an outdated form of non-digital technology (Beukes 70). In a short interview with Toby prior to a photo exhibition she held, Kendra explains the reason behind using "oldschool…non-digital" (Beukes 171) photography techniques:

> '… [F]ilm is more interesting than digital. There's the possibility of flaw inherent in the material. It's not readily available…some of it has rotted or it's been exposed even before I load it in the camera, but I don't know that until I develop it…And it's not just the film. It's working without the automatic functions. The operator can fuck up too.' (Beukes 171)

For Kendra, the usage of non-digital film defies the globalized forms of technology that characterize the society depicted in *Moxyland*. She expresses that the uncertainty of the results of photography and film reinforce a sense of uncontrollability in documentation. She refuses to use "the automatic functions" that enhance the picture and beautify the snapped moment. On the contrary, the "inherent" flaws in developed analogue pictures mark the possible malfunctions in the camera's "operator". Similarly, just like developed film can create damage in the snapped photographs, her developed pictures can strongly document the flaws in her society that are embroidered in the working of

the state and the multinational, technologized corporations. Through non-digital photography, she could document “immediacy” and “the transitive before it slips away.” (Beukes 132) In other words, Kendra uses her camera to save moments from a technologized reality that moves fast. Using Grosz’s terms, the analogue photos that Kendra develops illustrate a reality inscribed by urban disintegration and social differences. Her non-digital pictures do not undergo any form of human manipulation. Thus, the developed films convey a truthful documentation of how the flawed system of masculine surveillance works in the speculative South African society.

Moreover, Kendra does not only “[feel] naked without [her] cameras” (Beukes 10), but also uses them as resistant weapons in different settings. For instance, upon her first visit to the Inatec clinics, Kendra expresses her defying urge to use the camera in restricted corporate properties:

> As the train slows, pulling into the Waterfront Exec station, it sends plumes of seawater arcing up the sides. In my defense, It’s automatic; I lift my camera, firing off three shots through the latticed residue of salt crusted over the windows. I don’t think about the legal restrictions on documenting corporate space, that this might be provocation enough to revoke the special access pass Andile loaded onto my phone for the occasion. (Beukes 7-8)

Upon her first visit to the clinic, Kendra was aware of the restrictions surrounding her body whenever present inside corporate premises, especially that she holds the status of

a civilian. However, she transforms her camera into a weapon that "fires off" shots of corporate premises. Through such acts, she does not only subjectively choose which spaces and locations to document, but she simultaneously breaches the corporeal constraints that limit her embodied actions and defines her own behavior in such space even if discreetly. In her second visit to the clinic, Kendra "snuck [her Zion] past the receptionist, and surreptitiously snap[ped]" pictures within the clinic (Beukes 132). Furthermore, she takes her defying behavior into the streets of Cape Town where she could document the violations of the corporate surveillance system towards civilians:

> Without thinking about it, I already have my Zion out, snapping the dog-hybrid standing hunched over the child, growling, the boy's left arm twisted underneath his body….And I know this is illegit, that you're not supposed to photograph police procedurals without a media permit, but I don't care. (Beukes 136-137)

Kendra's documentation of police violence is an ultimate risk-taking act that mirrors her will to show her command over her embodied actions and reactions in the midst of the state-corporate surveillance system in which she lives. As previously suggested by Grosz, the body's resistant "impulses" forge a subjective form of knowledge. Through such an incident, Kendra understands that through analogue photos, she could question the coercive "police procedurals", especially the ones relying on biotechnology, namely the Aito dogs. In other words, she asserts her corporeal presence through decidedly

recording the same “procedurals” that contribute in the coercion of her body and other civilian bodies on the streets of Cape Town.

Ultimately, Kendra uses non-digital photography as a weapon to redefine her own embodiment. In the exhibition she held, Kendra chose her “*Self Portrait*” (Beukes 74) as “the centerpiece” of the display despite the discontent of her ex-boyfriend (Beukes 73). Kendra’s “*Self Portrait*” was made of “a rotten piece of film… [that] came out entirely black.” (Beukes 74) In the same context, she expresses the significance of the black analogue picture that supposedly depicts her portrait: “[v]isibility limits your imagination of the ocean only as far as you can see, ten metres, fifteen at a stretch. But it’s only in the utter black that you can feel the true scale, the volume and weight of the gaping unknowable drift between continents.” (Beukes 74) Kendra’s “*Self-Portrait*” materializes her effort to rewrite her inscribed body. Despite the literal Ghost inscription that entangles her in the web of corporate sponsorship, Kendra chooses to represent her body in a black analogue, physically printed photo. The less “visible” she is in the photograph, the more she “can feel the true scale” of her corporeality. Her “*Self-Portrait*” marks her agential attempt at eliminating through blackness the embodied vulnerability she gained by becoming the walking sponsor of a corporate product.

While Kendra uses non-digital photography to redefine her embodied experiences in the midst of high corporate influences, Lerato utilizes her corporate ranking and skills to sabotage corporate properties, thus displaying her command over her embodiment.

Raised in a corporate institute, Lerato grew up under the scrutiny of corporations who nurtured her abilities to make use of them in the surveillance system described in *Moxyland*. Using Grosz's terms, Lerato's embodied capabilities have been inscribed or molded by masculinist corporations. More specifically, the corporations that nurtured her throughout the years took advantage of her status of "Aidsbab[y]" (Beukes 141) to germinate within her a will for continuous "success" characterized by useful spying abilities (Beukes 110-11). However, as Grosz implies, "the body…[is a] pliable set of significations, capable of being rewritten, reconstituted…and consequently capable of reinscribing the forms of sexed identity and psychical subjectivity at work" (*Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* 60-61). In other words, the body can develop agential mechanisms that modify all forms of previously stamped meanings and corporeal reactions. In the same way, Lerato transforms her skillful capabilities into defiant corporeal moves. For instance, she helps Toby steal a "VIMbot", which is a high-end cleaning robot, from within Communique and transport it outside the corporate premises (Beukes 59). Actually, "[i]t takes [her] less than ten seconds to over-ride the GPS tracking program and the homing instinct" (Beukes 60). Through such small acts of defiance, Lerato breaches the Communique security system and helps a civilian transport a corporate item into civilian premises. More importantly, Lerato assists Tendeka and Toby in impairing a Communique street adboard, through hacking the system and covering the virtual procedures of the vandalizing act. Lerato accepts to "make a contribution" (Beukes 62) in the vandalizing act, while acknowledging that

such move is “a serious offence” (Beukes 63). She expresses the danger of this plot in a conversation with Toby:

> ‘… Aiding and abetting a hack job on corporate property? That’s a whole other category. That’s goodbye plush apartment and cushy job. Firing offence, no written warning required.’ I have to feed him the lines, cover up the snap of excitement. It’s like finding the wall blocking your way in a dead-end alley is only made of cardboards, that you can push right through it. I know exactly how to use this…‘…I just want you to appreciate the risk I’m taking on your behalf.’ (Beukes 63)

Without any doubt, Lerato realizes the dangerous consequences that pair up with resistant cybercrimes committed against corporate properties. Nevertheless, “the snap of excitement” she feels towards such defiant behavior resuscitates within her an agential form of embodiment. She assuredly understands that she can invest her skills into resistant actions. The obstacles that seem as “dead-end” blocks for Toby become simple “cardboards” for Lerato. She discerns very well how to hover around the corporate surveillance system with the same inscribed corporate skills that she nurtured over her orphaned years. On the operation day, Tendeka acknowledged that without “his techster friend”, they would not be able to dismantle “the N2 Communieque-108x billboard” (Beukes 95-96). Lerato’s hacking job stopped the satellite signal that featured “all those too-beautiful clebs and models and realife™ virtua spokespersons frisking in the ocean or nodding into the latest cell or acting in the consumer mini-movies for LG or Lucky

Strike or Premiere Recruiting" (Beukes 101). With Lerato's essential help, Tendeka and his friends voiced out their stance against corporate consumerism on civilian streets. Despite the considerably small-scale damage that this operation engendered, the act notably penetrated the repressive technologized system with the leading role of Lerato, whose presence was mandatory for the execution of this anti-corporate gesture.

F. Kendra and Lerato's Fate

Kendra and Lerato's agential embodiment, which they perform through small acts of corporeal defiance, brings them closer to their dreadful fates at the end of the novel. Nevertheless, the adverse fates that both women succumb to strengthen their subjectivity rather than weaken their position. On one hand, Kendra finds herself in the same train station that hosted the protest and the tossed "M7N1 virus". In the whirlwind of events, the police disconnected the phones of all individuals present at the station, including Kendra. The latter, who escaped the station, felt instantaneously "liberated" by her "dissociation" from her phone SIM and from the "swirl of the city around [her]" (Beukes 264). She decidedly makes her way to Communique, where she steps inside the examination room and expresses that she no longer wants to be invaded by the Ghost nanotech technology:

> 'I think…I know. I want it out. Now. Get it out.'… 'It's not permanent in the dogs.' … 'What happens to the dogs afterwards?'…'Impossible,' says the doctor. 'It's our intellectual property. It's very closely guarded. They put the dogs down.'… 'But

> don't worry, they don't feel anything. Just a prick. Then it's over.'…I look up and see that [the doctor] is watching me intently. 'See,' she says, 'just a little prick.' (Beukes 299-300)

The doctor's "little prick" procedure refers to an injection that will "put [Kendra] down", similarly to the Aito dogs who can no longer serve as police assistants. Prior to her foreshadowed death, Kendra experienced the ultimate meaning of freedom through her disconnection from the coercive phone technology. She realized that the nanotech that lives within her veins is another form of coercion, which she instantaneously rebuked. Despite the fate that awaits her, Kendra's negotiations with her conditions of embodiment remained until the last minute. As perceived by Judy Wajcman in her theory on "Technofeminism", technology, which is "part of the social fabric", constantly "reinvent[s] the self and the body" (*Technofeminism* 106). She stresses that "technology is always a socio-material product- a seamless web or network combining artifacts, people, organizations, cultural meanings and knowledge." (*Technofeminism* 106) Wajcman asserts that the availability of innovative technologies infiltrate people's lives and affect their interactionist meanings. Accordingly, the enmeshment of technology within social connections can naturally create a chain of undesirable consequences (*Technofeminism* 107). In return, those unfavorable consequences serve as "material, discursive, and social…technoscientific practice[s]" that engage genders in a continuous "mutually shaping relationship… [with] technology" (*Technofeminism* 107). In other words, the continuously unfolding exchange between gendered bodies

and technology can weaken the individuals' corporeal presence, only to strengthen it with further practice. Wajcman's theory offers an optimistic understanding of Kendra's resistant behavior despite the shift in her fate at the end of the narrative. Kendra's death in the Communique's clinic constitutes a consequence of her initial submission to the Ghost subscription. Nevertheless, she makes use of her entanglement in the web of masculine corporations to reinvent her corporeality. Hence, she ensures to invest her non-digital photographic talents to report the social consequences of the masculinist surveillance system. Yet more importantly, her last reaction towards the nanotech constitutes a sudden, yet agent, acknowledgement that she took part in an experiment that aimed at controlling her body rather than enhancing her embodiment.

Similarly, Lerato continuously manipulates her corporeal presence in relation to complex technological networks despite her forced promotion into the corporate-government spying web. In fact, Communique incriminated her with "'[c]orporate sabotage… [one] count direct involvement[,] [f]our conspiracy[,] [e]leven aiding and abetting.'" (Beukes 282) Stephan, a representative of the corporation, informed Lerato about her offered promotion in light of her corporate crimes. He explains that her work will be "[g]overnment linked", where she will "be running several identities, posting, inciting, organizing" in the aim of catching potential terrorists (Beukes 295-296). In response to the coercive and irrefutable offer, Lerato remains silent. She thinks that the situation "makes perfect sense. The process has to be managed. Fear has to be managed. Fear has to be controlled." (Beukes 296) Lerato's silence upon receiving the news of her

"promotion" is highly significant. As articulated by Frenkel, South African feminists rearticulate in their post-apartheid writings the "strict distinction between…silence and speech… [thus] redefine[ing] the terms of agency and call[ing] binaries into question because the reality from which such analyses emerge disrupt the binaries themselves." (6). For feminist writers, silence in a post-apartheid context constitutes an agential behavior that reassesses the traditional distinction that weakens "silence" in relation to "speech". In the same way, Lerato decisively understands that she can control her fear through silence, which becomes a corporeal response to Communique's means of compulsion. Moreover, Wajcman's asserts that existent "sociotechnical networks" necessitate women to find adequate "tools" to fight all forms of technological control over their bodies (*Technofeminism* 116). Women's embodiment materializes in the investment of appropriate tools that fight technological coercion. With that said, Lerato's poised behavior in the midst of the accusations and charges piercing towards her echo her previous defiant actions. She understands how the system works, it even "ma[de] perfect sense" to her (Beukes 296). Thus, she silently realizes that despite her future position, she will "manage" her corporeality with fearless agency. Without any doubt, both Kendra and Lerato understand the undesirable consequences resulting from their embodied struggles in the midst of complicated corporate sociotechnical networks. Both women respectively use their bodies with authority and agency whether through illegitimately documenting corporate practices or through sabotaging corporate

belongings. They intentionally accept the reality of their fates and take their chances at making a change in the patriarchal network in which they live.

G. Intersectionality and Body Politics in *Oryx and Crake*

In contrast to *Moxyland*, the fate of the female Crakers in *Oryx and Crake* differs drastically. In fact, Crake predetermines the biological and physical features of his bioengineered cyborgs and ensures their death at "the age of thirty" (Atwood 303). In that perspective, he fully engineered the "sociotechnical networks" (Wajcman, *Technofeminism* 116) that figured among the Crakers. Hence, the daily movements and fates of the female Crakers mirror a series of desirable, masculinist consequences ushered by Crake. More importantly, in his design of the female Crakers, Crake omitted their capability of behaving intersectionally. Despite the diversity displayed in their physical design, the female Crakers show little aptness for any form of embodied potentiality. Jasbir Puar defines intersectionality as the daily unfolding of identities in relation to "race, class, gender, and nation." (49) Notions like race and class that enmesh with representations of gender and sexuality shape the behaviors of intersectional bodies. According to Puar, bodies are "forces, affects, energies... [and] composites of information" that continuously act rather than simply exist (57). Puar's perspective on embodied intersectionality fuels the critique of the female Crakers' political presence in *Oryx and Crake*. Each of the Crakers display "a different skin colour – chocolate, rose, tea, butter, cream, honey – but each with green eyes" (Atwood

8). Crake expresses that their availability in "all available skin colours" (Atwood 302) transforms them into perfect "floor models" who "represent the art of the possible…for prospective buyers" (Atwood 305). Consequently, the Crakers' racial differences are rather characteristic traits that accompany the consumerist goal of the corporation under which Crake operates. Hence, the Crakers, and particularly the females among them exist within the environment rather than act based on their embodied features, which means that they are incapable of behaving intersectionally. As argued previously, the female Crakers' "docile" features (Atwood 304) and lack of "self-consciousness" (Atwood 302) even strip them from any mental or corporeal ability to situate themselves in the masculinist environment that led to their creation. Thus, the Crakers do not understand Crake's assigned gender roles and do not accord importance to their diverse physical features, which reduces their bodies to corporate and consumerist products devoid of any potentiality that excesses their pre-wired features.

Through their various "aesthetic" (Atwood 8) characteristics, the Crakers appear as global subjects with little rootedness to any form of locality and with traits that mark their belonging to the whirlwind of globalized corporate designs. In fact, Crake discusses the globalist features that the Crakers obtain in their meticulous design:

> What has been altered was nothing less than the ancient primate brain. Gone were its destructive features, the features responsible for the world's current illnesses. For instance, racism – or, as they referred to it in Paradice, pseudospeciation – had

> been eliminated in the model group, merely by switching the bonding mechanism: the Paradice people simply did not register skin colour. Hierarchy could not exist among them, because they lacked the neural complexes that would have created it… [T]here was no territoriality…They ate nothing but leaves and grass and roots… [T]heir food were plentiful and always available. Their sexuality was not a constant torment to them, not a cloud of turbulent hormones: they came into heat at regular intervals, as did most mammals other than man. (Atwood 305)

In his design of the Crakers, Crake ensured the elimination of all forms of racism. He also altered their sexual behavior and destroyed any tendency for domination or will for power. The Crakers also lacked the understanding of territorialization and locality. Crake even wired them into veganism, a food trend that enhances chances of global food security. Undeniably, the various altered features that Crake pre-wires within the bioengineered cyborgs mirror globally imagined aspirations. According to Anna Tsing, globalism consists of "corporate hype and capitalist regulatory agenda" (52). The notion of "global" hides a merger between corporate ambitions and technocapitalism. Consequently, such fusion often "attract[s] and engages[s] an expanding audience for imagining the globe:…its futurism…its ability not only to name an era but to predict its progress…its conflations of varied projects through which the populist and the corporate…seem wrapped up in the same energetic movement" (Tsing 52). Global environments entail both an elaborate imagination of the future and an effort to launch profiting projects that will diffuse progress. In the context of *Oryx and Crake*, the

bioengineering work of Crake and his personal imagination of the "futurism" of the "globe" exaggerate the elements of the global found in the environment. Crake's elimination of racism and territoriality among the Crakers, besides other introduced features, materialize the progress he imagines not only for the North American shore but for the world. That said, the global scope of his ambitions generates a group of bioengineered cyborgs who acquired a pre-wired global profile fit of Crake's corporate and technocapitalist plans.

Yet more importantly, the global character of the Crakers reduces any form of embodied initiative stemming from their locality. Actually, Tsing adds that global spaces, which host a form of "global cultural unification", usually entail "local cultural divergences as much as unification." (59-60) Tsing hypothesizes the importance of local diversity that enriches the global initiatives stemming from a certain place. While such argument manifests itself validly in the context of *Moxyland*, such view does not find a fertile ground in *Oryx and Crake*. Crake did not leave room for creativity and inventiveness among the Crakers (Atwood 305), which reduces the cyborgs' capability for local initiatives. The Crakers have built-in global profiles driven from the ambitious technocapitalist corporations figuring in the narrative. The Crakers' varied outer looks may suggest a form of local diversity. However, their imagined global features colonize their embodiment and incite them towards an imagined globalized corporeality. For instance, the female Crakers, who are made of "every known color from deepest black to whitest white" (Atwood 100) behave in the same exact ways with no trace of local

collectiveness. In her study of bodily descriptions in *Oryx and Crake*, Sally Chivers argues that the eradication of corporeal differences among the Crakers offers a type of "physical conformity" strengthened by a "normative bodily frame" (388). They constitute "a physical ideal" mirroring Crake's "fundamental commitment to the idea of human perfectibility through permanent changes to human physical form." (Chivers 389) The Crakers bodies, including the females among them, possess common physical characteristics that standardize their expected model behavior. While Crake suggested a sort of racial differentiation among the genetically engineered cyborgs, the Crakers' unified bodily behavior and movement in space resonates the universal vision of the "global" character birthed in the whirlwind of globalized corporations. In that context, Chivers suggests that "no amount of technology or biomedical understanding can eliminate the centrality of human body to social and individual welfare. Attempts to make the body redundant in this novel prove more than fatal." (389) In her latter statement, Chivers criticizes the global ambitions of corporations and the devastating consequences they lead to in *Oryx and Crake*. Moreover, she accords great importance to individual embodiment, without which the female Crakers cannot express any form of corporeal subjectivity.

Ultimately, the physical perfectness of the Crakers does not outshine the importance of conscious embodiment. The global environmental critique that the book provides dismisses any aspect of locality that is necessary for understanding the cyborgs' embodiment in relation to the space they occupy. Without any doubt, the narrative

speculates a parallel reality that exaggerates the impact of artificiality in global corporate endeavors located in the West. Actually, Atwood's speculative fiction "'weds the real decadence of contemporary consumer and corporate culture to the unchecked advances in genetic engineering that frequent today's headlines'" (Humann 510). The narrative's imagined environment fuses the ambitions of corporate capitalism with the increasingly sophisticated biological and technological progress. Thus, the narrative focuses on globally concerning themes rather than local knowledges that stem out of the characters' embodied contact with the unfolding of such themes. In her study on environmentalism in *Oryx and Crake*, Alice Ridout explains that the novel calls for "imagin[ing] the scale and the location of environmental politics differently." (37) She explains that Atwood, who is a Canadian author, does not aim at strengthening a form of anti-corporate, "Canadian nationalism" (37) by crossing the border and locating the drastic events of the narrative in the United States (36). Instead, Atwood's move engenders "a 'scale-crossing environmental consciousness' that can account for both the molecular and global scales of bio and geopolitics." (Ridout 40) Ridout accentuates the importance of the author's border crossing from Canada to the United States in the fictional setting. Such crossing broadens the scope of the environmental critique that Atwood aims at as well as strengthens the importance of technological and environmental events as perceived from a global scope. In that sense, *Oryx and Crake* consistently reproduces the globally perceived repercussions of multinational

corporations while eliminating the importance of locality and its effect on the subjective embodiment of the cyborg characters.

H. Intersectionality and Body Politics in *Moxyland*

In contrast, the women characters in *Moxyland* behave intersectionally and consequently display a subjective embodiment characterized by resistance to the global masculinist influences of the corporations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the narrative replaces the racial modes of segregation that figured in the apartheid era with a class divide built on membership to the civilian or corporate realms. Unsurprisingly, in Beukes' speculative environment, this class segregation system entails differences in socio-technical capabilities as well as differences in prestigious privileges. In their resistant actions, Kendra and Lerato invest their intersectional behavior, namely their gendered and class positions, to ferment a resistance against the masculine surveillance system under which they live. The two women's relation to the form of authority that operates in the narrative actively illustrates Puar's coupling of the notion of assemblage with intersectionality. Puar asserts that in the context of posthuman feminist theory, the notion of assemblage facilitates the tracing of the dimensions of intersectionality and their effect of women's posthuman bodies (51). Assemblage is "a term that means design, layout, organization, arrangement and relations…of patterns… Concepts do not prescribe relations, nor do they exist prior to them; rather relations of force, connection, resonance and patterning give rise to concepts" (Puar 57). The organized relations between "patterns" gives birth to meanings. For instance, using the notion of

assemblage, class and gender are no longer “attributes of subjects”; rather they become “events, actions and encounters between bodies” (Puar 61). Moreover, the intertwining of assemblage and intersectionality in posthuman feminist theory gives bodies “a sense of potentiality” in space; that is, space becomes “a matter with force” (Puar 61). Anything and anyone surrounding the body or interacting with the body becomes an actor that defines the body’s meaningful relations towards other bodies within a certain space. In the context of *Moxyland*, Kendra and Lerato’s intersectional behavior in space strengthens their potentiality and defines their anti-corporate resistant struggles.

Kendra invests her vulnerable position as a civilian “brand ambassador” (Beukes 7) to redefine her embodiment through unauthorized non-digital photography of corporate properties and police violence. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Kendra’s body hovers between civilian and corporate spaces upon her transformation into a walking Ghost brand. Using Puar’s terms, her intersectional embodiment becomes a series of “events” and “actions” that mirror her instantaneous reaction to the patterned masculinized relation she finds herself in with the Inatec corporation. She understands the form of coercion that the Ghost corporation engages with. Yet more importantly, her temporary civilian access to corporate properties instigates her towards becoming an analogue documenter. She understands her position in relation to the corporate space in which she stands, and consequently acquires potentiality that prompts her “automatic” (Beukes 7) usage of her camera.

Furthermore, the pictures she takes of police violence on the streets of Cape Town mark her understanding of the necessity to expose the executive forms of violence that the surveillance state adopts. In the same context, Puar explains that the vivid relation between assemblage and intersectionality sheds the light on the "societies of control... [that] modulate bodies as matter" (63). She adds that "intersectionality attempts to comprehend…forms of social normativity and disciplinary administration, while assemblages…ask what is prior to and beyond what gets established." (63) The actions of bodies, which are continuously molded by the relations developed towards other bodies and spaces, expose various modes of social disciplinary control. Moreover, those bodies potentially question the historically existent patterns of relations defining their presence. Similarly, Kendra decidedly uses her photographic skills to document the various forms of government-corporate "disciplinary administration" on the South African streets. Through such corporeal documentation, she rebukes police violence and simultaneously questions the "established" government- corporate alliance. Such literary move in *Moxyland* echoes the police violence in South Africa that propagated in various overt and covert forms between the apartheid and post-apartheid eras. That said, Kendra's embodied experiences, from both intersectional and assemblage perspectives, produce subjective knowledges about the narrative's setting. Historically, South Africa witnessed "high and low policing" missions that respectively controlled bodies overtly or through indirectly embedded missions (Steinberg 64). More importantly, some violent policing 'instruments" that surfaced during the apartheid reappeared in modified

ways in post-apartheid times (Steinburg 78) in response to various forms of resistance to the ruling party in the dawn of the twenty-first century (Steinburg 77). In that perspective, the embeddedness of the motif of police violence in *Moxyland* and Kendra's perception of such motif is significant. As argued before, the speculative fiction depicts a post-apartheid technologized setting that includes relics of the apartheid, one of which is police violence. Hence, Kendra's experience in such environment contributes in her agential generation of embodied meanings. The space in which she finds herself in, as well as both her class and gendered experiences shape her bodily reactions. She refuses to think of her civilian position as a hindrance to her resistance. Rather, she assertively seeks to respond to the masculinized surveillance system she lives in with corporeal resistance. She uses her camera to question the establishment and the dimensions of police violence that target vulnerable groups of society, namely the civilians.

Lerato, who is a corporate child, understands the biopolitics of her embodied position and accordingly uses her skills to sabotage the work of the corporate system under which she operates. Orphaned by the AIDS pandemic, Lerato refuses to relate to the period in which her parents lived before they died:

> I was only seven at the time. The baby of the family…I remember rows of beds crammed together and sour metal smells and a man, limbs as spindly and sharp as a locust, who terrified me…I'm glad I never had to go back there, never had to deal

> with the reality of Thomokazi and Sam Mazwai, which is all I have of them, their names on my birth certificate. (Beukes 141)

Lerato's early childhood trauma increased her desire to flee the reality of the fate of her parents. She acknowledges her title as "[a]idsbab[y]" (Beukes 141) and consequently realizes the biopolitical toll of her parents' death on her own existence. For instance, she finds herself repetitively arrested by Airport Customs for medical check-ups and she consequently wishes for the creation of "segregate" flights that separate civilians from corporates (Beukes 51-52). In her analysis of Lerato's character, Louise Bethlehem explains that Lerato's airport incidents illustrate the corporations' delineation of a space regimented by "the HIV virus" (530). Hence, Lerato's familial history in relation to the HIV pandemic is yet another biopolitical relic of the South African apartheid rule (Bethlehem 530). In that perspective, the biopolitical repercussions of this pandemic shape Lerato's reflectiveness towards her embodied experiences in *Moxyland*'s futuristic setting. Actually, she acknowledges that "corporate life is a breeze", "[c]ompared to scrabbling for opportunities with three thousand other Aidsbabies" (Beukes 154). Hence, Lerato's embracement of the corporate education and life she received mark her desire to unburden her past.

However, Lerato understands fully that her corporate education, which contributes in her elevated status compared to civilians, is yet another tool she can use to define her corporeality. In a conversation with her corporate colleague, Lerato expresses that her

ultimate ambition is to find a "[w]ork that is meaningful…where [she] can make a real and valuable contribution to society" (Beukes 154). Lerato purposefully wants to give the impression that she does not only appreciate her work, but views it as a means for social "contribution". Nevertheless, her ironic tone covers her acknowledgement that her prestigious corporate position grants her accessible doors for performing various acts of resistance. From a historical perspective, the educational system that surfaced with Mandela's "democratic government" worked to convey ideas of "equality and social justice" compared to the apartheid rule that indoctrinated students into "a racialized hierarchy" (Subreenduth 617-618). During the apartheid, the South African educational system worked on "the particular construction of… [an] 'ethnic Other'" (Subreenduth 624). Such form of indoctrination "fueled student activism and resistance in the 1970s and '80s" (Subreenduth 625), in response to the prevalent racialized agenda. Here again, *Moxyland* borrows another apartheid relic, which is that of estrangement through education. The corporate educational system depicted in the post-apartheid futuristic setting conveys a form of class otherness that alienates corporates from the realm of civilians. Taken by corporations, Lerato's education concentrated on both her acquired corporate skills and her dissociation with civilian life. Nevertheless, her intersectional corporeality, which stems from her familial history and corporate education, forges a way for manipulating the surveillance system under which she operates. Using Puar's terms, Lerato takes the embodied "energies" and "composites of information" (57), which she acquired through her corporate life, and deploys them

performatively. She uses the skills that supposedly dictate her corporeality, and transforms them into potential tools for self-assertion in the midst of the corporate-government alliance.

In their daily moves, both Kendra and Lerato display a rooted form locality that challenges the effects of the globalized corporations surveilling their lives. Through their embodiment, both women cyborgs subjectively and consciously display various forms of local and political resistance against the surveillance network in the sketched post-apartheid South Africa. In that context, Anna Tsing refers to anthropological studies scrutinizing the local politics of spaces invaded by globalization. She explains that those studies trace "a reactive, self-consciously 'local'…form of resistance to the proliferation of globalist capitalism and hypermodernist governmentality" (55). In her reference to those studies, Tsing suggests the reconsideration of situational and embodied claims made by citizens of local territories despite the increased influences of globalization. In the same way, Kendra and Lerato display assertive locality through the means of their bodies. In fact, the speculative plot rejuvenates apartheid themes and invests them in a technologized post-apartheid reality featuring a corporate-civilian divide. Accordingly, the women cyborgs' corporeality is a natural and "local" reaction to the relics of the past manifested in police violence, biased education or even biopolitical segregation. More importantly, their corporeality is a "local" reaction to the "hypermodernist" masculinized surveillance system that governs their movement and overtly suppresses their agency. Undoubtedly, those women are local, rather than

global, characters. As put by Chela Sandoval, “the technological embodiment” of cyborgs oppressed by the wiping effects of globalization (248) contributes in their development of a mode of resistance. She explains that this mode, which she calls “the methodology of the oppressed [,] generate[s] the forms of agency and consciousness that can create effective forms of resistance under postmodern cultural conditions” (Tsing 249). Using Sandoval’s expressions, each of Kendra and Lerato found their own local and “methodological” mode of resistance. Kendra politicizes her usage of analogue photography to report violence and Lerato actively uses the educational instrument, which must supposedly suppress her, to break the walls of corporate privacy. Hence, both women make their cyborgs bodies locally resistant under the effects of technocapitalist culture.

I. Locality, Anti-Cosmopolitanism and the Global South

Kendra and Lerato’s local resistance strengthens an anti-cosmopolitan, reterritorializing stand against globalized, post-apartheid South Africa. The two women cyborgs display the local political and capitalist tensions dominating the speculative society. Yet more importantly, they also create an embodied trend of knowledge production mirroring resistance to the global effects of the constructed patriarchal technology advertised by networked corporations. Both women respond to the constructed corporate masculinity with instances of reterritorialization, which is the active display of locality. Globalization theorist Ursula Heise finds reterritorialization ineffective under the heavy influence of globalization. Instead, she states that

"deterritorialization", the process by which individuals' relation to a place shrinks as a result of modernization and globalization trends (158), necessitates the description of those individuals within a framework of "cosmopolitanism" (164). The latter concept enforces the viewing of individuals on a "planetary" scale (Heise 167). The perspective of cosmopolitanism traces the cultural and social networks that connect people who are geographically far away from each other (Heise 164). More importantly, such framework highlights the coping mechanisms of "formerly colonial, marginalized or disenfranchised populations and the kind of cosmopolitan awareness that results from international trade, labor migration [or] political displacement" (Heise 164). Hence, the viewing of previously oppressed populations as cosmopolitan subjects entails tracing their slow adaptation to the forces of technocapitalist globalization. Undeniably, Heise's vision of cosmopolitan globalization fails to acknowledge the daily reality of certain locations, such as the post-apartheid state described in *Moxyland*. Heise agrees that individuals might resist deterritorialization through "reterritorialization", the process by which the place is readjusted with local cultural dynamics (160). Nevertheless, she seems skeptical about the efficiency of such a process in facing the penetrating power of globalization into the everyday lives of people (160-161). While Heise universalizes the individual in favor of cosmopolitanism, the two women cyborgs in *Moxyland* use their resistant and agent corporeality to expose and sabotage the deterritorializing masculinist influences surrounding their bodies. In contrast, the female Crakers, who epitomize the paroxysm of mad technocapitalist endeavors, are cosmopolitan by essence as a result of

their non-local features. In their bodily designs, the female Crakers exemplify all the preferred global features that globally connected consumers would desire.

Ultimately, our study of the characters' embodiment and knowledge production in both of *Moxyland* and *Oryx and Crake* assembles a form of posthuman feminism necessitating local potentiality and subjective embodiment in relation to the masculinist technology. Significantly, the presence or absence of intersectional behavior defines the characters' degree of potentiality and awareness of the patriarchal globalist system. In that perspective, the women characters in *Moxyland* obviously contribute in the definition of the strands of posthuman feminism more that the female Crakers do in *Oryx and Crake*. The different locations from which each set of characters comes from give birth to differently produced embodied knowledges. Actually, Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff explore the forms of knowledge production that stem from western countries as well as those stemming from previously colonized African countries, namely South Africa. In their book *Theory From the South Or, How Euro-America is Evolving Toward Africa*, Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff explore African modernity in terms of the reconstruction and separation from European and American definitions of modernization (8). Comaroff and Comaroff explain that the Global North tests its economic and corporate projects in the Global South. Consequently, the "global north is becoming more like the south" (Comaroff and Comaroff 13), having to "[play] catch-up on many respects with the temporality of the [south]" (Comaroff and Comaroff 14). The usage of the south as an experimental and execution field for Euro-American projects

makes the south powerful enough to be responsible for any economic repercussion that circulates back to the north. The two theorists explain that South Africa, among other countries from the Global South, is "becom[ing] [an] economic powerhouse" labeled as "the America of Africa" (14) for its potential to develop faster than other first world western countries. Additionally, they resort to Bertolt Brecht's concept of the "V-effect" to theorize the Global South's "effort to defamiliarize, distance, astonish…strip the ordinary of its self-evident ordinariness" (19). Hence, Comaroff and Comaroff invite their readers to shift their attention to the Global South's ability to produce subjective meanings that are very different from those produced in the North. With that said, the constructed cosmopolitan bodies of the female Crakers are opposed with Kendra and Lerato's local embodiment that challenges the universalizing experience of the female body. The process of globalization obliterates women's subjective embodiment in relation to a certain territory. However, as displayed by the women cyborgs in *Moxyland*, one of the main effects of locality is the creation of embodied differences that generate knowledge against the globally constructed patriarchal technology.

Furthermore, Comaroff and Comaroff acknowledge that after the end of the apartheid, the 1990s in South Africa witnessed an economic boom that "deliver[ed] abundance in some places and…impoverish[ed] others." (39) During that period, faith "in the legibility of relations among humans" dropped, paving the way for an overwhelming usage of technology and the continuous production of capital (Comaroff and Comaroff 40). Nevertheless, the "accelerated movement of money, jobs, and

commodities" subversively allowed the "positive" birth of "political action that congeal[ed] in the space between a poetics of estrangement and politics" (Comaroff and Comaroff 41). Thus, the technocapitalist endeavors that took over the democratic post-apartheid South Africa, simultaneously pushed the limits of the marginalized to respond politically especially through mobilization movements that show awareness of the newly available "social categories" (Comaroff and Comaroff 41). In *Moxyland*'s speculative environment, the economic boom manifests itself in the government-corporate alliance and surveillance system governing bodies and ensuring capital formation via excessively advanced consumerist technology. Yet, the behavior of Kendra and Lerato, as well as that of Tendeka and his friends, features a local resistance birthed out of their social "estrangement". As subjects from the Global South, Kendra and Lerato define their personhood via a set of subjectively performative endeavors that seem relevant in their location. As mentioned by Comaroff and Comaroff, the deconstruction of the north's perception of personhood is necessary as it contributes in othering subjectivities from the south (21). In fact, they suggest that "selfhood" entails becoming "an entrepreneur of the self" and "author of his or her own being-in-the-world" (23). Consequently, subjects from the Global South, such as *Moxyland*'s women, can define their personhood using locally generated meanings.

To sum up, Comaroff and Comaroff challenge traditionally northern sources of knowledge production. They recognize the south's efforts in creating meanings in an agential attempt at knowledge production. Traditionally, the Global South refers to the

condition of “recognition by peoples across the planet that globalization’s promised bounties have not materialized” (Lopez 3). More importantly, every individual inhabiting places from the Global South is “a product of globalization and a scapegoat for its many failures” (Lopez 4). This conventional definition of the Global South subject is not applicable on the subjects in *Moxyland*. On one hand, the destroyed North American environment documented in *Oryx and Crake* provides a post-apocalyptic view of the Crakers who are the premium products of globalization. Yet, their inability to act based on a political consciousness verifies them as the “scapegoats” in the process of knowledge production. On the other hand, despite the heavy strands of globalization that reach their everyday lives, Kendra and Lerato redefine their position and refuse to be the victims of technocapitalism. Their embodied relation to their location produces knowledge about themselves and their environment. Thus, they illustrate the meaning of posthuman feminism, which entails a local subjective embodiment and a potentiality built on intersectionality that challenges the global masculine.

J. Conclusion

This chapter aimed at comparing the political and corporeal presence of the female characters in each of *Moxyland* and *Oryx and Crake*. The female Crakers, who are unable to read or display agency, are devoid of any form of political consciousness. Their ritualistic behavior acts as the foundation of their apologetic and reverent behavior towards Crake – their creator. Their behavior, which is mistaken for a non-

discursive form of agency, is an actual form of adjustment to their habitat. Particularly, the female Crakers' bodies are inscribed with Crake's own views and convictions about female physicality and anatomy. Consequently, their existence is neutral and their presence lacks any form of creativity and inventiveness. In the same context, the Crakers' aesthetic characteristics renders them incapable of behaving intersectionally. They neither form an identity nor manifest capability for understanding the coercion under which they live. Ultimately, they epitomize the profile of global subjects in their standardized bodies. Actually, the various globally imagined aspirations materialize in the Crakers, who supposedly consist the future of the planet.

In contrast, the cyberpunk genre in *Moxyland* seemingly exaggerates gendered boundaries. This feature is particularly true in relation to Tendeka and Toby who act aggressively in a masculinized manner. However, the women characters, namely Kendra and Lerato, oppose the conventional representations of women in cyberpunk culture. Despite the corporate inscription of their bodies, they take command over their experiences. Kendra decidedly documents the social flaws that characterize the surveillance system in which she lives using her camera. The latter tool becomes both her weapon against corporate domination and her way for self-rejuvenation. As for Lerato, she uses her corporate skills to defy the same system that raised her. Despite the hideous fates that await both women, they keep refining their understanding of their embodiment and strengthening their subjectivity. In that perspective, both Kendra and Lerato's behavior is not only intersectionally significant but also loaded with local

potentiality. Kendra's embodiment becomes a series of events that react to the masculinized surveillance system and police violence. As for Lerato, her corporeality mirrors the biopolitics of her body. As an Aidsbaby, she takes the pieces of information that imprinted her existence via corporate education and transforms them into tools for self-assertion and local modes of resistance.

The dichotomous experiences of each of the female Crakers as well as Kendra and Lerato bring to light a form of posthuman feminism that figures mostly in *Moxyland* rather than in *Oryx and Crake*. Kendra and Lerato display an anti-cosmopolitan and reterritorializing stand against globalized masculinity through their display of locality. Hence, their materialization of a form of posthuman feminism necessitates a local potentiality and a subjective embodiment in relation to figuring masculinist technologies. Hence, the presence or absence of intersectionality defines the characters' degree of potentiality. The more intersectional the behavior is, the further the body advances in meanings and actions. With that said, the local personhood, which is based on estrangement, as well as the local embodied potentiality that the women display in *Moxyland*, recuperates the importance of the Global South in the process of knowledge production. While notions of feminism and technocapitalism circulate in the Global North, the Global South's capability for generating meaningful knowledges stems from its very intimate locality and evolving personhoods.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The various features of masculine technology displayed in *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland* unfold within speculative and dystopian ranges. Speculative fiction constitutes an imagined setting that is comparable to reality in many ways, yet which unfolds through a set of different morals (Gill 73). Such genre incited us to consider the North American and South African speculative spaces as the main instigators of the dystopian features in the two narratives. Atwood's concerns in *Oryx and Crake* echo global fears rather than local ones, which mainly concern the future of technology and globalist corporatism. The narrative constitutes an exaggerated critique of an overly globalized artificial environment relying on unethical technology. The dystopic events take a particularly feminist stance in the oppressive representation of the female Crakers, who behave under the hegemonic wiring of their male creator. In *Moxyland*, Beukes' concerns are rather local. Her speculative narrative reinvents a post-apartheid context that takes many elements of the apartheid era. Such literary move recalls a past dystopia, which is the period of racial segregation that constituted the apartheid rule in South Africa, and instills its remnants in the present in a parallel, highly technologized reality. It is worth noting that the speculative spaces in both of *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland* are undoubtedly different. However, both dystopian narratives considerably

use a posthuman lens to depict the dystopian work of technocapitalist corporations operating under the effects of excessive globalization.

Both *Oryx and Crake* and *Moxyland* adopt a posthuman framework that focuses on the embodied capabilities of living organisms in the midst of excessive technocapitalist endeavors. Particularly, the comparison of those embodied potentials in both narratives unravels the effects of masculinist global technologies on cyborg bodies. The speculative North American environment depicted in *Oryx and Crake* reveals an advanced pre-apocalyptic setting enriched with technologies fertilized by multinational corporations. The complete absence of any form of government in such environment politicizes the work of corporations who acquire sufficient power to create spatial schisms between the "compounds" and the "pleeblands". While the compounds consist of the engineering labs and fertile grounds for mad creativity, the pleeblands work as the experimental consumption spaces. The ultimate masculinization of corporations lies in their accommodation of male engineers who enslave their creativity to materialize various biologically and technically engineered forms that satisfy their own views on the world. Besides Jimmy's father, Crake epitomizes the working of masculinist corporate ambitions in his design of the Crakers and his meticulous initiation of pre-wired differences among the males and females among them. The female Crakers' bodily design becomes what Judy Wajcman refers to as "a site for capital accumulation" (*Technofeminism*, 115). Their bodies mirror globalized ambitions of a male engineer who aimed at restructuring the human anatomy and physicality. In their anti-racist,

docile, excessively healthy and passively peaceful behavior, the female Crakers represent an ideal model of a global subject.

In return, the government in *Moxyland* works hand in hand with technologically advanced, global corporations, consequently creating "a cyberpunk nightmare" (Visagie 103) featuring a socio-economic form of discrimination among cyborg bodies. Such alliance between state and corporations enforces a masculinist surveillance system executed directly via a web of violent policing strategies and technocapitalist consumerist practices. This system coerces bodies through the SIM tracking, disconnection offenses and Aito threats on the streets, as well as dictates individuals' movements who find themselves undermined by simply being "civilians", rather than "corporates". In that sense, the globalized corporations prescribe the stratification dynamics within the speculative South African society, thus creating a socio-economic form of segregation that replaces the previous apartheid racial discrimination. However, such advanced, technologically oriented social divide maintains various forms of detrimental violence on cyborg bodies within the narrative. Particularly, Kendra finds herself inescapably bound as corporate property when she becomes a walking sponsor of the Ghost drink. Her case "demonstrates how the capitalist logic of wealth production is intertwined with risk production, the hazards of which are firstly devolved to those who are excluded from the privileges of the wealthy elite." (Visagie 105) The Nano colonization of her body and the enforced gendered dynamics she finds herself in as a result of her sponsorship manifest the paroxysm of technocapitalist mentality. As for

Lerato, despite her prestigious Communique position, the corporation she works for nurtured her technological capabilities early on in her life purposefully to invest them in corporate endeavors that benefit them.

Nevertheless, the comparison of the women characters' responses to the masculine forms of technology that stem from globalized corporations in both speculative narratives shapes our understanding of the necessary elements for an effective posthuman feminist reading of embodiment. Using Grosz's theory on embodiment and Puar's conceptualization of intersectionality and assemblage, this thesis compared the manifestations of subjective feminine embodiment among the women cyborgs in both novels. The female Crakers, who do not display any form of political consciousness, cannot produce embodied reactions against the masculinized environment surrounding them. Instead, they pay reverence to their male creator and behave ritualistically without showing the capacity for creativity or self-assertion. As Grosz mentions, "women's containment within definitions constituted by and for men" (*Space, Time and Perversion* 43) reinforces "the passivity of the inscribed body" (*Space, Time and Perversion* 36). That said, the inability of women to resist every form of inscription that etches their bodies renders their corporeal presence meaningless. In the same way, the Crakers' pre-wired aesthetic features eliminate their potential for processing the coercive conditions surrounding them or behaving intersectionally.

As for Kendra and Lerato, both women challenge the traditional cyberpunk representations of women in literature in their defiant rather than sexualized character. Despite the corporate inscription of their bodies, they take command over their experiences and rewrite their embodied moves. Kendra, who literally becomes the walking advertisement of a corporate drink, chooses to document all sorts of social flaws engendered by the state-corporate surveillance system using her camera. She uses her camera as a tool to contrast the police violence on civilian streets with the privileges found in the corporations. Moreover, she recreates herself in black analogue self-portraits in an attempt to eliminate the invading effects of the Nano on and within her skin. In contrast, Lerato uses her corporate qualifications to generate indicative struggles against the same system that raised her. Both women's fates materialize the strength of the masculinist surveillance system. However, they keep finding resisting ways to manipulate their subjective embodiment. Consequently, their experiences prove to be intersectional in their awareness of their position in relation to their gender and class.

The comparison between the female Crakers' behavioral responses to the masculinist environment in *Oryx and Crake* with those of the women cyborgs in *Moxyland* delineates the importance of locally significant details in the realization of a form of posthuman feminism. As explained by Puar, any element in space can become a catalyst in living organisms' response to their life conditions. The intersectional body acquires "a sense of potentiality, a becoming" (Puar 61) that incites corporeal actions and

reactions within a certain environment. As Puar suggests, the importance of locality in influencing embodiment outgrows that of globalism. For Kendra and Lerato, reterritorialization in a posthuman feminist sense becomes an instance of regaining their agency and control over their bodies. Consequently, their analysis of local forms of violence in the speculative post-apartheid setting instigates their autonomous responses. Their intersectional behavior becomes loaded with local potentiality. Kendra's corporeality unfolds into a series of reactions to the masculine surveillance system and police violence on the streets of Cape Town. As for Lerato, her embodiment highlights the biopolitics of her body. Orphaned by Aids, she processed her corporate education into a weapon for local resistance. In return, the model of the female Crakers is both passive and non-political. The narrative, which portrays those cyborgs as globally accepted subjects with standard global aesthetics, limits the women cyborgs' capability to understand their coercive conditions as well as eliminates their potential to resist those conditions. From Crake's perspective, the Crakers are the imagined future of the planet and consequently must materialize in their pre-wired features a normative and masculinized global profile.

In conclusion, the divergent experiences of the female cyborgs in both dystopian narratives tailor a form of posthuman feminism that unfolds mostly in *Moxyland* rather than in *Oryx and Crake*. In their anti-cosmopolitan, reterritorializing embodiment, Kendra and Lerato produce local knowledge that tells a lot about Beukes' speculative vision of a present post-apartheid South Africa. The two women's growing

intersectionality simultaneously nourishes their potentiality, which grants them further command over their corporeal experiences. Ultimately, Kendra and Lerato shape a local personhood that restores the importance of the Global South in the field of knowledge production. With the end of the apartheid, South Africa entered "a complex historical process" that included "[f]ree market liberalization, deregulation, privatization, restructuring of industrial relations, and embryonic corporatism" (Murray 214). This economic shift ended the previously racialized economy and marked South Africa "in the world marketplace" (Murray 214). Hence, Beukes' speculative dystopia assertively takes the various features of corporate globalization that infiltrated the post-apartheid society and proves how many elemental features of the apartheid still influence the South African present. *Moxyland* dedicates the development of its characters to generate meaningful, yet intimate knowledge about the narrative's location.

This study demonstrated the importance of intersectional embodiment in the process of opposing the traditionally masculine entitlement over technology. As Puar suggests, "[m]atter is an actor" (57), which encourages the view of the body as an ensemble of meaningful information that acts and reacts in a certain space. Such awareness was absent among the female Crakers who fall short on resistance as a result of Crake's precautious wiring measures. Their lack of agency in this context is worth studying further in relation to Snowman, the last human survivor. In indirect ways, the passiveness of the Crakers is detrimental for Snowman, whose metacognitive abilities deteriorate progressively as he interacts further with them. That said, Snowman's

jeopardized existence threatens his survival as the last “man”, since he finds himself equally victimized by the masculinist ambitions of the pre-apocalypse. His weakened position is yet another ecocritical statement against the corporate mismanagement of environmental resources. In similar ways, Tendeka and Toby also suffer from the same masculinist system controlling the bodies of Kendra and Lerato, which suggests the necessity of acknowledging the inclusively infesting effects of patriarchal technology on individuals. Finally, it is worth noting that this thesis paves the way for exploring further the manifestations of reterritorialization as perceived from local individuals like Kendra and Lerato. Such inquiry would raise significant questions about the South African state’s actual discipline and control measures that are invested to sustain the work of global corporations and raise the economic status of South Africa on the global map. Another study that could surface in the same context is that of the unsurprising similarities between contemporary masculine forms of technological violence and the disciplinary tools used during the apartheid.

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