POST-APOCALYPTIC FICTION IN THE ANTHROPOCENE EPOCH: A POSTHUMANIST ANALYSIS OF MAGGIE GEE'S *THE ICE PEOPLE* AND OCTAVIA E. BUTLER'S *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

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ABSTRACT

POST-APOCALYPTIC FICTION IN THE ANTHROPOCENE EPOCH: A POSTHUMANIST ANALYSIS OF MAGGIE GEE'S *THE ICE PEOPLE* AND OCTAVIA E. BUTLER'S *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

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The purpose of this study is to analyse Maggie Gee's *The Ice People* and Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower* as examples of post-apocalyptic fiction arguing how the catastrophe is narrated in diary forms and the effects of post-apocalyptic contexts in different aspects of societies by discussing them through the perspective of posthumanist theory. Both novels place a dysfunctional society at the centre and criticise the anthropocentric approaches in the aftermaths of the apocalypse by questioning the core of what gives value to a human being in such a planet while presenting a gap between generations in their struggle to build a promising planet again.

Keywords: post-apocalyptic fiction, posthumanism, human agency, *The Ice People*, *Parable of the Sower*

ÖZ

ANTROPOSEN ÇAĞDA KIYAMET SONRASI KURGUSU: MAGGIE GEE'NİN *THE ICE PEOPLE* VE OCTAVIA E. BUTLER'IN *PARABLE OF THE SOWER* ROMANLARININ POSTHÜMANİST BİR ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı; Maggie Gee'nin *The Ice People* ve Octavia E. Butler'ın *Parable of the Sower* romanlarının kıyamet sonrası kurgu örneği olarak, yıkımın günlük formunda yazımla nasıl aktarıldığı ve kıyamet sonrası bağlamlarının toplumların farklı alanlarına etkisini posthümanist bir bakış açısıyla tartışarak analiz etmektir. Her iki roman da merkeze normal düzende seyretmeyen toplumları koyar ve kıyamet sonrası umut veren bir gezegen kurma çabasında, nesiller arasındaki uçuruma dikkat çekerken böylesi bir gezegende insana değer katan şeyin ne olduğunu sorgulayarak insan merkezli bakış açılarını eleştirir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kıyamet sonrası kurgu, posthümanism, insan edimi, *The Ice People, Parable of the Sower*

To the little girl in my heart who never lets me stop chasing my dreams

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. 1. The Aim of The Study

This thesis analyses Maggie Gee's *The Ice People* (1998) and Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of The Sower* (1993) through the perspective of posthumanist theory in order to problematise the similarities and differences of their context and narrative choices with the aim to lay bare the ways in which what is argued to be called as Anthropocene epoch becomes an era of dethroning human beings as the ultimate agent in the post-apocalyptic contexts. Using the critical lens of posthumanist theory, this thesis argues that post-apocalyptic fiction helps reveal insufficiencies of the Anthropocene regarding the problem of agency and incalculability of nature and universe while also pointing out that the Anthropocene as a theoretical aspect cannot be totally wiped out as the effect of humanity on the earth is undeniable. Through focusing on novels written in diary formats which make them more direct and immediate for the readers' exposure, the questioning of what it is to be human and acceptance of coevolving with the nature via internal arguments in the face of problematic situations are observed throughout *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of The Sower* narrate problematic contexts of the future, and both will be analysed by focusing on agency, human body, and the human-culture-nature relationship.

In this study, I am interested in Maggie Gee's *The Ice People* and Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of The Sower* considering a post-apocalyptic future with their formats as diaries that encompasses seemingly democratic and technologically advanced communities undergoing changes that are beyond recovery especially for human beings. Initially, decentralisation of human beings' position and bodily interventions through science or medicine, such as tech-fix babies in *The Ice People* and pyro medicine in *Parable of the Sower* will serve as a starting point for an analysis of such

issues from the perspective of posthumanism during the Anthropocene epoch. Then, I will analyse difference in the scope of timelines in both novels. *The Ice People* offers a context in which before, during and after the apocalypse as posthumanist reminisces is presented. I will compare such a wider perspective with the post-apocalyptic context as the immediate present of *Parable of the Sower* so that this will display the wider framework for both contexts. The examination of small events will lead to wider discussions in terms of the Anthropocene and its criticism through posthumanism. The collapse of societies in the aftermath of apocalypse in both novels will be studied considering the difference in generations and their reaction to the apocalypse as a return to wild in *The Ice People* and a return to religion in *Parable of the Sower*. Difference among the life practices of people and hierarchal social orders in communities of both novels will be compared and discussed in a post-apocalyptic context through a posthumanist perspective.

The Ice People has been previously analysed in terms of social transformations via climate change; one of these studies focuses on "an environmentally challenged society's adaptation process to the new climate conditions" (Aykanat 65) through an ecocritical interpretation of the story. The novel is examined as an example of a "climate change fiction … or Cli-Fi" (1) with its "representation of the Anthropocene in its social context" (64). Aykanat's thesis discusses "how geological forces reflect in social life and intergovernmental relationships" (68) and "how technology is not always the solution to planetary ecological crises" (68) since the world does not offer a welcoming environment for human species anymore as a result of climate change. In this thesis, the Anthropocene will also be discussed in societies through a critique of their hierarchal and segregated orders by pointing out the effect of its post-apocalyptic contexts. However, the discussion will focus on the humanist approaches and its destructing effects through a posthumanist criticism instead of placing climate at the centre of the argument as in Aykanat's study.

The Ice People has also been discussed in terms of its "hot and cold spatialities" (Şencan 98) and Gee's employment of "a world on the edge of environmental collapse accompanied by a social breakdown" where margins "depict inconsistency" (99). This study also relates the collapse of societies followed by a catastrophic event and its effect in the change of the power structure by pointing out the post-apocalyptic context

and its impact in such a relation. Another ecocritical analysis of the novel is aimed "to explore how she [Gee] represents the more-than-human world" (Topsakal 1) while displaying the "relations of fiction to ecology" (3). The discussion in Topsakal's thesis is focused on "materialist ecocritical theories, theories of cybernetics, and environmental justice conceptualisations" (10). Although Topsakal's study has a more materialist and ecocritical approach, the ground that indicates that human beings are not the only actors of the planet will also shape this thesis argument through a posthumanist understanding. *The Ice People* has also been analysed through an ecofeminist approach considering its context as an "eco-disaster" (Sepetoğlu 48) and its implications on women by focusing on the novel's association of "queer-ecological, sexist, speciesist and other related elements from a highly problematic perspective" and rendering "itself open to ecofeminist interpretations" (31). The collapse of "the ideals of heteronormativity" and "the societal patriarchal order" are interpreted to be related to "the environmental disintegration" (39); however, the novel's stance is found to be ambiguous since it "problematises both the repressive structure of heteronormativity" and "the newly emerged queer society" (41) in this analysis. This thesis will also discuss the return to heteronormative ideals in the face of the destructions resulted from the apocalypse but with a focus on how such a recurrence can be related to the post apocalypse through a posthumanist understanding.

Parable of the Sower has been discussed as a future instinct "to reinvent the utopian vision at a time when utopia allegedly has been rendered impossible" (Phillips 301) through Bauman's understanding of modern utopia. Phillips' study finds the novel as possessing "both prophetic and postmodern value" (301) in a "a harrowing world in which market exchanges and private property are the exclusive means of organizing social life" (304). This analysis places novel as reducted to an "utopianism to survive" (309). *Parable of the Sower* offers quite a plausible fictional context for the contemporary events on earth, this thesis also places the book as a predictive one like a warning for the future. However, the main focus in this study will be different from Phillips' postmodernist approach, it will discuss the dualities resulting from humanist understanding and their critique via a posthumanist aspect. There is also an analysis of the *Parable of the Sower* within post-apocalyptic perspective; however, it focuses on the "dystopian/utopian" (Miller 336) aspect of the novel through Butler's reinvention of "the desire for a better world" (336). The novel is described as one of the "critical

dystopias motivated out of a utopian pessimism" (337) while seeing *Parable of the Sower* as a practice of "overcoming the pessimism of the intellect with an optimism of the will" (357). Miller's study is related to the expectation of Lauren, who can be described as the 15-year-old narrator and the main character of *Parable of the Sower*, for the future in the novel and her struggle to keep the hope while placing the novel in an optimistic context; nonetheless, this study approaches Lauren's hope as a differentiating point of her as a member of the new generation from the old generation trying to stick with the values of the past.

Both Maggie Gee's *The Ice People* and Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower* were written in the last decade of the previous century when people expected various things from a millennium approaching. Some expectations might be related to a hopeful future enhanced by technology and science, some might be about the concerns because of technology and science again as narrated in these novels as fictional future societies. Both novels have previously been studied in terms of their dystopic contexts or their focus on the climate change. Watkins brings these two novels as examples of post-apocalyptic fiction while examining *The Ice People*'s "relationship between gender, time, narrative and history, drawing on Elizabeth Grosz's idea of the rupture or 'nick' and Haraway's conception of the Chthulucene" (3) and *Parable of the Sower* in terms of novel's context as a "place of writing and its relationship to post-secularism and new forms of spirituality" (4). The discussion of these two novels in terms of their post-apocalyptic contexts reveal fictional future representations that might be seen as quite plausible for the contemporary reality. However, these novels have not been studied through a posthumanist perspective before although their contexts present quite fruitful events and characters in terms of posthumanism since they show post-apocalyptic societies. Therefore, to analyse these novels through a posthumanist perspective can open up the space for fruitful discussion for the future of our very own societies for the worst-case scenarios since posthumanism criticises human exception and its consequences in nature and societies. This study will analyse these novels as examples of post-apocalyptic fiction. Through their context, the study will focus on its form and choice of narration as diaries written by first-person human narrators. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* present their stories in a world after the apocalypse in diary format. I think the similarity in such a choice offers a place for discussion regarding posthumanism since it criticises the centralisation of human

beings. However, the centralisation of their human narrators by means of diary writing displays the characters feelings and inner thoughts and they lead to criticism of their own society because their abstract ideals are related to humanist perspective.

1.2. An Overview of the Novels

Maggie Gee was born in 1948 in England, and she is an influential author whose "work has been translated into 14 languages and shortlisted for two prestigious global literary prizes" (Kılıç 11). Gee's writing is presented as being attentive to the style alongside a content blending daily trivial issues of life "with societal and global issues such as homelessness, poverty, climate change and nuclear weapons" (O'Reilly). Gee's *The Ice People* (1998) is a novel set in the future around 2050s telling a post-apocalyptic story about the Earth in a new ice age. The novel starts with an old man, Saul introducing himself and the pieces of writing that is about to start "I, Saul, Teller of Tales, Keeper of Doves, Slayer of Wolves, shall tell the story of my times. Of the best of days, and the end of days. Of the new white world that has come upon us. For whoever will read it. For whoever can read" (Gee 9).

The narration can be interpreted as a kind of diary of the Saul character who believes that giving a clear picture of what has happened so far is his ultimate goal before his death; thus, allowing a "critical distance to help the reader reflect on what is happening in the world outside." (Kılıç 12). The novel presents a technologically advanced society where people prepare themselves for a world that is getting hotter and hotter every day. Through Saul's entries into his diary, the reader can observe his social circle, personal relationships and everyday life of an Insider in the fictional context of England. Saul has a wife named Sarah with whom he has a very long and complicated relationship. They have a son named, Luke who is born through some medical interventions. The problems related to fertility can be observed in the very early stages of their relationship and the society has many people struggling with the same problem. People try to come up with scientific solutions for this problem in *The Ice People*. The best solution is for this problem is to have techfix babies in Fertility Clinics. Saul describes that they give "our bodies completely, our private parts, our selves, our money" (Gee 50) to such clinics so that they could conceive.

The society consists of a hierarchal order in which it seems impossible to get into another level as there is no interaction between them; Insiders and Outsiders. Technology seems to dominate every part of the life and Saul is a tech teacher who also works for a big company in nanotechnics "working with invisibly small molecular machines" (20). He feels like the machines "were alive to me … I was fascinated by artificial life, by the huge range of mobots in the college labs, the multitravellers, the swarmers, the sorters" (20). His early adulthood focuses mainly on his relationship with Sarah and their attempts to get pregnant. After the pregnancy, their difficulty to keep their relationship healthy becomes the focus alongside Saul and Sarah's other circles Gay Scientists and Wicca World. However, global warming turns into another ice age unexpectedly while shattering all the organisational structures with the worst possible damage making Saul one of the ice people. The story turns into the survival attempts of the ice people; people who live far away from the warm lands around the equator.

Octavia E. Butler was an award-winning African American author who was born in 1947 and passed away in 2006. She was praised for her "lean prose, strong protagonists, and social observations in stories that range from the distant past to the far future" in her official website. She was a prominent writer in her own time as she broke the taboo over science fiction genre regarding its white-male focus. Canavan summaries how Butler contributed to the genre: "She made science fiction 'messy'—or, rather, showed how messy it had always been. The future never belonged to just one tiny fraction of the human race" (*Octavia E. Butler* 15). Her unconventional stance as an author can be observed in her fiction with its characters and content.

Parable of The Sower is the first book of Parable Series. The series consist of two novels and the second one is *Parable of the Talent* (1998) which continues with Lauren, the main character in *Parable of the Sower*, in 2032. Lauren's community is based on her religion Earthseed and the story continues with her daughter's attempts "to reconcile with the legacy of a mother caught between her duty to her chosen family and her calling to lead humankind into a better future" according to Butler's website.

Parable of the Sower has been reviewed as having a context described as "a disintegrating world" (Jonas) in one of its early reviews in *The New York Times*. The

novel starts in 2024 as a diary of the main character Lauren which can be interpreted as a "cautionary tale" (Streeby 24) and evolves into a mixture of a diary and a book of religious verses of Earthseed. Lauren is the main character and the narrator of the story in the book. She is a young mixed-race girl in a small society where the setting is post-apocalyptic, and Lauren tries to comprehend the reasons and the outcomes of the things that have brought people to such a disaster. She introduces herself as "I live in a tiny, walled fish-bowl cul-de-sac community, and I'm the preacher's daughter" (Butler 13), and her father can also be assumed as the unnamed leader of their walled community. The social order was demolished as there is no effectively working authority that would retain the order; therefore, "small walled communities must protect themselves from desperate hordes of scangers and roaming bands of drug addicts" (8).

Lauren lives with her father, stepmother and three siblings. Her biological mother is dead. The apocalypse can be described as series of events which consist of rising temperature and earthquakes followed by other disasters such as drought. The society consists of three kinds of communities the rich ones where there seems to be no apocalypse and its harmful effects; walled communities in which people try to build themselves a safe environment with literal walls and protect themselves from the outsiders; and lastly the people from outside the wall who steal from anyone or any kind of community that they encounter. The burglaries and attacks from the outside become common while killing many people from Lauren's community and leaving many others homeless and too frightened to be able to continue their lives. Lauren establishes her own religion called Earthseed, and she keeps a diary while writing excerpts from the teachings of her religion. In her diary and religious writings, Lauren questions the current order and problems in the society and gives suggestions to change such an order to be able to found a hope for a better future. She summarises her religion as "I am Earthseed. Anyone can be. Someday, I think there will be a lot of us. And I think we'll have to seed ourselves farther and farther from this dying place" (Butler 56). The book starts with her plans for an expedition to the north and later continues with her realisation of these plans and what she faces with through the way.

The Ice People and *Parable of The Sower* offer fruitful contexts as literary materials to be discussed in terms of posthuman theory. I think the importance of this topic

derives from both the contemporary events such as the effect of human beings on earth and ethical questions due to advancements in science and technology, and current discussions in literature and humanities in terms of the place of human beings, their relation to the environment and the consequences of their actions to the planet and the response of nature to all human-made acts upon ecology. Also, these novels have not been previously discussed as diaries in post-apocalyptic contexts. Thus, to analyse the effect of post-apocalyptic world order and the difference and similarities in societies in their response to such events while criticising humanism and its human exclusivity in the face of survival will lead to a constructive discussion in terms of the humanism, the Anthropocene and their posthumanist critique.

Posthumanism has a ground that would shake the place and value of human beings in the Western understanding of idealised anthropic perspective concerning the planet or the universe as it was born out of the premise of "the historical decline of Humanism" (Braidotti 37). Posthumanism does not place one particular centre at its theoretical approach as in the case of humanism assigning human as the ultimate measure of all. It can be indicated that the perspective of human beings and the science or rational reasoning that humans create provides the base for humanism. However, posthumanism turns the tables for such an order by changing "the shift from a universe of certainty and predictability to a universe of uncertainty and unpredictability" (Braidotti 167). Not consisting of one consolidated focus makes posthumanism a more inclusive perception of universe as it involves human and more than human. Posthumanist theory attempts to bring human and non-human members of environment together; rather than aiming to be an anti-humanist approach. It criticises the problematic place of human being "above other life forms, and in control of them" (Nayar 17) while pointing out the fluidity of all forms of life on earth depending on one another.

Anthropocene is the term combined out "of *anthropos*, the Greek for 'human', and '-*cene*', the suffix used in names of geological epochs" (Davison) and it is used to be able to describe the period of time in which human effect on Earth can be observed in every possible area. It is an umbrella term that can be utilised in diverse disciplines from history to geology, from political sciences to literature. Although when the exact starting point for the Anthropocene epoch is debatable, it is being widely accepted that

it can be "with the rise of large-scale industrial societies after 1945 and their unprecedented capacities to alter Earth's environments globally at an accelerating pace" (Ellis 102). To place a beginning point for the Anthropocene is complicated and scholars argue it starting "from early human control of fire, to the rise of agriculture more than 10,000 years ago, to the peak year of nuclear fallout in 1964, … to the appearance of domesticated maize pollen in sediment cores around the world" (Ellis 30). Labelling the time that we currently experience is rather difficult as no one could see the big picture from an outside perspective and Davison summarises the problem of naming the era as Anthropocene as follows:

> *Things that we're living through at the moment – we don't know how significant they are. [The Anthropocene] appears significant but it would be far easier if we were 200 to 300, possibly 2,000 to 3,000, years in the future and then we could look back and say: yes, that was the right thing to do.*

Therefore, there is no consensus over whether the era we live in can be named as Anthropocene or not in different disciplines. However, it is undeniable that "humans are a force of nature" and time will show whether the epoch we live in will be called Anthropocene because their story "has only just begun" (Ellis 187); thus, neither to accept the Anthropocene wholly nor reject it utterly seems possible in such circumstances.

Posthumanist theory is critical of Anthropocene as much as humanism because of "humankind's exceptionalism and central position in a system of values that is criticized for being exclusively Western rather than universal" (Karkulehto et al. 25). Anthropocene can also be construed as a controversial phrase to comprise an era in terms of its scope over as humans being the main character in the contemporary times; however, I find the issues that it raises cannot be ignored. Human beings have influenced the earth in various ways and their influence bring out consequences that they cannot foresee although they cannot necessarily be placed as the ultimate agent. Rather than delving into unresolvable parts of the Anthropocene, deleterious effects that humans have throughout centuries on grounds of the humanist view ranking themselves on top of the whole systems on Earth will be analysed in *The Ice People* and *Parable of The Sower* through a posthumanist critical stance.

Theoretical framework of this thesis will be explained in following parts with a focus on critical posthumanism alongside with a discussion of the extent of the Anthropocene that is employed to discuss its effect in the novels. Post-apocalyptic fiction and its relationship with critical posthumanism will also been explored. Chapter II will focus on the novels and the Anthropocene through an analysis of them in post-apocalyptic contexts with the critical lens of posthumanism. The employment of the diary format in the first-person human narration in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* will bring the discussion to the centralisation of human beings' role in the narration as well as how differences in such a narrational technique contribute to each novel. Then, the discussion will focus on human beings' choice to intervene their bodies medically or technologically with the critique of human agency and its ironically irreversible harms in both contexts. To draw a wider frame for the narrations, the scope of timeline handled throughout the narrations and the effect that they leave will be analysed with a discussion of the Anthropocene and its applicability to each circumstance. In Chapter III, apocalypses and their inevitable result being the collapse in the societies will be examined through segregated structures of these societies and the widening gap between generations.

1.3. Methodology and the Frame of the Study

1.3.1. Post-apocalyptic Fiction

As this thesis examines *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* as examples of post-apocalyptic fiction withing the theoretical framework of posthumanism, it would be helpful to explain what is understood from post-apocalyptic fiction first. The prefix "post" in post-apocalyptic fiction is crucial because it implies the idea of "rejecting the stabilizing concepts of the end of the world and of dichotomized old and new worlds" while narrating "futures that are different from the present without employing the reductive idea that such futures are separated from the present by an absolute break or unbridgeable rupture" (Pitetti 444). Post-apocalyptic fiction brings out endless possibilities of ways of life for human beings and nonhuman and it makes the narration more disruptive as it deliberately does not offer a closure while also fulfilling "our taste for adventure, the thrill of discovery, the desire for a new frontier" (Adams 9).

In a post-apocalyptic novel, the story begins with depicting "a situation in which it is not desirable to live, starts with an event (an atomic war, a pandemic) that, by virtue of its exceptionality"; so the context can be seen as "based on the rupture between the

past and present of the narration" (Malvestio 28). Adams states that even though "its origins are firmly rooted in science fiction, post-apocalyptic fiction has always been able to escape traditional genre boundaries" (8) to be able to differentiate post-apocalyptic fiction from science fiction and dystopian fiction. Adams also sees "the first significant post-apocalyptic work" "*The Last Man* (1826)" written "by the mother of science fiction … Mary Shelley"; thus, seeing post-apocalyptic fiction "as old as science fiction itself" (8). Post-apocalyptic fiction initially presents or talks about the previous order of life which can be designed in many ways. Then, it presents the life after the apocalypse which can also bear many options such as presenting characters with an aim to sustain a life as before or making the life that the context previously had degenerate in such a way that characters need to create a new way of life. Thus, I find this aspect of post-apocalyptic fiction closer to a posthumanist understanding of the world. Both post-apocalyptic fiction and posthumanist theory do not offer clear-cut definitions and limits of the world and life. The uncertainty is what breaks the scientific rational humanist promise of the world in the posthumanist perspective. Similarly, resuming a life after an apocalypse without owning a basic social or political order in which the idealised human being can thrive in a post-apocalyptic fiction presents unpredictability and disrupts the humanist promise. The posthumanist approach that post-apocalyptic fiction brings in both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* will be analysed in the following chapters.

Post-apocalyptic fiction is a genre that reflects on the impact of human actions on the environment and society, and it often explores the consequences of societal collapse, environmental degradation, and other forms of disaster. In this respect, there is a close relationship between post-apocalyptic fiction and posthumanist stance, as it often portrays the characters as strong, independent, and capable, yet having trouble until being able to adapt and find new ways of survival in the face of a catastrophe. Post-apocalypse is particularly an important context while "opening up spaces of ambiguity" for "active historical subjects to take responsibility for directing and shaping indeterminate and open-ended historical processes" (Pitetti 444). The characters in post-apocalyptic fiction are generally presented as having to navigate a world that is vastly different from the one they knew, and they are depicted as having to re-evaluate their relationship with technology, environment, and other forms of life.

The genre also shows the reader that societal hierarchy is not fixed, it can change and evolve with time and new circumstances.

To summarise, posthumanist theory critiques and challenges traditional humanist perspectives and it highlights the need to re-evaluate the relationship between humanity and the environment, technology and all that are seen as nonhuman. The Anthropocene represents a new era of "a multidimensional process" (Ellis 84) where human actions are shaping the planet on a geological scale, and post-apocalyptic fiction reflects on the impact of human actions on the environment and society, it often explores the consequences of societal collapse, environmental issues, and various disasters. Posthumanist theory attempts to transcend "the boundaries of both anthropocentrism and of compensatory humanism, to acquire a planetary dimension." (Braidotti 89). The post-apocalyptic genre, in this sense, has close affinities with posthumanism as it often depicts characters adapting and surviving in the face of environmental catastrophe, and it also shows the reader that how societal hierarchy is can change and evolve in time due to novel circumstances.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* have post-apocalyptic contexts at the heart of the narration. In *The Ice People,* apocalypse can be described as an ice age that starts when "the ice advanced steadily across Euro, as the winter citrus harvest failed, as the golden Spanish summers grew paler, shorter" (Gee 310)". Although everyone in *The Ice People* expects this ice period to end quickly, "the ice didn't go away for long. It returned quite soon" (37) and they realise that they are "entering a new ice age" (58). All these take "two decades to move from temperate to permafrost" (142); however, at the beginning, two decades seem "like quite a long time at first. To organise ourselves. To prepare for the ice" (146).

Octavia E. Butler is seen as disputing "the genre of post-apocalyptic fiction" by disturbing "our understanding of who is to be the hero of such an account and she complicates our understanding of security, the condition for flourishing central to all social contract thinkers" (Curtis 3). In *Parable of the Sower,* apocalypse can be expressed as some series of natural disasters mainly focused around climate change; however, in this context "sea level keeps rising with the warming climate" (Butler 75) "there is the occasional earthquake" (75). A normal day would be described as "hot,

as usual" (7) since Lauren can only remember "the rain six years ago" (38). After four days of rain, they have seen during the narration, she indicates that "I wonder how many years it will be before we see rain again" (47). Alongside the hot weather, "wind, and earthquakes have taken a toll" (38) so the apocalypse for people in *Parable of the Sower* is a mixture of hot, wind and earthquakes that have occurred frequently for over decades leaving cities in ruins. There are remains of societies who experience the aftermath of an apocalypse possibly resulting from "the four horsemen of the posthuman apocalypse: nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and cognitive science" (Braidotti 59) since both novels possess a highly technological societies in their previous orders. Also, both main characters, Saul and Lauren, from the books blame people for such catastrophes that bring them to their post-apocalyptic reality while indicating that "How humans had everything, and valued nothing" (Gee 61) and "People have changed the climate of the world" (Butler 46). I think this highly implicates the posthumanist approach that both of these novels present throughout their content.

Posthumanist theory is an approach that critiques and challenges traditional humanist perspectives, which have long viewed humanity as the central and most important element in the world and the employment of post-apocalypse as a context serves "to critique the logics of social erasure that underwrite fictions of socially perfected futures" (Pitetti 446). Posthumanist theory argues that humanity's relationship with technology, environment, and other forms of life, should be re-evaluated and that the boundaries between human and non-human should be made more permeable. It also highlights the need to move beyond the human-centric perspective, and to consider the value and agency of other forms of life and non-human entities; similarly, post-apocalyptic fiction "reconfigures the conditions under which humans live and demands that humans rethink their premises for peaceful living together" (Curtis 5).

Post-apocalyptic fiction offers promising possibilities of posthumanism as it often portrays the main characters as strong, independent, and capable, and they are also portrayed as being able to adapt and find new ways of survival in the face of environmental catastrophe. Curtis summaries this: "The conditions from which the post-apocalyptic account starts over is a kind of created state of nature from which and out of which we can think anew about where we are going if 'we'll not go home

again'" (4). The readers see the characters in post-apocalyptic fiction as having to navigate a world that is vastly different from the one that they knew, and they are depicted as having to re-evaluate their relationship with technology, environment, and other forms of life. The genre also shows the reader that societal hierarchy is not fixed, it can change and evolve with time and new circumstances. Rather than presenting only the apocalypse and ending the narration, both *The Ice People* and *Parable of The Sower* display the world order, the life, human beings after "the end". This can be interpreted as that the end for humanity does not necessarily mean an end for the Earth or all the other species. As a matter of fact, the apocalypses whose aftermaths are shown in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* do not indicate the ultimate end for human beings either; instead, post-apocalypse gives them "opportunities to participate in those processes and contribute to determining the always-changing shape of the open-ended future" (Pitetti 451). However, they both demonstrate the end for humanism and its privileged idealised members. Humanity's adaptation to the new world order without all the things that are seen as crucial for what a human is opens up the space to question the value of those. I find the choice of this context, post-apocalypse, quite suitable to be able to make the characters face with the end of humanism in very harsh conditions and lead the discussion into posthumanism.

Post-apocalyptic fiction is one of the most common genres that explores posthumanism since it "speaks both to our deepest fears and to our desire to start over again" (Curtis 5). It often explores the theme of human agency, and how human beings are capable of shaping the world and themselves through technology and science, but also the potential negative consequences of human actions and the risk of unintended consequences. Saul in *The Ice People* summarises the aftermath and how small importance human beings bear in such circumstances: "But gradually I began to see the truth. We were the exceptions to the rule. The ice was bad for human beings, shattered our careful webs of control, killed our parasites, bugs and bedmates – and yet, the rest of life was flourishing" (Gee 278). Death of human does not affect other species as much as one would expect and this can be interpreted as a critical posthumanist perspective as it points out that human beings are species "co-evolving, sharing ecosystems" (Nayar 19) with what they previously saw as others. In *Parable of the Sower*, human beings are also criticised because of their ignorance regarding their perspective about change or not being affected irreversibly by any catastrophic

event as they believe that they could solve anything and "it took a plague to make some of the people realize that things could change" (Butler 46) for them out of their control. After the huge crisis, Lauren and her acceptance of being one with the whole system can be observed as a form of a religion in the narration. Lauren whose father is the Baptist minister confesses that "At least three years ago, my father's God stopped being my God. His church stopped being my church […] God who isn't mine any more." (9) and creates her own religion: Earthseed. The teaching of Earthseed possesses a ground that is quite compatible with the posthumanist approach towards human beings. Lauren writes excerpts from the teaching of Earthseed prior to every entry to her diary; therefore, the reader becomes highly familiar with the religion as well as her life throughout the novel. This religion situates change at the core of its foundation by indicating that "We adapt and endure, / For we are Earthseed, /And God is Change." (15). Lauren's choice to establish her own religious system can be interpreted as another way to gain her own autonomy in a world full of unexplainable occurrences.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* employ the diary form written in the first person human narration throughout the novel. Employing the diary format in both novels can be interpreted as another substantial tool to show the capacity of human beings, ethical or unethical choices made by them which can be analysed through a posthumanist perspective. The first-person human narration in diaries can be connected to posthumanism in the context of how posthumanism views the human experience in relation to technological and scientific advancements. Posthumanist theory argues that human beings are capable of comprehending the life as coevolving with nonhuman and embracing new forms of existence. Diaries can be used as a literary technique in a post-apocalyptic fiction to convey this posthumanist perspective, by allowing the reader to experience the story through the eyes of the characters. It allows the reader to understand the characters' thoughts, emotions, and beliefs, and how the lives and fates of the human species are closely and directly connected with the other species. Additionally, the first-person human narration in such diaries also permits the reader to understand the characters' experiences, struggles, and challenges as they adapt to new forms of existence in a post-apocalyptic world. It can provide an intimate and personal connection between the reader and the characters, which can help to convey the posthumanist perspective.

Both of these novels present their main characters as the narrators of the stories because stories are presented as the diary of Saul from *The Ice People* and the diary of Lauren from *Parable of the Sower*. Saul and Lauren pour their souls out to those diaries with the most inner thoughts possible while revealing faulty or questionable sides of human beings. Although reading the diary of those characters might be seen as locating human beings even at the centre of narration as humanism does, I believe that it gives characters a chance to doubt about themselves, their species and share their first-hand opinions in a post-apocalyptic world regarding those while giving readers opportunity to experience all of these with them.

1.3.2. Posthumanism

The place of human on Earth or in the universe has always been a privileged one whether it has been defined by origin stories or secular approaches towards the world. To be able to reach the point where posthumanism has a meaningful context, one should revisit humanism and its roots. Humanism is a theory that gives value to the agency of human beings, individually and collectively. It promotes critical thinking, rationality and scientific evidence rather than accepting dogma or superstition. It is a perspective that has been influential in shaping Western culture and values for centuries. Humanism derives from the Latin word *humanitas* and it is assumed as the translation of the Greek educational concept *paideia* highly related to "the kind of person it should aim at bringing into being" (Baker) according to Greek ideals. Its Latin counterpart *humanitas* becomes a concept of liberal education from which "the kind of cultural values that one would derive" (Kraye and Mann 1). The Renaissance helped reveal the values of Ancient Greek and Rome where the thinkers did not assume "the world to be subject to a Christian God"; instead indicated the notion that "Man is the measure of all things" (Pepperell 159). Thus, humanism can be seen as a reaction to the dogmatic Christian values that had suppressed the Western world before the 15th or 16th centuries.

One matter becomes obvious in the roots of humanism: even the origin of humanist theory is strictly narrow regarding both its content and its audience as it only accepts certain civilisations' values as its foundation and intends to educate privileged white men in European societies. Such focus produces otherness for all "non-white, non-

masculine, non-normal, non-young, non- healthy, disabled, malformed or enhanced peoples" (Braidotti 68). Within such thinking, not only the non-White non-Western subjects but also other species such as animals, plants, bacteria etc. are also seen as others, positioned in lower-than-human status.

Braidotti summarises humanism as the development during the Enlightenment by means of "a self-regulatory and teleological ordained use of reason and of secular scientific rationality allegedly aimed at the perfectibility of 'Man'" (37). As a result of liberal education without religious suppression, the ideal human being comes into image through which humanism finds its foundation as a theory. However, this man is the problematic first step into humanism as it is mentioned in the previous paragraph because it only produces "a systematized standard of recognizability – of Sameness" (Braidotti 26). Pepperell indicates that feminism, animal rights movements, environmentalism and anti-slavery are the signals for "the gradual overturning of a human-centred world" (172) in previous centuries. Those movements make the others visible and point out the problems that humanism creates while contradicting even its very promise that the aim is to enhance human beings. The confined perspective that humanism bears over human beings and nature is not able to cover what human and nature in reality consist of with all their members populating all over the earth as well as Europe. However, posthumanism as a critical theoretical framework "appeared at the end of the 1990s and the early 2000s" (Herbrechter vii) and reveals the possibilities promising the dismissal of such a narrow aspect. It is a theoretical stance that critiques humanism and mainly the belief in human exceptionalism "distinct from the inhuman over which it towers in a position of natural supremacy" (Badmington 18). Posthumanism argues that the humanist perspective is limited in its understanding of what it means to be human, and that the concepts of humanity and human nature are not fixed and unchanging. Instead, posthumanism suggests that human nature is malleable and can be transformed while acknowledging its position that "has always coevolved, coexisted, or collaborated with the nonhuman" (Clarke and Rossini 142), or all the other components of the world.

To be able to draw a theoretical framework for the study, there are some terms that need to be glossed over prior to the arguments. Initially, posthuman and posthumanism are terms that bear many interpretations both because the field is relatively new and

expanding and because they assemble various branches under its roof. However, this thesis is mainly interested in the theory of posthumanism in its critical stance as those two terms possess distinct meanings, and they are preferred not to be used interchangeably.

Posthuman can mean various artefacts or alterations ultimately generated from the fear of a futuristic other such as "a new biological species, a cybernetic organism, or even a digital, disembodied entity" (qtd. in Karkulehto 23). Therefore, posthuman refers to a being or an item that is a outcome of a scientific or technological alteration or development. The difference between posthuman and nonhuman derives from the premise that posthuman is "a (bio)technologically enhanced being but not an actual organic nonhuman species such as animals and plants" (Karkulehto et al. 25). This is quite similar to Haraway's definition of cyborg as "a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (5). However, a cyborg is a hybrid entity while posthuman can be hybrid as well as wholly digital and artificial. It should be accepted that there is a difference between posthuman and posthumanism.

In summary, a posthuman is a creature or an item that is the product of science and technology that triggers anxiety in human beings as they can shake the power of anthropocentric control over the planet. Posthumanism, on the other hand, broadly criticises the idea of human that is defined by Eurocentric humanist ideology as it places human being at the centre while sustaining the concept of binary opposites in that logic. Humanism is condemned on account of its assumption that "the world is a site of passive resources" (Alaimo et al. 401) for the exploitation of human in posthumanism. Posthuman prompts fright in human beings because of the displacement "as the dominant form of life on the planet by intelligent machines" (Hayles 283) while posthumanism analyses human beings and their place by eliminating it from the position of the ultimate agent in nature or the universe. In such a frame of reference, posthumanism can be referred as a site of "an ongoing and productive reworking of the defining features of the human subject" (Lam 324). Therefore, the description of what it means to be human becomes complicated when its prejudiced western humanism is removed from its connotation.

Posthumanism, or the critical posthumanism as a theoretical stance throughout this thesis, can be defined as “the radical decentring of the traditional sovereign, coherent and autonomous human in order to demonstrate how the human is always already evolving with, constituted by and constitutive of multiple forms of life and machines.” (Nayar 11). In posthumanism, there is a recognition that human beings have the power to shape the world and themselves through technology, science, and other forms of advancement. However, there are also concerns about the potential negative consequences of human actions and the risk of unintended consequences. In *Parable of the Sower*, the protagonist Lauren Oya Olamina, creates a new religion called "Earthseed" which teaches that humanity's ultimate destiny is to become "Godseed" by transcending the boundaries of the physical world and colonizing other planets. Lauren tries to exercise her agency by creating a new belief system, and actively works towards its realization. Additionally, there is a drug called "pyro" which amplifies the ability to feel pain and pleasure, which leads to a new level of empathy among humans. This exemplifies the problem of human agency as the drug was intended to help people, but it ended up being used as a weapon of control. Similarly, *The Ice People* explores the theme of posthumanism through the use of genetic engineering to help humans procreate, and the creation of a new form of human with enhanced abilities. The characters in this novel exercise their agency by experimenting with genetic engineering to enhance their abilities. However, the novel also explores the negative consequences of these actions, as the tech-fix babies face with several problems since their birth. In both novels, the characters exercise their agency in various ways, but the consequences of their actions are not always positive. The issue of human agency in posthumanism is the acknowledgment that humans might possess the strength to shape themselves and around the world via innovative or logical developments, but it also focuses on the potential negative results of human activities and the incalculable results.

Posthumanist theory argues that humanity's relationship with technology, environment, and other forms of life, should be re-evaluated and that the boundaries between human and non-human should be made more permeable. It also highlights the need to move beyond the human-centric perspective, and to consider the value and agency of other forms of life and non-human entities. In relation to the Anthropocene, posthumanist theory argues that humanity's impact on the environment has reached

such a scale that it has become a geological force. It is no longer possible to separate human and non-human entities and Anthropocene should not be applied as "a distancing that posits humanity as the driving force acting on a passive, abstracted nature." (Rossini 154). The Anthropocene represents a new era where human actions are shaping the planet on a geological scale, and posthumanist theory suggests that it is necessary to consider the implications of this new era and the need to move beyond exploitative human-centric perspectives alongside the posthumanist intent "to treat the human itself as an assemblage, co-evolving with other forms of life, enmeshed with the environment and technology" (Nayar 13).

In literature, posthumanist theory can be explored through various themes such as the impact of technology on human identity, the consequences of human actions on the environment, and the ethical and moral implications of human advancements. It can also be explored through the depiction of characters who have been altered by technology, such as genetically modified humans or cyborgs, and the challenges they face as they come to terms with their new abilities and identities. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* demonstrate portraits of societies that take endless advantage of nature, animals, and non-human in general as if it was their birth right as human beings; therefore, they arrive at a point where there can be nothing to be exploited anymore. The humanist perspective places human beings at the top of hierarchy on earth while considering nature to be "as a logical machine following its own predetermined laws" that needs to be "overcome and tamed" (Pepperell 159). The ideal human at the top does not consist of anything other than European ones and if one is not related to the Western understanding of human being he/she is seen "as simpler, more primitive, and closer to nature" (Scott 195). Science that human beings make appears to resolve all the codes of nature and they can easily depend on them in their decision-making process according to such an understanding of nature. However, humanist view results in an approach towards nature that is "humanized" and "human cultures naturalized – in new, often unhealthy, ways" (Asberg 2). The unhealthy ways suggest the exploitative side of humanism which sees every person other than white Western heterosexual idealised human being as other and nature is placed in a lower rank than human other to be utilised from as a means of supply. Therefore, humanising the nature indicate that nature can be used and abused just like how the other humans have been utilised from by making them slaves, or underpaid workers. Naturalisation

of human cultures mean that cultures that do not belong to European people can be ignored and looked down upon as they do not meet the standardisation of Western civilisation. This indicates how this abusive manner regarding nature as a "mere resource" can be directly harmful to nature itself while "utterly inimical to particular cultures" (Alaimo 105) because non-white, non-European people are abused in obscure ways via exposure of their environment to the exploitation.

In *The Ice People,* Saul recalls that at the beginning of the plagues and chaotic events, "In wealthier areas, life went on as usual. I didn't let the newscasts upset me." (Gee 20). The privileged human beings of humanist ideals are not able to recognise the consequences of their action on nature or any kind of human damaging activity goes on in nature until they reach their protected ivory towers. Posthumanism critiques humanism for its emphasis on the individual, and its tendency to ignore the interconnectedness of all living things. It also critiques humanism for its emphasis on the intellect over the body, and for its inclination to prioritize human needs over the needs of other forms of life. Saul's confession reveals that even catastrophic events do not have the same impact on all around the world. However, this changes irreversibly during a very simple turn of events throughout the novel when the society in *The Ice People* "expected summer, but there was a curious patch of real cold" (Gee 141) because of the alarming level of temperatures rising. The novel displays how nature can have its own autonomous acts upon all the components of the earth whether they are human beings, plants or animals. The ignorance and patronising manner of human beings toward nature have been wiped out with an unpredictable move from nature in *The Ice People*; therefore, this book presents a striking fictional context of societies undergoing difficulties due to changes in the climate and aftermath of catastrophes to be analysed by means of a posthumanist perspective.

In Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower,* the nature is exploited as a result of human actions. The novel is set in a future where society has collapsed due to environmental degradation, economic collapse, and political turmoil. The characters in the novel are struggling to survive in a world where resources are scarce, and the environment is harsh. The novel portrays how the overuse of resources and lack of environmental regulation have led to the destruction of the natural world, including the destruction of forests, the pollution of water and air, and the extinction of plant and animal species.

The humans are also affected by the environmental degradation, as they are often forced to travel long distances to find food and water, and they are also affected by the extreme weather conditions caused by climate change while the rich communities can have all these resources in their highly protected small communities in *Parable of the Sower*. Basic needs for life become scarce such as water which "now costs several times as much as gasoline" (Butler 15). However, even after an enormous catastrophe, there are still inequalities among various groups of people. Lauren is the narrator and the main characters in the novel. She is a 15-year-old black girl who writes a diary and her own religion's teachings in a post-apocalyptic society. She presents all these communities in summary:

> *Up toward the hills there were walled estates— one big house and a lot of shacky little dependencies where the servants lived. We didn't pass anything like that today. In fact we passed a couple of neighborhoods so poor that their walls were made up of unmortared rocks, chunks of concrete, and trash. Then there were the pitiful, unwalled residential areas.* (11)

There can still be observed the unfair distribution of even scarce resources from this quote during a period of survival in *Parable of the Sower*. Posthumanism criticises the arrogance and egoist approach of human beings resulting from the dichotomy between human-nature, idealised humans-other humans. Lauren indicates that dogs are seen as wild animals in their period because "dogs eat meat. These days, no poor or middle class person who had an edible piece of meat would give it to a dog" (33). However, the rich still utilises from dogs to protects their estates as an "extra insurance" alongside several other devices for protection since "dogs scare people" (33). The division between the wealthy few and others reaches to a point in the book where the entitled people are not even aware of the immediate occurrences happening around their environments as they build walls to be able to separate themselves from the others.

Posthumanism focuses on and critiques the arrogance produced based on ideals of supreme "human individuals as the only beings endowed with mind and agency" (Karkulehto et al. 263); the ideals which again are created by human beings themselves. Such a challenge towards the superior understanding of human being is not easy to accept in the western humanist context. Humanism bases its argument on "secular scientific rationality" (Braidotti 37) which results in predictability and

certainty as nature follows its laws. However, the last century teaches human beings that there will be “blind spots and scientific uncertainty” (Alaimo 100) with global warming and wars leading to mass casualties. It is comprehended that science or cultural values cannot answer all the needs of human beings and everything cannot be foreseen no matter how law-abiding they may seem. This recognition takes us to a posthumanist perspective in which “the grand dream and narrative of high humanism” is being shattered while uncovering human’s need of “nonhuman to come into the modes of its own becoming” (Clarke et al. 150). The upcoming discussion will be focused on the damaging effect of the apparent place of human from the humanist perspective and the dismantlement of that place in a posthumanist discourse.

Posthumanism brings “a generative shift of humanities research beyond its classical anthropocentrism” towards “the social, environmental, and scientific challenges” (Åsberg and Braidotti 18) of the last century if the prefix that it adds to humanism is taken into consideration. It does not necessarily mean in the sense that humanism is over; it rather indicates “the 'end of the human' without giving in to apocalyptic mysticism or to new forms of spirituality and transcendence” (Herbrechter 10). Posthumanism criticises humanism for its belief in human exceptionalism, which has been used to justify exploitation of other living beings and the environment. It suggests that the belief in human exceptionalism has led to the current environmental crisis, and that it is necessary to move beyond humanism in order to address the ecological crisis. Posthumanism intends to embrace other species, and other disciplines while placing human at the same level as everything that they share the world with. Posthumanism has the aim “to decenter the human by terminally disrupting the scripts of humanism” (141) as Clarke suggests. Although humanism sees what separates human beings -the idealised illusion of a western man- from others as the faculty of reason, there comes an era where humanist worldview cannot bring out reasonable outcomes in the face of uncertainty. Therefore, the prefix “post” can be interpreted as a means that assists the narrow perspective of Eurocentric humanist ideals adopting a more extensive understanding of human beings as a part of the planet since humanism offers an image of human that is “defined by Western models of knowledge steeped in the intellectual traditions of the Enlightenment” (Alaimo et al. 401). Such a description is not capable of capturing human species as a whole; instead, it demonstrates a highly biased grasp of what characterises a human being.

The theory of posthumanism may not be able to give exclusive details about what all that human species include; yet, it shows a willingness to involve all it brings rather than excluding some with sharply defined expectations and accept human as "an embedded figure among many other lively and active entities" (Marchand and Stratman 406). This aspect results in a position where patriarchy and its values concurrently lose its place as the hegemony of humanism; thus, making posthumanism evidently a feminist theory eliminating "white, European, handsome and able-bodied" (Braidotti 24) male accepted as the norm for humanism. Nonetheless, this inclusiveness does not necessarily mean a positive outcome for the privileged ones under the Eurocentric crown of humanism because posthumanism not only embraces all human beings as species but also involves all nonhuman organisms namely animals, plants, microorganisms, everything that includes the vast systems of the ecosystem alongside scientific entities that affect the planet in diverse ways. Objective of posthumanism is the "dissolution of the assumptions about the nature/culture divide" (Alaimo et al. 402); in general, the dichotomy that is established through humanist perception of the world. Contemporary times make human beings confronted with situations where they question themselves, what it is to be human and unable to find a point that they can hold on to. The experiences that human beings have gone through lead to a point where they are no longer superior even scientifically; instead, human beings are considered as "just another animal on just another planet orbiting just another ordinary star" (Ellis 28). The harsh realisation that not only as species but also as a planet or a system in the universe human beings are not the special being on one and only planet that offers life gets the guards of humanism down.

The humanist promise that human beings are the norm for everything is destroyed because nonhuman might endure what the world offers while human beings suffer as seen in the rising or lowering of temperature in *The Ice People*. There are circumstances where culture or science cannot provide any solution to problems such as in infertility in human beings resulting from medical interference of the body or genetically modified foods. There are settings where humans realise that they are at the same level as nonhuman such as scientific conditions in which "tissue and organ transfers between human beings and across species barriers destabilize apparently secure boundaries between self and other" (Rossini 153). Sometimes human beings find themselves even in lower positions than nonhuman in some respects where they

have to be in the hands of nature or nonhuman such as natural disasters. Such powerlessness creates an irony for the agency of human over nature. The exploitation and modification of every aspect of life in turn result in a problem for their own species. This issue can be interpreted as another posthumanist critique of the humanist worldview shattering the belief that human beings are "the common measure of all things" (Alaimo et al. 403). Posthumanism tries to convey a more inclusive understanding of the world in which there is no one particular centre that everything depends on. To summarise, posthumanist theory attempts to bring human and non-human members of environment together and gains its power in "its critique of singular narratives about the nature of knowledge, meaning, and existence by refusing to be a clean and orderly distinct discipline" (Marchand and Stratman 412). The ground that posthuman construes for a new understanding of human being and its place in the universe contains criticism over human agency, its body, and the human-culture-nature relationship as well as nonhuman and nature alongside their constituents.

The Anthropocene is a geological epoch characterized by human activities having a significant global impact on the Earth's ecosystems and climate. The term was first defined in Oxford Dictionary in 2014 as "relating to or denoting the current geological age, viewed as the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment" (qtd in Ellis 185) In post-apocalyptic fiction in literature, the Anthropocene is often depicted as the cause of a catastrophic event that leads to the collapse of human civilization. The effect of the Anthropocene in post-apocalyptic literature is portrayed through themes of environmental degradation, climate change, and resource depletion. In such post-apocalyptic stories, the Anthropocene is presented as the root cause of the collapse of human society, through events such as nuclear war, pandemics, or ecological disasters caused by human activities. The characters in post-apocalyptic fiction are shown as struggling to survive in a world ravaged by the consequences of human actions and must contend with issues such as food and water scarcity, disease, and extreme weather events. Additionally, many post-apocalyptic stories also explore the effects of the Anthropocene on human psychology and society. Characters usually struggle with feelings of guilt and despair over the collapse of civilization and the loss of the world they knew and must come to terms with their role in the new period full of obscurity. There are also explorations of power dynamics, as those who have resources or special skills may exploit others in

the new society. Overall, the effect of the Anthropocene in post-apocalyptic fiction in literature is generally presented as a dire warning of the potential consequences of human actions and a call for humanity to take responsibility for their actions with the recognition of the functioning of the world as a much bigger system than human beings can understand. Thus, this warning aims to change the ways of human beings' actions to prevent such a collapse in the future.

Although posthumanist theory concentrates on "less anthropocentric perspectives, the humankind's growing influence on the planet cannot be ignored" (Karkulehto et al. 2). Therefore, through a posthumanist perspective, the Anthropocene can be viewed as an opportunity for humanity to transcend its current limitations and create a new form of existence. Posthumanist theories argue that human beings, through their technological and scientific advancements, have the ability to reshape the planet and even themselves within its main promise of "elaborating alternative ways of conceptualizing the human subject" (Braidotti 37). The Anthropocene is seen as a moment when humanity has the opportunity to take control of its own evolution and create a new form of existence that is more adaptable, resilient, and sustainable. However, posthumanist theory also recognizes that the Anthropocene poses significant challenges and risks. It recognizes that human activities have already led to environmental degradation, climate change, and other ecological crises, and that these issues need to be addressed in order to create a sustainable future. They also recognize that the consequences of human actions could be catastrophic and that not all technological advancements are positive. Therefore, it is argued that it is important to consider the ethical and moral implications of human actions in the Anthropocene and to strive for a sustainable, responsible, and equitable future. In summary, in posthumanist theory, the Anthropocene is viewed as a time that presents significant risks and challenges that must be addressed in order to create a sustainable future. It is also seen as an opportunity for humanity to overcome its present limitations and create a new way of life.

The following chapter will discuss the effects of the Anthropocene in post-apocalyptic contexts in terms of narrative forms of the novels, surgical interventions or excessive medication intake of human beings in the narratives' contexts and the scope of timeline in the novels and their effect to the story via a critical posthumanist stance.

CHAPTER 2

ANTHROPOCENE IN THE POST-APOCALYPTIC CONTEXTS

Post-apocalyptic contexts of *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* might be expected to offer these narrations a less human-centred perspectives since the catastrophe destroy what human beings have worked on so far in both novels. In apocalyptic literature, the Anthropocene is employed as "a powerfully moralistic narrative" (Davis and Turpin 330) standpoint. However, concentrating on the aftermaths of a life destructing event results in the observation of the characters in their attempts to survive and build on what has left of their previous lives.

Post-apocalyptic fiction captures "the social criticism inherent in the apocalyptic text" with "the utopian impulse of the pioneer novel and outline an origin story ironically appropriate for our current time when the frontier is absent and the possibility of catastrophe seems imminent" (Curtis 6). Since both of these novels hint in a way that the development of human beings reaches into a point where they take advantage of anything that can be of use and might play a part in the end of their humanity, they might present an ironic scene to comment on whether the Anthropocene can be accepted and to what extent the Anthropocene can provide a meaningful criticism of those particular circumstances. To focus on the role of human beings in their destruction of the previous orders of their lives proposes a sarcastic perspective for a posthumanist criticism of the narration in the hands of such human beings, human beings' interference of supposedly ideal bodies via their own products of development and the position of human beings in the wider scope of both contexts. I claim that *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* can be analysed as a critique of the Anthropocene in the post-apocalyptic fiction through a posthumanist perspective because the diary format written in the first-person human narrative that is used in both novels brings out the problematic aspects of humanism and human-centred approaches. The interventions via scientific or medical advancements lead to unprecedented results that human beings are unable to foresee or cease, and the extent of timeline covered

throughout *The Ice People* indicate how human beings are not the only actors of the earth while *Parable of the Sower* displays only the post-apocalyptic context as the present by demonstrating the inadequacy of human beings to comprehend the scale of the catastrophe supposedly they have caused.

In the following section of this chapter, the narration in the form of diary in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* will be discussed in terms of whether it makes the novels anthropic or posthumanist by focusing on the diary format and what it brings as a genre to the contexts and the first-person human narration in diary formats. Then the next part will focus on the interventions that are made through technological or scientific advancements in the societies of both novels and how those interventions can be discussed through a posthumanist understanding and whether these advancements and their results can show the inadequacies of the Anthropocene. The chapter will continue with the discussion of the scope of timeline covered in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* how the span of time presented in the novels can show different societies regarding whether they are aware of the upcoming apocalypse or not and societies reactions to such upcoming events as critique of the Anthropocene and its promise that human beings are the planet shapers.

2.1. Narration in the Form of Diary: Anthropic or Posthumanist

Many languages have a word to indicate a diary that is "derived from the root meaning 'day'"; thus, it can be observed that main promise of a diary is to be "committed to the calendar, day after day" (Paperno 562). Therefore, a definition of diary can be summarised as "a text written in the first-person, in separate instalments, ideally on a daily basis, and ostensibly for the purposes of giving an account of the writer's personal experience in a given day, which is not necessarily addressed to someone other than the diarist" (562). This section will analyse the format of the novels as fictional diaries written in the first-person human narration and this form's relation to the perspective of the novel whether they are anthropic or posthumanist with such a choice to place human beings at the centre to tell the stories of their contexts. The use of first-person human narration in a diary can be interpreted as an anthropocentric approach in both *The Ice People* and *Parable of The Sower*, and the use of this narrative technique might bring "out the ambivalence of readers' responses to characters in literature" (van Lissa

44). While the Anthropocene as a theory can offer a narrow perspective to interpret the events that human beings have experienced in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* since nonhuman beings experience those events concurrently, I think that the first-person human narrative in these diaries provides the reader with a critical approach towards the Anthropocene alongside any approach separating human from nonhuman as superiors.

The narrators of the novels question their value and necessity as human beings in the world and whether it is essential for them to be alive even after an apocalypse since Saul and Lauren witness the downfall of humanity and all its principles with societies, but the life of nonhuman continues without those concepts while human beings struggle. A criticism of humanism can be pointed out towards such intimate diaries through posthumanism because posthumanist stance "should not seek to fashion "scriptural tombs" for humanism, but must, rather, take the form of a critical practice that occurs inside humanism, consisting not of the wake but the working-through of humanist discourse." (Badmington 22). Thus, employing the fictional diary form with a first-person human narrator at the cores of both stories presents the reader with a humanist context in a critical stance since they both have a human character as the storyteller, and they tell their stories by utilising from the language which human beings assume as a partition from the nonhuman. However, their storytelling does not only display an anthropic narrative; instead, to have a story in a post-apocalyptic context allows it to offer a posthumanist critical perspective in terms of the dilemmas that the characters and societies go through questioning their place on earth with scarce supplies and life-threatening environments for human beings. In this chapter, the diary as a literary genre and its effect on the narrations and the contexts of *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* will be discussed in terms of its presentation of human beings in situations where they question themselves, their societies and the values that they assign themselves as human beings with humanist approaches.

The narrator of *The Ice People,* Saul talks about his environment as full of children of the ice age who can only speak in words and do not have any families, any proper education, they "expectantly, waiting for me [Saul] to tell my story" (Gee 10). He approaches his audience with a critical stance indicating how "Writing fascinates them, and makes them jealous. Sometimes they pretend to copy me."; however,

questioning “how can they ever understand?” (10). This inquiry towards his surrounding bears more questions related to these children and their share of humanity in the ruins of it, and Saul assigns himself the role of a teacher for these children who have not been exposed to the humanity and its legacy as Saul had. Saul sees himself as “an ancestor, to them” (10) who tries to “stick to the past” and telling the descendants “how the old world turned into this” (11) with “the arrogant belief in our [human beings’] superiority and uniqueness” (Pepperell 172). However, in this context “superiority and uniqueness” are assigned to a human by himself carrying the ideals of the western humanism, Saul. Lauren in *Parable of the Sower* criticises people because they assign a bad connotation to nature “to mean just about anything they happen not to understand or feel in control of” (Butler 14). The people in this context differentiate themselves from nature and alienate nature whenever they are not able to exercise their authority over it. Presenting the diaries of these characters as the main scene of storytelling provides the novels with a more open-ended structure and sequence of events since “the most pliable and elastic of literary genres” (Merry 3).

In *The Ice People*, the diary in the first-person human narration is used to tell the story of a group of people who are in a world covered in ice and the human population is greatly reduced. Through the eyes of the narrator, the reader experiences the characters' struggles to come to terms with their new abilities and identities, and their struggles to survive in a world that is vastly different from the one they knew. Saul in *The Ice People* criticises the previous egoistic view of human beings from the future indicating that “Human beings have always foretold the future. Self- deluders. Wishful thinkers” (Gee 10). Before the apocalypse, Saul lives in a world where everything is in order with “predetermined laws and being uncovered by science” (Pepperell 159). Therefore, there cannot be anything to be afraid of because all can be explained through reasoning and this gives human beings the assumed power to be able to foresee the future.

Similarly in *Parable of the Sower*, the diary in the form of the first-person human narrative is used to tell the story of Lauren Oya Olamina, a young woman living in a walled community in the midst of a societal collapse, a place of “communal efforts to maintain and establish a sense of order protecting inhabitants from the increasingly chaotic dissolution of the contemporary American social landscape” (Scott 90).

Through her eyes, the reader experiences the harsh reality of life in a world ravaged by environmental degradation, economic collapse, and political turmoil. The diary as a genre allows the reader to understand Lauren's thoughts, emotions, and beliefs, which are central to her creation of a new religion "Earthseed" which teaches that humanity's ultimate destiny is to become "Godseed" by transcending the boundaries of the physical world and colonizing other planets. Lauren indicates that human beings in *Parable of the Sower* are responsible for change in "the climate of the world. Now they're waiting for the old days to come back" (Butler 46), but she is aware of the fact that the previous order will not be implemented again. Both novels put human beings at the heart of their narration but this allows them to attack human beings via their own words with a posthumanist perspective questioning humans place at the position of the ultimate agent for the world. Overall, the use of diaries in the first-person human narration in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* provides the reader a more intimate means to understand the characters' experiences and conflicts as they adjust themselves to new forms of existence in a post-apocalyptic world.

Saul from *The Ice People* and Lauren from *Parable of the Sower* are the narrators of the stories in their wrecked worlds. They both seem to have the urge to write not for the sake of writing but for a more meaningful aim. Saul indicates that he writes "as if it would save my life, though I don't suppose anything can save me. I mean to finish my story, though" (Gee 64). On the other hand, Lauren finds her writing as a way of escaping from losing her control: "I have to write. I don't know what else to do. The others are asleep now, but it isn't dark. I'm on watch because I couldn't sleep if I tried. I'm jittery and crazed. I can't cry. I want to get up and just run and run... Run away from everything. But there isn't any away" (Butler 102). The conditions that both characters find themselves in do not offer them relief; instead, those circumstances make them question the value of their life and the societies that they try to protect or build in the face of a destructed planet physically and spiritually especially for human beings. This can be interpreted as a posthumanist condition because it raises "anxiety about the possibility of a serious de-centring of 'Man', the former measure of all things" (Braidotti 2). Their selection of writing as a way of survival or to communicate with the next generations of human beings later via those writings demonstrates that they both still expect a means of survival for humanism as in its previous condition. Also, the specific decision to write can be asserted as another rooted humanist

perspective that "the self-proclaimed soliloquist of the world, Man is obliged to use his language as the point of intersection between the human subject and what is to be known about nature" (Braidotti 22) since the invention of writing and use of it as a means of communication are known as peculiar to human beings. Both narrators' concern only involves conveying their message to human beings although the change that they are experiencing comprises areas not only specific to human beings but also including animals, plants; more-than-human others. The negligence of acknowledging other even during a catastrophic event can be construed as another self-centred humanist perspective because nature is discerned as silent "in the sense that the status of being a speaking subject is jealously guarded as an exclusively human prerogative" (Glotfelty 15). Therefore, even a simple choice may expose what posthumanism criticises the most which are different sides of the ineradicable human exclusivity assigned in every aspect of the life.

The familiar feeling or need for human beings to live their lives on Earth easily in control of everything does not stop chasing the dreams of the narrators. The Earth is seen as home, and it is expected to be nurturing towards human beings, namely the measure of all as from the humanist perspective on life. The use of diaries gives us glimpse of how human beings feel towards the post-apocalyptic world orders reminiscing or hearing about the good old days. Saul feels offended when he realises that there is something happening that he is not able to grasp: "I tried to take in what was going on. Behind my back, the world had been changing. Once I started looking, it was everywhere" (Gee 65). He expects the world to inform him or be more obvious about any process; in a way, he has the need to comprehend anything happening around the world because he has been raised with that expectation. Saul knows the condition before the apocalypse where human being "has been the center of conversation," and "has occluded the natural world, leaving it voiceless and subjectless" (Gilroy 26). Facing a world that is an active subject detached from the human being's agency leads to a difficult realisation that the world can maintain its activity without their involvement.

Lauren in *Parable of the Sower* has not experienced the world before the apocalypse; however, she somehow differentiates the post-apocalyptic one from the previous world repeatedly: "Live a normal life. It's hard enough just to do that in this world"

(Butler 22), “I live in this world, too” (168), “No one should travel alone in this world” (191). Although she has been raised in the post-apocalyptic conditions, she still seems to yearn for the world before, or does not accept this one as the ultimate order. She keeps her hopes high for a change to occur in this world; so that it can turn into the world that is more hospitable for them. To employ the first-person human narrators in such situations provide these texts with a posthumanist approach in which one can observe the issues that Anthropocene asserts cannot be entirely ignored with ironic aspect where human beings feel upset following the changes in the world that they cannot fully grasp. Anthropocene here can be employed as a critical attitude in which one can realise that human beings in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* have altered the earth so much so that there are striking consequences. However, Anthropocene should also be utilised from to reveal that human beings are not the only actors in processes that the earth undergoes in countless parts. Therefore, posthumanist approach is crucial to recognise this limited effect that human beings possess over the planet while there are endless unfolding events occur concurrently all over it because of every component of the world.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* utilise diaries with the first-person human narration technique which is expected to create “a more immediate sense of closeness and familiarity to the main character” (van Lissa 47) to constitute the story as the form of a diary by characters with mixed raced backgrounds. I consider this choice to contribute to a posthumanist perspective in both novels since “a diary is an intimate journal, a personal dialogue between the writer and his private persona” (Merry 3). Therefore, to watch the world through the eyes of Saul and Lauren can result in being exposed to their criticism of their social environments, the decisions imposed by human beings and their effects and even self-criticism. Saul from *The Ice People* talks about the unexpected election results as “We weren’t quite so clever as we thought” (Gee 139) since he and his friends would not guess that the opposite side were able to win. During a memory of his relationship with Sarah, his wife and the mother of his child Luke, Saul admits that “For a while I felt nothing but hatred for Sarah” (Gee 215) after a disagreement with her while also confessing in a way that his feelings can change unexpectedly. Lauren criticises “the people who’ve made such a hell of life here on Earth” (Butler 18) since she is not content with the ruins of them. While arguing with one of her friends about the world and the inevitable change,

Lauren confesses that she "was too angry to let myself speak" (178) letting her readers to know the degradation she feels and her attempt to gain control by managing to make her body hold the tears. Readers can observe both writers intimately as a consequence of diaries written in the first-person human narration. Although writing process means that they both have the time to have the experience then the writing process follows, they still cannot hide their inner thoughts and feelings after such a procedure since a diary can also be "conceived as a progressive discovery of self" (Merry 4).

There is also a difference between these two novels that is generated through the approach of their narrators to their stories although they are both written in the first-person human narration. This difference in the narrators' perspectives creates distinct perspectives and experiences that shape the reader's understanding of the story. In *The Ice People*, the narrator aims to provide a sense of detachment and objectivity, as he reflects on his experiences and the world around him. The beginning of the book indicates his attempt to be impartial as if this storytelling was his final task for the sake of all humanity: "I, Saul, Teller of Tales, Keeper of Doves, Slayer of Wolves, shall tell the story of my times. Of the best of days, and the end of days. Of the new white world that has come upon us. For whoever will read it. For whoever can read" (Gee 9). This approach aims to allow the reader to understand the characters' experiences from a distant perspective, and the narrator tries to allow for a more analytical and contemplative reading of the story although I find this rather problematic to be implemented; being impartial while telling the story of your life.

In contrast, in *Parable of the Sower*, the narrator provides a sense of intimacy and subjectivity that she does not hold back, as she reflects on her experiences and the world around her. This allows the reader to understand the characters' experiences from a personal and emotional perspective and allows for a more immersive and empathetic reading of the story when Lauren points out the reasons that she writes as "I have to write. I have to dump this onto paper. I can't keep it inside of me" (Butler 84). Additionally, the narrator in *Parable of the Sower* being a person of colour and a woman, provides a unique perspective of discrimination, societal collapse and the impact of environmental degradation on marginalized communities. This provides the reader with an understanding of the characters' experiences through a more intersectional lens and allows for a more nuanced reading of the story.

The difference in genders of the narrators brings about the troubled side of humanism to be able to be compared between the characters Saul and Lauren although they both find themselves in similar contexts, there is still the effect of socially constructed gender roles. Race and gender are two significant factors which indicate that the discrimination resulting from humanism not only towards other species but also towards human beings since being a human is ordained "not only not to be a 'beast' but also to subscribe to a specific code of humanity, a code that has essentialized differences of ethnicity and race, class, gender, and sexuality" (Rossini 155). Anthropocentricism with the ground that humanism has established for specific human beings exploits others as "a tool that may be more or less sophisticated but only exists because of its usefulness to humans" (Karkulehto et al. 205). Wolfe also criticises that human instrumentalism which is explained as human beings owning the right to dominate the natural world "will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social other of whatever species – or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference" (qtd in Nayar 14). Bearing these in mind, posthumanist approach brings a critical angle to such an approach uncovering the possibilities even within the scope of human beings that have been neglected so far by humanism.

The diaries as the main structure reveals similarities as well as differences between *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* and enhances the narrations' posthumanist stance. Employing mixed race narrators bring *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* closer to contemporary readers' "posthumanist sensibility, their experience, or their desires as embodied beings" while "changing the symbolic order that maintains and reproduces hierarchies of class, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality" (Clarke et al. 165). Both Gee and Butler can be regarded as possessing a critical stance in their selection of mixed-race characters to narrate those characters' stories in forms of a diary. Both stories provide controversial contexts to inspect the striking images of being other in the realm of white supremacy.

Both Saul and Lauren are mixed race people, and this choice enables novels to criticise contradictory concept of ideal human in humanism through the experiences of their main characters. The narrator of the first novel, Saul, is a male from Europe who is closer, or at least he thought so until being made realise that he is not, to the idealised

human concept of humanism. The question that his mother asks "Haven't you noticed your father's black?" (Gee 15) shatters every concept that he holds about himself. That realisation changes even how Saul sees himself in the mirror while searching "for the truth. My skin was golden, as it was before, but I watched it change and become light brown" (15). The first observation of black people is of Saul as a child from TV "then scenes of dark people, sweating and furious, bullying the immigration officers, shouting and swearing, their black mouths open" (14). The need to emphasise dark to describe these people initially shows the stereotypical division of them not as people but dark people. Even their organs, their black mouth, require an adjective defining the skin of their colour so that it can be understood that they are not similar to superior human beings accepted as in white and west centred humanism.

Similarities do not contribute to find a common ground for all human beings; instead, white people entail other descriptive words to them so that they can separate the white from the black. After the narrator's realisation that he was half black, he questions all aspects of his life and "it hurt my [his] chest" (15). Later, he makes a great effort to ignore this side that builds himself physically and culturally not wanting "to be a part of black history" (30). I think Saul's attempt to disregard his dark skin brings about an irony for humanism. The culture that human beings build on can generate such an illusional personality for a person that they can become estranged to himself, his own flesh covering up his own mass on Earth. It is also ironic that once the order of nature changes, people attempt to flock to African countries in whose borders "The soldiers were black, the people were white" (164). This will direct the argument to the intertwined relationship between human and nature while focusing the alteration of culture and power. In *The Ice People,* the power balance changes due to climate change and its deleterious effect on Europe. Black people gain authority because of the lands that they live on. Saul summarises this power change quite impressively while contrasting then and now:

> *When I heard 'Ghana' I started listening properly. The pictures they were showing reminded me of something. People fighting to get past a barrier, uniformed soldiers holding them back. The soldiers were black, the people were white. The white people looked desperate, the soldiers bored. Bored and amused and slightly contemptuous. What did it remind me of? Something from the past that upset and disturbed me – Then I remembered. When I was little, the scenes on the screen that had scared me to death, showing hordes of black*

> *people pouring into Britain, coming to take away all we had, with the brave white soldiers holding them back. Only this time, it was all happening in reverse, the negative image of the longforgotten photo. This time the desperate people were white. This time the people with the power were black.* (Gee 164)

Racism can be defined as the "assignment of people to an inferior category and the determination of their social, economic, civic, and human standing on that basis" (Fields 48). This scene reveals how the margins "created by Eurocentric- hegemonic-rationalist-humanist-capitalist thought" maintaining "the exclusion of those who are socio-economically and racially underprivileged" "from privileged positions and integrates them only through exploitation and commodification" (Topsakal 10). However, these margins can also change and the meaning of others can be fluid as it depends on the possession of power. The idealised image of human does not indicate anything if that idealised version cannot hold power. It also gives another perspective for the human beings that can be interpreted as the fact that abuser is not the abuser because of its race; instead, it is because of its authority that can be manipulated and used to exploit others.

In their relationship with Sarah, Saul objects her "thoughtless exoticizing" (Kılıç 116) of him when she delves into black history assuming that this side of Saul makes him "more romantic, my mixed-race background, my unusual looks" (Gee 30). However, Saul "didn't want to be a part of black history, I needed to be myself, her man" (30) to be able to make Sarah "go beyond the colour bar and see one's lover just as a human being" (Kılıç 116). On the other hand, Lauren from *Parable of the Sower* is another mixed-race person who utilises from her race to scare white people away while on the road. However, her father makes her aware of the fact that they are not welcomed in many places because of their race when he indicates "I doubt that Olivar is looking for families of blacks and Hispanics" (Butler 76) during their discussion about moving to another community. However, the authors play with the race card quite cleverly to criticise the elitist approach of humanism and its idealised image of human being a white Westerns male. In *Parable of the Sower*, we learned from the description about the neighbourhood that there are only two white families and "the rest of us are black" (Butler 29) including the main character, Lauren. However, Lauren's race is presented as a chance to survive during their expedition to North because "Mixed couples catch hell whether people think they're gay or straight. Harry'll piss off all the blacks and

you'll piss off all the whites" (112). Both writers utilise from race and its abuse in pre-apocalypse world in order to criticise white people exclusivity that humanism offers in alternative world orders in the post-apocalyptic societies.

The narrator in *The Ice People* is not aware of the fact that he is a mixed-race person when he is depicted as a young boy; instead, his mother later makes him realise this side of their family. Then, Saul explains and juxtaposes why it is difficult for them to perceive their race when they are "mostly third or fourth generation British, all with more white in us than black. Yet I think I longed to be recognised. That hidden part of me was waiting to be seen" (Gee 16). Neither mixed race people nor their acquaintances acknowledge this factor, yet he later states the need to be seen not as a person but as a mixed-race person by others. In a way, not to acknowledge this part of him makes him feel discriminated among white people. Still, Saul is not a stable character regarding the issue of race because it can be observed throughout the book that he has many questionings related to his race and whether he wants it to be recognised or not.

During the early years in their relationship with Sarah, Saul feels irritated when she delves into black history and culture saying that "I didn't want to be part of black history, I needed to be myself, her man" (Gee 30). Her acceptance of Saul as a black man appears to be insulting for Saul but her attitude can also be regarded as a "thoughtless exoticizing" of him showing "how difficult it is, even in this futuristic world, to go beyond the colour bar and see one's lover just as a human being" (Kılıç 116). Saul confronts his mother when she realises that Saul is clueless about black side of his family when he watches tv and makes unpleasant remarks about black people. He, then, tries to escape from hearing the facts about his black part of the family: "Shut up. I hate you. Why are you saying these horrible things?" (Gee 15). Even after years later, he recalls that day as "the painful day when she told me he was half Ghanaian" (164). However, the circumstances change in his planet and the societies collapse because of the ice age during which the countries with warmer climates get popular. Saul seems to adopt this change quite well boasting about his black part of the family when he witnesses white people attempting to get permission to enter hot countries in front of black police officers or soldiers guarding their boarder: "And a long-lost part of me started to laugh: it was my turn now. Our turn now! Black man's turn! – Yet I

wasn't a black man" (165). We can observe his questioning and how it can sometimes become strange owing to first-person human narration when he also cannot find himself a place among Europeans when he discerns that "So now Europeans were ice people – perhaps we had always been ice people (Yet I wasn't one of them, was I? That long-lost part of me snickered, jeered. Black man's turn! Serve them right!)" (165).

Long before the apocalypse, other human beings that are not seen as idealised men of humanism feel disadvantaged because of their race in *The Ice People* and they believe that they should adopt themselves to white values to be able to be someone so that they would not be exposed to "the oppression, torturing, eating, and killing of beings not falling into the category 'human'" (Clarke et al. 155). The character Saul can be of great use to be able to uncover the humanist trap people feel that they are obliged to obey. This trap compels people to hide their identity, history and reality so that they can exist in certain parts of the society where the norm is to meet the humanist expectations of the idealised man. However, this turns into a trap for that idealised image when the power dynamics change in this context. White people lose their control over "others" when their countries become useless ice lands when they "were too busy worrying about rising sea levels and the spread of deserts in Africa" (Gee 58) when they expect warming of the world. However, the ice age begins and European people flock into the lands of others, to Africa in this case, to be able to survive while African countries warns European others that they will "close its borders 'within six months' to those 'special cases' allowed to immigrate because they had Ghanaian blood" (165). Through a posthumanist interpretation of this interchangeability of power dynamics and ideal human image, it can be pointed out the fragility of humanism due to its inadequateness to comprise human beings with all its constituents and how it is vulnerable to change following inevitable results of their actions.

In *Parable of the Sower*, they live in Robledo in 2025 near Los Angeles but this is a period in the novel that even different raced people cannot be seen as a couple: "Last year when Craig Dunn who's white and one of the saner members of the Dunn family was caught making love to Siti Moss who's black" (Butler 59) after nearly six decades since black people gain equal rights with The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 that "outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex,

or national origin" if the history of the fictional context aligns with the history of the United States or three decades before the novel's publishment. Shaping a community with people from different races can also be perceived as threatening: "The Garfields and the Balters are white, and the rest of us are black. That can be dangerous these days." (Butler 29). Separation is in a level so high that "On the street, people are expected to fear and hate everyone but their own kind" (29), and their own kind is determined based on their race.

Possessing power can increase discrimination regarding the powerful ones controlling the less powerful ones but not having one almighty authority over the others also enhances the segregation and fight among races to be able to gain control. In such conditions, one would expect that ideals of humanism would not work because there is no order in any part of the society. Butler provides an "unflinching eye on racism, sexism, poverty, and ignorance" in this narration while "unsettling results for both their victims and their oppressors, who may not always be easily distinguished" (qtd. in Grecca 348). Minds that are engraved with prejudiced opinions because of humanism cannot easily erase those, so there are still favours on account of race: "Of course, it didn't help that he was black. Being white might help you win people over faster than he did" (Butler 192). It can be easily observed here the influence of the diaries written in the first-person human narrative helping the display of this prejudiced perception of races. This acceptance of being black and not being able to impress people as easy as white people is a learned reaction resulting from "the compulsory humanity of the human" (Nayar 11) limited to white Western standards of appearance. Human beings recreate the judgments that they systematically implement in every part of the society to be able to feel the agency to pursue the control over their society following the collapse of the world order which they thought that they were previously in charge of or able to explain via their own tools.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* display societies that possess prejudices regarding race and are not simply willing to leave them behind even though the world order has changed irreversibly especially for human beings. The diary written in the first-person human narration contributes to experience the observations of the society through an intimate perspective and biases that these mixed-race narrators are exposed to. Their remarks over the issue of race display that the Anthropocene epoch can be

criticised due to its centralisation of humanism which detrimental effects within the human species as well as nonhuman if analysed via a posthumanist perspective.

In conclusion, in this part, the diary writing in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* is analysed to be a technique that provides a posthumanist perspective to both novels since it allows their narrators to comment on and criticise their very own societies and human beings acts or approaches in the post-apocalyptic contexts. The diaries provide the reader with a sense of direct witnessing or immediacy in narrators' contexts as they can observe their inner thoughts and feelings in many situations that they come across.

A diary might be seen as a form that is written in "a monologue, self-narrations"; however, there can also be "the dialogue of the diarist with him- or herself, with his or her diary, or with a real or imagined recipient" (Depkat 140) as in the case of *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. Employment of the first-person human narration can also be interpreted as a sarcastic portrayal of the Anthropocene. The stories are in the hands of the main characters and they tell the stories while they are also being affected by their environment and shape the stories that they tell. Similarly, the Anthropocene might indicate "to rename our time the 'age of humans'" (Ellis 30) since humans are accepted to be "planet shapers" (33). However, the novels present main characters, the storytellers, as limited to their own tools and those are not sufficient to carry through their desires to alter the world order to a more human friendly one. Similarly, the societies in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* seem to affect the world negatively supposing that they can advance the human species and find solutions whenever they encounter a problem; nonetheless, they find themselves at a loss realising that human beings are not the only actors of their world presenting a mock of the Anthropocene and its view of human beings as "planet shapers".

The novels are the diaries of the narrators, thus, it becomes easier to witness their approaches towards all the events happening in their societies with a more critical aspect due to post-apocalyptic contexts. Through these diaries, readers also observe the racism and its implications in their societies; power dynamics change, and the superior place of the white is replaced with the black people of Africa in *The Ice People* whereas *Parable of the Sower* offer a more segregated structure in society that divides each race sharply while still placing the black people inferior to the white ones.

2.2. Bodily Interventions: Tech-fix babies vs Pyro Medicine

The communities in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* are technologically advanced ones before the disasters. These advancements result in dreadful consequences for the earth and human beings in both novels, there were “so many infertile young men” (Gee 264) in *The Ice People* and “roaming bands of drug addicts” (Butler 4) in *Parable of the Sower*. As expected in any kind of humanist approach, human beings try to solve their problems with medical advancements by the power of science developed by human beings which unfortunately lead to other unprecedented issues. I find these medical interventions quite ironic in relation to humanist understanding of human being “as the standard of both perfection and perfectibility” (Braidotti 23). To disrupt this supposed perfection as a result of rational scientific developments is one side of the irony and the other part is to rely on remedies by human beings expediting troublesome results.

In *The Ice People*, the main issue is related to infertility in human beings while characters in *Parable of the Sower* experience horrible occasions where people who have taken a pill put places on fire as a result of the side effect of the medicine. Both novels present a different kind of bodily intervention; “experiments with contemporary subjectivity actualize the virtual possibilities of an expanded, relational self that functions in a nature–culture continuum” (Braidotti 61), and their results by revealing the limits that human beings can advance their species and their adverse and paradoxical outcomes. Medical interventions such as tech-fix babies or addictive medicines and their unexpected defective results contradict with the Anthropocentric place of human as the controller of the planet. Tech-fix babies in *The Ice People* cannot offer the promised healthy contraception and result; instead, there are “articles about “rates of deformity in techfix births” (Gee 50) and those babies are described as “rare, petted, unhealthy children" (66). Also, the medical product in *Parable of the Sower* which is “a legitimate drug intended to help victims of Alzheimer’s disease” (Butler 92) paves the way for the production of “a new illegal drug that makes people want to set fires” (20) with "plenty of addicts" (160). Therefore, in this section, I claim that human beings’ assignment of themselves as the world controllers in the Anthropocene especially through scientific advancements is implicitly denounced by revealing the

boundless relations and results occurring due to those medical acts upon people as well as nonhuman in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*.

Saul ironically remembers and confesses how he would not accept that anyone can have problems related to reproductivity that might be the result of certain interventions:

> *The problems with fertility had started to get worse. The screens were full of alarming statistics. … I knew, in any case, with that complete confidence that young people have once, then never again, that these reports weren't about me. I wasn't like them. I wouldn't have a problem. I knew I was a man who wanted women. … It seemed so natural, like having children.* (Gee 24)

The earth in this perspective seems abundant, and it is used as an instrument for human beings to utilise from so that they can have anything they want in their human-centred lives. Saul remembers his time at lab looking through microscopes and feeling that "life was still all right, that men were still in command of things, masters of a friendly universe (51). He confides his attitude regarding the rank of human beings as "masters" in the universe which can be depicted as welcoming for the human species. He feels "proud to help them along. I, Saul, was one of the chosen." (52) since he is also a part of a powerful agency demonstrating its strength over the universe through science.

Human beings' bodies can also be assumed as a part of this instrumentalised nature; and therefore, the bodies can also be expected to offer the best that they are designed for such as having babies following an intercourse. Saul's egocentric ignorance can be construed as rather innocent with such a point of view while generating a posthumanist purpose for the context "to decenter the human by terminally disrupting the scripts of humanism" (Clarke et al. 141) in a post-apocalyptic concept. Saul remembers the remedies of past by longing for "Such beautiful, desirable words: aspirin, somnifer, paracetamol, diamorphine, tenebrol, heroin, lullane. Lulling us away from hurt and grief. We grew used to them, and then we lost them" (Gee 17). Considering Sarah's memories of the past in their medically and scientifically advanced society, she has "lost one twin" (Gee 53) early in her pregnancy and becomes depressed. Then, during the difficult birth of their son Luke, Sarah "slipped away beneath the anaesthetic" (Gee 56) because she has a caesarean due to the complications. She becomes suicidal after

the birth when she is found "on the window ledge the other day" (57). A man's memory of medical intervention is quite a positive one whereas the women become the most affected side of "reproductive technologies" since their bodies are separated "into parts (e.g. eggs, uterus, and breasts) to be commodified by medical experts" (Sepetoğlu 12).

In *Parable of the Sower*, medical intervention that leads to a disaster occurs because of a drug explained by Lauren as follows:

> *The most popular name is pyro— short for pyromania, it's all the same drug, and it's been around for a while. ... Like Paracetco, my biological mother's drug of choice, pyro screws around with people's neurochemistry. But Paracetco began as a legitimate drug intended to help victims of Alzheimer's disease. Pyro was an accident. It was a home-brew— a basement drug invented by someone who was trying to assemble one of the other higher-priced street drugs. The inventor made a very small chemical mistake, and wound up with pyro.* (Butler 92)

The diary lets the reader be more aware about Lauren's life and how she reacts to certain situations with a short comment about her mother in this part. The problem related to a drug addiction has been around long before the post-apocalyptic circumstance. Therefore, it can be concluded that people do not lean on drugs to escape from the harsh reality of the apocalypse. It might be interpreted that the collapse of hope for humanity might be around long before the apocalypse. Lauren's use of the phrase "drug of choice" can be construed as a hint to a bigger matter related to drugs as if everyone would need a drug or should choose one to be able to live and her mother chose that drug in particular from a wide variety of drugs. Lauren tries to keep distance to this issue with objective or sometimes sarcastic comments regarding her mother's drug issue probably as a way of coping mechanism "Thanks to Paracetco, the smart pill, the Einstein powder, the particular drug my mother chose to abuse before my birth killed her, I'm crazy" (13). In this sentence, the selection of the word "abuse" can be read in both ways: One is that that drug might be useful but her mother abused it and it lost its beneficial side because of that, and the second way is that she implies her mother's abuse of Lauren long before her birth since she has hyper empathy due to her mother's drug addiction. Although one would expect more sincere comments from anyone writing a diary, there can still be observed a fair amount of distance between the writer and the supposed reader. However, to delve into the word choices and attempt to comprehend what they might hinder in that particular character can present

more intimate issues than just post-apocalyptic events. Still, this issue inexplicitly becomes another gender related problem when the reader learns about the attitude of Lauren's father towards drug use: "A first wife who was a drug addict and a daughter who is drug damaged is not something he wants to boast about" (13). His first wife's addiction leads to her death and troubles in his daughter's well-being. He might want to hide it, but his daughter has nothing to be ashamed of considering her disorder as she inherited it. Nonetheless, the man of the family whose job is related to religion orders his daughter to hide this side of her even though it is burdensome to do so.

Lauren admits that she is helpless when it comes to her hyper-empathy and the limits that she can hide "no matter what Dad thinks or wants or wishes." (13). Her dad does not focus on helping her; instead, he wants her to become good at hiding it so that no one could say anything bad about his family and learn about the "family business". Lauren's hyper-empathy "relies on entirely Lauren's perceptions, and thus can be 'fooled'" (Canavan, *Octavia E. Butler* 105); however, she finds ways to manipulate hyper-empathy so that she can make this her strength "by forcing people to taste the pain they cause others" (105). Although her father perceives this as something to be ashamed of and orders Lauren to hide it, she displays her adaptability as a member of more change-oriented new generation and turns a disadvantage into her unique power.

The Ice People and *Parable of the Sower* display different problems related to advancements in medicine and their results but I find that they present "a healthy suspicion of techno-science for its destructive complicity with patriarchal and colonial enterprises" (Watkins 41). They both somehow find a common ground to condemn their effects; the birth and gender apartheid. Post-apocalyptic fictions present such issues to "express discomfort with the focus on returning women to domesticity and the home and the recreation of traditional gender roles" (42) as a reaction to a global catastrophe affecting all on earth.

Saul from *The Ice People* connects his problems regarding the relationship to change in temperature indicating "how his marriage to Sarah had been good in warm times, but how as the climate began to cool so too did their relationship" (Milner et. al 93) rather than blaming himself for being negligent. Sarah becomes agitated during their attempts to conceive with Saul although the real problem is related to infertile sperms

of men. Sarah gets the treatment to be able to conceive and give birth to a tech-fix baby. Her body is the one that is most vulnerable and exposed to the alterations. However, the man becomes the one to decide on what kind of birth the woman can give even when there are problems during the process: "The doctors needed consent to act 'if it becomes important to remove the baby'. Which meant a caesarean. I refused. We'd agreed to have the baby naturally. An hour later, I gave my consent. Sarah was in trouble, pale and sweating" (Gee 56). This scene seems like the man grants her the means to end her troubles even when she gives the birth.

In *The Ice People*, the story "foregrounds gender as a strong denominator of culture as being degenerated" (Topsakal 41). Patriarchal values are regenerated even in scientific areas. This can be construed as the protection of humanist values because it centralises the man as the ideal and it can be discussed as a critique of exclusion of others whether they are nonhuman or other humans from claiming their own borders because they seem inferior to the humanist eyes of Saul as an example of the idealised European patriarch.

Lauren's biological mother in *Parable of the Sower* is treated as if she is something to be covered up and concealed: "Dad is big on privacy and 'family business.' There's a whole range of things we never even hint about outside the family. First among these is anything about my mother, my hyperempathy, and how the two are connected. To my father, the whole business is shameful. He's a preacher and a professor and a dean" (Butler 13). She is reduced to becoming a drug addict as if she had done nothing in her life other than using that drug. One can learn about her only in between lines although the diary is from her biological daughter, Lauren. Her father grants himself the right to hide everything related to her first wife even from their daughter because of what he finds shameful and keeps as a family secret. She is not even named in any part of the book; she stays nameless only with roles assigned to her: a wife and a mother. These two female figures Sarah and Lauren's biological mother reveals "the male/female dichotomy" which foregrounds "all the dichotomies that ground Western thought: culture/nature, mind/body, subject/object, rational/emotional, and countless others" (Alaimo and Hekman 2). Gender related issues bring out another posthumanist aspect which gives it a feminist side by attempting "to disrupt masculine, white hegemonic structures that promote visions of the human as the only legitimate

dominating force in the world" (Alaimo et al. 403). Both women are dominated or attempted to be dominated by their male partners and if they do not comply with their values, these women are accused of bringing shame.

To summarise, interventions whether they are in the form of a medicine, or a medical procedure are observed to be applied to human beings throughout *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*, and these interventions and their detrimental results can be observed in both societies. All these reveal the questionable sides of humanism and its promise to advance humanity while also bringing a critical posthumanist aspect to dichotomies created because of humanism via gender related discriminations.

2.3. Three Eras of *The Ice People* as a Posthumanist Reminisce and The Post-apocalyptic context as the immediate present of *Parable of the Sower*

The Ice People presents pre, during and post-apocalyptic contexts while *Parable of the Sower* only displays the aftermath of the apocalypse. Saul from *The Ice People* has experienced the previous world order and tries to adapt to the new one in his short period of human life. On the other hand, in *Parable of the Sower*, Lauren has been raised in the post-apocalyptic world where survival is a war itself. I assert that to analyse post-apocalyptic novels with changing time-duration can bring a critical feature to be able to compare especially their main characters and their reactions to the events unfolding bearing in mind the fact that the experiences that they have had differentiated.

In this part, I also claim that the differences in the scope of timeline in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* can show how the arguments related to Anthropocene discussing that it is difficult to label an era as the result of human action with only limited data covering decades can be valid. These arguments see such human exceptionalism in the Anthropocene as a poor "narrative of 'the self-making Human, the human- making machine of history'" (Moore 7) while making it a political ally "with history and its will to secure human dominion" "by silencing nonhuman others" (18). However, there are also some arguments in the Anthropocene regarding the concept as entwining "human history and natural history—even if the "why" and the "how" remain unclear, and hotly debated" (3) rather than centralising human. Thus, the difference in the scope of time regarding *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*

can also display why human beings cannot be separated from the argument that involves the change on the planet, its reasons and their relation to human beings.

The Anthropocene places human beings as the planet controllers; however, this part argues that the world orders in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* and the catastrophe that human beings face in these contexts and inability of human beings to alter such inhospitable environments to a more promising one serves as a criticism of human's placement as in charge of the world through a posthumanist understanding. The difference in the scope of timeline covered throughout the novels provides a base for the argument to lay bare the ways for a posthumanist discussion in which the human beings' awareness of an upcoming catastrophe, their attitude before and after the apocalypse in *The Ice People* and characters' expectations from the future through their interpretation of a post-apocalyptic situation in *Parable of the Sower* will be compared through a posthumanist stance.

In *The Ice People,* the issues of global warming and its sudden turn into global cooling can be seen as nature's response or it can be interpreted that nature does not even acknowledge human agency and carries on. The setting of the story in *The Ice People* starts with an order of the planet where there is global warming and people seek solutions for the heat because they feel "too hot to put our clothes on" (Gee 52) and the fashion is "egglike baldness" (19) for women and men as "an attempt to keep cool at any cost" (19). They live in a time where "All they ever seemed to talk about was the shortage of water and the heat" (13). Although in such a context "no one could envisage that global warming was coming to an end" (37), it happens and the result is the alteration of everything from social to political, from geographical to technological contexts. The juxtaposition of globally scaled seasonal changes in less than three decades, while people prepare themselves for years full of heatwaves, presents a fictional representation of critique of human exceptionalism which can place human beings as "so impotent to control our numbers, appetites, and plundering technologies, and so indifferent to our swallowing up the more-than-human world" (qtd in Moore 23).

In *The Ice People,* the single narrator Saul witnesses three kinds of different worlds: The first being the perfect world for human beings, the second one is where there is

global warming and the last one is in the ice age. In this novel, we can see a linear unfolding of events rather than repetition of mistakes. It contributes to show us the dramatic changes that human beings have witnessed over the span of a simple human lifetime: Saul's life. Saul himself comments on "the gradual change bringing catastrophe to the very culture he belongs to" not as "a 'traveller in a foreign culture'" (Kılıç 112) but through his diary as a first-hand experiencer of the events. The order of the world gets drastically worse with each event. At the end, there is a world order that only gives a chance to the survival of the fittest in an ice cold life. Saul realises that "The ice was bad for human beings […] yet, the rest of life was flourishing" (Gee 278). This recognition takes us to a posthumanist perspective regarding human beings shattering "the grand dream and narrative of high humanism" while uncovering human's need of "nonhuman to come into the modes of its own becoming" (Clarke 150). The narrator suggests such an observation indicating that "There were more species in ice ages, not fewer" (Gee 278). I think a planet where life thrives for nonhuman while being hostile to human beings allows a critical stand for Gee's *The Ice People*. Though being a fictional work, it might serve as a warning for today's actions of human beings with a posthumanist attitude.

The planet before the ice age in *The Ice People* also displays a hostile setting with heat waves leaving people dependant on the machines to cool down and continue their routine lives because it is seen as "luxury to feel cool" (100) and "wrapping up in coats" "like they did in the last century" (36) seem impossible. However, the rising of temperature is not the only issue that human faces in such a world order. Infertility becomes a major problem especially in Saul's life because they want to procreate with his wife Sarah. Procreation seems like an aspect of life that is easy to be in charge of and should not be a problem where human agency seems to be in control of "everything". However, they are not able to regulate the reproduction of their own species in *The Ice People* and "alarming statistics" (20) are everywhere for fertility rates. Such powerlessness creates an irony for the agency of human over nature. Politicians make promises to change the situations because they have "elections next year" (24) and "the fertility figures are down again" (24). The exploitation and modification of every aspect of life in turn result in a problem for their own species. This issue can be interpreted as another posthumanist critique of humanist worldview shattering the belief that human beings are "the common measure of all things"

(Alaimo et al. 403). In the novel, infertility of human beings does not appear to affect other species; rather, they all grow well no matter how difficult human finds recent events around the world both biologically and socially.

Objective of posthumanism is the "dissolution of the assumptions about the nature/culture divide" (Alaimo et al. 402); in general, and the dichotomy in people's approach towards nature is established through humanist perception of the world. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* have events unfolding in such ways that their characters find themselves in situations where they question themselves, what it is to be human and unable to find a point that they can hold on to. The experiences that they have gone through leads to a point where they are no longer superior to others which can be summarised as "*Man* may have become more powerful; *men* very probably the opposite" (Moore 23).

In both of these novels, human beings become the opposite of powerful following the apocalypse. In *The Ice People*, Saul confesses that "The ice was bad for human beings, shattered our careful webs of control, killed our parasites, bugs and bedmates – and yet, the rest of life was flourishing" (Gee 278) while Lauren summarises the situation that "many people here on earth can't afford water, food, or shelter" (Butler 15) in *Parable of the Sower*. Humanist promise that human beings are the norm for everything is destroyed because nonhuman can endure what the world offers while human beings suffer. Both novels place their characters in situations where culture cannot provide any solution to their problems and in settings where they have to be closer to nature and realise that they are at the same level as nonhuman and lower in some respects such as procreation. Saul realises that there are "more species in ice ages, not fewer" (Gee 278) the ice people, or the survivors of the ice age are "exceptions to the rule" (278) in *The Ice People*. In *Parable of the Sower,* it is fashionable "to be dirty now" (Butler 36) since "the cost of water has gone up" (36) and being clean can make "a target of yourself" (36). Posthumanism tries to convey a more inclusive understanding of the world in which there is no one particular centre that everything depends on. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* display critical examples of what it feels like to be a human being in such worlds where human beings are not the superiors of nonhuman or others.

In *The Ice People*, Saul witnesses the change socially, economically, geologically at first-hand although he stays reckless towards them initially:

> *When civil order broke down, over the next few years, I stayed optimistic. Who needed governments? If you were young, you were selfreliant. The plagues passed me by, though I lost several friends. The streets grew rougher, but I stayed away from trouble. In wealthier areas, life went on as usual. I didn't let the newscasts upset me.* (Gee 20)

He reckons that the only thing he would ever need is himself during his youth even though the political changes occur, and the lower ranks of society deal with plagues and social disorder. However, this attitude drastically changes when he tries to escape the deadly cold and mockingly reminds himself his youth: "I began to understand what I'd never grasped when we flew all over Euro in less than half an hour, when we slid like silk over the surface of things – that the world was large, and wild, and hard" (213). These flashbacks show the readers how negligent people were towards nature and world in general as long as they do not affect human beings, especially the idealised ones living in wealthy countries in any kind of harmful ways. Saul tries to keep himself optimistic at the beginning saying that "I have seen the world change utterly, perhaps for ever." (9) while holding on to the possibility of returning to the past with the word "perhaps" since to accept nature's agency and the fact that "it acts, and those actions have consequences for both the human and nonhuman world" (Alaimo and Hekman 5) are difficult. However, Saul ultimately states this realisation of nature's agency when he felt "the world turning faster and faster. It was true, yes, it was definitely happening, but all of it seemed remote, unreal" (Gee 163). This can be read in a way that he cannot perceive this change as a part of it; rather, he makes an effort to distance himself from it so that he could protect what is familiar to him, illusion of a voiceless earth as an instrument for human beings.

In *Parable of the Sower*, the narrator, Lauren, learns about the previous world from books or older people telling her their memories. She is too young to remember anything from before because the world has started changing before she was even born. So, her life has past in the post-apocalyptic world. Her stepmother talks about how it was difficult to see the stars at sky because of "City lights," and finds how distant they are now from all they took for granted such as "Lights, progress, growth, all those things we're too hot and too poor to bother with anymore" (Butler 7). During

this conversation with her stepmother, one can observe the difference between people who are aware of earlier way of life and the post-apocalyptic generation. Lauren states that "I'd rather have the stars," while her stepmother would rather "have the city lights back myself, the sooner the better" (8). She also indicates how stars are free while mentioning "But we can afford the stars." (8) in this new order of the world. Her stepmother points out the instrumentalist understanding of nature when she says that stars are the only things they can have since money or extensive electricity becomes a thing of the past. However, she misses what she can afford with human development and cannot find those in the new post-apocalyptic world order. Lauren, on the other hand, reveals that she is willing to adapt to the post-apocalyptic order because this is what she has seen and experienced so far; she does not really know about the previous one except from what she has heard from older people. When she comes across with a dog, the reader recognizes that Lauren does not even know about common pets that all human beings can share their lives with previously she has "read books about them being intelligent, loyal pets, but that's all in the past" (137). Nonetheless, the last part of her sentence displays her acceptance of the new world and letting the past go. When she talks about a president candidate, she criticises him and his supporters because he is "like a symbol of the past for us to hold on to as we're pushed into the future. He's nothing. No substance" (145). She does not think that he has the right material to fit into the new world as he only makes "people feel that the country, the culture that they grew up with is still here— that we'll get through these bad times and back to normal" (145). Lauren can be seen as a character who is critical about the people with an attitude of clinging onto the past and missing out the important current changes. Following a small period of time like months, she perceives them "like ancient history." stating her focus that "Now was what we had to worry about. What were we going to do now?" (192). It is apparent that Lauren might not be pleased about everything on the post-apocalyptic world but she is eager to alter it to be suitable for human beings within what post-apocalyptic context offers her not with the illusions of the past.

In terms of Anthropocene, Lauren's present circumstances display how human beings can affect the earth but not as an only agent; instead, everything they do is intertwined within systems of the planet. Any action big or small that human beings practice interacts with nature, other components of the planet and has results through all those

interactions. Therefore, it is difficult or sometimes impossible to estimate the consequences and become ready for them as in the case in *Parable of the Sower*. The societies could not predict the apocalypse, and "The world is in horrible shape" (58). It is difficult to find a solution following an apocalypse as people are not the only actors of the world. However, Lauren's perspective can be interpreted as a posthumanist one and it is reflected through her religion, Earthseed which focuses "around a central proposition: the inevitability of change, and the consequent need to be adaptable and flexible in response to change" (Aguirre 101). This attitude can be seen as a posthumanist one because posthumanism also attempts "to disrupt modes of knowledge that rely on assumptions that are no longer viable, thus pointing to opportunities for significant change" (Marchand and Stratman 402) via decentralisation of human.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* present post-apocalyptic societies through the perspective of a main character via their diaries. *Parable of the Sower* displays the immediate presence of the post-apocalypse while the characters are still undergoing the effects of the newly faced situation. Although it refers back in time when adults talk about the past, it mainly centralises the story in the current events that the narrator experiences. *The Ice People* does not only focus on the aftermath of the catastrophe; instead, it starts with the narrator's memories of what the life was like before the apocalypse and it is actually written years later, even after the post-apocalypse. Therefore, it is observed that the narrator is in a circumstance far from the occurrences that he narrates. The positions of the narrators in relation to time differentiate their content due to the fact that one can display the situations that they are still processing while the latter can narrate them by utilising from a broader perspective of the events as they have already been experienced. Such difference will be analysed in a critical stance of the Anthropocene from a posthumanist perspective by comparing the position of human beings in the presence of a catastrophe and the following situation of humans after what is seen as an end for humanity.

If we compare Saul and Lauren, the most obvious difference between them is the fact that they have different experience of post-apocalyptic world order. The first one, Saul in *The Ice People*, has seen before and could not realise that the end was coming and it was inevitable; therefore, he copes with the reality of apocalypse by hanging on to

the past as if the possibility of going back always existed while "I long for someone who knows what words mean" (Gee 64) since the language is not a complicated means of communication and not many words are used in the ice age. However, Saul also acknowledges that human beings should change to be able to create a chance for themselves in this changing world: "If humans survive, we'll be as grass, quiet and slow like moss or grass, lowgrowing things, less arrogant" (228).

Lauren in *Parable of the Sower* has not been exposed to anything other than the contemporary world which is a post-apocalyptic one; thus, such exposure makes her more open-minded for the future as she carries her hope to establish a new order that is more suitable to the aftermath of the apocalypse. Lauren believes that "Space could be our future" (Butler 17) while "building a future that makes sense" (56) in this new structure of world. Saul comes from the generation that values "western notions of enlightenment, progress, and modernity" which bases itself on "the idea that technology, closely linked to a scientific perspective, is an instrument, means, or tool through which human beings are better able to know and understand the world and to achieve the power to control it" (Clarke et al. 184). So, Saul does not want to be a part of the world that he does not have the access to the tools with which he can understand the world. Lauren, on the other hand, tries to give a chance to the new order because it is all she knows about as she does not wish "to abolish human nature but perhaps to temporarily suspend it" (Canavan, *Octavia E. Butler* 100) since "The whole state, the country, the world needs help, it's been told" (Butler 75) until she and her people find a sustainable way to adapt themselves to the new world. Although both of their current situations are post-apocalyptic, their approach towards such a context depends mostly on whether they have experienced a human-centred lifestyle or a survival-based lifestyle.

If the two novels are compared, then, they can serve differently in terms of their contexts. *The Ice People* presents Saul's youth when "We ate in the sun; we danced in the sun. We laughed at the old" (Gee 18) when old people start talking about a climate change and its possible harmful effects while dealing with political issues. Then, Saul's adulthood continues with problems related to global warming and infertility. No one would foresee an apocalypse involving a new ice era.

Creating a story with three distinct surrounding situations within only a human being's lifespan gives a chance to witness various sides of human beings, their effects on earth, nonhuman and their species and how they have to concede to the limited resources that they have left with and struggle to survive in a world that is hostile to them.

The power structures change with the cooling climate and Eurocentric world turns into an Afrocentric one since Africa becomes more habitable with cooling but these countries indicate "We cannot take in all these ice people" (168), "So now Europeans were ice people" (168), the ones that is discriminated and despised. Saul talks about the world in the ice age as "the winter world" which "stretched on forever" and its "silence was unearthly, oppressive, as if all the human beings had died" (252). The winter world is assumed as a different one and it is not accepted as the world that is home to Saul because this winter world is "unearthly". If the winter world would be earthly, it would supposedly be embracing for human life; however, he states his opinion that it is "a world that would outlive us" (252). In this context, it can be observed that it is time that "The human now mingles with a motley nonhuman crew of fellow survivors" (Clarke 145) in a post-apocalyptic context. Saul deliberately ignores the nonhuman while indicating how the new world from which he distances himself might terminate the human life ultimately although others will continue their existence without human beings. Therefore, this context with changing earth structure and affecting all on it presents how a limited perspective it can be to call the era only as the Anthropocene and to assign human beings as the main effect.

Saul witnesses that human beings influence the earth structure and becomes one of the causes of the global warming in *The Ice People*. However, it is a narrow perspective to assume human beings as the main actor in temperature changes in such a context since people try to explain and cease the warming in that situation; yet, the earth has its own plan or planlessness when the ice age starts all of a sudden and turns everything upside down. This unpredictability and decentralisation of human from being the major agent of the planet contribute to the book's posthuman aspect.

Parable of the Sower hints back at the previous community and how the power dynamics have changed by comparing them via Lauren's book references or what she has learnt from her parents. All the references towards past are second-hand

experiences as the narrator is only an adolescent who has been raised in the post-apocalyptic world. The only lifestyle she is familiar with involves constant survival attempts. Yet, she is not as negligent as Saul in *The Ice People* towards post-apocalyptic issues and criticises herself because of it: "Chaos. Even so, why can't I do what others have done—ignore the obvious. Live a normal life" (Butler 21).

In post-apocalyptic contexts Curtis regards that "a state of nature—from which we can come together and renegotiate our lives"; however, "Octavia Butler's post-apocalyptic accounts challenge the usefulness of this lie and complicate what it means to start over" (6). Lauren's attitude is also critical of other human beings. In her understanding of the world, the new world structure and everything other than human beings are not assumed as the enemies. Her enemies are everyone and everything other than her small community behind the walls in which "We all know each other here. We depend on each other" (Butler 28) and this turns into even a smaller community with whom she tries to reach the north. During her voyage to the north, she can see how easily "the racial, gender, and class identity boundaries fall" (Hampton 69) when the survival becomes more important than those artificial borders among human beings. She is observed to be more flexible and eager to change if the conditions require her to do so as she indicates that "change is part of life, of existence, of the common wisdom" (Butler 21). Her lack of exposure to previous structure in the world socially, economically, politically makes all those components seem less important and more dispensable so that she can find means to survive in a fast-changing context. She can be regarded as an example of what posthumanism expects from human beings sharing a planet with lots of different species and how adaptable they should be to be able to abandon the humanist instrumentalist approach towards the earth holding a strong bond with earth in her religious excerpts while seeing human beings as "preparing to fall away from the parent world. We are Earthlife preparing to take root in new ground" (98). In Chapter 3, Lauren's adaptability and the difference between older and younger generations in post-apocalyptic societies will be discussed further in relation to collapse of societies and their posthumanist cause and effects.

The span of timeline for the novels gives chance for an analysis of people and societies through various perspectives in terms of posthumanist theory and its criticism of the Anthropocene. Although both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* consist of a

post-apocalyptic context as their main scene, to experience before such an order or to start a story in the middle of chaos present different aspects to be discussed in a critical stance. Through Saul's diary, one can observe how the power structure can change and alter "the dialectics of otherness" which "assigns difference on a hierarchical scale as a tool of governance" (Braidotti 68) while leaving the previously privileged ones without any tools to survive in the face of a catastrophe in *The Ice People* to "escape to Africa" (Gee 300). Lauren's experiences and criticism of hope for the return to the past display that adaptability and acceptance of the end for humanism can result in a bigger chance to survive in *Parable of the Sower*. She admits that "This world is falling apart." (Butler 178); however, this catastrophic world is the only thing she has been exposed to. She does not find turning back and trying to bring the past back meaningful; instead, she wants to "begin something purposeful and constructive" (178) with what she can get in her own post-apocalyptic reality. In both novels, the effects of human beings on earth cannot be ignored; yet, they both present this with such a skilful way that human beings are both actors and toys in the hands of the unpredictable world.

The difference in the span of timeline for both novels is discussed in terms of their contexts to criticise the anthropic approach placing human beings as the shapers of the planet since they do not display limitless capacity of human beings whether they are prepared against an apocalypse or not. The approach that the characters choose to survive in the post-apocalypse reveals occurrences that can be observed through a posthumanist criticism regarding humanism for its view of human-others and non-human species as well as the nature since the "post-" in posthumanism "does not (and, moreover, cannot) mark or make an absolute break from the legacy of humanism" (Badmington 21). Instead, any kinds of posts in posthumanism "speak (to) ghosts, and cultural criticism must not forget that it cannot simply forget the past" (21). Both characters of *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* cannot desert the past even if that means a kind of obsession for Saul in which he "stick to the past" (Gee 11) while trying "to think of the future, not the past" (277) whereas Lauren criticises people who support a candidate like "a symbol of the past" (Butler 45) because her environment is full of people "still anchored in the past" (46) and she tries to explain that "change is inevitable" (21) through her religious writings.

CHAPTER 3

THE COLLAPSE OF SOCIETY IN THE AFTERMATH OF APOCALYPSE

Apocalypses are often associated with the end of humanity with a highly focused human exclusivity while ignoring the nonhuman. The end of humanity means demolishment of any structure established by human beings whether it is political, economic or technological. All those structures are what constitute societies and provide them the means for human beings to live together with certain rules. Therefore, apocalypses can also be associated with the collapse of societies since the resources and instruments to hold them together are no longer applicable in the post-apocalyptic contexts.

The aftermath of a new ice age can be observed in *The Ice People* while *Parable of the Sower* presents a world still being destroyed due to heating weather and earthquakes. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* present deconstructed societies which make efforts to hold together or create smaller ones so that bigger communities can grow out of them. However, those efforts mainly result in questioning the value of the previous order or if societies are genuinely necessary to survive in this new order of life.

In this part, the societies in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* will be analysed in two aspects. Firstly, the societies will be analysed in terms of their hierarchal structures because these structures are constituted through some obscure and obvious means of suppression or discrimination. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* have segregation based on gender and race in their societies implemented implicitly in everyday social practices. However, there is also economic segregation which is more visible in both novels with different names of separate levels of their hierarchal status. In *The Ice People*, there are two parts of society divided according to their economic power, educational background: “The elite Insiders” (Gee 106) govern the economic and political sphere of the society while the Outsiders eat the leftovers of them

"sneaking into the cities in the long hot nights and rifling the bins and the garbage hills" (106). In *Parable of the Sower*, the society can be depicted as having three main levels of segregation according to their wealth: The rich still own "estates, enclaves, and businesses" (Butler 33) guarded by dogs and "plenty of other security devices" (33) while "escaping by flying out in helicopters" (160) if there is any danger whereas there middle-classed people like Lauren who have to "defend their community" in walled areas from another level of the society "the street poor" (12).

The reasons of hierarchal orders alongside the separation of old and new generations in the post-apocalyptic societies as well as their attitude towards the new world order will be discussed via posthumanist argument of the social principles that govern the societies in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. In this part, I claim that both novels present segregated communities not only as a result of the apocalypse but also as continuing the customs of humanism and its dichotomies in gender, race and power structure; therefore, to discuss them through a critical posthumanist lens will reveal the discriminative structures governing humanism.

3.1. Obvious and Obscure Means of Segregations in the Societies

The Ice People and *Parable of the Sower* seem to have democratic societies since Saul talks about "Elections next year" (Gee 24) and Lauren says that "He's the only person I know who's going to vote at all" (Butler 18) when she talks about her father's favourite candidate. However, these elections and the candidates do not seem to mean much for people in these contexts with their scarce resources and the daily basis of survival attempts in many parts of their lives.

Disintegration of societies can be interpreted as a result of apocalypses because they affect and harm all the components of societies such as countries, governments, labour, forces of authority, laws or cultural rules. All these components become either damaged or not functional at all following an apocalypse. Saul comments on the elections and their turnouts in such a disintegrated order:

> *Elections of course were already a shadow of what they had been in the twentieth century, when the socalled Parliament still played a real role, when there were centralised policeforces, hospitals, schools – but our Speakers still had some importance because of their weekly access to the screens. They could affect people's buypower, and sometimes their opinions.* (Gee 137)

Saul indicates that politicians seem to be chosen like a symbol not a real person who can actually carry through their promises to enhance the society in different areas. Previously, the actions of politicians could affect people's wealth; therefore, people would vote seriously with a hope for a change. However, after a world-changing disaster "the poll was only fourteen-percent, a pathetic fraction of what it once was, when elections were real, in the twentieth century" (196). Similarly, in *Parable of the Sower*, Lauren's father states that "politicians turned his stomach" (Butler 22) and "Most people have given up on politicians" (17). In both novels, survival becomes the main issue; therefore, people cannot spare time to listen to the arguments of politicians and bother to vote. Lauren finds promises of politicians empty since they have been "promising to return us to the glory, wealth, and order of the twentieth century ever since I can remember" (18) but there seems to exist "barely a nation at all anymore" (18). Thus, it can be observed that previous societies might be wiped out and people have lost their hopes for the politicians who perform like the shadows of the past. However, post-apocalyptic fictions usually display smaller communities that people create after the catastrophe to be able to establish an order that they have known so far or just to survive depending on one another and each other's strength.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* display people trying to stay together for a main goal: a chance of survival in a better or less damaged place. However, these novels differ in terms of the scope of their societies since *The Ice People* gives us a chance to witness the society before the catastrophe and its change after the apocalypse while *Parable of the Sower* presents only the post-apocalyptic society and its attempts for the adaptation to the new order.

The societies have been affected negatively following a catastrophe, and the segregated forms and the gaps between different ranks of societies become more visible aftermath of an apocalypse. While the people in both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* attempt to form and protect communities even after the apocalypse, there are hierarchal forms of societies constructed through gender, race or other power related implementations. Gender is a significant factor since the men in these societies try to preserve patriarchal structures by claiming that they protect "our little family, our little life, our private life" (Gee 98) and not let others intrude into "family business" (Butler 13). Race is also seen as an obscure idea from the past which

is described as "twentieth century prejudices about race" (Gee 164) in *The Ice People*. Race still affects people's judgment for one another while segregating them since the society that Lauren lives in expects everyone "to fear and hate everyone but their own kind" (Butler 29). People's economic status is affected by the previous issues; gender and race, and this very status also affects the ranks of their place in this hierarchal societies while providing them with jobs or means of accommodation in both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. In this part, the segregated structures whether it can be related to gender, race or people's access to proper accommodation and income in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* will be analysed while focusing on the obvious or obscure ways that lead to such divisions through a posthumanist perspective questioning the value of human, their societies and principles that govern those societies.

The Ice People presents Saul as narrating mainly his adult life with flashbacks of his young adulthood. There are incidents throughout the novel that involve human beings as object of oppression by human beings which can serve as critique of the humanistic perspective of what it means to be a human. Saul talks about the approaching ice age and its implications for the society but mainly "decisions about healthcare" (Gee 150) for the Insiders. However, he realises that no one would care for the Outsiders although "they had no homes, they would get sick first, with nothing to protect them from the cold" (150). There are contrastive scenes of temperature changes globally and how this affects some human beings even in their simple everyday lives while others are protected via their expensive solutions.

Saul admits that he was not concerned about anything happening on Earth, and "happy, whether cool or hot, and slept as little as I could" (19) when he was young. However, during his adulthood, he becomes concerned about everything happening around the world as he starts to be affected by them directly. Saul indicates that there is "a great gap … between the sexes. Segging we called it. From segregation" (Gee 20) even beginning during his youth. Saul and Sarah's relationship can be seen as a minor step towards the dispute between generations and genders because Saul wants to pursue older traditions while reclaiming his manhood when Sarah joins a commune and starts spending most of her time and Luke's, their son, time with this commune: Wicca. Saul introduces the reader with this organisation by deprecating them as in the situation of

the wild children: “the weird new women’s collective, ‘Wicca’, an outgrowth from the Children’s Commune. Wicca. I still shiver, remembering their name” (Gee 116). Prior to arguments related to the disconnection between generations, it can be observed how the whole community “has also become increasingly segregated along gender lines” (Milner and Burgmann 93) through the personal life of Saul and Sarah. Maggie Gee is accepted as quite good at employment of “depictions of the personal and the domestic to illustrate the wider social and political issues surrounding everyday existence” (O’Reilly) since the gender segregations and issues of both sides can be observed via two characters from each gender, Saul and Sarah. Utilising the diary written in the first-person human narration also contributes to observe the wide society with “the intersectionality of gender, race, and class conflicts” (Sepetoğlu 28) via exposure to small personal lives of the narrator and his circle.

Sarah agreed to marry Saul “because she had promised, because of Luke” “as a pledge to the child, but no longer live with me or love me” (Gee 61); therefore, they “got married; a kind of divorce” (61) after having troubles with the intimacy, baby and postpartum depression and Saul’s reluctancy to support Sarah in any of it. Their relationship is on a shaky basis just like the earth that they live on where temperatures are getting hotter each and every day. Following failed attempts to conceive and then succeeding in having a tech-fix baby who is highly vulnerable, Sarah continues to be depressed and tired. A “techfix conception” (47) is a solution where people “get the doctors to make us a baby” (49) since “the majority of men have semifertile sperm” (48) and people have unsuccessful attempts to have a baby due to semi or infertility. Although she had Luke -Saul and Sarah’s son born as a techfix baby-, “she wanted one the natural way” (76); that’s why, she started seeing other people who have successfully had kids naturally. Their relationship with Saul becomes quite distant hanging by a thread which can be seen as their son.

Saul blames Sarah as he thinks that she is “Disloyal to Luke, disloyal to me.” (77) due to her personal relationships with others. Saul accuses of Sarah being an irresponsible mother as if her relationship with others would affect her relationship with her child negatively. When he confesses that he wants her to be “Shaved. Shamed. Torn apart” (76), he indicates that “She was Luke’s mother, but I wanted her dead” (76). It can be noticed in this example “how the expulsion of the mother from culture might operate

in destructive ways leading to an apocalyptic crisis" (Watkins 107) in patriarchal ideals while post-apocalyptic context also defies the gender dualism and heteronormative relationships in *The Ice People*. Sarah does not let Saul get away with his accusations and she plays mind games with him rather than accepting a defeat and yield to the roles ascribed to her by heteronormative patriarchal values. She leaves a book behind called "The Sperm Race, describing the positive effect on conception of competition between males" (Gee 76) and Saul considers this as a hint for him regarding a race between Saul and others that Sarah has been together. Although readers experience the story only from Saul's perspective not Sarah's, it is difficult to accept Sarah as the only guilty party in the failed attempts of this relationship. They both seem to have problems that they are afraid to admit and try to find solutions outside the relationship while the house becomes a kind of a battlefield. Saul feels offended because Sarah "still acted as if the flat belonged to her, cleaning it silently, manically, whenever she arrived" (76) because he believes that she should not come back if she has relationship with other people. This can show the hidden work women perform "in a given society, including bodily work and reproduction" (qtd. in Alaimo 49) and Saul seems to be only an observer in all that Sarah does whether it is to clean their house or give birth to their baby. However, he does not stop her coming home since he tells that "Sarah came and went, and acknowledged no guilt. She slept with me when she felt like it" (Gee 76). This can be interpreted as a psychologically problematic attitude because Saul does not object to Sarah's visits and what she does at their home. Saul desires her to see him; thus, he utilises from their home as a scene of revenge as he "let things get dirtier than usual, I admit that in my anger I let things slide" (76) being aware of the fact that Sarah is obsessed with cleaning and most probably clean his dirt when she comes back the next time. Consequently, Saul can "see the objects of their desires" (qtd. in Alaimo 49) working on household chores that he tangles her into. Their relationship can be deciphered as a foreshadowing of what comes next for the society and world order since dissociation begins to occur in every part of Saul and Sarah's life as there will be in the upcoming events.

Saul starts having meetings and spends most of his time with a community called Gay Scientists where he describes people there laughing together "a lot, and were basically friendly. They liked me, I felt, they did not despise me, we were all men together, we could be free" (77). Saul describes the feeling that he has while being with the

members of Gay Scientists as “welcoming me to a safe new dream” (77). They mainly argue about how women become distant to men and they blame women for many things including men’s intimate relationship with DOVEs which originally is the name of machines “short for “DO Very simple things”” (90) in households. Saul’s use of the words “free”, “safe” displays how hostile the division of genders becomes as if the opposite sex can only mean enemies. Sarah, on the other hand, assume that the Gay Scientists are “all gay, machine junkies”(73). This artificial segregation between men and women turns into somehow a battlefield when the DOVEs and the children become the subject of the argument between them.

To understand older generations’ dependency on technology, it is crucial to learn more about DOVEs in *The Ice People*. DOVEs cross the limits of human-machine distinction starting only as “household pets” because they “dust, wash floors, recycle rubbish” (Gee 90). This seems like an advanced household appliance; however, upcoming DOVEs “became selforganising, ‘selfmotivating’” (95). The difference between a person and a dove is construed as the ability to think. Sarah indicates that it cannot think “because it’s artificial, not natural” (99), “the children of our brains, not our bodies” (319) also “negatively associating masculinity with the unforeseen effects of scientific enterprise” (Watkins 109). A DOVE displays intriguing cases for posthuman as discussed earlier in the first chapter explaining the difference between posthuman and posthumanism. Posthuman is “a new biological species, a cybernetic organism, or even a digital, disembodied entity” (qtd. in Karkulehto 23) since it is demonstrated that posthuman derives from the anxiety for the future of human beings alongside technologically developed beings, DOVEs can be seen as an example of posthuman. I think this concern finds its roots in its hidden connotations because people place posthuman “as a biological other” and it is still “incomplete” (Karkulehto et al. 23) as one cannot predict what the future holds precisely. *The Ice People* presents this incompleteness in a contrastive yet critical way.

A DOVE is commercialised as a commodity for the benefit of everyday chores of houses. Their promise is to execute the instructions given without producing any unique thoughts of their own. The initial image of this posthuman example presents a hopeful depiction of future where human beings can have control over what has been feared of; “enjoying our power and its obedience” (Gee 95). The narrative turns these

fears into reality as those posthumans gradually start acting what has not been placed as part of their programming and face or almost replace human beings. Doves develop into autonomous beings that "could do without us [human beings]" (104). It can be deduced that the book displays the fright over posthuman and its gradual actualisation in the focus of its context through the gender related division and the arguments of each side.

The second issue regarding DOVEs is that men of the society become very attached to these appliances when Saul confesses that "We wanted them human, but better than us, biddable wives, welltrained children, mothers who never got cross or tired" (125). In a way, they attempt to fill their social needs to interact with these seemingly female machines. Saul attempts to protect traditional patriarchal values while still practicing his power over females via DOVEs and opposes Sarah as she accepts Wicca's feminist environmental values and practices them in her life. Throughout the narration, one can see various kinds of robots mentioned in distinct means to be utilised from. Here are all the robots that are created to fill a hole in a different part of the life: "bits" "the replacement parts" (Gee 79) that the old people get; "'mobots', cute little domestic animats" (85), "'Warmbots', … to 'keep you warm at nights'" (113); "'Hawk', a kind of avian guard dog" (114); 'Sexbots' as partners in sex, and "Replicators" can "make another of itself" (115). Therefore, it can be indicated that these machines can also be seen "as the consequence of men's disengagement" (Watkins 109) since they develop DOVEs to replace the assumed gender roles of women in every possible way while exercising their authority over these robots.

Widening gender segregation results in women living with other women while leaving men and their houses behind. Saul reacts to her separation from home by pointing out how difficult a situation she has left him with because "we were men, for godsake. What did they think they could turn us into?" (Gee 60). Women get closer to understanding and appreciating nature since Wicca promotes natural things. Men get closer to technology and even start having intimate relationships with DOVEs. The society can be summaried as "populated by technophiliac men and technophobic women" (Aykanat 101). Such separation of genders concentrating on nature against technology and women against men is "quite essentialist and problematic" considering the criticism of women's association with nature as "a major oppressive tool generated

from traditional patriarchal sources" (Aykanat 78). To associate women with nature is the result of the assumption that women are procreators similar to nature but in the womb of the mother nature itself which hints back to the dualism "nature to culture, woman to man, passivity to activity, madness to reason" (Alaimo 49). This segregation of genders results from the "Western thought [that] has been structured by a series of gendered dichotomies" such as "culture/nature, mind/body, subject/object, rational/emotional" (Alaimo 2). The humanist understanding of the world seems to be repeated with a divine aspect attached to women alongside nature which posthumanism criticises since the aim of posthumanist theory is "to understand nature and culture as intimately entwined systems rather than as fundamentally different from and opposed to each other" (Marchand and Stratman 402). Each part of this gendered division becomes highly marginalised and has strong opinions against each other. Neither women nor men come up with anything productive and act efficiently in the face of a catastrophe coming closer every day.

Sarah tries to keep Saul away "from the Commune and Wicca … mostly because I was a man, I suppose" being married "embarrassed her greatly" (Gee 117) while men talk about women in their meetings with the Gay Scientists as some "burst into tears and admitted they were trying to hang on to the remains of their family" (118). However, these are all Saul's perspective of the issue, and he most probably wants to display himself as the victim of Wicca and the separation of his family is also the result of Wicca because he mentions Sarah delicately and how she thoughtfully looks after his parents:

> *My delicate Sarah, who so loved cleanliness. She cared for my parents without complaining … I did what I could, but it was so claustrophobic, the little overheated house, and I felt embarrassed by my parents' bodies. The thinner they got, the more heat they needed ... And women are so much better with nursing. Besides, I didn't really understand they were dying – didn't understand, couldn't understand.* (81)

The first-person human narration displays how inconsistent a person can be although he promises to "tell the story of my times" (9) with a serious attitude so that this can be his legacy for the future generations at the beginning of the story.

Saul becomes one with the story while "meditating on the gradual change bringing catastrophe to the very culture he belongs to" (Kılıç 112). He also plainly shows the

presumption regarding the gender roles and women's association with a caring, loving nature here indicating how they are superior to men in terms of "nursing". He previously presents the reasons why he has married to Sarah as her traits of being "slight but enduring, loving, fierce, good with her hands, helpful, maternal" (Gee 29). This memory can also demonstrate an irony of his aspect of the value of family since he criticises Sarah previously because of her negligence of their family when she starts spending more time with Wicca related works.

Gee's employment of Saul as the narrator plays an important role here for a critical posthumanist stance to introduce the reader with his biased view towards women due to patriarchal and humanist norms that he has been accustomed to since those opinions are "inherently anthropocentric, gendered and racialized" possessing "aesthetic and moral ideals based on white, masculine, heterosexual European civilization" (Braidotti 68). Nonetheless, it is still obvious that both sides quarrel and try to get the upper hand neglecting the real issues happening in that particular context: climate change and its effect in every aspect of the life. DOVEs become dangerous after an incident with a "Dove that had halfeaten the baby" (Gee 144). Following the incident where the DOVE tries to eat a baby, "Wicca World had at once demanded that production of DOVEs be halted, and all existing models destroyed" (45). Wicca carries out such an agenda for the sake of winning against men; later in politics it can be discovered that Wicca turns into a "militant lesbian- separatist feminist political activism" (Milner and Burgmann 94). Their election campaign is carried out with slogans such as "'revaluing nature', 'nurturing the future'; 'the future is green'" (Gee 137), and they promise to "'bloom again' with the 'cooling earth'" (137). Thus, it can be understood that Wicca utilises from nature as an instrument to ensure their gain against men, at the same time men "Only madwomen, we thought, would vote for them" (139). Human beings construe culture and value it over nature. However, they neglect the fact that they share a planet with all the components of nature; human beings and non-human. This negligence results in a white dominated Eurocentric structure where others, black people, women or the ones that do not correspond to the norms of that ideal culture are belittled by means of this constitution.

In *The Ice People*, both parts, women and men, criticise one another for the sake of criticism not producing any fruitful argument to be able to gain power. Saul

summarises the timeline of Wicca through Sarah's works and how extremist they have become can be observed via their goals:

> *First, a wacky female nature worship, centring on 'the Hidden Goddess', who apparently 'gave suck' to us all (count me out, I was bottlefed), 'pentagrams', 'equinoxes', 'handfastings'; second, a 'new biology', starring a singlecelled female bacterium which, scientists had recently discovered, had given up sex three thousand years ago; third, a rigid, doctrinaire politics whose central premise was 'separate development' (for women. They didn't mention men. These bitches were too stupid to remember apartheid).* (117)

Wicca have turned into an organisation which is obsessed with a desire of single-gendered society. Thus, it can be understood how these distractions take people's attention away from the real problems that politicians should explain and offer solutions as part of their duties in those societies. Although neither side follows a white-heteronormative Western principle, they utilise from their exploitative means to possess authority unable to accept the posthumanist approach that "no politics can adequately conceive how ultimately unimportant humanity actually is" (Milner and Burgmann 93) since "the rest of life was flourishing" (Gee 278) while human beings struggle to survive in the ice age.

Both women and men adopt distinct values regarding raising a child in *The Ice People*. Men prefer older methods in which women should be the nurturing mothers of their home while men earn the money to live on; to summarise "The gendered dualisms of public and private, breadwinner and caretaker" (Alaimo 194) can also be observed in this circumstance. Saul loses his temper after their son, Luke's birth when Sarah probably suffers from postpartum depression following a difficult pregnancy and they "have lost one twin" (Gee 53) because Sarah confesses that "I don't want him" (59) regarding her son. Saul barks at her indicating that "You have to want him. He's our son" (59) since "She was the mother. It wasn't fair" (59).

Sarah disappoints the image Saul has in her mind for mothers as nurturing and lavish with their loves for their child. Saul, especially, wants to create his ideal image out of his son so that he can realise his dreams, whatever he couldn't do through Luke with "the idea of recovery or sustenance of patriarchal and imperialist norms" (Watkins 106). The narrative displays Saul's desire to take a role as a hero in Luke's life like "an obsession with father-son relationships" (106). Saul also wants to make his father

a hero in Luke's mind so that Luke can look up to those ideals and they can agree on the subject migrate to the promised lands of his ancestors, "to secure passage to the warmth of Africa" (Milner and Burgmann 94). Saul behaves as if he had been proud of this aspect of his character all his life, he wants Luke to accept and give value to it too. His father was vague when the issue came to his race and Saul wanted to learn more about it. Saul could not easily comprehend his father's opinions, advices and warning regarding their race which became more confused than before:

> *What did he say, exactly? That I should be proud (but how proud was he? He had never told me about myself). That the first humans were African (but 'You kids are as British as the next person'). That skin colour was not important (and yet it had 'held me back in the force'). That we were 'the same as anybody else' (yet 'people like us always have to watch our backs').* (15)

Saul's father gave all the stereotypical views regarding the race possible as if he was not a black person, as if he was a white person trying to empathise with a black person and not to hurt their feelings. It is quite ironic that Saul does not desire Luke to have his own opinions on such matters too, and this attitude is quite similar to Saul's father's approach. Instead, Saul wants Luke to look up to him and his side of the family just because he has black ancestors which would survive him from the dreading effects of the ice age since he cannot offer him any tangible thing to be proud of rather than kidnapping him from his mother's circle.

On the other hand, Luke "instead of going to school, … was being 'home educated' by the women" in communes of Wicca teaching them values of nature. Later, Saul understood that they start giving hormonal interjections such as "highdose oestrogen and other, subtler, more complex drugs" (220) to children to alter or at least dampen the male sides of their body. One of the previous Wicca members, Briony confesses that hormone injections are "against our principles – Wicca's principles. I mean. They're so keen on being … 'and then they start stuffing the boys with hormones. They wanted to see if it made them gentler." (221). Their hatred becomes unreasonable and dangerous even for the one thing that they value the most: children. Saul opposes these methods and explains his goal as "to save him [Luke] from the nanomachines, the thrumming headsets, the speaking buildings, the wretched tech-births, the rare sickly children, the lonely sexes" (308), everything that he finds fascinating in technology becomes the things that he wants his son to avoid from. *The Ice People*

presents Saul as a narrator through whom the issues related to gender segregation and race and its connotations in a society can be experienced from that person's perspective. In their relationship with Sarah, the readers are exposed to the fertility related approaches in *The Ice People* where "the fertility clinics do their best for people" (Gee 47). However, when Sarah loses one of the twins during the pregnancy and the fertility clinic send "a thick package" "as a routine precaution" because "some of the postnatal complications" "occur 'slightly more frequently' with techfix conceptions" (54). Before the loss of a baby, Sarah does not even get a warning regarding such complications. After the pregnancy Sarah could not leave the hospital in a few days; instead, she is kept there for "a blood transfusion", then due to "an infection" (56). She is not warned against such procedures after the birth during their frequent visits to the clinic. All the problematic sides of this procedure are revealed after Sarah experiences and she is affected by them negatively.

The society becomes obsessed with conceiving babies; however, the mother's chance of living decreases for the sake of that pregnancy and that part is ignored. This can be interpreted as a way of discrimination against women in *The Ice People*. Through Saul's realisation that he is a mixed-race person and his attempts to make sense of what this means, race related issues in the society can be perceived and how "It was dark in the shed" (15) for society and for his family even when Saul "tried to talk to him [his father] about being black" (15). Saul and his experience in the society shed light on the bigger picture for the society and its approach towards the gender and race related segregation.

Saul in *The Ice People* displays his experience as a mixed-race man in a society where women seem dispensable for the sake of "a successful techfix conception" (47) and race is a hidden subject even in mixed race families and their children grow up hating "black people" in Europe and asking, "Why must they come here?" (14) without realising that one part of their family is also black. When Saul notices "these horrible things", his father and his grandfather's being black; thus, he is half black, he becomes depressed. Lauren in *Parable of the Sower* is similar to Saul as a black person and her experience of being "armed and watchful" (Butler 29) so that others do not harm them in their mixed-race community. Lauren's family does not hide the fact that they are black as Saul's family does; however, they bring up their children to be prepared to

dangers due to their race. Both Saul and Lauren's race become liabilities throughout their lives. However, Lauren's gender brings another means of oppression in her society as a girl. She needs to disguise herself as a man since their group believes that "two men and a woman would be more likely to survive than two women and a man" (Butler 139).

In *Parable of the Sower*, Lauren is a black girl in her adolescence years, the narrator of Butler's vision of "a post-apocalyptic hoping informed by the lessons of the past" (Miller 336). Lauren and her family lives "in a tiny, walled fish-bowl cul-de-sac community" (Butler 13) and she is "the preacher's daughter" (13) in this small community established on the principle of survival through one another. Therefore, one would not expect the repetition of the previous values of segregated societies based on gender or race. However, previous presumptions retain their power over women as the inferior gender and non-white people. Although having been raised in a small walled community, Lauren has the courage to have her own opinions regarding these matters. However, she cannot find suitable places to express those other than her diary.

The first thing that we encounter regarding segregation through the expected gender roles and men's alpha male complex over any women is the "family business" (Butler 13) that Lauren and her family should keep as a secret. The first and foremost issue that they should "never even hint about outside the family" (13) is her late biological mother and her death as a drug addict. She was Lauren's mother; however, her father's attitude towards this makes Lauren supress her emotions regarding it. Lauren expresses her ideas without hesitation about anything; even the one thing that she is afraid the most: religion because she might hurt her father. Nonetheless, she does not ask questions, she does not indicate any opinions. I think she is so supressed by her father that she is not even aware of the fact that she deliberately keeps quiet about this subject. Lauren does not introduce her biological mother's name throughout the narration which is her diary and the book of her own religion. Instead of focusing on the real reason why "a first wife" (13) and Lauren's "biological mother" (38) would choose using the drugs, the mother and her memory have been kept as a shameful untalkable subject in the family because the father orders to do so. This biological mother is "rendered as pejoration, pathologized and cast out of normality, on the side of anomaly, deviance, monstrosity and bestiality" (Braidotti 68) since her misconduct

during her pregnancy can be depicted as appallingly abusive. Her existence even in the memories depends on the husband who has married after her, so to call him husband is not suitable but that is the only option to be able to define her because she is only in his memories in that context and he does not let anyone to know her. This situation is so similar to the belief that "there are no slaves without masters, there are no women without men" (qtd. in Alaimo 50) since there is no biological mother of Lauren without Lauren's father. The survival cannot surpass the "family business" because "the whole business is shameful" (Butler 13) according to the man of the family.

Lauren's stepmother as one of the neighbours calls her "that Mexican woman Cory-ah-zan" (19) also faces with such discrimination because of her gender and race. Lauren realises that "Cory never let on that she was offended" (19). I think Cory chooses such an attitude again because of her husband and his position in the society as a preacher and a professor. Cory and Lauren's father "are both teachers, both Ph.D's" (76), so they are equal in academic aspect. However, the father is the only one who keeps working in a college. The reader is not presented with the reasons why Cory is not able to work. She is eager to work because "She was desperate to get in ahead of the crowd" (76) when she sees the commercial related to a new life in Olivar offering homes and works and gets their numbers to call and see if she can work. During this instance, Lauren's father reacts to the whole situation discouragingly. After Cory indicates that "You know nothing about the world. You think you have all the answers but you know nothing!", the father can only focus on the race telling that "I doubt that Olivar is looking for families of blacks and Hispanics, anyway," (76) "in a world on the verge of destruction" but "racial difference" "still has its place among humanity" (Hampton 67). It is obscure to grasp the motives of Lauren's father's attitude. However, the most obvious thing is that women are left with stereotypical gender roles in their houses. Although the context displays a post-apocalyptic society, there are still work to do, why don't women do them too?

In *Parable of the Sower*, two female characters have been discussed in terms gender related discrimination in previous parts. The first one, Lauren's mother, is erased because of shameful acts she has done before her death, and the second one, Lauren's stepmother, faces race-related prejudices and is not allowed to work even though she

has the qualifications. There is a family in Lauren's small community "the Mosses" and Lauren describes the father as "a total shit" (29). This man has "three wives. All at once" (30), Lauren might live in a highly unusual environment after a catastrophe; still, she needs to indicate that he has all these wives "all at once" as polygamy is not common practice even after an apocalypse. Lauren empathises with the first wife, "the one with the marriage license" realising that she should have thought she could not "make it on her own with three kids" (30). Even though the abnormal conditions of the narration making the survival of human beings difficult, only the women think that they need to be able to ignore unbearable things so that they can survive with their children.

I think men alter the post-apocalyptic context in such a way that women cannot work although there is no particular reason for it, and women are imprisoned in their houses though they all live in a walled community. Jobs may be scarce, and the outside might be dangerous; however, these situations apply to everyone not only women. Through the ruins of the previous world order, men pave their way to patriarchy in the harshest way possible for women. Richard Moss, the father of the Mosses, might seem an extreme example for Lauren but he collects the ideas of men who keep their wives, daughters at home to look after the kids that are born into such horrific times, to do house chores even if these women have qualifications that would be helpful in other ways, and his religion expresses that: "God wants men to be patriarchs, rulers and protectors of women, and fathers of as many children as possible" (30). However, this religious teaching is not composed because of a divine approach, Richard Moss can live with these women in that community whether it is ethical or not because "He's an engineer for one of the big commercial water companies, so he can afford to pick up beautiful, young homeless women and live with them in polygynous relationships" (30). No one can talk about shame even Lauren's father in such a situation if the power structure does not allow the members of that community. Lauren comments on this state with fear:

> *I hear there's a lot of that kind of thing going on in other neighborhoods. Some middle class men prove they're men by having a lot of wives in temporary or permanent relationships. Some upper class men prove they're men by having one wife and a lot of beautiful, disposable young servant girls. Nasty. When the girls get pregnant, if their rich employers won't protect them, the employers' wives throw them out to starve. Is that the way it's going to be, I*

wonder? Is that the future: Large numbers of people stuck in either President-elect Donner's version of slavery or Richard Moss's. (30)

In Lauren's comment, it is discerned that the only possible ways women to continue their lives are to be wives or servants, and either way they can be abused by a man in higher position. Lauren can be critical in a community like this and question whether the future holds any kind of hope because this is her only chance. She does not possess a previous life full of memories of an abundant life, she only has the reality of a post-apocalyptic state on a daily basis full of attempts to survive or seeking for resources to survive while aspiring for a better future. Nonetheless, to reach that future, she realises that being a woman can be a burden. Thus, she disguises herself as a man during their expedition to north after losing everything in her walled community and she confesses that "We believed two men and a woman would be more likely to survive than two women and a man" (139). Still, Lauren's perspective in that incident does not aim to reproduce patriarchal values; instead, she penetrates "the constructed nature of the human 'person'" while "blurring of bodily borders, identities" (Nayar 12) and she manipulates them to serve her goal. Lauren can be interpreted as a quite conscious young adult, and she realises that what is seen as a weakness in such communities can be altered to serve a more meaningful purpose at the end. That meaningful motive is to establish a community through the teachings of Earthseed in Lauren's situation.

The cities or any kind of familiar districts have been destroyed but there are some companies renovating vital places to offer people jobs and places to stay. In a way, they form commercialised communities to make profit by offering some gain for the people who would work for such communities. The race becomes an issue even to choose a place to commercialise and Lauren is not hopeful about her community since "Robledo's too big, too poor, too black, and too Hispanic to be of interest" (Butler 76). However, Lauren will later realise that there is "nowhere to go to escape the increasing effects of climate change and the societal burden on resources" (Scott 88).

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* present segregated communities especially regarding the gender, and these post-apocalyptic fictions concentrates "on returning women to domesticity and the home and the recreation of traditional gender roles … in response to anxiety about climate change" (Watkins 42). The patriarchy draws its strength from "the death, domination, and exploitation of a nature gendered

female" and presents its power through "the cultural subordination and exploitation of women" (Thompson 506) although post-apocalypse would be expected to draw the people's interest to means of survival. The segregation is not only concerned with gender, the post-apocalyptic world cannot stop people forming hierarchal structures through their economic means since the distribution of the very limited resources continue to be unfair in both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*.

In *The Ice People,* there are several situations where human beings are separated from one another and one type is valued while the other despised on account of their colour of flesh; Black or White, whether they have a house or not; the Insiders and the Outsiders, the century that they grow up and its values; the ice people, or the gender that they biologically or socially claim to possess. *The Ice People* creates an image of a society where human beings are not able to see one another as compatible even as a component of the same species and utilise from the artificial tools of nature to value one over the other. The first part of the book is at a time of extreme heat in a fully technological society. This society displays some problematic aspects even though everything seems normal at surface since everything works like clockwork. One can observe how each person is identified as a number assigned for a specific job not as a person who has a name and how global warming has turned into a daily issue that is dealt with technology through Saul's memories related to work. The voice tone at the door of his work welcomes him saying that "'Good morning, Officer 102. It is eightothree am Cooling is in progress. Please specify rooms you want unlocked and conditioned'" (21). He feels amazed and "always said 'Good morning' back, though other teachers laughed at me. They thought I was joking, but I wasn't. It seemed to me anything might be alive. What was the boundary between living and nonliving?" (21). His questioning, in a way, foreshadows the narration's second part in which the robots designed to help household chores start to gain autonomy over their decisions and actions.

In a technologically functioning society, *The Ice People,* in an ironically posthumanist way, shows how even the human beings can turn into a component of a big system with numbers assigned for their role rather than recognising their unique characteristics. However, these people working in highly technological offices are the fortunate ones because they are "The Insiders". There are two types of people in the

country that Saul lives in: “the people in houses, the Insiders” and “the homeless – Outsiders, Wanderers” (149). Inability to afford an accommodation contrives another reason to divide people from one another but it is in regards to their wealth this time. The Insiders have access to occupations, education and the right to vote while the Outsiders are “a great stirring, floating base of people with nothing.” (149). The distinction is obvious, and they all share the same cities while one at home, the other on the streets but there is nothing that has been done to address basic needs and rights of the Outsiders. They are referred as having “‘fluid lifestyles’” (149) as if they deliberately choose such a way of life rather than the faults in the system pushing them to the margins. The concept that human beings need certain methods of life and needs that they can meet the expense of them only by working in particular jobs that the society needs and creates ways of payment for them is a cultural artifact. However, they exclude some who are not compatible with their values and abandon them in the outskirts of their civilisation. I find the issue of the Outsiders side by side with the Insiders quite paradoxical because human beings cannot eliminate the ones that bother them even if they are the same species. Therefore, I consider that it presents a peculiar example of a posthumanist criticism of humanism in the cultural territory revealing the inability of human beings as the omnipotent agency over nature and all the components of it including human beings themselves.

The division of the society reaches to an alarming level when “Insiders produced so much waste, whole meals, whole bins full of fermenting vegetables, rotting chickens, tropical fruit” that “the Outsiders used to eat it, sneaking into the cities in the long hot nights and rifling the bins and the garbage hills” (106). Saul states that this society is “an amorphous pyramid” (149) in which the order is as follows: the Speakers who orders all the people “on top”, then “successful people” with their secure occupations and accommodations holding the right to elect the speakers and paying their taxes followed “the Outsiders and Wanderers, a great stirring, floating base of people with nothing” (149). When the Insiders have all the necessary things to continue their lives, there is no problem but heat. They have technology to address this issue and “an increasingly globalized and corporatized technocratic culture, and inadequate responses to climate change” (Watkins 41) can be observed throughout *The Ice People*. Saul mockingly talks about DOVEs and how they are very cheap and become common in every household while expressing that "the Outsiders could never have afforded

them, of course, but then, they had no homes to clean" (90). The perception of price can change enormously for the people in the city and the outside of it. Nonetheless, the more hypocrite side of this statement is the fact that acceptance of the Outsiders as homeless as it is one of the scientific facts that one can encounter daily. However, the Ice Age starts, and the Insiders start understanding the situation that the Outsiders have been living with, then there comes fear that "We began to see that life would get rough" (150). The initial fear is not related to climate; instead, it is about "the Outsiders" because "They had no homes, they would get sick first, with nothing to protect them from the cold. If they got sick, we would be infected. Or perhaps they would want to take our homes" (150). The Insiders perceive that their technology would no longer offer solutions to their problems; therefore, a stronger and direct solution might be needed such as police force or an army. *The Ice People* causes even the most rooted biases to be destroyed when it brings the Insiders and the Outsiders at the same level with an opposite direction of a climate change. Paradoxically, the Outsiders are accustomed to live by their own means in the heat, so they would adapt to the new environmental condition better than the Insiders who know switching on or off buttons to be able to access to liveable conditions, food or water.

In *Parable of the Sower*, the hierarchal structure of the society is not as rule based as in *The Ice People* since there is no functioning society even in the beginning of the story. However, there is still a hierarchy that applies in every aspect of life even after a catastrophe it can be observed Lauren's location "in Robledo— 20 miles from Los Angeles" "once a rich, green, unwalled little city" (Butler 11). There can be three main categories in this society related to people's economic status: The first is the rich ones live in the "walled estates" (11) while still being able to afford "buying gasoline" (15) and having "domestic servants" (60), keeping dogs "to guard estates, enclaves, and businesses" (33). The second can be the small walled communities with people from middle class similar to Lauren's described as "a tiny, walled fish-bowl cul-de-sac community" (13). However, even those have upper and lower walled communities since Lauren distinguishes the poor ones having walls "made up of unmortared rocks, chunks of concrete, and trash" (11) and hers is their "neighborhood walls" (13). The safe and familiar feeling inside of their neighbourhood provides a sense protection from the outside dangers while dividing people again into insiders and outsiders similar to the ones in *The Ice People.* Lauren cannot imagine a life without such a

tangible protective shelter: "There was no neighborhood wall back then. Crazy to live without a wall to protect you" (12). Although the characters here do not mention people with these terms, they often use "outside the wall" or "street poor" as dangerous connotations since "most of the street poor— squatters, winos, junkies, homeless people in general— are dangerous. They're desperate or crazy or both. That's enough to make anyone dangerous" (12). There is again a hierarchy in *Parable of the Sower* and the bottom line suffers the most:

> *Most of the dead are the street poor who have nowhere to go and who don't hear the warnings until it's too late for their feet to take them to safety. Where's safety for them, anyway? Is it a sin against God to be poor? We're almost poor ourselves. There are fewer and fewer jobs among us, more of us being born, more kids growing up with nothing to look forward to. One way or another, we'll all be poor some day. The adults say things will get better, but they never have. How will God— my father's God— behave toward us when we're poor?* (14)

Lauren realises that her future might not hold much for her or her generation if the situation does not change. In *Parable of the Sower*, the poverty turns into such an alarming level that poverty costs their lives not because people are hungry but because these people cannot even hear warnings related natural disasters in advance and take precautions or escape from the affected areas. The hierarchal segregation in *The Parable of the Sower* makes the people at the lower levels of society suffer more than the rich or middle-classed ones even in a post-apocalyptic circumstance where the survival should be seen as the main concern for all the levels of humanity leaving the humanism and its effects open to criticism due to its human exclusivity and the application of this exclusivity to a certain part of people who hold the power and wealth in the society. The "warnings" are most probably a result of a scientific work announced through a technological device. Therefore, it can be observed that for the upper class there is "one science that can discover the one truth about nature", and "there is a distinctive universal human class— some distinctive group of humans— to whom the unique truth about the world could be evident" (qtd in Alaimo 102). Lauren's approach is more optimistic than Saul's in *The Ice People*, yet more realistic in a post-apocalyptic way of living. The society is still divided even the only issue becomes to find a way to survive after the apocalypse, there are still people enjoying a way of life similar to the previous exploitative communities who perceive non-human as an instrument and non-white poor as the servants for them. The middle-class

people live in kinds of cages that they design to protect themselves although Lauren's "Dad tries to shield us from what goes on in the world, but he can't. Knowing that, he also tries to teach us to shield ourselves." (30). The poorest ones are pushed away from the rich but they haunt the middle-classed communities to steal anything they need. However, the street poor's only threat is not to commodities of other communities but also to themselves since "They carry untreated diseases and festering wounds. They have no money to spend on water to wash with so even the unwounded have sores. They don't get enough to eat so they're malnourished— or they eat bad food and poison themselves" (Gee 12). The inadequate water supplies is a problem for all the communities in *Parable of the Sower,* but only the poor die because of this inadequacy and the diseases related to it. Lauren's community gets used to some of these poor haunting them and call them "garden thieves" (53) because they only steal the food from their garden and the community tries to prepare themselves for such robberies. However, it is difficult to keep such an order "behind our walls, looking clean and fat and rich to the hungry, thirsty, homeless, jobless, filthy people outside" (121). Later, their community has also been burned down and "'Everyone's dead,' … 'Everyone. Those painted bastards killed them all'" (107). The fearful thing happens: the street poor kill the members of the walled community. The different levels of the society seem like performing a part in a children's game of playing house since they only get into trouble with one another, rather than seeking the reasons why the earth becomes unliveable.

In this part, I assert that both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* pursue hierarchal orders alongside "taxonomies of the human/inhuman/nonhuman" in their societies to justify "the oppression, torturing, eating, and killing of beings not falling into the category 'human'" (Clarke and Rossini 155) even after a world-changing catastrophe and the gap between different levels of that social scale gets wider with every crisis. However, those ranks of societies only serve for the people who hold the power and means at the top and they try to keep themselves safe through the exploitation of others since those others do not possess any value even though "The Speakers pretended to address everybody" (Gee 149) in *The Ice People* and "older ones … said it was the job of the police to protect them" (Butler 32) in *Parable of the Sower*. Both societies seem functioning on the surface; however, they have come to a degree of such degeneration that people warn each other "not to trust any police or

government official" (191) and call their elected ones as "those hideous dykes with their insincere voices" (Gee 144). The collapse of humanity due to events around the world leads to the collapse of societies and authorities that govern those societies. However, people become so inadequate that they cannot interfere or even reach anywhere near the ones who still exploit nonhuman alongside people who previously support or elect them to those positions. The post-apocalyptic nature of these contexts offers the characters extreme situations in which they even find themselves in the exploited part making the path to a posthumanist criticism of human beings' extreme instrumentalist approach towards anything or anyone that would allow them to possess more power and exceptionalism.

3.2. Generational Difference towards the Apocalypse

In *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*, the readers can observe people from different generations and how their experience of the apocalypse differs from each other. Younger generations in both novels are brought up in the post-apocalyptic circumstances and they are most probably one of the precariat in these hopeless circumstances. They do not have enough or any memory at all of what is past and ordinary in everyday lives of human beings other than their endless attempts to survive in a world hostile to them. The fluidity of normal or the changeability of ordinary is an aspect that is employed in post-apocalyptic fictions which "interrogates the nature of 'the ordinary' in a situation in which the ordinary is itself in question" (qtd in Malvestio 28). It can be observed that there are two sides of such questioning in both novels. The previous generations question the life by comparing the values or important components of life previously as they are accustomed to while the new generations attempt to construct their own ideas of ordinary in the midst of post apocalypse realising that the ordinary that their parents insist on living by is no longer applicable to this new order of world. Therefore, it can be deduced that the conflict between generations resulting from the apocalypse lead to a posthumanist perspective of life questioning in a post-apocalyptic context due to its obscure critique of humanism for "the lifestyle and habits of thought leading up to that disaster" (Kılıç 113) in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. Younger generations in both novels attempt to bring forward a new approach to the new order of life rather than yearning for the past like the older generations. In this section, I claim that the new generations'

reaction against the apocalypse and its difference from the older generations in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* is not only a result of the collapse in the society but also as a reaction to the humanist values and older generations' pursuit of them even when the survival should be the main issue through the lens of posthumanist theory. Therefore, their search for new principles to govern their lives according to recent developments since both contexts can only offer scarce resources in a world in ruins is claimed to be a posthumanist reaction.

The Ice People begins with the narrator describing his environment with "The wild children, surrounding me" (Gee 9) by naming a group as wild while indicating inexplicitly that he is not wild but civilised. Wild children or "the salvajes" (289) "grew up without decent parents. They never lived in a family" (290) as Saul describes to his son Luke; so these children have "no family, no history" (62). These wild children are seen with "halfnaked bodies, matted hair" (293) and sometimes called as "'mongrels', because these kids were such a mixture, Arabs, Africans, Andalucians" (316). Saul seems to despise them and looks down on them by calling them "wild boys, these urban savages, the worst of the lot." (303). His detestation and disdain for these children will be understood more clearly as the events unfold in the book and Saul's family is affected by them directly. Saul has a son named Luke who has been brought up to this world through medical interventions; thus, he is one of the tech-fix babies who need "more surgery" (57) right after his birth to be able to have more chance to survive. Even at birth, there is quite a distinction between the old and the young generations. *Parable of the Sower* employs a narrator who belongs to the new generation that does not have any experience of the world prior to an apocalypse. This novel's perspective is set on a more post-apocalyptic centred one; rather than yearning for the past as in *The Ice People*. Lauren establishes her own religion; Earthseed, as she becomes aware of the fact that "I think your [older generation's] world is coming to an end, and maybe you with it" (Butler 48). She counters the one person that she holds dear the most; her father when she founds her own religion because her father is a preacher and she opposes her father's whole way of life. However, to be able to display such a courage might mean that she is on a path she really finds meaningful as she points out that "I'm trying to speak— to write— the truth" (79). It can be regarded that Lauren desires to discover a fresh way to adapt to the circumstances of the new system of the world instead of repetition of the old acts and wait for a different

outcome. Both books introduce the readers with the difference between generations and their attitudes after the apocalypse via distinct narrators one from the previous generation, the other from the post-apocalyptic generation. New generations in both books are interpreted as abandoning the previous social structures governed mainly principles based on humanism and its centralisation in human beings and their interests. In *The Ice People*, the escape of the wild children is rendered as that "They were working life out for themselves again, running wild; living wild" (Gee 231), and Lauren in *Parable of the Sower* talks about her thoughts regarding a new religion as inescapable and that "In spite of what my father will say or do to me, in spite of the poisonous rottenness outside the wall where I might be exiled, I'll have to do something about it" (Butler 22).

The Ice People presents a tremendously segregated community regarding gender. The conflict between genders brings out troubles in politics, technology, relationships, raising children. These unresolved issues lead to "a widening gap between the old generation and the youth as one of the indicators of a society disconnecting" (Kılıç 172). The youth escape from their families to wild and become "wild children" because "They didn't want Role Support or Wicca Wisdom" (Gee 231). The Role Support is a government office established due to the need that "boys and girls have to be taught to get on together" according to previous administration, and Wicca Wisdom aims to "shield our children from 'robot perverts'" (150), DOVE obsessed men. These wild children did not want "any of the crutches we [their parents] deemed essential" (231). They are called wild because they live on the principle of survival only with basic needs. The older generations react to this incident with shock: "The escape of the children, all over the world, was the strangest thing about the coming of the ice" (172). However, the motive of the wild children can be understood quite well as they fed up with generated problems of their families' values such as gender roles, power dynamics and hierarchy: "They didn't want Role Support or Wicca Wisdom or any of the crutches we deemed essential. They didn't want to be smothered by their mothers" (231) as explained by Saul too. Especially, in Luke's case, it can be observed that he is "traumatised by his mother's earlier attempts to chemically castrate him and by his father's attempts to culturally Africanize him" (Milner and Burgmann 94). *The Ice People* displays "parental conflicts against a background of climate devastation" (Evans 105) regarding Luke's situation. Those artificial problems are not easy to grasp

for the children of the apocalypse and such complications between adults might all seem quite distant for them because they were born into a world where there are scarce sources with no social, economic or political order as in the sense that their parents have exposed to before the apocalypse. Luke cannot comprehend why his parents try so hard to attract his attention to live with one of them and accommodate himself according to that parent's way of life because he does not have a clear picture of a family portrait on his way to protect himself one more day from the ice cold. When he encounters one of "the salvajes", Luke asks Saul why they think these children are bad:

> *'It's because they grew up without decent parents. They never lived in a family, like you did. So – anything goes, for them.'*
>
> *'You mean, they're starting again? From scratch?'*
>
> *'Yes –' But I didn't like his intonation. 'Luke. They're not a good thing, you know.'* (Gee 290)

In this conversation between Luke and Saul, rather than listening to the tales of the past, children want to focus on the real problems of their own reality, their own present: to survive. Family ties and conflicts between genders, "the standards of the old paradigm based on differences and divisions" (Kılıç 172) seem unnecessary in the face of harsh reality of survival. Therefore, their escape is meaningful for these children so that they can have a chance for adaptation to recent changes of the earth. However, their families struggle to admit that their children escape and cannot perceive how big this situation is while unable to comprehend the motives of these children's escape:

> *We thought it was nothing, a fiveminute wonder, we hoped they were Wanderers who happened to be young ... The escaping Doves took up all our attention. And yet there were probably ten times as many children. We were too afraid to take it in. The wild boys and girls. The breakaways. Some of them the children of Outsiders and Wanderers who didn't know who their parents were, but many more of them Insider children whose parents couldn't admit they were gone.* (Gee 231)

The discrimination against the Outsiders continues through their children too as if their lives are not valuable enough to consider because they do not have any information about their parents and their upbringing is not in a family like the Insiders. Gee offers a great point for two extreme ends of the society: gathering of their children in the wild. The new generation does not follow the way of their ancestors and does not

recognise their ways of division in the communities. The children leave their parents, their houses, the cultural and social values that their parents hold on to even after the apocalypse and aspire to leave as a legacy. Nonetheless, the new generation does not find any of these meaningful alongside the reality of the "cold, cold, battering cold, cold that howls and bites and burns, cold we shrink from like an enemy" (62). The wild children do not even bother themselves to utilise from words; instead many use "some wordless wildboy oath" (323) to communicate with one another. Saul thinks that "the truths of my life, my long strange life in the twenty first century" would be considered as "stupid. Incomprehensible. Pointless quarrels, unnecessary problems." for these children since "simple is best, for the wild boys" (232). At the end, Saul sees a time when everything human beings have created and given meaning does not mean anything to the ice people who have survived and become one with the world to be able to understand and live their lives according to the ice-cold days. Saul confesses how the will to survive surpasses any cultural artifact even the most important one that human beings assume since it is what differs them from the nonhuman: the language:

> *I long for someone who knows what words mean. My mother loved them; my father too. In the new Days, people don't risk words. If you open your mouth, the ice blows in, hurting the teeth no dentists care for. Drying your throat. Piercing your soul. Filling your heart with loneliness. Best keep the old words close to your chest ... They don't hurt me if I write them down.* (Gee 64)

The opening of the story gives the impression that Saul desires to be remembered and gives a lesson to next generations who might encounter his writings related to "the new white world that has come upon us. For whoever will read it. For whoever can read" (9). However, he later discerns that words signify nothing if there is no one to receive your message. Saul keeps writing for his own sake giving up hope for anyone that will understand him or even be able to know how to read.

> *To say 'I lost hope' is not the whole truth. I gave up hope of reclaiming him. I gave up hope of ever completing my dream voyage to Africa. Taking Luke back to Samuel's land. Completing the circle I'd drawn in my head. The serpent with its tail in its mouth. I thought that circle meant something precious, but maybe to Luke it was prison, incest ... Children always have different dreams. I gave up hope of 'saving' him. Perhaps it was the salvajes who saved him.* (311)

Saul confesses that he has a pre-planned future for Luke with his own ideal without allowing him to voice his wishes. His attitude is complicated because he wastes a lot

of his life and his son's life to this intention. Their family with Sarah has been separated for the sake of "the circle" that he desires to accomplish to express gratitude to his ancestors or to impress his son. However, his obsession with the past does not correspond to the plans of Luke who is more inclined to live for the future. When Saul realises that he is near death, he confesses that "maybe I outlived my use" and "It's his [Luke and wild children's] turn now. The Days of the children" (323). The older generation ironically gives the path to the younger one on their death bed as if death was their choice to send them to the wild, and the adults want to see themselves as the endowers of the future for the next generation with their consent.

In *Parable of the Sower*, Lauren is raised in the post-apocalyptic world order. She has a big family with her siblings, and a father who is a preacher and her step mother. Her biological mother has died because of the excessive use of drugs and she inherits hyper-empathy, an "organic delusional syndrome" (Butler 13), as a side effect of these drugs that her mother used when she was pregnant with Lauren. They live in a walled community in the ruins of the previous life while trying to protect each other from everything and everyone behind those walls. Lauren is expected to be married to someone who can be suitable for her family and have children like many of the girls in the community. However, these are expected of girls as if everything was normal and everyone should get married in a community of small number of people and brought up children in such a world where nothing can be predicted, and life depends mainly on getting by the day with scarce water and resources. Lauren is also critical about such expectations and people who follow through such paths:

> *But my point isn't who's sleeping with whom or who's feuding. My point is— my question is— how in the world can anyone get married and make babies with things the way they are now. I mean, I know people have always gotten married and had kids, but now... . Now there's nowhere to go, nothing to do. A couple gets married, and if they're lucky, they get a room or a garage to live in—with no hope of anything better and every reason to expect things to get worse.* (59)

Her question presents the gap between the older and younger generation in the post-apocalyptic reality of the world. *Parable of the Sower* can also be in "the category of the female bildungsroman, or female novel of self-awakening and self-fulfillment" since it "demonstrates how Octavia Butler makes use of this genre, while combining it with specific religious overtones, to describe the ascent to divine status of a young,

half African-American, half Mexican-American woman" (Andreolle 119). Lauren tries to cut her ties with all the predetermined values of the past marriage, raising children, obeying the older generation while establishing her own religion so that this world would be worth living with newly adjusted values suitable for the new order. She does not possess any hope with the way things are because older generations stubbornly try to carry out a social organisation very similar to their previous lives. However, they always have difficulty to sustain the social organisation since nothing is the same. The baptism ceremony can show how unreasonable the older generation can get to be able to experience something from the past. Her father's insistence "on fresh, clean, potable water for the baptism. He couldn't afford" appears to be absurd for Lauren but older ones "thought a proper baptism was important enough to spend some money and take some risks" (13). The new generation only sees the baptism as "a kind of insurance, but most of us aren't that much concerned with religion" (10). The line between the new generation and the previous one is quite distinct here. The new generation has been raised in a world where "You're supposed to be dirty now. If you're clean, you make a target of yourself" because there is not enough water to keep oneself clean daily and "water now costs several times as much as gasoline" (15). Therefore, to waste scarce resources for the memories of the past brings criticism from the new generation with the indication that it is high time that the previous generation should either adapt to the new system of the world or wait for their end. The new generation is aware of the fact that "Our adults haven't been wiped out by a plague so they're still anchored in the past, waiting for the good old days to come back" (46). However, Lauren points to the importance of adaptation in her religious verses too: "Adaptations that an intelligent species may make in a single generation, other species make over many generations of selective breeding and selective dying. Yet intelligence is demanding" (23). To indicate intelligence as demanding can be a criticism of the older generation because they are not eager to adapt to new environment as they are too old to carry out such "demanding" tasks.

The abundance results in wastefulness; however, the scarcity does not reverse it since people persevere to keep their habits just to feel superior against nature as in the previous golden days of human exceptionalism. Such inconsistency again creates reaction in the post-apocalyptic generation leading them to become distant even to their parents. Lauren establishes her religion, Earthseed, to be able to base her

questionings on a more reliable base than the past. She has the aim "to pry them [the older] loose from the rotting past, and maybe push them into saving themselves and building a future that makes sense" (56) in her religious teachings. This religion is "constituted by a Darwinian recognition of the eternal flux of life" but also with "a post- Darwinian attempt to seize control of that flux and put it toward human ends" (Canavan 9). The fixation of protecting the community at all costs eventually leads to Lauren's father's death. Lauren does not want to accept this as a living when she points out that "Every time I go outside, I try to imagine what it might be like to live out there without walls, and I realize I don't know anything" (46). She is "glad we're still in space. We have to be going some place other than down the toilet", and this makes her more hopeful to find a better place outside the earth ""Mars is … heaven in a way. … a whole other world, but too nearby, too close within the reach of the people who've made such a hell of life here on Earth" (18). Although she does not trust the politicians, she supports the space program so that she can have something else than repeating the same actions while expecting different results. She associates her religion with such a promise too: "The Destiny of Earthseed Is to take root among the stars" (58).

As a member of the post-apocalyptic generation, Lauren is eager to change herself, her community, her way of life since she has only experienced the worst; therefore, she is not afraid that circumstances can get worse than this. She establishes a religion, a new perspective in the form of a religion focused on the principle of change. Stubborn older generations seem to practice useless things for the sake of the values of the past such as using the scarcely found water for a holy ceremony or implementation of futile gender roles making women prisoners of their homes, and even "politicians have been promising to return us to the glory, wealth, and order of the twentieth century" (17). These are not beneficial for anyone, and the repetition of the past as if it was possible to return back leads to a nonsense way of living with the ghosts of the past.

Lauren names the book of her religion as "Earthseed: The Book of the Living" since "there are the Tibetan and the Egyptian Books of the Dead. Dad has copies of them. I've never heard of anything called a book of the living" (79). This title suggests a hint for her approach and aim in life, and those cannot be associated with the dead memories of the past, instead, it can be related to "devising an alternative civilisation to the modern one that has collapsed into chaos" (Kaup 201). Lauren is not content

with such a yearning perspective for the past, and following the death of all her family members she cannot find anything to hold on to or hide her own truth so that no one would get hurt. She creates her own path with the people she chooses as to be valuable on her way to north; in a way, the book "presents an interesting double quest centered on the protagonist/narrator Lauren Olamina, composed of an exterior, physical journey and an interior, spiritual voyage of formation" (Andreolle 119) through her expedition to north and her religious writings of the verses of the Earthseed. She reaches to a place and decides "to call this place Acorn" (Butler 195), another seed just like she embraces as the name of her religion. To use the seed in the name of the religion, and the new place that they have moved to can indicate how bounded Lauren feels towards soil, and planting seeds on the ground means waiting for goods just as she plants her hopes for the future to make the new order of the world a worth living.

Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* display differences in generations in terms of the scope of their lives and their exposure to the previous orders of the worlds before the apocalypse. The space between generations widens, and their endurance to one another, especially the younger generation's toleration to the older decreases with every hint related to past or any stubbornness to maintain things as the way in the past. Luke in *The Ice People* chooses to join the salvajes, or the wild children who are "starting again? From scratch" (Gee 290). Lauren, on the other hand, establishes a new religion: Earthseed whose aim is the explanation of "what God is, what God does, what we are, what we should do, what we can't help doing" (Butler 56). She centralises her religious teaching on change since she believes that "Whether you're a human being, an insect, a microbe, or a stone, this verse is true. 'All that you touch, You Change. / All that you Change Changes you. / The only lasting truth Is Change. God Is Change.'" (56). Both novels present the generation with the experience of the previous system and their inability to adapt. However, the new generations focus their attention to exist in this recent system as there is no other that they have been accustomed to. Their choice of path to follow as descendants of technocracies is claimed to be a critique of their ancestors with their obsession of the past and to pursue the values of the past even if they are not applicable anymore since Luke chooses a simpler way of life concentrating on the principles of survival while Lauren leaves both physically and spiritually the older generations legacy as she travels to north for a new chance while laying the foundations of her own religion. It can be deduced that older generations

become affected by the collapse of the society and humanist values poorly since they are the structures those people are accustomed to. However, the new generations in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* are more adaptable in their lives and welcome new possibilities since they are raised in an order where there is no place to rest and relax; instead, survival is the main race of their everyday lives. Therefore, the contrastive images of generations constitute a posthumanist approach in the societies of these novels as a result of their post-apocalyptic contexts.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, Maggie Gee's *The Ice People* and Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of The Sower* have been analysed as post-apocalyptic novels through a posthumanist perspective to criticise Anthropocene in these novels' contexts due to their human exclusivity and the effect of humanism in the collapse of societies in the aftermath of apocalypses. The narrative choices and the post-apocalyptic contexts of the novels are explored with a critical stance towards the Anthropocene epoch, its applicability, and its insufficiencies in the post-apocalyptic circumstances of *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. Characters' questioning of what is to be a human and their place in a post-apocalyptic environment lay bare the aspects that has been discussed in a posthumanist attitude while centralising the arguments around agency, human-culture-nature relationship.

Post-apocalyptic world orders in both novels reveal unprecedented problems for the characters in an environment that is inhospitable towards them. Thus, the characters begin to question their value as human beings and the humanist promise of "the almost boundless capacity of humans to pursue their individual and collective perfectibility" (Braidotti 2) since they face conditions that they are not capable of altering them in favour of human species. Posthumanism as a theoretical base provides the perspective that problematises "cultural representations, power relations and discourses that have historically situated the human above other life forms, and in control of them" (Nayar 13) and to present "alternative ways of conceptualizing the human subject" (Braidotti 37) in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* in this thesis. These novels are examined as the scenes of the aftermath of an apocalypse. "The cooling of the climate" (Gee 310) and its sudden turn into "a new ice age" (58) can be accepted as the apocalypse for the characters in *The Ice People*. In *Parable of the Sower*, "the warming climate and there is the occasional earthquake" with other natural disasters especially winds are the reasons that lead to apocalypse and derange the world order that people

have previously known. Both novels present the stories of societies which have undergone a huge change due to natural disasters that they have not been able to prevent although their previous world orders seem quite advanced scientifically and technologically.

In this thesis, the Anthropocene is utilised as a theoretical perspective to be criticised in post-apocalyptic fictions, *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* which present stories in which humanity has progressed to a point where they exploit anything that is nonhuman or others on such an alarming level that this might contribute to a catastrophe for their species in return. The Anthropocene proposal puts humans "back into a central role on Earth" (Ellis 33) and this period can be summarised as "the human ability to influence and transform the planetary system" (Arias-Maldonado 73). Therefore, *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* present settings that criticise the Anthropocene. These novels' use of diary format in the storytelling and the narrators, Saul and Lauren, can be seen as an anthropic approach considering their role as the first-person human narrators. However, those actually help reveal the controversial issues in their societies and human-centred attitudes in post-apocalyptic contexts. Diary as a format offers an intimate view of the post-apocalyptic world for the reader since the narrators can reveal their true feelings and reactions towards world changing society devastating situations that they have been experiencing. Saul condemns human beings for always attempting to predict "the future" (Gee 10) and calls them "Self-deluders. Wishful thinkers" (10) when he reminisces the past and realises how human beings have been mistaken. Lauren criticises "the people who've made such a hell of life here on Earth" (Butler 18) as she tries to find fresh ways to start a life that is more suitable for the new order. The use of first-person human narration as a result of diary format can be seen as a reflection of humanist perspective; however, such a perspective also provides controversial anthropic aspects of societies in both novels through Saul and Lauren's encounters. Saul criticises people while remembering the old days "How tiny shades of wants and wishes made us fight, and sob, and part. How humans had everything, and valued nothing" (Gee 61) during the harsh reality of the ice age surrounded by the wild children. Lauren cites from her conversation with a friend during their journey to the north: "Human beings are good at creating hells for themselves even out of richness" (Butler 170). Both Saul and Lauren as human beings tell their stories with a tool, language, that is accepted mainly to be used by human

beings, but they do not reinforce the idea that human beings are the measure for all. Instead, this study claims that the analysis of diaries of Saul and Lauren through critical posthumanism present how inadequate human beings can be in the face of a catastrophe.

Through such intimate diaries, the readers are presented with bigger issues in societies such as infertility in *The Ice People* and drug addiction in *Parable of the Sower*, and the problematic reasons or solutions to those matters. This study claims that medical interventions in the novels can serve as a criticism of the Anthropocene since these interventions lead to unexpected results and these results become irreversible. Techfix babies are the solutions for the "semifertile sperm" (Gee 48) in *The Ice People* and it results in children that look "thin and pale as a child of glass" (69) having "asthma" and "allergies, because of all the drugs" (69) that is prescribed to enhance his weak organ systems due to their condition as technologically developed babies in laboratories. *Parable of the Sower* presents some medicines described as "the smart pill, the Einstein powder" (Butler 13) "intended to help victims of Alzheimer's disease" (92) at first, but then "screws around with people's neurochemistry" (92). Through a posthumanist perspective, these interferences to supposedly the perfect body of human beings according to humanism lead to a critique of humanism since these bodies seem faulty as they cannot procreate in *The Ice People* and have dysfunctional parts in brain in *Parable of the Sower*.

Also, this study states that the solutions to these problems present another critique of humanist perspective because the solutions are the results of supposedly the limitless capacity of the human perfectibility, but they also bring out unprecedented issues such as permanent diseases in tech-fix babies and drug addicts possessing dangerous side effects for themselves and the society. Posthumanism argues that human beings are not exclusive species that can comprehend and tackle every problem on earth; instead, posthumanism places human beings alongside all the nonhuman and non-living. These novels also put women as the object of such interferences because Sarah gets pregnant with the tech-fix baby and lives through complications before, during and after the birth in *The Ice People* and Lauren's biological mother is mentioned as a drug addict before and during her pregnancy and how this leads to a dysfunction in Lauren, hyper-empathy in *Parable of the Sower*. This thesis asserts that these novels display the limits

of human beings' capacity in science and technology by making their contexts criticisms of the arrogance of humanist perspective while also reinforcing the ideal image of human being as the man by placing the women as the object of these medical interventions.

The main scenes in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* are post-apocalyptic contexts, yet they differ from one another in terms of the scope of timeline covered throughout the narration. *The Ice People* displays the world order before the apocalypse, during the catastrophe and the post-apocalyptic circumstance; however, *Parable of the Sower* only presents the aftermath of the apocalypse. These differences in the scope of their timeline are analysed to be an opposition of the assignment of human beings as the main actors of the world. *The Ice People* initially shows that the society is in a heating world and later the scientists start warning about a new ice age. However, they continue their lives with temporary solutions such as cooling of their homes and workplaces through technology during the rise of the temperatures around the world. This politicians in the society also believe that they can come up with a solution for the approaching ice age too. Nonetheless, they could not estimate the extent and speed of this ice age, and it turns into an apocalypse. *Parable of the Sower*, on the other hand, only presents the world after the apocalypse which consists of series of events from the climate change to earthquakes. Lauren blames that "People have changed the climate of the world" (Butler 46) and criticises that they still look back for the good old days. Although being stuck in the post-apocalyptic hostile new world, people cannot learn from their mistakes and look for a better future; instead, they keep the spirit of the old in their ceremonies such as baptism by using the scarce resources of water. Both novels fall short of estimating the apocalypses that they have undergone though seeing their societies as advanced in science and technology which help comprehending the world around them. Both of these contexts are discussed to be a criticism of the Anthropocene in the study for assigning human beings in the role of planet shapers since the effects of nonhuman and nature in general cannot be ignored in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*.

The societies and their long-lasting principles governed around humanism are the first and foremost affected structures for human beings after an apocalypse in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* because societies base themselves on abstract yet

enforced ideas of humanism which results in discrimination of human beings that confront "the idea of the human as defined by Western models of knowledge" (Marchand and Stratman 401). However, these novels present structures that cannot only be related to the effect of the apocalypse that they have undergone; instead, they have hierarchal structures resulting from some implicit and explicit conducts in the societies based on gender, race and economic power. Those conducts are carried out even after an apocalypse while evoking a route for a posthumanist criticism of such acts. *The Ice People* displays Saul and Sarah's relationship as an indicator of the segregation in the society based on genders because Saul desires to maintain a patriarchal order in which Sarah plays the role of a mother and wife. However, the genders also become separated in terms of their approach towards technology and men get attached to robots while women start hating these robots. The other reason for segregation is the economic power since the society consists of two levels: the Insiders and the Outsiders. The Insiders can benefit from technology while meeting their needs such as accommodation or food through their jobs. The Outsiders live literally outside of technology driven cities by feeding themselves off the leftovers of the Insiders without any place to live and earn money.

Parable of the Sower displays a society in the aftermath of the apocalypse where women are not allowed to work but men continue earning money if they can find suitable jobs for their education or talents. Also, Lauren's father serves as a small example of the bigger frame of gender segregation in his orders to keep the drug addict mother as a family business and not even allowing her name to be mentioned. This society is also segregated in terms of economic power in three main ranks: the rich, the small walled communities and the street poor. The gap between each ranks becomes so wide that the rich can feed their dogs with precious meat but the walled communities adopt dirtiness as fashion due to scarce water resources while the street poor dies because they do not have any technological means to get the warning news from authorities regarding any upcoming natural disaster. This thesis claims that the apocalypse is not the main reasons for the harsh segregation and hierarchy in the societies of both novels. Instead, this study criticises humanism and its long-lasted principles that discriminate non-human alongside other humans since they do not fulfil the ideal human of the western humanist perspective. It is argued in this study that segregation of societies becomes more obvious due to the apocalypse although they

are expected to come together for the survival of their species. However, through a posthumanist approach, the hierarchy and the effort to keep a few privileged ones in their previous spoiled lifestyles even after world-changing occasions in these novels are claimed to reveal that humanism is not able to adequately represent even humanity with all its components.

Segregations in societies are not only presented in terms of the gender or wealth-based principles, both novels give the reader a chance to observe the reactions of the younger and older generations to the apocalypse and their plans for a future following such a catastrophe. The younger generations response are observed firstly with Saul's son Luke in *The Ice People* and then with Lauren as an adolescent in a post-apocalyptic environment in *Parable of the Sower*.

Luke abandons both his mother and father in the midst of their arguments to offer him the best possible life. He joins the wild children who live without any rules implemented by the authorities or their families. The principle of life for the wild children is simple: to survive. Lauren criticises the religion that his father works as a servant for and the walled community outside which she cannot even picture herself. Her aim becomes leaving them both; the religion and the walled community. She establishes a religion based on the inevitability of change so that she can spiritually get away from the past to be able to focus on creating a better future. Lauren also starts an expedition to the north so that she can physically move beyond the borders to have another chance for a new life in the new order of the world. This study asserts that the difference in the reactions of the generations reveals a new perspective to discuss the social, political or economic structures that rule the countries basing themselves mainly on the principles of humanism and their inapplicability in the face of world-altering disaster because new generations intend to leave that previous basis to be able to adapt themselves to a life embracing the coexistence of human beings with nonhuman and the need to adapt oneself to change to be able to survive by presenting a posthumanist approach.

To discuss *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* through a posthumanist perspective reveals that post-apocalyptic fiction generates a context for the examination of humanist values as the post-apocalyptic environment itself destroys

the societies which centralise their values to favour of a few who are seen as the norm in these novels. The life following a world destructing event in both novels are discussed to present a critique of the Anthropocene in the sense that it locates people as the ultimate agent, the controller of the planet since the circumstances of *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* display that societies are aware or see themselves as having the capacity to be aware of the damage that they give to their environment. However, their greed and naïve expectation that nature is like a nonstop clock that human beings can benefit from lead to unforeseen disasters. To assign the role of planet shapers to human beings seems ironic in such situations by leading the discussion to dethroning of human beings from their place as the ultimate agents of humanism and the Anthropocene. These novels demonstrate societies that are not only affecting and exploiting the nonhuman via their technological, scientific or political methods, they also influence their societies in irreversible ways leading to highly segregated communities in several aspects such as race, gender, wealth and disengagement of older and younger generations in their response and acts against the hostile world. The segregation of societies reaches to a level that even an apocalypse cannot bring the human as species together; rather, it makes the gap between each rank wider. This study affirms that the apocalypse is not the main separator of these societies; but humanism is since the ideals of humanism for human beings fall short of involving all human beings without focusing on their gender, race and wealth.

Future research on these two novels can foreground issues related to race and its implications in a fictional future in *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower*. There can also be discussions related to the segregation of human beings and machine in *The Ice People* through the relationship of men with homer-robots, DOVEs, via shifting the discussion towards techfix babies and their place between these two by questioning the ethics in machine-oriented societies. There can also be a religion focused investigation of *Parable of the Sower* by comparing the teachings of the Earthseed and the bible, and human beings' need to have a higher power to look up to in times of despair. Both *The Ice People* and *Parable of the Sower* can also be analysed via a critical feminist approach and discuss the attempts to return to the patriarchal values following an apocalypse by focusing on the female characters and their struggles alongside their effort to survive in post-apocalyptic worlds.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, Maggie'nin *The Ice People* (1998) ve Octavia E. Butler'ın *Parable of the Sower* (1993) romanlarını kıyamet sonrası kurguları olarak ele alarak Antroposen çağda insan edimi, insan merkezci yaklaşımların etkileri ve bu iki romandaki öngörülemeyen sonuçlarıyla teknolojik ve bilimsel olayları posthümanist açıdan inceler. Kıyamet sonrası kurguların Antroposen olarak nitelendirilen çağa dair yetersizlikleri ortaya çıkardığını savunarak insan edimi sorunlarına, doğanın ve evrenin değişkenliğine dikkat çeker. Bu iki romanında kıyamete doğru giden toplumlardan ziyade yaşanan büyük felaket sonrası toplumların iyileşme, değişme ya değiştirme çabalarına odaklanmasının hümanist değerler olarak kabul edilen soyut ideallerin ve onların dolaylı olarak toplumda yarattığı ikiliği eleştirmeye zemin hazırladığını tartışır. Her ne kadar Antroposen çağ insanların gezegeni değiştirecek etkiye ya da güce sahip olduğunu belirtse de *The Ice People* ve *Parable of the Sower*'daki kıyamet sonrası bağlamları yalnızca insanların bu kadar geniş bir etkiye sahip olmasının mümkün olmadığına dair olaylar içermektedir. Günlük tarzında yazılmış bu iki roman görünürde demokratik ve teknolojik anlamda gelişmiş toplumları sergilese de kıyamet sonrası geçirdikleri zorlayıcı değişimler yaşadıkları gezegenleri özellikle insan türü için iyileşmesi imkansız hale getirmiştir. İnsan etkisinin tamamen yok sayılamayacağını da belirterek bu tez, hümanist yaklaşımlar sonucu yalnızca insanlara atfedilen eylemlilik, karar verme ve uygulama yetisinin çok daha geniş kapsamlı anlamda gezegende karşılığı olması gerektiğini önererek insan merkezci ve diğer-dışlayıcı yaklaşımları eleştirir.

Maggie Gee 1948'de doğmuş bir İngiliz yazardır. 1982'de yılında, 20 En İyi Genç Britanyalı Romancılardan biri olmuştur. Sıradan günlük konuları işlediği romanlarında çok daha geniş bağlamlardaki yoksulluk, iklim değişikliği, nükleer

silahlanma gibi küresel sorunlara dikkat çeker. *The Ice People* (1998), 2050li yıllarda geçen dünyanın yeni bir buzul çağa girdiği bir romandır. Roman ana karakteri Saul'un kendini tanıtmasıyla başlar ve daha sonrasında onun günlüğü olarak ilerleyerek okuyucu olaylara tanık eder. Saul bir insan ömrü içerisinde pek çoğundan daha fazla olay ve değişime tanıklık ettiğini belirterek bunları kendi insanlarımın hikayelerini aktarmalıyım diyerek kendine bir görev atfeder.

Kitabın ilk kısmında okuyucu teknolojik olarak gelişmiş bir toplumda sıcaklığın yükselmesi sonucu yaşanan iklim değişikliği ve insanların bununla baş etmesine tanık olur. Gün geçtikçe artan sıcaklığı durdurabilmek için bilim insanları çözümler ararken toplum içerisinde teknoloji sayesinde geliştirilmiş sınırlı çözümler göze çarpar. İşyerlerinde soğutma devrededir, evlerde insanlar soğutma sistemleri olanları tercih etmeye çalışır. Ancak bu kurgusal İngiltere toplumunun tamamında geçerli değil ve dünya çapındaki diğer toplumlarda da durum teknoloji ile geçici sonuçlarla bir nebze olsun durdurulabilmiş değildir.

Romanın bu kısmında toplumsal hiyerarşi göze çarparak kurgusal İngiltere içerisindeki "Insiders/Outsiders" yani İçeridekiler ve Dışarıdakiler ayrımı göze çarpar. İçeridekiler teknolojiden faydalanarak normal görünen yaşamlara sahip olabiliyor, işlerine gidip hayatlarını sürdürmek adına gelir elde edebiliyorken Dışarıdakiler herhangi bir şekilde bir iş ya da eve sahip değiller. Bu nedenle Dışarıdakiler ısınan dünyadan en kötü şekilde etkilenen kısmı oluyor toplumun. İçeridekilere geri dönecek olursak onlar da belli numaraların isim yerine kendilerine atandığı dev teknolojik iş yerlerinde çalışan, yaşamlarında ciddi değişiklikler yapabilecek bir özgürlüğe sahip olmadığı gözlemlenen insanlar. Yani İçeridekiler teknoloji sayesinde yaşanan iklim değişikliğinden çok fazla etkilenmese de sunulan fırsatlar nedeniyle kısıtlanmış bir hayat düzenine sahipler. İçeridekiler için kitabın ilk kısmındaki en büyük sorun kısırlık. Saul ve partneri Sarah bununla ilgili destek alırlar. Çocuk sahibi olmak büyük bir sosyal ve politik bir sorun olarak dikkat çekiyor çünkü politikacılar seçimler öncesinde insanlara doğurganlık istatistiklerini nasıl artıracaklarına dair vaatlerde bulunarak seçimi kazanmayı amaçlıyor. Doğurganlık klinikleri bilimsel müdahalelerle insanların çocuk sahibi olmasını sağladıklarını vaat etseler de hem insanlarda hem de doğan çocuklarda olumsuz sonuçlar olduğunu bizzat deneyimler Saul ve Sarah. Bu sorunlarla baş ederken toplum, bilim insanları yaklaşmakta olan bir buzul çağdan

bahsetmeye başlar ancak politikacılar bunu görmezden gelir, çözüm için zamanları olacaklarını öne sürerek göz görerek bir buzul çağın gelişi izlenir. Saul karakteri buzul çağ dönemine dair kendini hazırlıklı hisseder ve daha öncesinde yok saymak üzerine kurguladığı babası tarafından Afrikalı olduğu gerçeceğini bir kurtuluş olarak görür çünkü Afrika toplumları buzul çağ ile daha yaşanabilir kara parçalarına dönüşmüştür. Kitabın son kısmında Saul ve Sarah'nın problemleri toplumdaki kadın erkek ayrımı tartışmalarına ışık tutarken bir yandan da yaşadıkları sorunlarla çocukları Luke'u maruz bıraktıkları uygulamarı okuyucuya gösterir. Saul, Afrika üzerinden ulaşacağı kurtuluş için Luke'u yanında tutmak isterken uzun bir yolculuğa çıkarlar. Yol üzerinde yaşadıkları şeyler karakterlere toplum ve insanlığa dair kıyamet sonrası bağlamda ilginç sorgulamalar yaşatır.

Octavia E. Butler ödüllü bir Afro-Amerikan yazardır. 1947 yılında doğmuş ve 2006 yılında vefat etmiş olan yazar, bilim kurgu türündeki beyaz ve erkek egemenliğini yıkarak türde öne çıkan bir yazara dönüşmüştür. Bilim kurgu yoluyla geleceğin insanlık türünün küçük bir kısmına ait olmadığına dair bağlamlar sunmuştur. *Parable of The Sower* (1993), Parable serisi kitaplarında ilkidir. 2024 yılında Lauren isimli karakterin günlüğü olarak başlayan roman kıyamet sonrası bir toplumdaki karakterin anıları ve dini öğretilerinin karışımı halinde devam ediyor. Lauren 15 yaşındaki bir genç kız olarak kendi dinini kurduğunu ve buna Earthseed () adını verdiğini belirtir. Küçük ve etrafı duvarla çevrili bir toplumda yaşayan Lauren ve anıları üzerinden okuyucu toplumda yaşanan zorluklar, toplumun farklı kesimleri, fiziksel çatışmalar ve Lauren'ın toplumla ayrışan fikirleri ile kendi içerisinde yaşadığı çatışmalara tanık olur. Lauren yaşanan yıkım sonrası yeni bir kurtuluş için neler yapabileceğine dair planlar yaparken bir yandan da toplumda yaşanan kadın erkek ayrımı, farklı hiyerarşik sınıflar arasındaki sorunlar, madde bağımlılığı gibi konuları anıları yoluyla anlatır. Babası bir din görevlisi olan Lauren onunla içsel çatışmalar yaşayarak kurduğu dinin temellendirmesini geleceğe dayandırır. Lauren kıyamet öncesi düzene dair anıları olmadığından yeni düzeni ancak değişim odaklı bakış açısıyla kurabileceğini belirterek toplumun geçmişe sıkı sıkıya bağlı kalmaya çalışan kesimlerini eleştirir. Kitabın son bölümlerinde, Lauren'ın kuzeye doğru çıktığı yolda yaşadığı toplumdan hem fiziksel hem de ruhsal anlamda ayrılışına tanıklık ederken kuracağı yeni düzenin yolunda karşılaştığı sorunlara tanıklık edilir.

Maggie Gee'nin *The Ice People* ve Octavia E. Butler'ın *Parable of the Sower* romanları posthümanist teori çerçevesinde tartışmak için önemli noktalar sunuyor. Günümüzde yaşanan insan-teknoloji-gezegen ilişkisi üzerine tartışmalar ve bunlar sonucu insanın gezegendeki yeri, davranışlarının etkisi ve doğanın öngörülemeyen tepkileri konularındaki sorgulamalara yeni bir bakış açısı sunabilecek iki roman olarak incelenmiştir.

Kıyamet sonrası kurgulu romanlar genellikle yaşamaya elverişli olmayan bir dünya düzeni sunar ya da nükleer savaş, pandemic, iklim değişikliği gibi insan hayatına büyük etki eden olayların sonrasında yaşamı konu alır. Bu çalışmada, bu romanların kıyamet sonrası olması özellikle önemli görülür çünkü büyük bir kıyametle yok olup biten bir dünyayla en azından keskin bir son anlayışına ulaşılabilecekken kıyamet sonrası eski ve yeni dünya arasındaki ikililiklerin sınırlarını bulandırır. Keskin bir çizgiyle geleceğe bakmak yerine yaşamın devam ettiği ancak insanı insan yaptığı sanılan pek çok şeyin artık olmadığı dünya düzenleri öne sürer. Hem *The Ice People* hem de *Parable of the Sower* romanlarında kıyamet insanlar için sonu ifade etmiyor. Bunun yerine, yeni ancak pek de dostane bir dünya sunmayan bir düzen sunuyor.

Bu çalışmada posthümanist teori ana çerçeveyi sunuyor. Posthümanizm ya da eleştirel posthümanizm insanın dünyadaki geleneksel üstün yerini yıkıp hümanizme eleştirel açıdan yaklaşıyor. Posthümanist teori bireyselliği öne sürüp insan, doğa, diğerlerinin ilişkilerini yok saydığı için hümanizmi eleştiriyor. Bu çalışma posthümanizmi temel alarak romanlardaki kıyamet sonrası bağlamların nasıl humanism eleştirisi olarak görülebileceğini inceler.

Antroposen çağ son yıllarda dünya üzerinde yaşanan değişimlerin sorumlusu olarak insanı gören bir bakış açısı. Bu anlayışa göre insanlar gezegen şekillendirici olarak nitelendiriliyor. Ancak bu bakış açısı tıpkı hümanist anlayış gibi insan merkezli bir bakış açısı sunmakta ve dünyada yaşanan olayların insan, diğer canlı türleri, cansız türler ve daha pek çok değişkene bağlı olduğunu görmezden geliyor. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma ikinci bölümünde Antroposen çağ olarak nitelendiren bakış açısına eleştirel bir açıdan yaklaşarak insanın etkisinin ne kadar olabileceği, nerelerde Antroposen bakış açısının yetersiz kalabileceğini *The Ice People* ve *Parable of the Sower* romanları bağlamlarında inceler.

İki roman da birinci tekil insan anlatıcılarla yazılmış günlükler olarak karşımıza çıkar. Her ne kadar bu seçim insan merkezci gibi görünse de aslında kıyamet sonrası kurguları ve anlatıcılarının bağlamlarındaki ele aldıkları toplumları eleştirmeleriyle posthumanist bir kurgu sunuyor. Saul, *The Ice People* romanın anlatıcısı; Lauren da *Parable of the Sower* romanının anlatıcısıdır. İnsan anlatıcılar seçerek dil yoluyla bir olayı aktarmak hümanist bir seçim olabilir ancak posthümanist açıdan bakıldığında iki anlatıcı da bilim ya da insani yetileriyle anlamlandırıp çözümlendiremedikleri bir dünya düzeni içerisinde yer almaktadırlar. Bu çalışma, kıyamet sonrası kurgu ve bu düzende anlatıcılarının yaşadıkları zorluklarla toplumlarını eleştiren kişilere dönüşmelerine odaklanır. Sonuç olarak dünya üzerinde insanın değeri, insanların hümanist öğretilerle yaptıklarını belirttikleri durumların ne ölçüde böylesi hayatta kalmanın ön planda olduğu bağlamlarda mantıklı olduğunu sorgular hale gelen anlatıcıların günlük formatındaki yazımlarını posthümanist bir eleştiri olarak görür.

Hem *The Ice People* hem de *Parable of the Sower* romanlarında görünen benzer bir diğer durumda insanlara yapılan tıbbi müdahaleler. Bu tez, bu müdahaleler ve onların öngörülemeyen sonuçlarına dayandırarak öne sürdüğü posthümanist tartışmayla teknoloji toplumlarını Antroposen çağın ana unsuru görüp insanları gezegen şekillendirici rolüne koyan bakış açısına karşı çıkar. İki romanda da teknolojik ve bilimsel anlamda gelişen toplumlar kısırlık ve Alzheimer gibi sorunlara çözüm ararken geri döndürülemez sonuçlara neden olmuşlardır. *The Ice People* romanındaki kısırlık sorunu için geliştirilen "tech-"fix", teknoloji ürünü bebek sahibi olma yöntemi ömrü boyunca ilaçlar ve tıbbi müdahalelerle yaşaması mümkün olan çocuklar dünyaya getirmiştir. Ayrıca bu bebeğe sahip olmak için geçirdiği süreç nedeniyle annelerde de sorunlar ortaya çıkmış ya da doğum sırasında yaşanan sorunlar nedeniyle annelerin ölümleriyle sonuçlanmıştır. Aynı şekilde *Parable of the Sower*'da da Alzheimer tedavisinde mucize olarak görülen ilaçlardan "pyro" daha sonra toplumun büyük bölümünde bağımlılık yaratır. Aşırı empati -yakınındaki kişilerin duygularını bizzat hissetmek- ya da çevreyi, nesneleri ateşe vererek haz alma duygusu gibi durumlara sebep olarak bağımlılığı daha kötü boyutlara taşır. Bu iki toplumda da yaşanan hümanist öğretinin sonucu olan insanı mükemmelliğin temeli görme ve bu mükemmellikle gelişmenin sınırsız olduğu düşüncesi tersine döndürülemez sonuçlar doğurmuştur. Bu da insanı gezegen şekillendiren sınıftan kendi türünü mükemmel görürken ironik şekilde sorunlarla karşılaşan toplumlara dönüştürmüştür iki romanda.

Bu çalışma, bu sorunları insanın mükemmelliğiyle yani bilim ve rasyonel yollarla çözmeye çalışırken de daha karmaşık sonuçlara ulaşan toplumları Antroposen yaklaşıma dair bir eleştiri olarak konumlandırarak bu tıbbi müdahalelerin posthümanist anlayışla hümanizmin bir eleştirisi olduğunu vurgular.

İkinci bölümün son kısmında da romanların zaman çizelgelerinin genişliğini karşılaştırarak çalışma Antroposen çağ vurgusunun bu bağlamlarda ne kadar uygulanabilir olduğunu tartışır. *The Ice People* romanı yetişkin Saul'un anılarıyla kıyamet öncesi, sırası ve sonrasını kapsayan bir zaman dilimine sahiptir. Ancak *Parable of the Sower* yalnızca kıyamet sonrası dönemi anlatıcısı genç bir kız olan Lauren gözünden sunar. İlk romanda yaklaşan buzul çağ önceden bilim insanları tarafından tahmin edilip uyarılsa da bu durumda toplumların ne kadar yetersiz kalıp politikacıların boş vaatleri oyalandığına tanık olunur. Asıl kıyamet öncesi dönemde ısınan bir dünya düzeni olsa da toplum teknolojik geçici çözümler sunabilecek hale geldiği için bu sorun göz ardı edilir. Ancak yaşanan buzul çağ ile birlikte güç dinamikleri değişerek Avrupa merkezli dünya düzenini Afrika merkezli bir hale getirir. Saul her ne kadar geçmişin izlerini taşıyarak geçmişe dönmeyi umsa da yarı siyahi oluşundan faydalanarak yeni düzene ayak uydurmaya çalışmaktan da geri kalmaz. Sergilenen bu üç ayrı dönemde insanı dünya düzenini değiştirecek tek kuvvet olarak konumlandırmanın sığ bir bakış açısı olacağını öne sürerek bu tez, bu romanı insanın en güçlü olduğunu sandığı dönemden çaresizliğe sürüklenişine tanıklık ettiren posthümanist bir zaman dilimi içerdiğini iddia eder. Öte yandan, *Parable of the Sower* anlatıcısı genç Lauren'ın gözünden yalnızca kıyamet sonras yaşantıya tanık bırakırken insanların hazırlıklı olup olmamasının bu düzende aslında çok büyük bir etkiye sahip olmadığını gösteriyor *The Ice People* ile karşılaştırıldığında. Lauren geçmişe bağlı kalan yaşlıları eleştirerek değişimin temel alınıp bu yeni düzende var olunacağına inandığı bir dini düzen kurar, Earthseed. Anlatıcının yalnızca kıyamet sonrası döneme maruz kalmış olması onu daha adaptasyona açık, değişimi hoşgörüyle karşılayan bir karaktere dönüştürür. İki romanda zaman kapsamının değişimi, birinde daha uzun yılları kapsayıp kıyamete yaklaşırken yaşananlara tanık eden bir çerçeve olarak ele alınırken diğerinde yalnızca kıyamet sonrası hayatta kalarak yeni bir düzen inşa etmeye çalışan insan topluluklarını gösterir. Bu farklılık dünyanın tahmin edilmez, insan anlayışının ötesinde mekanizmalar içerdiğini göstererek bu romanları Antroposen çağa karşı eleştirel bir yere dahil eder.

Çalışmanın üçüncü bölümü bu romanlarda yer alan toplumlardaki kıyamet sonrası çöküşü iki yönden ele alır. Kıyamet toplumları bir arada tutan ya da hiyerarşik ayrılmalarına zemin sunan kaynakları ya da araçları yok eden bir sebep olarak görülür. Bu nedenle toplumların kıyamet öncesi düzenlerini sürdürmeleri mümkün görünmez. *The Ice People* ve *Parable of the Sower* romanlarında kıyamet sonrası düzende hayatta kalma temelli bir yaşam beklenirken hümanist ve kapitalist değerler üzerinden ayrışan toplumlar hala sürdürülmeye çalışılmaktadır. Çalışma; cinsiyet, ırk ya da ekonomik güce dayalı oluşan ikililiklerle ayrışan toplumların bunları dayandırdıkları soyut iddiaların kıyamet sonrası düzende anlamsızlaşarak insanların toplum düzenini sorgular ya da tümüyle terkeder hale gelmelerini posthümanist açıdan ele alarak eleştirir. Aynı zamanda toplumsal kopuşlarında yalnızca bu bağlamlarda değil aynı zaman farklı jenerasyonlar arasında da ayrımlar yarattığını ve kopuşlara sebep olduğunu belirterek yeni jenerasyonun eskilerden farkına posthümanist olarak yaklaşır.

Bu bölümün ilk kısmında toplumun ayrışması, hiyerarşik olarak bölünmesi üzerinde etkili olan açık ve üstü kapalı araçları inceler. Bu iki romanda en büyük hiyerarşik ayrışma iki temelde olur. Birincisi cinsiyet ikincisi de ekonomik düzeydedir. Cinsiyet kıyamet sonrası toplumlarda şaşırtıcı bir şekilde üzerine ilk gidilen konulardan biri olmuştur. Genellikle kıyamet sonrası düzendeki yaşamlar ataerkil yapılara dönme çabasıyla kadınları baskılayan ortamlar kurgular. *The Ice People* ve *Parable of the Sower* romanlarında da bu ataerkil düzene dönme çabası Saul karakterinin Sarah'nın evde çocuğuyla kalmasını istemesi, Lauren'ın üvey annesinin çalışma izni olmayıp yalnızca ev işleri yapmaya zorlanması gibi örneklerde gözlemlenmektedir. *The Ice People* DOVE isimli ev robotuna yaklaşımlar üzerinden teknoloji bağımlısı erkekler ve teknofobik kadınlarla toplumu cinsiyet ve teknoloji temelinde iki uç noktada gösterir. Maskuleniteyi bilimsel girişimlerin öngörülemeyen sonuçları ile eşleştirirken kadınlığı da önyargılı ataerkil ikililiklerde olduğu gibi teknoloji karşıtı olarak pekiştirir. Teknoloji düşkünü erkekler bu ev robotunun canlılara saldırma, kendi otonomilerini kazanıp tehdit oluşturma gibi sorunlarını yok sayarken doğaya dönüşün, teknolojiden arındırılmış doğal yaşam ve doğal yollarla sahip olunabilen çocukların önemini savunan Wicca kadınlar topluluğu robotların toplatılmasını talep eder. Bu karşıtlığı eleştiren Saul, Sarah'nın böyle politik olaylarla uğraşmasının opluna ve ailesine haksızlık olduğunu öne sürerek iyi bir anne olmadığını söyler. Diğer yandan

Parable of the Sower, Lauren karakterinin kuzeye yaptığı yolculukta daha güçlü görünmek adına kendini erkek kılığına bürüdüğünü göstererek hala güç dengesinde kadının aşağıda kabul görüldüğü bir kıyamet sonrası düzen ele alır. Lauren'ın biyolojik annesine dair bildiğimiz kısıtlı bilginin babasının ilk eşi olması, Lauren'ın annesi olması ve madde bağımlısı olmasıdır. Bu kadının ismi kızı tarafından dahi belirtilmez tüm roman boyunca. Lauren'ın babası ilk eşinin madde bağımlısı olması, hamilelik öncesi ve sırasında bunu kullanması nedeniyle Lauren'ın hiper-empati denen bir rahatsızlığa sahip olmasını aile arasında kalması gereken konular olarak görür ve üzerini örter. Bu kadının bir anı olarak kalması bile erkeğin elindedir ve o anıları dahi örtbas edip bir isim verilmez biyolojik anneye. İkinci eşi ise kendisiyle aynı düzeyde doktora derecesine sahip bir kadınken yalnızca Lauren'ın babası dışarıda çalışıp para kazanabilmektedir. *Parable of the Sower* romanında kadınlar yalnızca hizmetli olarak çalışma hakkına sahiptir zengin evlerde. Kıyamet sonrası bağlamlarda erkekler öyle bir toplum düzeni kurgular ya da kurgulamayı amaçlar ki kadınlar ev ve ev işleri ötesinde hayatlara sahip olamaz, ev sınırı kadınlar için dünya sınırına dönüşür. Kıyamet insanları hayatta kalmaya dair önemli noktalara odaklandırmalıyken ataerki iklim değişikliği ve kıyamet üzerinde yaşadığı endişeyi kadınların ev işlerine dönüşüyle rahatlatıp güç dengesini kendi üzerinde toplayacağı yollar yaratmaya çalışır. Çalışma bu çabayı hümanist düzenin eşitlikçi değil toplumun belli bir kısmını güçlendiren bir yapıya sahip olduğunu gösterdiğini iddia ederek posthümanizmin bu istisnacılığı eleştirdiğini belirtir.

Bu romanlardaki ayrışımın ikinci yaşandığı alan ekonomik güç üzerinden gerçekleşir. Kıyamet sonrası bağlam ekonomik araçları, kaynakları bozmuş olsa da hala güçlü olanın kıyamet öncesi yaşamlarını para, emek üzerinden satın almaya çalıştığı görülür. *The Ice People* İçeridekiler ve Dışarıdakiler olarak ayırdığı toplumla yaklaşan buzul çağı karşılar. İçeridikilerin yaşadığı endişe toplumun insani değerler değil, belli bir sınıfın değerleri üzerinden yürütüldüğüne tanık eder. Buzul çağa dair en büyük endişe Dışarıdakilerın yatacak yeri, yeterli beslenme ve ilaç erişimi olmadığı için hasta olup İçeridekilere bunu bulaştırmasıdır. Ancak gelen buzul çağın ilginç yönü şudur ki Dışarıdakiler buna daha kolay adpte olabilmekte ve hayatta kalma yollarını daha pratik planlayabilmektedir çünkü zaten yaşamları bunun üzerine kuruludur. *Parable of the Sower*; zenginler, küçük duvarlı toplumlar ve sokak fakirleri olarak üçe ayrılır. Zenginler kimse doğru düzgün yiyecek bulamazken etlerle beslediği köpeklerle

evlerini korurken, sokak fakirleri teknolojik herhangi bir düzene sahip bir yatacak bir yere sahip olmadığından otoritelerin yaptığı yıkıcı hava durumları ya da doğal afetlerin uyarısını duyamadıkları için ölmektedir. Sokak fakirleri içerisinde madde bağımlıları da bulunmakta ve bu insanlar açlık ve halüsinasyonlarla orta ya da zengin sınıftaki insanların yaşam alanlarını ateşe vererek tehdit oluşturur. İki romanda da yüzeyde işleyen bir toplum görünmektedir ancak artık bu toplumların otoriteleri yalnızca en üst sınıfa hitap eden, onların çıkarlarını ve ellerinde kalanları korumaya odaklanan bir düzendedir. İnsan türü içerisinde bile en üstteki ve alttaki arasındaki fark giderek derinleşir ve kıyamet sonrasını insanın insana düşman olup türünü kurtarmaktan çok kendini kurtarmaya odaklandırdığı bir düzene dönüştürür. Burada kıyametin sebep olduğu gibi görünen toplumsal kırılmanın aslında posthümanist açıdan ele alındığında önyargıları oluşturan, ikililikleri öne süren hümanizmin çok önceden beri ayrışmaların kıyamet ile daha da belirginleşip acımasızlaşması olduğunu öne sürer çalışma.

Bu bölümün ikinci kısmında jenerasyonlar arası çatışmanın yeni jenerasyonların aslında daha posthümanist bakış açısıyla eski yaşam düzeni, eski değerlere eleştirileriyle büyüdüğü görülür iki romanda da. Yeni jenerasyon olarak *The Ice People* romanında Luke, Saul'un teknolojik düzeltme sonucu doğmuş oğlu ve bu toplumdaki çocukların vahşiye kaçışları; *Parable of the Sower* romanında 15 yaşında bir genç olan Lauren ve kurduğu yeni din ile kuzeye kaçışı yer almıştır.

Luke annesi tarafından kimyasal yollarla kısırlaştırılmış ve babası tarafından Afrikalı yapılmaya zorlanmaktadır. Farklılıklar, ayrımlar eski jenerasyonda daha anlamlı gelip onları sıkı sıkıya savunsalar da Luke bunlardan kaçmayı tercih eder. Cinsiyet temelli çatışmalar anne ve babası arasında, toplumda içeride ve dışarıda yaşayanlarla hayatta kalma düzeninde bile dışarıdakilerin çocuklarına yaklaşmasına izin verilmemesi Luke'un basit olarak yalnızca hayatta kalıp tehlikeden kaçacağı vahşi çocuklara katılmasına sebep olur. Lauren ise banyo yapacakları su bile olmadığı düzende vaftiz edilmek için boşa harcanan suları gözlemlerken toplumun gözünde birkaç yıla evlenip çocuk sahibi olması beklenmektedir. Ancak şimdinin geleceğe dair yollar yaratmak ve bunun da ancak değişimden geldiğini düşünen Lauren hem ruhsal hem de fiziksel olarak toplumdan ayrılarak kendi dini Earthseed'i kurar ve kuzeye doğru yola çıkar. Bu çalışma iki toplumda da yeni jenerasyonu eski nesillere posthümanist bir eleştiri gibi tepki görerek hümanist değerlerin hayatta kalmanın ana planda olması gereken

kıyamet sonrası toplumlarını yozlaştırdığını gözlemler. Bu değerleri paylaşamaz hale geldiklerinden kıyamet sonrası düzen için değişim adına bunlardan uzaklaşarak eski nesilleri çelişkileriyle baş başa bırakır.

Bireysel ve toplumsal mükemmelliğin insanın sınırsız kapasitesi üzerinden kurgulanabileceğini öne süren hümanist öğreti bu çalışmada *The Ice People* ve *Parable of the Sower* romanlarındaki kıyamet sonrası kurgularla posthümanist açıdan eleştirilmiştir. Romanlar bağlamındaki çağları Antroposen olarak nitelendirip insanı gezegen şekillendirici konumda görmenin aslında ne kadar kısıtlayıcı olabileceğine dikkat çekerek romanlar üzerinden örneklerle insan kapasitesinin yetersizliği, insan ve evrenin birlikte şekillendirdiği bir düzenin gözlemlendiği belirtilmiştir. Bu romanlar insan türünün belli bir kısmına istisna gösteren toplumların kıyamet ile bu hiyerarşik düzenlerdeki ayrımı giderek açtığı ancak çözüme dayalı bir argüman geliştiremediği için nesiller arası kopuşlara sebep olmuştur. İki roman da milenyum çağına yaklaşmakta olan 20. yüzyıl sonlarında yazılarak geleceğe bir uyarı niteliğinde bağlamlar sunmaktadır okuyucuya. Posthümanist açıdan ele alınarak aranabilecek çözümün insan türünü insan olmayan, diğer olarak görülenlerden ayrıştırmada olmadığını belirterek çalışma bu romanlarda kıyamet sonrası hayatta kalmak için daha kapsayıcı bir bakış açısına ihtiyacı öne sürmüştür.

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