HiLL PUBLISHING

Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Science, 2025, 9(6), 1224-1233
https://www.hillpublisher.com/Journals/jhass/
ISSN Online: 2576-0548
ISSN Print: 2576-0556

Fluidity of Post-human: Cyborg Images in Western Science Fiction Films of the Alpha Generation Period

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How to cite this paper: Qichen Song. (2025) Fluidity of Post-human: Cyborg Images in Western Science Fiction Films of the Alpha Generation Period. *Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Science*, 9(6), 1224-1233.
DOI: 10.26855/jhass.2025.06.028

Received: May 17, 2025
Accepted: June 13, 2025
Published: July 11, 2025

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Abstract

In the 21st century, under the influence of the explosive development of science and technology, human thinking mode and aesthetic criteria have also begun to change in science fiction film aesthetics in the post-human context. As an interdisciplinary approach between interfacing science, literature, and the humanities, the scientific imaginary in visual culture is expanding. Based on the Cyborg Manifesto, created by Donna Haraway, the Cyborg is assumed to be a gender-fluid post-human figure, which is more inclined to the feminine pronoun. After the third wave of feminist movement, in the western fiction films of the Alpha generation period (2013-2024), the images of Cyborg characters have gradually become the images that cannot be ignored, because it plays an important role in the expression of human-machine relations, gender issues, and social order. First, it is the change of the body structure and the organisms of the Cyborg images that change and subvert the original appearance of human beings' physical body, breaking the bound between human and machine. Second, the Cyborg characters blur the boundary between femininity and masculinity due to the change of body structure and organisms in these sci-fi films. Cyborgs enable a productive blurring of the binaries, such as male and female, self and other, culture and nature, that have sustained Western cultural hierarchies. Third, compared with the powerful Cyborg images, the masculine characteristics of the male Cyborg images become less dominant in science fiction movies where female cyborgs are the major characters. The male castration anxiety in this kind of film is still obvious, which also reflects that the female Cyborg images still cannot completely escape the fate of being male-gazed, voyeurized, and imprisoned. Therefore, the main research question of this thesis is how the Cyborg female image in the western science fiction film realizes the gender and human-machine fluid, breaks the dualistic system and the traditional social order, as well as the influence and imprisonment from the patriarchal social consciousness that still exists. This paper will argue that the fluidity between human and machine of the Cyborg contributes significantly to the post-human gender and social new order.

Keywords

Post-humanism; Cyborgs; Science Fiction Films; Alpha Generation

1. Literature Review

1.1 Body and Cyborg

In the year 1960, the word cyborg stands as a combination of cybernetics and organism, which is given by Manfred Clynes and Kline Nathans. In the Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late

Twentieth Century, Donna Haraway defines that "a cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction". Freud theorizes that the human body and mind are closely linked, and there is a close interaction between body and mind. In particular, the connection between the inner and the outer world, according to Freud, the self of human is connected to the outside world by perceiving and controlling the sensations of the body. The ego is responsible for balancing and regulating the relationship between external realities, personal desires, and inner conflicts. And Haraway argues that "cyborg imagery can suggest a way out of the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves" by asserting that she "would rather be a cyborg than a goddess". But beyond that, based on Haraway's cyborg theory, the cyborg metaphor embodies how feminist theory as a whole has entered and become a crucial, albeit controversial, element of 21st century thought. And Robert Fisher suggests that the image of the Cyborg the cinema-going public is handed is that the image of the cyborg seen by the movie-going audience is a very gendered mad or hysterical machine.

1.2 Binary Opposition

In fact, Western philosophy has always been influenced by traditional dualism. According to the dualism of Plato's Phaedo, things that have opposites arise from their opposites. Cyborg researcher against the binary opposition between nature and the human body. Luca Valera posts that criticism of dualism is one of the cornerstones of feminist thought, and it often appears as a critique of radical opposition. In the overall non-hierarchical context, there are no dichotomies of changing nations such as animate and inanimate, plant and animal, insentient and sentient, human and non-human, male and female, rational and irrational, body and mind, and so on.

In Lumpy Discourses and the Denatured Bodies of Biological and Medicine, Haraway proposed "The body, therefore, is not inborn; they're human-made. The body has changed as radically as sign, context, and time". She insists on a context to Simone de Beauvoir's: one is not born an organism, one is not born a woman. Organisms are made; they are a world-changing structure and variety. Her view is that "the body is considered a strategic system, highly militarized in key areas of imagery and practice". In terms of local investment strategies, sex, sexuality, and reproduction are theorised; the body is no longer a spatial map of stable, normalized functions, but emerges as a highly fluid domain of strategic differences. Take the movie Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019) and Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), for example, both of their Cyborg protagonists are a combination of human brain and machine body. It is an improved half-human, half-machine that breaks the binary opposition between human and machine. According to Judith Butler, "Our task is to 'eliminate' categories of analysis that lead to uniformity, such as sex or nature". Newitz comments that this type of heroine "Openly uses their power, but tends to hide their gender in one way or another... What these animations show is that once combined with mechanical technology, the male and female bodies are largely indistinguishable". According to Li Zhaolong's paper, in the future world construction of science fiction movies based on thinking about the real society and rebellion, female characters become independent and can undertake tasks together with males, even more courageous and decisive than them. In the post-human world, women with a Cyborg nature are no longer limited by the body, which subverts the cognition of patriarchal society. Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019) and Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017) all feature violent depictions of dismembered and eliminated Cyborgs, as well as describe brutal killing and fighting, which visually represent the gradually dissolved boundaries between organic and disembodied, male and female.

Originally proposed by Robert Connell, the Gender and Power theory is a theory of social structure based on existing philosophical work on gender inequality and power imbalances. The marked organic body has been a key site of cultural and political debate, and both are crucial to the language of the liberating politics of identity. In some science fiction movies, Cyborgs affectionately refer to humans as "father", "boss", or even "master". These cyborgs seem to have been born not just to satisfy technological or economic needs, but to create the pinnacle of human narcissism, to satisfy humanity's crazed desire to move toward its creator.

1.3 Feminism

Laura Mulvey in Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema mentions that "the binary opposition between male and female, voyeurism and exhibitionism, or passive and active, is simpler on screen than it is in Freud's work, likewise, much simpler than it is in life". As she explains, the beauty of the woman as an object is combined with the beauty of the screen space: she is no longer a guilt bearer, but a perfect product, her body stylized and fragmented by close-up shots, the content of the film, and the direct recipient of the viewer's gaze. The female image of Cyborg in Cyborg movies is often both a goddess and a female warrior, and the image of the goddess has a profound mark of paternity.

In Cyborg films, the men with technology became the new patriarchy that regulated the behavior of female cyborgs and intervened in their lives. Holland believes that in the film, Cyborg not only fails to break through other frameworks but also exaggerates the depiction of masculinity and femininity.

1.4 Existing Research

The existing paper related research include Henke Jennifer (2017)'s Ava's body is a good one: (Dis) Embodiment in Ex Machina, Li and Edwin (2019)' Alita: Battle Angel -A Step in the Right Direction for Anime Adaptations, Qingyue Peng(2019)'s The Humanity and Feminism of Robots in Sci-fi Movies—Take Alita: Battle Angel (2019) as an Example, Seaman-Grant (2017)'s Constructing Womanhood and the Female Cyborg: A Feminist Reading of Ex Machina and Westworld, Gough, Simon, Noel Gough, and Annette Gough (2022)' Cyborg, Goddess, or Magical Girl/Heavenly Woman? Rethinking Gender and Technology in Science Education via Ghost in the Shell. These articles all mentioned Cyborg images in the film and talked about its association with feminism.

2. Research Gap

In recent years, with the outbreak of AI technology, the research on science fiction movies has become a hot topic. However, the research on film aesthetics of Cyborg images in live-action movies is still a relatively new research field.

In terms of research content, most of the previous papers only focused on the analysis of one film or one series of films. And it usually analyzed the adaption of films from animation, literature to live action. No one concentrate focusing on the western science fiction movies in the Alpha generation period with Cyborg women as the protagonist from 2013 to 2024.

In terms of research methods, the existing research articles are most biased towards the direction of cultural studies, emphasis on humanities. There is a lack of textual analysis from the field of film aesthetics such as cinematography, Mise-en-Scene, sound and editing.

3. Discussion

Lucy (Denis Villeneuve, 2014), Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014), Blade Runner 2049 (Denis Villeneuve, 2017), Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019) is one of the five most typical and representative films of the Alpha period (from 2013 to 2024) featuring a Cyborg female protagonist, which fit the Cyborg image envisioned by Donna Haraway in the Cyborg Manifesto. The directors of these five films are all men from Western societies. Third, whether or not these films are remakes of comics, novels and TV series, the versions we have selected and discussed in this paper are all Western live-action sci-fi films.

3.1 Body and Machinery

The images of cyborgs in the western science fiction movies of the Alpha era break the binary between human and machine, organic and disembodied. Lucy in Lucy (Denis Villeneuve, 2014), Ava in Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014), Joi in Blade Runner 2049 (Denis Villeneuve, 2017), Mira in Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), and Alita in Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019), those cyborgs, based in artificial intelligence, virtual digital and biotechnology, also possess human consciousness, emotions and confusion. They also break the duality between human and machine and the traditional social order through the fluidity of the body.

In Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), the first look of Mira Killian is a mechanical body which has a pair of full breasts indicating the female sexuality. With a dolly in shot, the suspending Cyborg body from blur to clarity. After a frame full of nerve fibers, a human mind is put into a cybernetic frame with slow-motion, achieving a combination of human organ and mechanical body. Over the next 44 seconds, the camera cuts 14 times, showing the full picture of Mira's body and the process of her changes from the mechanical shell to human-like skin (00:03:51-00:04:35). A slight low angle and medium close-up shot focuses on her face and chest, another low angle and full shot from below shows her body entering the liquid in a flat position. And the camera cuts from the side shows the body fully entering the fluid, also by a low angle and full shot. The slight low angle and close up shot shots the left side of Mira's face, and full shot shows her back. Then a slight low angle and full shot from the top of her head shows her head features. Low angle and close-up through the left side of Mira's face shows her moving from the red liquid to the milky white liquid. The mid-angle and close-up shots capture the moment the Cyborg body surfaced with the

white liquid. The picture is shifted to a high angle and medium close up shot to capture the scene when her face and chest are covered with white liquid, and a close-up shot captures the process of the left hand of Cyborg emerging with white liquid. High angle and three-quarter shots filmed the Cyborg bubbling up the white liquid from the knee to the head. The extreme high angle and full shot from the front of her body covered in white liquid. With extreme high angle and three-quarter shot, the white liquid solidified and cracked, and the machine body showed human flesh color skin. That body reveals the color of human flesh, and its slowly falls, leaving a floating white floss in the screen. This scene illustrates the Cyborg body's creation process, which break the binary between human and machine, organic and disembodied. However, her nude body is fragmented by several close-up shots, direct recipient of the viewer's gaze. A choke shot, showing human skin on the Mira's face, and traces of skin spliced together (00:04:36). By this time, Mira's Cyborg body was almost close to a human being, but she still had some robot features in her appearance, such as hairless and fragmentary skin. Opening with a sharp electronic synthetic sound, Mira showed her doll-like face by a rotating lens, which was undoubtedly an almost perfect goddess image with thick hair and abstruse eyes (00:05:45). Except for her human features, Mira also keeps some mechanical attributes. In a full shot with zooming, Mira Killian rests on a panel covered in light tubes, with two wires attached to the back of her neck (00:14:48). In terms of physical expression, Mira has both human and machine features.

Similarly, Alita in Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019) is also a Cyborg with mechanical prosthetics and a human brain. At the beginning of the film, Dr. Dyson Ido picks up the remains of Alita's head and implants her with a prosthetic body. With dolly in the shot, the medium close-up shot becomes a close-up shot to Alita's face. Alita's face has human-like features and skin, while her skull is mechanically metallic (00:02:53). A pan shot from Alita's head to her chest shows how doctors covered her mechanical body with human-like skin (00:03:15-00:03:17). Since then, Cyborg Alita has enjoyed a new lease of life.

The breakthrough of duality between human and machine is not only reflected in the externalized form of the body, but also in the internal mind. Throughout the film Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), Mira, as the first fully prosthetic cyborg, has been experimenting with self-identity. Immediately after being "rebirth", Mira asks Dr. Ouelet, "Why I can't feel my body?" (00:06:36). Dr. Ouelet's answer explains the complexity, contradiction, and duality of Mira as a Cyborg. She said, "Mira, your body was damaged. Only your brain survived. We made you a new body. A synthetic shell. We could not save it. But your mind, your soul, your 'ghost', it's still there." For Mira, not only need a shell, but she also needs a ghost.

Finding the past and learning about oneself is the thread that drives Mira's behavior throughout this film. As a Cyborg between human and machine, Mira is conflicted, confused, and at a loss. Mira finds a human girl and tries to understand what it's like to be a real human through contact with that girl. With medium close-up shots, Mira looks straight in front of the girl's face, and the camera cuts back and forth between Mira and the girl as they talk. In the dark and small space, Mira asks the girl to take off her cyberpunk makeup and reveal her face with original human skin. The camera cuts to a full shot, with black coverings on both sides of the screen, creating a voyeuristic feeling to audiences. As they sit face-to-face, the girl removes her makeup, and Mira looks closely at the girl's face, even reaching out and caressing her lips and eyes. Mira Killian wants to know what it feels like to be human intensely. However, this scene is suddenly stopped when that girl asks Mira, "What are you?" About this confused question, no answer is sometimes already an answer.

This confusion of being a Cyborg is reflected not only in Mira, but also in Joi in Blade Runner 2049 (Denis Villeneuve, 2017). Joi is a holographic AI projection Cyborg. But she had the desire to be a human, and wanted to know the real feeling of being a human. Therefore, she finds a woman who engaged in sexual services and made a compatible agreement with her. By a full shot, Joi dresses in a sexy cheongsam, standing in front of the window and motioning for K to be silent. The doorbell leads to the scene to the reaction of Joi and K. With a dolly out and racking focus shot, the focus shifted from Joi to K. They look to the door, when woman who provides sexual services enters (01:25:33-01:26:05). By a three-quarter shot, Joi synchronizes herself with woman's body (01:26:54-01:27:04). The soothing, ethereal music and the rhythmic wheezing of the women set the foreshadowing for Joi to have sex with K using the body of woman. This scene breaks the traditional social order that one person can only own and use one body.

This breakdown of the order is also reflected in Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019). Cyborg Alita has owned and used three bodies. Originally a Berserker, she fell to Iron City during the Great War, called "the fall," and was found and brought home by Dr. Dyson Ido. Since Alita has only one brain left, Ido fits her with a prosthetic body that belongs to his dead daughter. But Alita is obsessed with having a mechanical body that is more capable and

combative. After a battle, Alita, who is badly wounded, finally replaces by Ido with the mechanical Berserker body. Through a full shot, accompany by melodious pure background music, Alita happily performed a handstand with one finger supporting her new body, showing the joy of having a stronger body (00:49:38-01:12:42).

Different with Mira, Joi, Alita, Ava in Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014) retains more pronounced mechanical features with her body. Caleb first met Ava at Nathan's lab, looking through layers of glass (00:12:21). Ava's appearance is unique, with the exception of human skin on her hands and face, and all other parts of her body are mechanical (00:35:38). On a digital screen in Caleb's room, Ava's live feed is shown. With a zoom out shot, Ava can be seen lying on her bed, her waist, arms and legs are translucent mesh, through which can be seen her body's constantly powered blue machinery. However, she also has a desire to be a truly human. Ava externalizes this desire into behavior, and in session three text, she shows Caleb Smith how she looks like a human girl in a dress and wig. With the pan shot, Ava carefully pulled her floral dress from the closet and slipped it over her body. The camera follows Ava's movements, from her hands all the way up to her neck. Her body stylized and fragmented by close-up shots. And stroking a blonde wig and a black wig. Ava is seen awkwardly walking down a hallway in a dress in a follow-up shot, which is still fragmented by close-up shot, showing only her waist and hips. In the panoramic shot after the close-up, Ava covers all mechanical parts of her body with clothes and shoes. with a three-quarter shot, Ava stands in front of Caleb and spins happily, showing off her costume (00:41:16-00:43:22). with a low angle shot, Ava slowly walks up to human-being Caleb Smith and takes a stand. Turning to Caleb, the shot goes into a high angle shot. A hand-held shot accompanied by a slight shake reveals Caleb's nervousness and panic when confronted by Ava, an intelligent robot with human consciousness and desires. Next, Ava walked into the room with a medium shot stationary camera and looked in the mirror. hand-held POV from Caleb shows a sense of voyeurism. With the close-up scale, Ava removed her robotic arm and replaced it with a human body. A pan from the top to bottom, with Ava touching her body, ends the scene. This scene shows Ava's inner swing and longing as a Cyborg, due to the mechanical and human fluid nature.

Humans are emotional beings with feelings, while machines are cold, rational machines. Ava, as a Cyborg, is a combination of both. She pretends to be infatuated and dependent on Caleb, and disguises herself as something he likes, convincing him of her undying love for him. Cyborg Ava's robotic nature enables her to act rationally and result-oriented, and to avoid emotional interference with her decision to the greatest extent. It also rationalizes Ava's harm to Cable in the end.

In Lucy (Denis Villeneuve, 2014), Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), and Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019), Cyborgs transcend the boundaries between human and machine. Lucy (Denis Villeneuve, 2014), in the corridor of the hospital, the lens of dolly in follows Lucy to the man at the end of the corridor, and on the way, she eliminates all the interference and obstacles with her mind alone. Here she has achieved the fluid between human and machine. In Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), after shooting a Japanese robot Geisha, an extreme high angle scale filmed Motoko Kusanagi sleeping on a light board. This scene not only reveals her female sexual body, but also illustrates the two charging cables attached to the back of her neck and indicates the fact that she is a human Cyborg. The scene switches from medium close-up to full shot, and with dolly out, Motoko Kusanagi reveals her "charging doll" essence. In Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019), Alita's human Cyborg attributes are evident. With an extreme high angle scale and pan shot, Alita is put into a new Cyborg body by her father. The close-up of Alita's body parts reflects her adaptability to Cyborg's body. A pan shot from bottom to up ends the gaze on Alita's body.

3.2 Gender Fluidity: The New World of Gender Ambiguity

In the Cyborg films, the male is clearly distinguishable from the female in appearance, but gender is fluidity and ambiguity. Cyborg women have equal or even greater force value than men, and become invincible. In these films, the superiority of masculinity becomes less obvious, breaking the stereotype of male and female gender division of social labor. Joi in Blade Runner 2049 (Denis Villeneuve, 2017), Mira in Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), and Alita in Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019), who incarnated cyborg goddesses, with the manful spirit and super-power.

In Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), Mira is a super-fighting Cyborg warrior. The scene begins with naked Mira breaks through the window on skyscraper in slow motion, and the pan shot follow the moving of her (00:12:59). Then in a full shot with low angle, Mira leaps into the air, engages with a group of security guards inside the building. Then an extreme high angle shot, shows the full scene of the corridor where Mira is fighting. The camera change

back to the low angle with full shot from the back as she soared into the air. Shooting the back of Mira, Mira rises into the air. The next second, the camera gave a shot of Mira's front face. When Mira's foot kicked the security guard's back, the camera gave her a close-up of her right foot. Mira lands, and the camera goes back to that low angle full shot of Mira's back. Even the fight in the pool reveals Mira's masculinity beneath her feminine feature. With a medium close-up shot, the near-invisible Mira appears and blindsided the Skinny Man in the pool. The camera shifts from a low angle to a high angle shot, recording the man being kicked into the air and then falling heavily to the ground. As the man struggles to get up and fight back, the camera cuts back and forth between medium and full shots, showing a new round of blows from Mira. Through an extreme high angle shot, the man is hit by Mira's another whirlwind kick, spinning in the air. The moment the man freely falling body is in a full shot, accompanied by a pan shot from top to bottom. During the process, Mira displayed extraordinary fighting power, leaving the heavyset and armed man with no room to fight back.

The high point of Mira's masculinity comes in the last battle. As the camera goes up pan, Mira, who is blown up in the explosion, lifts her head from the ground (01:27:55). Then the editor insert spider tank forward shot as Mira POV. A full shot shots Mira and spider tank in the same scene, she stands up and runs fast to avoid the tank's artillery attack. The camera cuts to give Mira and Kuze a short three-quarter shot. Following a pan shot from right to left, Mira drags Kuze away. By an establishing shot photographed the burning ruins from the rear of the spider tank. Under heavy artillery fire, Mira displays superb combat abilities, rolling and dodging in the footage. At 01:28:44, Mira jumps to the second floor and takes cover. Finally, Mira occurs on the tank (01:30:32). Along with the pan shot, Mira tugs hard at the top of the tank with both arms, destroying its motor center. A close-up shot of Mira's arm, she is taken so hard that her bionic skin has cracked, revealing the wires that are slowly crumbling inside. The downed wires glowed blue. 01:30:06, with slow motion and a pan shot, Mira's left arm completely breaks, but she manages to destroy the spider tank.

Lucy in Lucy (Denis Villeneuve, 2014) is a Cyborg with super powers. She was forced by the drug lords to hide drugs inside her body, and the new drug, CPH4, was surgically sewn into her abdomen and seeped into her internal organs and bloodstream due to fighting, thus giving her superhuman powers. And the whole process of morphing into a Cyborg is sequential. At the 60% stage of evolution, Lucy has mastered the ability to control space with her mind to fight, breaking the three-dimensional space and mastering the four-dimensional space operation in time. With a strong rhythmic background music, Lucy leaned back to the camera and over-the-shoulder shot shots six men with guns. Then, static camera shot the middle close-up shot of a stone-faced Lucy. A full shot of the men attacking Lucy and a calm Lucy. Dolly out camera follows Lucy forward, and the men are manipulated by Lucy one by one with her mind. With the slow motion, it shows Lucy's superpower to manipulate time, but also shows her calm, highlighting the embarrassment and helplessness of the male killers.

Alita in Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019) looks like a 14 years old girl, wearing colorful shirts and having naive disposition. Between 00:09:47 and 00:11:26, Alita shows a mixture of strength and softness. A close-up of Alita's face highlights her subconscious desire for motorball, a dangerous, violent and competitive sport. The plot turns to Alita feeding a stray dog on the side of the road, and heroically saving the dog under the centurion. A bottom-up swish pan accompanying dolly in shows Alita's conscious fighting reaction to the centurion, with a strong masculine touch and in stark contrast to the maternal nature of the gentle handling of the puppy.

Alita showed the fluidity of gender in the motorball final. Compared to the other seven contestants, Alita was the most petite and curvy, but she showed great strength. A close-up turns into a bottom-up pan, showcasing the weapons and power of the male Cyborg competing in the maneuverball final. When Alita learns that the players are all in order to hunt her, the camera pans left and right to see the players and Alita's reflection. With a quick tilt shot, the motorball contest begins, with all the players sprinting forward under a stationary camera. The fast forward track and reverse track camera movement recorded Alita's dodging kills throughout the game. Also, a low-angle shot takes a close-up of the head of the player killed by Alita. On the contrary, the human male protagonist, Hugo, at this time in the city running to avoid the chase. Ten tracking shots are used as Alita rushes to rescue Hugo, ending the intense chase with a low-angle shot. A high-angle shot followed, showing Alita under the control of two other Cyborgs, and a sustained tilt movement recorded Alita's victory in battle. Alita shows more power and masculinity than Hugo, which is also because of the gender fluidity brought by the Cyborg's body.

3.3 Immutable Imprisonment

Although the female Cyborg seems to have gained more power and freedom because of the mutual mix with the

machine, the patriarchal control and discipline still leave deep traces in the film. In these films, the suppression and control of Cyborg by institutions or people with absolute power of life and death are always inseparable, which also makes these films rich in a strong sense of order, and radiates the majesty and breath of power everywhere, and the infinite expansion of material desires under the shell of high-tech, representing a top-down high-pressure attitude in the context of power.

In terms of gender equality, for Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), Mira is created by male scientists and is regulated and ordered by them. During the mission, Mira often appears naked to fight, while the male characters appear well-clothed on screen. With a low angle and three-quarter shot, Mira, who is standing on the outside of the skyscraper, takes off her black coat (00:11:40). By a high angle shot, naked Mira leaps from the roof of a skyscraper, along with a forward track (00:12:00). The male is still portrayed as having more resources, power, wealth, and thus once again as the creator image that can give life to others. Even if female cyborgs get more and higher abilities and longer lives because of the chimeric blessing of mechanical technology, it does not mean that they can escape the control and discipline of patriarchal society.

As a Cyborg, Mira has not escaped rape culture. Mira goes to a nightclub in an attempt to find Kuze, but is unfortunately harassed and assaulted by some men. By a static medium shot, the man's hand reaches rudely toward Mira's chest and tries to touch her through neckline (00:30:35). The next second, another man quickly takes advantage of the electric baton and severely shocks Mira in the waist. A close up shot shows Mira, too late to fight, is pinned to the pole. The camera cuts to a close-up of the man's feet, his rhythmic stomping movements showing his leisure and enjoyment, in stark contrast to Mira's suffering. With a low angle shot, the men sitting on the couch condescends to Mira, giving dancing instructions that sounds like asking but is actually command, and repeatedly tapping Mira with electric sticks again (00:31:30). This is the patriarchal society's cruelty and destruction of women, men can not see this woman's kindness, talent, ability, and her entire body exudes humanitarian charm. In the eyes of a large number of men, a beautiful woman is a vase, a tool to serve their desires.

In Blade Runner 2049 (Denis Villeneuve, 2017), Joi is portrayed as a cyborg character attaches to a man for survival. This also carries with it a strong sense of submission to the male. In these Western Cyborg sci-fi films, men are not only give a high-tech identity, but also through technology to save and create women to gain the power to control women. It seems that Joi is no longer an independent life entity, but a tool to please men. With the crane shot as Joi's face gets closer and clearer on the skyscraper screen. It also loops the slogan "Joi is anything you want her to be, Joi goes anywhere you want to her to go" (01:30:13-00:30:24). The huge and naked Joi advertisement appears again on the outdoor screen, and she initiatively chats with K, caring for K. "Joi, everything you want to see" appears on the advertising screen (02:15:39-02:16:03). Clearly, Joi is objectified. And she does not have freedom. K has absolute control over Joi, and he can control Joi's appearance and disappearance by remote control. While Joi and K are kissing in the rain, K suddenly accepts the task and suspends the intimacy with Joi. With a medium shot, Joi awkwardly freezes into a kissing pose in the rain. And K just walked away and turned Joi off (00:23:07-00:23:31). Joi is portrayed as a Cyborg with full of romantic relationship in her head, willing to sacrifice herself for K. The camera takes an over-the-shoulder shot, in order to protect K, Joi risks disappearing forever and asks K to delete her data (01:32:17-01:32:36). These episodes are still extremely cruel, for a Cyborg woman who yearns for love and is willing to give her heart.

Much like Joi, in Alita: Battle Angel (Robert Rodriguez, 2019), Alita's actions have always been associated with Hugo's, and most of the things she has done to risk her life have been to help Hugo achieve his dreams. Alita trusts Hugo, and is greatly influenced by Hugo's values. At the beginning of the film, the newly revitalized Alita knows nothing about this strange city, and Hugo acts as a guide. At this time Hugo is still a sunny outgoing boy image, the color of the scene is also bright. He protects Alita, who is nearly attacked by the centurion. Alita takes part in the Motorball game in order to help Hugo win the prize. And Alita goes to dissuade Hugo, who is determined to go to the wealthy sky city of Zalem, with a high angle aimed at Alita and a low angle aimed at Hugo (01:51:53-01:53:03). A full shot and Hugo's body being sliced up by the big machine, a forward track captures Alita trying to hold Hugo back. Several close-ups of the hands show Alita's determination and helplessness to rescue Hugo. However, this plot has a strong patriarchal social awareness, it seems that the existence of women is always inseparable from romantic relationship and male. Alita's relationship with her "father" also reflects the suppression of gender power. When Alita wanted to join the bounty Hunters and take on the Berserker's body, she has to ask her father for permission and is prevented from doing so. The stereotypes about female, the expectations that men have for women, are highly display in these episodes.

I argue that Cyborg represents the desire for survival hidden in the universal ideology of human groups and disdain for the weakness of the female physical body. In Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014), Ava, on the run, encounters Kyoko, a fellow Cyborg, in the corridors of an underground laboratory. With extreme close-up shots of their eyes, hands, and lips, they reached a consensus to get rid of Nathan Bateman and flee. But in the fight, Nathan had the upper hand, and a low-angle shot captured Ava being pinned under Nathan's crotch. With another high-angle shot, Nathan breaks Ava's left arm. However, with a low-angle shot to Kyoko's leg, Kyoko steps forward and stabs Nathan. In the empty hallway, following a dolly in shot, Ava speeds toward Nathan and knocks him to the ground with her Cyborg body. Ava can be regarded as the femme fatale Cyborg. Her situation indicates the confinement and control of men, and women need to exert their efforts and even use sexual charm to please men so as to obtain the gap of resistance and the possibility of freedom.

Ava is held captive in a house in the mountains, and her every move is monitored. Caleb watches Ava's live surveillance footage in the room, peeping at her behavior. the camera, over the shoulder of Caleb, zooms in, taking images of the walls. Interspersed among them were a close-up shot from Caleb, a look of wonder on his face (00:18:31-00:19:20). "You want to remove the chance of her falling in love and fucking?" In between her legs, there's an opening with a concentration of sensors. You engage them in the right way, creating a pleasure response. Therefore, if you wanted to screw her, mechanically speaking, you could. And she'd enjoy it (00:46:36-00:47:03). This conversation between Caleb and Nathan exposes the reality of Ava's objectification and sexual instrumentalized status as a Cyborg with female sexuality.

In Lucy (Denis Villeneuve, 2014), an extreme close-up shot of the eye introduces a scene of Lucy lying in bed. A full shot shows Lucy half-naked in her underwear, which clearly caters to male pleasure. Several men rush through the door, first with a close-up shot of Lucy's face, and then with a three-quarter shot to expose her half-naked body. Although Lucy already has the characteristics of a Cyborg, the camera still deliberately shows her beautiful chest and slender waist on the screen, which all reflect the pleasing of men.

In terms of human and mechanical order, it is hard to deny that these films have a strong anthropocentric idea of wishful thoughts. In Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017), Mira has no privacy and less freedom as a Cyborg, and every motivation and thought of hers is monitored and read. As Dr. Ouelet's conversation with Dr. Osmond, "A machine can't lead, it can only follow orders. A machine can't imagine or care, or intuit. But as a human mind in a cybernetic frame, Mira can do all those things, and more." Even Dr. Osmond believes that Mira is a weapon. He wants to erase Mira's memory, but Dr. Ouelet refuses.

> OSMOND: She is a contract with me.
> OUELET: She is more than human and more than AI. We changed her entire identity. But her ghost survived!
> OSMOND: Her ghost is what failed us. We can not control her. (01:10:13 -01:10:27)

The human characters put themselves in a position of power to look down and control Cyborg, while ignoring Cyborg's strength, feelings, and thoughts.

This human-centered setting of order is also reflected in Ava in Ex Machina (Alex Garland, 2014). People think that because they created Cyborg, they can control them. But in fact, humans ignore their own smart-aleck and headstrong human weaknesses. Caleb was convinced all along that he was here to test Ava. The confidence and arrogance of being human led him to overlook the possibility that Ava was the test that was specifically designed for him. At 01:02:17, Ava asks Caleb, "Are you a good person?", but Caleb never tries to find out if Ava is good. Caleb went so far as to suggest that Ava, who had never been outside the lab, was vulnerable and dependent. This kind of blind confidence from the human male is also an important reason for his injury in the end. Ava imprisons Caleb the way he imprisons herself, and eventually walks out into the free and beautiful world.

4. Conclusion

This paper chooses the image of Cyborg in the western science fiction films of the Alpha period as the starting point, focuses on Cyborg with the feminine pronoun, and analyzes and explains the feminist theory through the cinema.

In the post-human era, the Cyborg is characterized by fluidity, breaking the boundaries of the human and mechanical and gender binary. In the externalization of human-machine mobility of cyborg, the body is an important factor. The existence of mechanical prosthetics prolongs human life and enhances human strength, while the existence of the human brain gives the temperature and emotion of machine life. In terms of internalization, Cyborg figures still

desire affection, love, and freedom like humans, but they are also more rational and restrained.

The portrayal of cyborgs in the film is also an important demonstration of gender diversity. The image of cyborg eliminates the gap between men and women in physical strength and creates an equal stage for women to show themselves. Women are no longer controlled by men and can compete with them. And because of the characteristics of Cyborg, they can break through the boundaries more directly and boldly, and resist and struggle for their own rights and dignity.

The image of the post-human cyborg after the combination of man and machine reconstructs the social order to a certain extent. In the distribution of production roles, gender can no longer be a reason to restrict women's careers, because women have unique power, and the traditional male-dominated social division of labor is gradually disintegrating. The breakdown of this dualistic order also manifests itself in physical changes. The uniqueness and immutability of the body are severely damaged. Post-human cyborg figures have the opportunity to change their bodies and possibly even share their bodies. At the same time, it will also lead to new social and ethical problems.

For Cyborg images, they are still unable to completely break away from and break the order of the patriarchal society. And even if they have a powerful super ability, they will still escape sexual harassment because of women's physical characteristics and beautiful faces. In Western science fiction movies, cyborg is often used as a tool for human service, and their superpowers are more like a double-edged sword or even Pandora's Box. But the drawbacks of human selfishness and anthropocentrism are also clearly exposed.

4.1 Limitation

Based on Cyborg body theories, this paper selects five representative works from the Alpha era for textual analysis. However, this does not fully summarize all Western science fiction films with Cyborg images of the period. The contribution of cyborgs in Western science fiction films to the construction of a new social order still needs to be analyzed and interpreted at a deeper ethical level.

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Ghost in the Shell. (2017). [IMAX, 3D, IMAX 3D, 4DX]. Directed by Rupert Sanders. United States: Paramount Pictures.
Blade Runner 2049. (2017). Directed by Denis Villeneuve. United States: Columbia Pictures.
Ex Machina. (2014). Directed by Alex Garland. United Kingdom: Film.
Lucy. (2014). Directed by Luc Besson. France: EuropaCorp.

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