

## CAMUSIAN REBELLION AND THE ETHICAL LIMITS OF POSTHUMANISM

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### **Abstrak**

*Artikel ini mengkaji bagaimana konsep absurditas dan pemberontakan dalam pemikiran Albert Camus dapat berfungsi sebagai kerangka etis dalam merespons ideologi posthumanisme yang menantang subjektivitas dan otonomi manusia. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis secara kritis relevansi filsafat eksistensial Camus dalam menghadapi dilema etis yang ditimbulkan oleh posthumanisme, khususnya terkait dengan transendensi teknologi dan pengikisan keterbatasan manusia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan normatif-filosofis melalui analisis tekstual, penelitian ini menyelidiki apakah gagasan Camus tentang pemberontakan autentik dapat menjadi sikap kritis terhadap aspirasi posthumanis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa gagasan Camus mengenai pemberontakan yang berlandaskan pada keadilan, batas, dan martabat dapat memberikan respons etis yang kuat terhadap dampak dehumanisasi dari posthumanisme. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa etika Camus menegaskan tanggung jawab manusia sekaligus menawarkan resistensi terhadap pelarian metafisik dalam konteks hiper-teknologis.*

**Kata kunci:** absurditas, pemberontakan, posthumanisme, etika, Camus.

### **Abstract**

This article examines how Albert Camus's concepts of absurdity and rebellion can serve as an ethical framework in responding to posthumanist ideologies that challenge human subjectivity and autonomy. The research objective is to critically analyze the relevance of Camus's existential philosophy in addressing the ethical dilemmas posed by posthumanism, particularly regarding technological transcendence and the erosion of human finitude. Adopting a normative-philosophical approach with textual analysis,

the study investigates whether Camus's notion of authentic rebellion offers a critical stance against posthumanist aspirations. The findings reveal that Camus's idea of rebellion, grounded in justice, limits, and dignity, provides a strong ethical response to the dehumanizing effects of posthumanism. The study concludes that Camusian ethics affirms human responsibility and offers resistance to metaphysical escapism in hyper-technological contexts.

**Keywords:** *absurdity, rebellion, posthumanism, ethics, Camus.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In an era where technology accelerates at exponential levels and traditional boundaries regarding human identity become increasingly blurred and complex, a fundamental question arises: What is the essence of human existence? Advances in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and cybernetic augmentation not only expand human ontological capabilities but also challenge the very epistemological foundations of humanity (Frangoul et al., 2021; McKinney et al., 2020). *Challenging* in the sense that it destabilizes humanist assumptions while also demanding a rethinking of subjectivity and relationality<sup>1</sup> in a world shared with non-human and technological agents. By refusing to take the "human" as a stable given, posthumanism forces us to confront the fragility of human identity and to consider alternative ways of existence beyond anthropocentric paradigms.

However, along with the extraordinary prospects offered by posthumanism, profound existential issues also arise. What is the meaning and purpose of existence in a world that is increasingly

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<sup>1</sup> Posthumanism critiques humanism's view of humans as autonomous, rational, and superior, emphasizing relationality over individualism. Subjectivity emerges through ecological and technological entanglements, not isolated autonomy, and rationality is distributed across systems. In addition, superiority is rejected by viewing humans as contingent, interconnected entities.

automated and augmented?<sup>2</sup> Here, Albert Camus's philosophy of absurdity and rebellion becomes highly relevant. Camus defines absurdity as a condition where humans search for meaning in a random and seemingly teleologically devoid world. According to Camus, although life inherently lacks meaning, humans can find freedom and dignity through rebellion against this absurdity (Camus, 1955).

In works such as *The Myth of Sisyphus* and *The Rebel*, Camus illustrates how humans can confront a meaningless reality with an attitude of rebellion. This rebellion is not a destructive effort to destroy the world, but, as Camus puts it, an affirmation of dignity and solidarity: "I rebel therefore we exist" (Camus, 1956: 22). Rebellion thus becomes an act that strengthens human dignity, asserts our existence, and provides meaning amidst the absurdity. Following this, the article explores how the concepts of absurdity and rebellion in Camus's thought can be applied in the context of posthumanism.

In today's world, we are facing a reality where technology enables humans to transcend their physical and mental limitations. This situation can be read as a form of rebellion against the existential conditions of finitude. Yet, this rebellion also raises complex ethical and philosophical questions. For instance, when we enhance ourselves with technology, how do we maintain human values in a world increasingly dominated by technology?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Posthumanism engages existential issues by questioning human centrality and meaning in a technologically mediated world. It reframes existence as relational, aligning with existentialist concerns about contingency and purpose (Braidotti, 2013). This shift prompts reflection on dignity and becoming within entangled, post-anthropocentric realities (Herbrechter, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Maintaining human values in a technology-dominated world involves prioritizing principles such as dignity, solidarity, and care, ensuring technology serves to enhance rather than erode these values (Herbrechter, 2021). A humanistic purpose requires critically guiding technological development to foster relationality and responsibility, avoiding dehumanizing tendencies like inequality or loss of agency (Braidotti, 2013). This can be achieved through ethical frameworks that integrate technology with equitable access and ecological sustainability, preserving authenticity in an increasingly automated world.

This research is important because we are on the brink of significant changes in how we understand ourselves and our place in the world. Technological advances, especially in AI and biotechnology, challenge traditional notions of human identity and our role in a post-anthropocentric world (Braidotti, 2013). The project addresses the urgent need to navigate these shifts ethically, so that values such as dignity and responsibility persist amid rapid change (Foley, 2008). Drawing on Camus's philosophy, the study provides a foundation for critical engagement with posthumanism, promoting a balanced understanding of our evolving existence (Herbrechter, 2021).

By examining Camus's thoughts, we can gain valuable insights into how to confront the existential challenges posed by posthumanism. Through my critical evaluation of posthumanism, I argue that it poses a significant threat to existential human values, as it has the potential to erode the core of human dignity and meaning within the framework of Albert Camus's idea of absurdity and rebellion. Posthumanism's drive to transcend biological limits through technologies like AI (Artificial Intelligence) and genetic engineering risks what Camus terms "philosophical suicide," substituting authentic human struggle with a technocratic escape that undermines solidarity and ethical responsibility (Camus, 1955; Foley, 2008). By prioritizing technological transcendence over the lived tension of the absurd, posthumanism threatens to dehumanize existence, reducing human agency to mere data points or market-driven enhancements (Braidotti, 2013), thus alienating us from the relational dignity Camus champions. Through critical analysis, we will see how absurdity and rebellion can provide ethical and philosophical frameworks for understanding and navigating the new world we are entering<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> By "new world," I refer to an emerging reality shaped by advanced technologies such as AI and biotechnology, which fundamentally alter human identity, agency, and relationality (Braidotti, 2013: 145). This world challenges traditional humanist paradigms by decentering the human subject and fostering a post-anthropocentric, technologically mediated existence (Braidotti, 2013: 60–61). A humane approach to technology, informed

Furthermore, this article will also examine how absurdity and rebellion can contribute to the development of a more humane approach to technology. This research serves a humanistic purpose by advocating for the preservation of values such as dignity, justice, and solidarity in a posthumanist era, utilizing Camus's philosophy to ensure that technology enhances rather than diminishes human authenticity (Camus, 1956; Foley, 2008). I adopt a critical stance toward posthumanism, appreciating its challenge to anthropocentric humanism but cautioning against its potential to erode human responsibility through unchecked technological transcendence (Braidotti, 2013; Herbrechter, 2021). Rather than defending the status quo of traditional humanism, I propose a reimagined humanism that integrates posthumanist relationality while grounding it in Camus's ethical rebellion to safeguard human values against dehumanizing tendencies. By understanding these concepts, we can find ways to maintain human values amidst rapid technological changes. This includes considering how technology can be used to enhance human life without sacrificing our human essence.

This study aims to address the lack of ethical reflection within posthumanist discourse by offering a Camusian perspective that has rarely been applied in this context. While most discussions on posthumanism draw on transhumanist, techno-utopian, or critical posthumanist frameworks, few engage with existentialist ethics, particularly Camus's concepts of absurdity and rebellion. The research employs a normative-philosophical method through textual analysis to investigate whether Camus's ethical rebellion can offer a meaningful critique of posthumanist thought. The central research question is: How can Camus's notion of absurdity and rebellion serve as a philosophical response to the ethical challenges posed by posthumanism? The hypothesis is that Camus's thought provides an ethical standpoint capable of resisting the

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by Camus's rebellion, seeks to preserve human dignity and ethical responsibility within this transformative landscape (Foley, 2008).

dehumanizing tendencies found in posthumanist narratives, reaffirming human responsibility and dignity.

Through this exploration, we will see how Camus's thought can offer profound and relevant insights for understanding the complex dynamics between technological advancement and humanity. Ultimately, this article aims to encourage critical reflection and constructive dialogue on how we can face the challenges and opportunities presented by posthumanism while ensuring human values and dignity. In this case, posthumanism offers opportunities to reimagine human existence by fostering relationality, enhancing capabilities through technology, and promoting ethical inclusivity beyond anthropocentrism (Braidotti, 2013). It enables advancements such as AI-assisted healthcare and genetic therapies that extend human potential while challenging hierarchical humanist paradigms, encouraging interconnectedness with non-human entities (Herbrechter, 2021). Guided by Camus's ethical rebellion, these opportunities can affirm human dignity and solidarity, ensuring technology serves a humane and sustainable future (Foley, 2008).

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Camusian Absurdity and Rebellion

Albert Camus sets himself apart in twentieth-century philosophy by resisting existentialist classifications and engaging directly with the contradictions of human existence, an outlook shaped by World War II and his role in the French Resistance, including the milieu of clandestine publishing and the ethical stakes it raised (Zaretsky, 2013). This experience of resistance, his clandestine Combat work in 1944—producing anti-Nazi pieces under the risk of arrest and deportation—helped shape his view of lucid defiance (Todd, 1998: 180–182). He favors lived experience over closed systems, treating the absurd not as a doctrine but as a methodological starting point for thinking, one that frames rebellion as a specifically ethical response rather than a slide into nihilism (Foley, 2008: 28). Taken together, these commitments articulate a

way beyond nihilism through lucidity and a concern for human dignity, what later debates oppose as “unity” versus ideological “totality” (Sprintzen, 1991: 61). This stance is inseparable from Camus’s wartime practice at Combat, where he argued against confusing pessimism with despair and sought moral clarity in the face of crisis (Todd, 1998: 210).

Camus delineates the absurd as the clash between the human demand for meaning and the world’s mute indifference, as he states: “The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world” (Camus, 1955: 21). He insists the absurd is a relation, not a property of either subject or world: “The absurd is not in man (if such a metaphor could have meaning) nor in the world, but in their presence together... I have just defined it as a confrontation and an unceasing struggle” (Camus, 1955: 23). Read this way, the absurd marks those ordinary moments when our need for meaning meets “the unreasonable silence of the world,” a theme Zaretsky lays out while expounding Camus’s *Myth of Sisyphus* (Zaretsky, 2013: 12–14). Confronting this absurd condition has ethical stakes, as Sprintzen notes in discussing Camus on suicide and significance, to treat life as devoid of meaning is a genuine, perilous option we must answer lucidly (Sprintzen, 1988). Boisvert interprets ethical motivation within Camus’s orbit through Taylor’s concept of “ultimate benevolence,” which can serve as a foundation for action that extends beyond mere sympathy (Boisvert, 2023: 65–67).

Facing the absurd, Camus identifies two misguided responses that undermine lucidity: *physical suicide*, ending one’s life to solve the tension and *philosophical suicide*, leaps or systems that foreclose the tension, such as the Kierkegaardian leap of faith. He frames the core problem as “There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide, ” and insists the task is to live the absurd rather than abolish it (Camus, 1955: 3–4; 40–41; 50–51). Camus emphasizes that embracing the absurd does not imply resignation or despair, but a conscious decision to confront life’s inherent lack of ultimate meaning with courage and lucidity. This

confrontation transforms human existence into a space for personal freedom and ethical responsibility, where one can act authentically despite the absence of metaphysical guarantees. Finally, fidelity to the absurd seeds rebellion as a constructive and solidaristic response, shifting the focus from solitary inwardness toward shared ethical involvement, as Camus's writings and their reception around *The Plague* make clear (Foley, 2008: 53–54). By embracing the absurd fully, individuals cultivate a heightened awareness of life's limitations, which in turn fosters solidarity, creativity, and moral clarity in navigating both personal and collective challenges.

Camus urges persisting the absurd “without appeal,” that is refusing recourse to higher guarantees while keeping the absurd alive as a matter of lucid consciousness (Camus, 1955: 40; Foley, 2008: 85). This stance provides a stable foundation for ethics in enduring the tension of existence instead of escaping into consolations; in Camus's own terms, “outside the single fatality of death, everything ... is liberty” (Camus, 1955: 87). Rejecting both forms of suicide highlights a duty to continue, a lesson sharpened by Camus's wartime experience and *Combat* journalism, which demanded vigilance against despair and doctrinal temptations (Todd, 1998; Zaretsky, 2013). Thus, living without appeal becomes a form of resistance: revolt is “one of the only coherent philosophical positions,” converting the absurd from a paralyzing premise into motive power for moral action and personal integrity (Camus, 1955; Foley, 2008; Sprintzen, 1991).

Camus's position also diverges from Sartre's postwar emphasis on historicized commitment, a difference that fed their public quarrel in the 1950s (Aronson, 2005). While Sartre prioritized engagement with historical and social conditions as a measure of authentic existence, Camus remained focused on the immediate ethical implications of human freedom in the face of the absurd. This divergence reflects Camus's insistence on personal lucidity and moral responsibility over adherence to ideological or historical frameworks, highlighting his concern with individual conscience rather than collective political objectives. Within the wider

philosophical field, Camus's refusal of "solutions" that override lived experience resonates with his disputes with Sartre over history, violence, and engagement (Aronson, 2005).

The awareness of absurdity ignites rebellion as a moral validation of human worth against indifference, with Camus declaring: "I rebel, therefore we exist," a statement that redirects philosophical investigation from solitary detachment to communal connections (Camus, 1956: 22). In *The Rebel*, he explicitly contrasts this formula with Descartes' *cogito*, noting that in daily trials rebellion "plays the same role as does the 'cogito' in the realm of thought" (Camus, 1956: 22). This Camusian validation establishes a relational being where the refusal of injustice opens onto solidarity (Foley, 2008). Shaped by his Resistance experience and work at *Combat*, rebellion for Camus links people not via abstract theory but through the practical safeguarding of dignity against degradation (Todd, 1998). The shift from "I" to "we" highlights the social dimension of existence, turning rebellion into a cooperative project to sustain justice within limits (Sprintzen, 1991; Zaretsky, 2013).

Rebellion circumvents the extremes of nihilistic annihilation and revolutionary excess, as when the French Revolution slid into the Reign of Terror, where virtue turned to legalized violence (Camus, 1956). Rather than either resignation or total negation, rebellion at once contests unjust structures and affirms shared dignity, a stance of limits and solidarity (Sprintzen, 1991; Camus, 1956). Moral, not merely speculative, rebellion emphasizes proportion and moderation, understood as the careful calibration of action to avoid excess and the exercise of restraint in pursuit of justice (Camus, 1956; Foley, 2008), a view also expounded in the scholarship that glosses Camus's *mesure*: "reality is neither entirely rational ... the irrational limits the rational, which in turn gives it proportion" (Francev & Kałuża (eds.), 2023: 61, *The Rebel* R 259). This framework stems from Camus's critique of movements where unbounded aspiration breeds catastrophe, hence his vigilance and clarity about limiting violence (Camus, 1956; Todd, 1998). Anchored in these tenets, rebellion remains a catalyst for constructive

change—in line with Camus’s war-era insights on calibrated opposition and the refusal of “legitimate murder” (Zaretsky, 2013; Todd, 1998).

Camus’s moral of proportion rejects the radical actions of utopian politics, such as the Jacobins’ guillotine or Stalinist purges, which ignore human flaws. It emphasizes the importance of awareness of limitations to prevent oppressive outcomes (Camus, 1956). Rebellion necessitates ongoing alertness to preserve these boundaries, which are delineated by the finite character of human abilities and moral confines, thus preventing well-meaning equity quests from transforming into new forms of oppression (Camus, 1956; Foley, 2008). Utopian politics appears in the discourse because Camus employs it to exemplify how rebellion can deteriorate when separated from actuality, creating explicit analogies to past revolutions that began with lofty aims but ended in horror because of their disdain for human restrictions (Todd, 1998). In 20th-century Europe, where doctrines like fascism and communism represented such overindulgence, Camus’s analysis functions as a caution against replicating these patterns, pushing for a tempered strategy aligned by lucidity (Zaretsky, 2013). This alertness assures rebellion continues to thrive yet controlled, adapting to injustices without yielding to total remedies’ temptation aligned by fantasy (Sprintzen, 1991).

Absurdity and rebellion are inseparably interconnected in Camus’s idea. In the absence of rebellion’s robust confirmation, absurdity’s acknowledgment risks crumbling into absolute nihilism, where every principle is rejected as insignificant, resulting in indifference or self-ruin (Sprintzen, 1991). Inversely, devoid of absurdity’s anchoring clarity through unyielding truthfulness, rebellion may decline into utopian rigidity, enforcing inflexible doctrines that overlook life’s innate inconsistencies and culminate in despotic consequences (Zaretsky, 2013). Camus expertly merges these components by ensuring that absurdity provides the essential transparency to retain rebellion practical and cognizant of constraints. At the same time, rebellion imbues absurdity with

moral guidance, converting passive tolerance into dynamic value creation amid war and existence's senselessness (Foley, 2008). Prior evidence drawn from the rise of 20th-century totalitarian regimes, where unrestrained doctrines caused widespread suffering, bolsters this dialectic by illustrating the dangers of detaching clarity from deed (Todd, 1998). Within Camus's scheme, this interconnection thwarts philosophical extremes, nurturing a balanced method that reveres both life's sorrowful essence and humanity's solidarity capacity (Aronson, 2005).

The Sisyphus legend operates as a potent depiction of this dialectical interconnection between absurdity and rebellion, portraying Sisyphus as doomed by deities to the perpetual duty of boulder-rolling uphill only for it to descend anew each instance, signifying the absurd toil that marks human beings without any definitive purpose or settlement (Camus, 1955). Nevertheless, in accepting his destiny without the support of fantasy or anticipation for godly mediation, Sisyphus attains a liberty form through aware resistance, where his futility awareness transforms it into a personal victory act, as Camus deduces: "One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (Camus, 1955: 91). This solitary resistance directly ties to the collective rebellion's notion, broadening Sisyphus's lone battle into a mutual human posture versus unfairness, where societies derive vigor from clarity to validate honor facing tyranny (Camus, 1956; Foley, 2008). The legend echoes Camus's personal opposition encounters against Nazi dominance, where steadfast endeavor amid insurmountable odds personified the absurd yet produced ethical triumph and unity moments (Todd, 1998). Through dissecting Sisyphus's tale, Camus shows how absurdity's strain can be utilized for rebellion, turning ceaseless labor into a symbol of human endurance and independence (Sprintzen, 1991).

Critics frequently claim that Camus's philosophy lacks metaphysical depth, reading his refusal of system-building as a retreat into moralism rather than ontological rigor (Aronson, 2005). Yet this charge misreads Camus's deliberate strategy of resisting systematization in order to remain faithful to the irreducible

contradictions of lived experience, an approach rendered especially urgent in eras dominated by doctrinal extremes such as fascism and communism (Aronson, 2005). Evidence from his wartime writings for *Combat* underscores this pragmatism, showing him prioritizing moral clarity and limits over abstract theorizing to address immediate human suffering (Zaretsky, 2013). This approach enables Camus to refuse grand metaphysical closure without collapsing into relativism, keeping his thought accessible and responsive to concrete predicaments (Foley, 2008).

In response to such critiques, the force of Camus's work lies in its groundedness: rebellion as an ethics of limits, proportion, and vigilance against the legitimation of violence (Sprintzen, 1991; Foley, 2008). Some dismiss his conception of rebellion as mere temperance, too indeterminate for decisive political action; yet in historical contexts marked by extremes, fascism's ascent and communist purges, his insistence on boundaries functions as a protective stance against the very excesses that lead to disaster (Todd, 1998). Camus calls for tragic accountability: acts that balance the critique of injustice with the affirmation of human dignity, rejecting both quietism and totalizing remedies (Foley, 2008; Zaretsky, 2013). By stitching historical cases into his analysis, he roots his ethics of proportion in empirical reality and practical judgment (Aronson, 2005). Such vigilance keeps rebellion dynamic yet bounded, able to confront injustice without succumbing to the allure of absolute solutions (Sprintzen, 1991).

## 2. Posthumanism

Posthumanism took shape in the late twentieth century as a critical response to Enlightenment humanism and anthropocentrism, motivated by the need to address exclusions such as speciesism, coloniality, gender hierarchies, and by the pressures of technoscience and ecological crisis (Herbrechter, 2021; Braidotti, 2013; Ferrando, 2019). It develops a post-anthropocentric and relational outlook that distributes agency across humans,

nonhumans, and technologically mediated systems, reframing the human as historically contingent rather than an absolute norm (Braidotti, 2013). Its philosophical articulation draws on postmodern and feminist, postcolonial and critical race interventions together with new materialisms and related currents, while adopting non-dualist and monist orientations that resist binary thinking and foreground interdependence (Ferrando, 2019). In this sense, posthumanism does not announce the end of humanity but dismantles a particular Eurocentric figure of “Man” and advocates humility, attentiveness, and care within ecological and technological networks (Herbrechter, 2021; Braidotti, 2013).

Rosi Braidotti (2013) enriches posthumanism by articulating a relational ontology grounded in feminist neomaterialism, presenting the human subject as an embedded, embodied assemblage entangled with animals, technologies, and environments rather than as an isolated individual. This perspective calls for rethinking boundaries to build ethical alliances beyond anthropocentric individualism, cultivating an affirmative and vitalist account of matter attentive to nonhuman others (Braidotti, 2013). It critiques humanism’s emphasis on autonomy and abstract rationality by showing how subjectivity emerges through affective and embodied relations, and it offers a framework for addressing contemporary problems such as climate change through interdependent ethics (Braidotti, 2013; Ferrando, 2019).

Contemporary scholarship redefines agency as distributed and emergent, moving away from the notion of an inherent individual trait. Daigle and Hayler (2023) emphasize that this shift highlights networked interdependencies, better capturing the ecological and technological complexities of modern existence. McMillan (2021) further illustrates how digital culture reshapes identity through hybrid human-machine interactions, fostering “mechanical identities” within virtual and media environments.

Posthumanist thought gains further depth from biotechnological developments. Tomašovičová and Suwara (2023) show how Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic

Repeats (CRISPR) based genome editing and the debate over heritable human genome editing prompt a rethinking of life's boundaries and call for an ethic that decenters the human in favor of more egalitarian interspecies responsibilities. In education, Daigle and Hayler (2023) outline a critical posthumanist pedagogy that shifts attention from individualist knowledge models to networked interdependencies, reframing learning with animals, natures, and machines. Against the broader crisis of humanism, Jorion argues for ethical frameworks scaled to ecological constraints and complex systems, extending moral consideration and agency across humans, artificial intelligences, and organizations while attending to environmental carrying capacities (Jorion, 2022).

Posthumanism justifies the anthropocentric humanism paradigm move to a relational, non-exceptionalist frame. By showing that even projects imagining a "beyond" of the human often leave intact "the idea of human exceptionalism and some form of anthropocentric projection into the future, even if, paradoxically, that future were to be a 'world without us'" (Herbrechter, 2021: 212). Building a positive alternative, Braidotti argues that "subjectivity is not the exclusive prerogative of anthropos ... [and] is based on the immanence of relations" (Braidotti, 2013: 82).

This decentering nurtures humility as well as a sharper sense of responsibility, particularly in the face of climate change and technological acceleration, where human activity carries planetary weight. For example, coastal adaptation that prioritizes mangrove restoration over concrete seawalls treats nonhuman systems as co-actors in resilience, and "One Health" surveillance that links human clinics with wildlife and wastewater monitoring situates care within broader ecologies. In environmental science and healthcare alike, the use of predictive algorithms already shows how agency circulates between human experts, machine models, and affected communities.

Collectively, these perspectives distinguish posthumanism from transhumanism, which prioritizes overcoming biological limits through enhancement and optimization, frequently keeping

an anthropocentric focus on human improvement and control rather than decentering the human (Ferrando, 2019; Tomašovičová & Suwara, 2023). Transhumanism often emphasizes overcoming limits through technical fixes, gene editing, neural implants, or similar interventions that risk intensifying inequality by serving only a privileged minority. Posthumanism, by contrast, stresses collective well-being and relational ethics. It advocates for the equitable sharing of biotechnologies and for advances in medicine and enhancement to become means for solidarity rather than exclusion (Ferrando, 2019).

Thus, posthumanism calls for an ethical reorientation away from anthropocentrism and from binary hierarchies such as human versus non-human or nature versus culture, emphasizing relational, networked, and interdependent modes of existence (Braidotti, 2013). It advances affirmative ethics of interconnection that value zoe-centered egalitarianism and transversal relations, rethinking subjectivity beyond autonomy and abstract rationality (Braidotti, 2013). Situated amid ecological crisis and technological mediation, posthumanism also interrogates humanist grand narratives in light of anthropocene problematics. It proposes critical ways to reposition the human within broader planetary and material processes (Herbrechter, 2021).

### **3. The Relationship Between Absurdity and Posthumanism**

The intricate and multifaceted relationship between Albert Camus's concept of absurdity and the philosophical project of posthumanism offers a rigorous lens for probing human limits and the transformative potentials of technology (Braidotti, 2013; Foley, 2008). As Camus writes, "The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world" (Camus, 1955: 21). This condition resonates with posthumanism's critique of the traditional humanist assumption of a fixed, autonomous, and exceptional human subject, a critique made increasingly urgent as contemporary technologies such as artificial

intelligence and genetic engineering destabilize the boundaries of the self (Braidotti, 2013; Foley, 2008).

Posthumanism in its critical and philosophical forms emphasizes relational ontologies, hybridity, and a profound interconnectedness with non-human entities, including animals, ecosystems, and machines (Ferrando, 2019). It reframes mortality, fragility, and embodiedness not as flaws to be overcome but as fertile sites of potential for co-evolutionary becoming and creative negotiation (Ferrando, 2019). As Stefan Herbrechter states, “witnessing the end of (at least a certain notion of) humanity, what task lies before the human (now)?” which signals a shift away from a specific humanist image of the human rather than an end of humanity as such (Herbrechter, 2022, xvi). Rosi Braidotti develops a relational, neo-materialist account of subjectivity that is embedded, embodied, and connected across nature and culture, proposing an affirmative ethics that decenters human exceptionalism (Braidotti, 2013).

However, a critical tension arises when this posthumanist project manifests not as an immanent critique of humanism but as a pursuit of technological transcendence, a strong attempt to eliminate suffering, finitude, and ontological uncertainty through engineering. This ambition, often associated with transhumanist strands within posthumanism, risks committing what Camus would condemn as philosophical suicide: the evasion of the absurd’s essential tension by placing a new faith in technological solutionism, akin to the religious or metaphysical leaps he rejected (Foley, 2008; Camus, 1955). The absurd for Camus is constituted by limits, the reality of death, the inevitability of suffering, and pervasive uncertainty, conditions he explored against the historical backdrop of war and occupation, which demanded a response grounded in lucid awareness and ethical rebellion within those limits, rather than an escape from them. (Camus, 1955; Zaretsky, 2013; Todd, 1998).

In direct contrast, transhumanist-inspired strands within the broader posthumanist scene actively envisage using technology to

neutralize these limits. Recent advances make this pursuit tangible. CRISPR Cas9 gene editing has produced clinically meaningful outcomes in early trials for monogenic diseases such as sickle cell disease and beta thalassemia, indicating the potential to mitigate biological suffering and extend healthy life (Frangoul et al., 2021). Likewise, artificial intelligence systems for breast cancer screening have surpassed human experts on large datasets, reducing false positives and false negatives and outperforming radiologists in an independent reader study (McKinney et al., 2020). Visionaries project further horizons, including a prospective singularity in which artificial intelligence and human cognition converge, though such scenarios remain speculative and beyond current clinical evidence (Kurzweil, 2007).

Raymond Boisvert's contemporary reading of Camus offers a crucial and clarifying lens for this critique. He emphasizes that the absurd is not an abstract puzzle; it is lived in ordinary experience, in the frictions between human longings for health, meaning, and permanence, and the real limits of body, time, and knowledge (Boisvert, 2023). From this Camusian view, the technological project of transcendence can look like a refusal of the absurd's tension rather than an engagement with it (Camus, 1955). For instance, the transhumanist drive toward mind uploading or AI-assisted immortality reprises a utopian solutionism (Kurzweil, 2007). More concretely, techno-utopian narratives can obscure biopolitical power and inequity in how life is governed and valued (Rose, 2007). They gloss over who sets the terms, including platform owners, regulators, and funders, and whose bodies and data bear the risks of experimentation and surveillance. By framing enhancement as an inevitable good, they normalize unequal access and justify diverting care and resources toward the "optimizable," while sidelining those deemed too costly or noncompliant.

Ultimately, Camus's philosophy posits rebellion as the authentic and affirmative response to the absurd. It is neither nihilistic destruction nor resignation; it is a refusal of injustice that at once affirms shared human dignity. In this context, "injustice"

names the ways technological domination reproduces harm. For example, algorithmic triage that deprioritizes poorer patients, data extraction without meaningful consent, enhancement markets that entrench class privilege, and gene-editing agendas that stigmatize disability. Following Boisvert's insistence that absurdity is lived in the everyday, rebellion must be equally embodied and ethical, guided by justice and moderation, and intrinsically social (Boisvert, 2023; Foley, 2008).

Therefore, a genuinely Camusian critique does not reject technology per se; it demands lucid, critical engagement. It asks whether tools like CRISPR or AI preserve human agency and responsibility or dissolve them into technocratic management, and it warns against reproducing domination under new guises (Rose, 2007). By refusing a technological leap of faith and embracing ongoing rebellion, we can use technology to deepen solidarity, relieve real suffering, and affirm dignity within limits (Camus, 1956; Camus, 1955).

#### **4. The Relevance of Camus to Posthumanism Issues**

In works such as *The Myth of Sisyphus* and *The Rebel*, he rejects essentialist claims about human supremacy, affirming instead the need to face mortality and vulnerability without retreat into metaphysical consolation (Camus, 1991; Camus, 1956). Later commentators highlight his fidelity to these limits: mortality, finitude, and fragility (Zaretsky, 2013; Foley, 2008). Such a position resonates with posthumanist thought, which likewise insists on contingency amid ecological and technological entanglements (Braidotti, 2013). For posthumanists, contingency emerges from shifting relations among humans, nonhumans, and technical systems rather than from human intention alone. In practice, climate feedback, microbial evolution, and algorithmic retraining can redirect plans and values, so ethical judgment must remain responsive to these changing interdependencies.

For Camus, rebellion means affirming dignity by acting together within these limits, transforming despair into solidarity and justice (Camus, 1956). Posthumanist discourse, while sharing this concern with finitude, asks whether limits might be reconfigured ethically, not denied, through new assemblages of humans, nonhumans, and technologies. Biohybrid and regenerative approaches in medicine exemplify such reconfigurations, showing how bodies and materials intertwine, yet also raising questions about fairness and exclusion (Braidotti, 2013). For example, organoid research, lab-grown tissues, and neural or cardiac biohybrids redistribute agency across cells, devices, and clinicians, challenging simple human-centered control. These interventions also raise questions about justice, including access and affordability, consent over biomaterials and data, and the ecological costs of sourcing scaffolds and reagents.

The tension between posthumanism's relational ethics and transhumanism's drive to overcome limits becomes obvious when considering biotechnological innovations such as CRISPR gene editing. From a transhumanist perspective, such tools express a drive to overcome biological limitations like disease and aging (Bostrom, 2005). Early clinical reports describe editing of the BCL11A enhancer in patients with transfusion-dependent  $\beta$ -thalassemia and sickle-cell disease, with both achieving transfusion independence after treatment, which is evidence of profound therapeutic potential (Frangoul et al., 2021). In Camus's terms, however, any technological advance must remain faithful to human dignity and solidarity. Applied to CRISPR for hemoglobinopathies, this requires more than clinical efficacy: patients' agency and consent must be safeguarded, post-trial access and affordability planned, community-engaged oversight and long-term risks monitored with transparent. On this view, technique serves persons and communities, not the other way around. His line "I rebel—therefore we exist" warns against turning technique into a metaphysical escape from our limits, and instead grounds action in shared responsibility (Camus, 1956: 22).

The philosophical and ethical analysis of artificial intelligence through Camus's concepts, integrated with posthumanist insights, highlights how promises of efficiency can displace human agency and accountability if uncritically embraced. A large international study in *Nature* shows an AI system that, in screening mammography, reduced false positives (healthy patients incorrectly flagged as having cancer) by 5.7% in the USA and 1.2% in the UK, and reduced false negatives (actual cancers missed by the system) by 9.4% in the USA and 2.7% in the UK (McKinney et al., 2020: 89, 91, 93–94). In parallel, *Nature Medicine* reviews emphasize bias, privacy, and the so-called "AI chasm," the gap between high test accuracy on curated datasets and real improvements in patient outcomes once systems are deployed. Models can drift on new populations, embed dataset biases, or disrupt workflows, so prospective trials, external validation, consent, data governance, auditability, and equity monitoring are required to translate accuracy into clinical benefit (Topol, 2019: 44–49).

Read through Camus, the ethic of rebellion refuses to delegate moral responsibility to machines because machines are not moral agents; they cannot answer for harms or weigh justice. Responsibility must remain with designers, clinicians, and institutions for the value-laden choices in AI, including what data to collect, which errors to minimize, how to handle consent and privacy, and how to monitor disparate impacts, so that any efficiency gains serve dignity and solidarity rather than a flight from our limits. From here, it becomes clear that Camus's engagement with questions of limit, dignity, and responsibility extends beyond AI alone, unfolding in three interconnected dimensions of posthumanist relevance.

Thus, Camus's relevance to posthumanism has two tiers. First, his warning against flights from finitude safeguards authenticity as a normative limit on technological ambition. Second, that limit yields a relational ethic of solidarity and dignity that is then operationalized in governance for AI, biotechnology, and ecology through expanding consent and access, ensuring

accountability, and orienting innovation toward sustainability and justice.

## CONCLUSION

Albert Camus's philosophy of absurdity and rebellion provides an essential ethical lens for evaluating the ambitions of posthumanism. While technological advancements in AI and biotechnology can be seen as forms of rebellion against biological limits, Camus reminds us that authentic rebellion does not abolish finitude but affirms dignity within it. His critique warns against "philosophical suicide," where transcendence through technology risks evading the absurd rather than confronting it.

From this perspective, posthuman transformation must remain ethically guided, promoting solidarity, justice, and responsibility rather than deepening inequality or domination. Camus's emphasis on lucidity and limits calls for technological progress that respects human authenticity and ecological interdependence. In this way, Camus's thoughts do not reject posthumanist aspirations outright but offer a framework to ensure they enhance, rather than diminish, the human condition. Thus, the relevance of Camus to posthumanist debates lies in his ability to balance critique with affirmation: resisting false transcendence while upholding human dignity. His thought provides not only a philosophical critique of posthumanism but also a constructive guide for navigating technological futures with ethical responsibility.

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