

TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURE AND TRANSHUMANISM. THE PERSPECTIVE OF A PERMISSIVE FUTURE

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Abstract

The present article brings into light a problem of technological culture and transhumanism which is often met today and approached consequently, problem defined from many perspectives and revealed through the subjective permissive future. Man, as a human being, is permanent. Submitted to some profound and inevitable changes, the human being has defined his own limits and integrated technological terms and conditions. We wonder whether the *technical man* as he was defined in the last century, tends to adhere and to integrate into the mechanisms/ cars, giving up gradually but certain, to his own freedom only for an additional comfort. It is a question to which, although this work, we will try to provide some pertinent answer. The nowadays technology integrates the new technical tools and marks a significant growth of the creative abilities of informational machines and in the same time of mankind. Scientific and technical revolution lead to the building of a solid fundament in the development that derive in concepts as social justice and quality of the equality of chances. In the same time, for a coherent approach of the proposed issue, it has been imposed the analysis of *convergent technologies* as life biotechnology, info technology, nanotechnology and cognotechnology. These technologies of the future refer to the enhancing of the human condition which has become a new global perspective among the reinterpretation of science. The common impact refers to a new economical development which implies utility, efficiency and financial prosperity. Thus, the proposed theme refers to a personal manner in which the modern technologies specific to the *technical man* which generate a real impact not only on the global economy and security but also on the main feature of the human, the real one with advantages and disadvantages

Key words: *transhumanism, technical man, nanotechnology, infotechnology, permissive future.*

1. ARGUMENTS

“You have nothing else to do than to choose the second alternative, if you like it, laughed Ivan, and if our contemporary realism managed to monopolize in such a manner that you couldn't accept anything from the domain of fantasy,

even a “qui pro quo”, if you wanted (Dostoievski, 1986).

No matter what is the social, moral, cultural level of the human being, this one has his own ability to adopt a position towards the world and his own attitude about what life represents, according to his own outlook of life, led on his own wish and in accordance with his own conceptions, based on the way he chooses his manner to live, to give birth and implicitly to die. To assert that everyone creates his own philosophy about life, evolution and death, doesn't represent an overreaction.

These conceptions might coincide, but most of the time, they radically differ. The power of acceptance of the common way or the expansion and the influence of a barrier, are limits in what concerns the existence and evolution of humanity that sometimes interfere.

We propose in our paper, to analyze the human being, the free man, the way to live integrated in the new technologies from the perspective of transhumanists and from the vision of religion, also. These points of view are mainly based on a strict study, often adopting our original points of view.

2. WHO AM I IN RELATION WITH MYSELF AND THE OTHERS?

Along the time, the specialists/professionals have often asked themselves this question, on the premises that we tend to be more and more what we seem to be. The need to put into evidence would explain the importance of the contrast between all resemblances and essence that have today that ineffable look.

Human, generally speaking, tends to hide series of facts from the past, all over his life, giving the impression that secrecy has an archaic value and which has nothing to do with the modernism. Submissive to new techniques in order to adapt to life, man has to learn to be translucent with the aim to be “sold” better. Transparency is a subjective term and belongs to the limits and the rules of the community where the man lives in. If what he wants, is confounded with what it looks like, then the man is seen as being submissive to media, to successive exposure which he has to cope alone, thus, he will definitely be a real target. Known by all the others as being optimist/sensitive/connoisseur, he definitely imposes a new “translucent human being” “who is not allowed to step out of the pattern.

So, the new techniques of information and communication have allowed a video transnational supervision of man, “the world became a kind of panoptic system, everything tends to be seen and all tend to be some voyeurs” (Guilleband, 2006).

Is this phenomenon dangerous? Can we escape from its toils? Do we tend to remove the common element in order to create the perfect man, without deficiencies even in an incipient state?

3. „GENETIC HYGIENE “ - A COMMON REALITY

The used syntagm ‘genetic hygiene ‘ belongs to Suzuki and Knudtson (Harris, 2003) and includes a series of deficiencies which the man of the future can deliberately remove from the genetic map of mankind in order to choose only those favorable genes, dictated and selected for a perfect human being. What does this improvement of the human condition actually mean? It means a better living, a removal of some unfortunate disease or it is a direct wish to improve the intelligence, for example. The last one supposes that the genetic modification of some features or states with the aim to be possible and sure. The intelligence, the level of pigmentation of the skin are inherited human features. They might be used in new genetic

therapies as instruments of alteration, of “genetic hygiene “. They are definitely joined to the limits of future because the past ones offer failed examples (for example the issue of improving the pigmentation of the skin is the notorious case of M. Jackson). On the other side, a benefic role for this desideratum would be the fact that the thinness of the level of ozone demonstrated the idea that the change of the pigmentation of the skin would be obligatory in order to resist to the harmful effects. Our duty, of the present generation, is not to harm the future generation. We are not supposed to perform any modifications at the level of genetic structure if they have a harmful effect on the descendants. In the same time, we must not remove the genetic danger which would mean a damage made deliberately to the next generations.

Translucent men, genetically transformed, the result of the assisted interventions, could be denominated through the syntagm “the new race”. Although controversing this term is justified because these men will have a genetic structure, totally different from a man to another.

A potential community of translucent men supposes a series of advantages but also disadvantages. In what we treat further, we highlight a few advantages (Harris, 2003): the existence of a new race is considered to be an important measure at the level of public health. The expenses which regard health will be considerably reduced, the level of longevity will be much more accessible, the power of work will be also increased, the exposure to different diseases will be more reduced. Regarding the disadvantages, we emphasize the following: the creation of a new race might suppose a danger for the environment and for the rest of the inhabitants who would be unprotected, the lack of welfare of the population, the unconformity of the process from a Christian point of view, the compulsion of the other members of society. All these aspects are actually subjects debated by both transhumanists and eugenists.

4. THE TRANSHUMANISM / THE EUGENISM

Firstly, transhumanism (Hrisman, 2012) represents a way of thinking about the future,

based on the premises that the human species doesn't represent the end of revolution at the moment, but a stage of beginning, the forerunners of the present era. It is constituted as a cultural and intellectual movement and of course which has a premise the possibility of improving the human condition fundamentally and radically mediated by the intellect and ration and based on the use of the new technologies. All these aspects have the precise purpose to improve the intellect, the physic and to eliminate the harming diseases.

Transhumanism may be seen as an extension of humanism. Transhumanists leave from objectives established by humanists (man is not a perfect human being but can perform activities better through rational thinking, freedom, tolerance, democracy), adding the improvement of the human condition. The translucent man may have the aim of the terrestrial immortality. The hope for the life span has significantly improved and the desire to defeat death is not new. Sometimes, this desire goes beyond the frontiers of normal and it supposes the elimination of the causes of premature death. Overpassing these limits of cheating the natural process of getting old is the point of departure for science.

Contemporary philosophy tries to remove the idea of death as well as the phenomenon itself. It is the desire to discover the elixir of eternal life with the help of technique GNR (Revolution of Genetics, of Nanotechnology and Robotics) (Vaccaro, 2009).

The idea that the destiny can decisively influence the human being has been taken into account for a long time, excluding actually the conviction that future is not known. Today, our destiny can be determined by genes, God is removed from the process of creation and the knowledge of genes revolutionizes everything. The possibility to "improve" the human beings creates an injustice to the poor who can not afford the expenses for these techniques.

The new medicine might offer us the possibility to heal and remove a much bigger number of fatal diseases and to improve the quality of life. Does this quality, obtained as a result of the affiliation to technique, supposes happiness, too? The fight against diseases may be a support in order to dictate/create the genes of a perfect future child. Thus, the new society might materialize through

eugenic education. This matter refers to the idea that the future parents would be able to know the options regarding the natural modelling of genetic inheritance of their children. If "therapeutic" clonation became a common practice, this thing would announce the beginning of a new era which would revolutionize everything. For transhumanists, the new world that includes the new race depends of the future decisions of humanity, of the type of posthumans who will be developed. Occidental society thinks that eugenism has transformed in the way that daily life, eugenism's practices are difficult to be identified. Nowadays it is sustained the fact that the eugenism is justified from an ethical point of view, according to the following principles :scientific responsibility of not practising, the commercialization of the techniques which haven't been tested enough, the avoidance of the challenges provoked by drawbacks/poverty, personal autonomy.

Overall, eugenism changes its way of practice and continues its existence in our society, included decisively in the world of future through all the creation techniques of the superior human beings.

5. THE VISION OF RELIGION ON THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

A very important aspect for the approached theme is the vision which religion proposed. Some people think that the "presence of human biological manipulation will lead us to the change of our spiritual reference points" (Bostrom, 2003) Transhumanists see science as an alternative to religion, without excluding it because they can make use of some of the functions which people searched/sought in religion. Apart from the advocates of religion, transhumanists try to make their dreams come true through science, in a rational manner, excluding supernatural beings or divine intervention.

The new techniques through which the world is characterized can adopt various aspects which have a different way when it is observed from the religious perspective.

The main problem is the reproduction through assisted intervention. At the beginnings the Christian world had many limitations about this

subject, having most of the times a critical attitude. The Orthodox Church hasn't had an official position but many famous theologues built opinions which rejected the process of reproduction through artificial intervention. From a Christian point of view, there are not only some moral amendments but profound anthropological restlessness, spiritual and theological, too.

The main negative aspects regarding assisted reproduction which theologues argue would be the change of the familiar medium, the impact the descendants might have, the ignorance of the parents, sexual decision, killing fetuses through genetic hygiene, the attack of the family nucleus.

However, the aspects promoted by the Orthodox Church take into account traditional moral principles. Through monodimensional promotion of the biotic principles a paradoxical fundamentalism is shaped, in whom bases are accused as being fundamentalist all the religious or moral conceptions among biotic themes.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The problematic of the new technologies which are specific for the future and implicitly the future communities of translucent men is approached from several points of view.

Transhumanists, eugenists but also famous representatives of Christianity and theologues, approach this subject differently because their opinions on this subject are different. The

common object of the discussion is obvious the man but he has to correspond to some new visions. The transhumanists and eugenists propose a new human type, the result of "genetic hygiene: through the annihilation of all negative genes; the representatives of the Christianity accept the idea of the new technologies only in exceptional cases, militating in favor of divine creation".

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