

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO TRANSHUMANISM AND DYSTOPIA

1. Transhumanism

Transhumanism is a futuristic philosophy that analyses technological achievements aimed at developing mankind to transcend the boundaries of human capability. It is a philosophy that deals with human enhancement. A common example of the human enhancement concept of transhumanists philosophers is the ability to transcend death and eternity. The term 'transhumanism' was popularized by Julian Huxley in 1957. Behind this philosophy hides the idea that technological evolution allows us to evolve rapidly towards a new humanity termed as Humanity 2.0 or H+. Humanity 2.0 is the 'posthuman' according to transhumanists' thought. H+ is the intermediate stage between the mortal man of today and another evolutionary stage which transcends the human condition and becomes a man-machine hybrid. Transhumanists see this as a natural continuation of our development and evolution. The main idea of transhumanists is that at some point we will have the opportunity to live forever in the technologies of the future that will save us from old age. Besides this powerful perspective, there are other theories that have always been associated with the development of technology but not as much as transhumans intend to make of the machines. With the help of technology we obtain excellent physical abilities to save us from fatigue, to make us faster, stronger and more flexible. Some transhumanist film concepts that are yet to be achieved are mind uploading; having a human brain in a cyborg body and being immune to sickness. These filmic technological concepts do not yet exist, but they could soon be available. James O. Bailey, author of *Pilgrims through Space and Time* says "Every story relating to an imaginary invention, discovery, fact or theory in the field of the exact sciences and the consequent advances and consequences belongs to science fiction." (Bailey, 46)

Julian Huxley, an English biologist and humanist philosopher, played an important role in popularizing the concept of metaphysics. In a 1957 essay titled "Transhumanism," Huxley discussed the idea that humans transcend their current limitations through the use of science and technology. His vision is rooted in evolutionary biology and the belief that humans can use their intelligence and creativity to consciously direct their own evolution. Huxley saw the potential for

humans to control their own evolutionary destiny, overcoming the constraints of natural selection and biological evolution. He envisioned a future where science and technology could be harnessed to enhance human capabilities, both physically and intellectually. Huxley believes that by doing so, humans can achieve a higher level of existence and overcome many of the problems and limitations that have plagued humanity throughout history. Huxley's concept of transhumanism laid the groundwork for the modern transhumanist movement, which continues to explore the ethical, social, and technological implications of human enhancement and the integration of man and technology. The movement has evolved over the years to include many views and ideas regarding the future of humanity, the potential of advanced technologies, and the nature of consciousness and identity in a highly technologically enhanced world.

While Julian Huxley is often credited with popularizing the term "transhumanism", it is important to note that the concept itself and its various philosophical and technological aspects have been influenced by the works and ideas of many authors and thinkers around the world over the years. The modern trans-anthropological movement has seen the contributions of a number of prominent figures, each bringing their unique perspectives to the field. Key authors and thinkers who have contributed significantly to the spread and growth of transhumanism include Max More, co-founder of the Extropy Institute, an organization that has played a key role in promoting metaphysical ideas in the 1990s and early 2000s. Another was Ray Kurzweil, a prominent futurist and inventor, who wrote extensively about the concept of the "singularity", a point in the future when technological progress dramatically accelerates and fundamentally changes human society. Nick Bostrom is another meta-anthropological thinker and philosopher, Bostrom has explored topics such as artificial intelligence, super intelligence, and existential risks related to advanced technologies. Vernor Vinge, a science fiction author and computer scientist, Vinge's writings, especially his 1993 essay "The Coming Technological Singularity", influenced discussions of the potential transformative impact of advanced technology on human civilization. Natasha Vita-More, designer and metaphysicist, Vita-More has contributed to the development of the transhuman aesthetic and explored human enhancement through a variety of media. Hans Moravec, robotics and futurist, Moravec wrote about the potential to

combine human consciousness with machines and the concept of mind uploading. Anders Sandberg a philosopher and researcher in the cognitive sciences and ethics, explored the effects of human enhancement and cognitive technology.

FM-2030, formerly known as Fereidoun M. Esfandiary, is a futurist and metahumanist writer and philosopher. He was born on October 15, 1930 in Brussels, Belgium and died on July 8, 2000. FM-2030 has chosen its name to reflect its optimistic view of the future and belief that it will live until 2030, a time when it believes will bring significant advances in science and technology. FM-2030 is a visionary thinker who has explored ideas regarding human transformation and the possibility of extending human life through advances in medicine, technology and society. He was an early proponent of transhumanism, a movement advocating the ethical use of technology to enhance human capabilities and overcome biological limitations. FM-2030 authored several books, including *Are You a Transhuman?: Monitoring and Stimulating Your Personal Rate of Growth in a Rapidly Changing World* (1989), *Telespheres* (1977), and *"Up-Wingers"* (1973). In his works, he explored themes such as the potential for human enhancement through technology, the implications of advanced artificial intelligence, and the ethical considerations surrounding the transformation of human nature. Throughout his life, FM-2030 remained an optimist about the future and believed that humanity could overcome its challenges and embrace a new era of human potential. His ideas and writings continue to influence the transhumanist movement and discussions about the future of humanity and technology. He is remembered as a forward-thinking visionary who challenged conventional thinking and encouraged people to consider the possibilities of a radically transformed future. These authors and many others have played essential roles in shaping and promoting the transhumanist movement, contributing to its popularity and continued exploration of the possibilities and challenges of human enhancement and integration with advanced technologies.

1.2 Dystopia

Dystopia is a term used to predict, describe or represent the imaginary reality of the future. These predictions are based on the current trends of the use of technology. 'Dystopia' or 'dystopian world' in films intends to bring a negative feeling. The etymology of dystopia, is derived from the ancient Greek words "δυσ-"

(dys) = "bad" and "τόπος" (topos) = "place". Dystopia means a 'bad place'. The term is synonymous with anti-utopia, contra-utopia or negative utopia¹. Dystopia is the opposite of utopia: the former has an unpleasant and undesirable prediction, while the latter has a positive connotation.

The acronym used by Anglo-Saxon critics to refer to 'dystopian films', a typically Anglo-American genre, is *SF*, which is sometimes written *sci-fi*. It is usually dissolved in Science Fiction² where the English word 'fiction' has the meaning of 'fictional work of invention' or simply 'fiction'. Dystopian Films seems to underline the mere fiction of the science depicted in the work: a fake or fantastic science. But the Italian translation, despite its imperfect adherence to the original term, highlights a programmatic novelty of the genre: the desire to bridge an imbalance between the imaginative functions and the rational fact of our experience, which along the history of Western civilization have undergone a progressive detachment. The relationship between art and science had not always been so dramatic and difficult, such as to think of it in terms of saturating a dialectical polarity. So in the antiquity of the philosopher-scientist poets, in the medieval age of the abbey and philosopher-chemists, the dystopian genre was born.

On the basis of this definition, it is difficult to try to trace a tradition of fantasy science that includes works much earlier than our industrial and technological civilization. Finishing or linking a definition of dystopian films to the field of exact sciences, while somehow grasping its distinctive character, does not provide an adequate picture of the genre, its evolution and its links with other genres. Anthropological research, for example, supports the definition of those dystopian films while according to historians there is a direct relationship, or rather a significant continuity, between magic, religion and science. All magical practices, myths and fables, religious rituals in dystopian research would therefore be united by the same singular efforts in a joint attempt by mankind to overcome the limits of their individual experiences.

Dystopian novels and films are exemplified by stories in which the imaginary society or the imaginary world is taken to the extreme of negativity. In this way dystopia describes the dangers which would be the outcome of today's society. Dystopian society as described in novels and films are however shown to exist in a

distant time and space. As McGinney says,

"From 1966 to 1976, science fiction films tended to depict civilizations of the future that had become intrinsically antagonistic to their inhabitants as a result of some internal or external cataclysm. This dystopian turn in science fiction films, following a similar move in science fiction literature, reflected concerns about social and ecological changes occurring during the late 1960s and early 1970s and their future implications. In these films, "dystopian" conditions are indicated as such by music incorporating distinctly modernist sounds and techniques reminiscent of twentieth-century concert works that abandon the common practice." (McGinney, 13)

Dystopias are invariably descriptions of future societies with a history that is rather different from our own, with different historical events; that try to show where humanity would go if a certain destructive situation is not corrected. The dystopias that began to proliferate at the end of the 19th century continue to this day and express different fears: the fear of the appearance of a society governed by the ruling elite that crushes the subject and therefore the community, or the fear that a nuclear war or a virus will destroy our civilization. After the advent of new technologies in films, science fiction stories have found a more symbolic meaning in films. Dystopian films represent them as an allegory of our human existence. Elaborate technological constructs, inhuman and dystopian worlds began to play a deeper role than what were traditionally simply attractive images for the viewer. Control of power, class struggle, xenophobia, and human enhancement develop as subtexts in the dystopian film genre. Human conflicts that have been going on for a long time and affect the way we interact with others. The objective of this research is to analyse the Transhumanist representation of humans in select Hollywood Dystopian Films. The chapters that follow is a study on the representation of the posthuman concepts and human enhancement in Hollywood Dystopian Films and the sort of outcome that machines in our daily life would one day bring upon us.

1.3 On what drives the directors to create dystopian cinemas

The story of our civilization happened in ways that we didn't expect, weird things that surprised us; and it will go towards what we don't expect. We may

descend to a more basic state that is not long in coming. It's more medieval. Mad Max is set in a very simple town. Director Miller set the appeal of stepping into this world feels like stepping back in time. We are led back to a primitive time where the rules are much simpler and the technology is much simpler. Miller visited different fortresses around the world like the great fortresses in India or the Imperial Palace in Kyoto. Post-apocalyptic movies like *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)* bring forth ideas and paint the future as a kind of dumping ground. But looking at all of human culture in the film, no matter how bad the conditions are, it doesn't mean it doesn't have a strong aesthetic. This is how Cultural Studies film theorists approach film as a cultural artefact that reflects and shapes social values and identities. Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model in 1973 explores how audiences interpret media messages based on their social context.

In the Palaeolithic, they have done very little work and yet they created beautiful cave designs that are so amazing. Just because Mad Max is set in the desert doesn't mean humans have lost the ability to create beautiful things. In this world, we jump about 50 years into the future and all the remaining artefacts are damaged, but everything is recycled, almost like new found art. In this situation, people are worth less than objects.

At the end of the story Immortal Joe is being replaced by the hero. But the person who causes the change is often attached to what he has created. They love it so much that it loses its flexibility and adaptability because it is human nature for people to cling to what they have built. The revolutionary of yesterday becomes the tyrant of tomorrow. So "it is the reflexivity of postmodern film that traps us within the dystopian visions it projects: an inward turn to explore image-making only implicates films within the same regimes of surveillance, manipulation, and repression that are so often the object of their critique." (Page, 190)

Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) has been set up as a new kind of adventure, it's about a lonely character wandering the desert in search of meaning. Mad Max character is a timeless hero, he looks like a wandering Japanese ronin or a hermit who has acquired some mystic skills for survival. He's a common archetype. The story of *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)* was essentially an ongoing chase.

In this film Miller creates a solid framework for an underlying human drama of infinite contests in a post-apocalyptic wasteland. The story of Mad Max is constantly moving: the film gives clues to where the characters or their behaviours came from, but the audience is never explained how he lost his arm or how the citadel works. Speaking of such dystopian wasteland films,

"Cinema is, after all, the supreme maker and manipulator of images for commercial purposes, and the very act of using it well always entails reducing the complex stories of daily life to a sequence of images upon a depthless screen. . . . Nevertheless, the malaise lies rather deeper than that. Postmodern art forms and cultural artefacts by their very nature must self- consciously embrace the problem of image creation, and necessarily turn inwards upon themselves as a result. It then becomes difficult to escape being what is being imaged within the art form itself." (Page, 227-244)

X-Men Days of Future Past (2014) was directed by Bryan Singer. In this movie, some of the X-Men were teenagers. The reason for keeping them that way is school: which teens often dislike. Some were older teens, but still teens. And Stan Lee has placed a leader among them; an adult. As maturity increases intellectual capacity, the strength of the mature leader is his mind. He can pour his thoughts and will into another person or mutant and make them do things or speak against their will. This prominent professor Charles Xavier has one of the greatest mental powers in the Marvel world. He was a bit older at a school with gifted youngsters. Xavier's School is a place for these mutants with unusual powers to come, meet and after a while become a team. And Professor Xavier, whom Lee decided to call Professor X, was in charge.

Professor X was a powerful man who could do almost anything, who could get into someone's mind and do things. But humans, even if they were born mutants, would have a weakness, so Stan Lee gave him a weakness: his limp. He was always in a wheelchair. This is an example of the balance of power in X-Men and this is where director Bryan Singer got a foothold.

The anti-hero here is Magneto. The X-Men were good mutants, and there were

a lot of bad mutants, and Singer made it seem like bad mutants were right about that. The human race hated them, feared them, avoided them, and tried to get rid of them, which is why they did not accept what humans considered to be mutants. Singer portrayed them in a defensive line. Professor Xavier's ideology was that they all lived together - humans and mutants - no matter how different they were. Here the idea of a cosmopolitan culture was represented. Actually, Lee's main idea was to show that bigotry is a terrible thing and that people should just get along no matter how different they are. That was the core of the X-Men story.

Rupert Sanders, who was in his second film since *Snow White and the Huntsman* (2012), has taken on the challenge of immersing himself in a work he literally loves: *Ghost in the Shell* (2017). It was a story from Masamune Shirow's manga with the same name. The film aimed to repeat the success of the original work and also expand the spectrum for mainstream audiences. Sanders, who directed this film, expected it to be a cult film; to stick with people after seeing it. The film stars Scarlett Johansson as the central character.

Sanders is one of those people who revere the revolutionary animated film *Ghost in the Shell* released in 1995 and took everything; the images, themes and philosophy of the original anime into his 2017 film. He was a fan and then a director who wanted to reboot the story in a new setting. Sanders introduced the masculinity of the female voice. In *Ghost in the Shell*, the women are very strong.

One of the characteristics of *Ghost in the Shell* is the depiction of a world and a society that has blindly entrusted the development of humanity to machines, technology and the automation of all processes. A future that worries many, but Sanders would love to live in such a world: the streets and the skyscrapers in the film are the extreme heights of what wealthy people would normally want in life. *Ghost in the Shell* (2017) is a society based on the futuristic, cyberpunk underpinnings of the original saga. There's a lot of emotion beyond the spectacle of the film and some of the ideas and themes of the film will resonate with people long after they've seen the movie in their memory. *Ghost in the Shell* leaves the door open for future chapters that would follow the action format.

Joseph McGinty Nichol, commonly known as McG is the director of the film

Terminator Salvation (2009). He tried to piece together the legacy of the Terminator saga³. In this film we see a post-apocalyptic vision that pays homage to previous films but also represents a fresh start. In this story the most important relationship is between John Connor and Sam Worthington played by Marcus Wright. It's the story of two destinies colliding: Bale is part of the resistance that the world's ethnic groups created whereas Sam is a creation that is aimed to see the resistance fail. *Terminator Salvation* (2009) is not just a story about Los Angeles, it's a global crisis that reflects the clash between man and machine.

In the film, the Terminators retain an aura of deadly abilities that are nearly impossible to escape, especially when one of them is chasing you. The film is able to depict a hopeless and ominous future in a few flashbacks of previous films. The common elements of the Terminator saga are flying machines in the sky, armed Terminators on the ground and the constant feeling that you're no longer the dominant species on the planet, none of that matters. reflected in this movie, showing that it's a kind of world where you have to learn to live and survive and thrive (eventually).

The resistance seems to be made up almost entirely of powerful marines, who have learned to resist under Connor's leadership. These are people who have proven themselves ready to adapt to the dark aspects of a post-modern apocalyptic world driven by machines. The Resistance includes fighter bombers, helicopters and the like, many of which leave machines armed with far fewer weapons than humans.

In the first Terminator film, director James Cameron attempted to create his own version of Jesus; of humanity, and named him John Connor (JC, Jesus Christ), with the film offering the opportunity to show the rise of John Connor. James Cameron understands that the Terminator is one of the most interesting characters that cannot have a universal definition, just as humans cannot be universally defined due to each person's differences.

1.4 History of AI in Hollywood Films

Artificial intelligence, hereafter AI, turned out to be multifunctional in the development of plots and at the same time they longed to be human. AI is taught by humans and they interact with each other and with humans. *Transhumanism - Engineering the Human Condition: History, Philosophy and Current Status* by

Roberto Manzocco gives a comprehensive, high-level introduction to transhumanism as an international political and cultural movement seeking to bring about a paradigm shift in the ethical and political understanding of human evolution. Pramod Nayar thus calls transhumanist thought ‘techno-deterministic, and techno-utopian, in its faith in technology’s ability to ensure a certain kind of future,’ which especially science fiction celebrates in a ‘near-obsessive exploration’ of the conflation of human and machine. In his view, this enmeshed human-machine future of transhumanism represents the ‘pop posthumanism of cinema and pop culture’ that is found in films such as *The Terminator*” (Schmeink, 38). Transhumanist thinkers believe that humanity is unconsciously taking control of evolution through advanced technologies such as robotics, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cognitive neuroscience and nanotechnology. Our intellect exceeds the maximum level currently available. Currently there are no unique abilities among other species, we eliminate involuntary aging and death and finally we come to the post-human level of existence. This book helped me to explore transhumanism from a historical, philosophical and scientific perspective, explore key philosophical, epistemological and ethical issues, and analyse the state of legal suspension.

Alita: Battle Angel (2019) is a dystopian animation where the earth is ruled by some humanoid aliens that stays mid-air and never comes down like the Island of Laputa in *Gulliver’s Travels*. *Avatar* (2009) is a dystopian film that encompasses the Indian spiritual belief, Chinese topography and Western Scientific advancement on AI. *Dredd* (2012) is another futuristic cyberpunk where the defence forces are military men with powers of a judge. *Ghost in the Shell* (2005), directed by Rupert Sanders is an AI film about mind uploading. *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) deals with water scarcity and the misuse of machines and firearms. *Snowpiercer* (2014) is a dystopian film that forecasts the next ice age. *Terminator Salvation* (2009) is a film on internet takeover by a powerful AI called Skynet. As Konior too says that “the Internet is abstracting and disrupting politics—they arrive either at a utopian vision, in which digital spaces become materials out of which a new politics can be borne, or generate a dystopian disengagement with politics as humanity is increasingly trapped in aesthetics.”(Konior, 61). *Wall-E* (2008) is a dystopian animation where machines do most of the work to maintain whatever little is left of our planet earth. *X-Men: Days of Future Past* (2014) is a film on mutants who have powerful capabilities.

Their powers are catastrophic if not properly maintained.

The article *Dangerous Relationships: Humans and Machines in Narrative Fictions*, written by Leda Rodríguez Jiménez discusses how the 20th century, known as the age of machines, and the rise of film and the futurist movement created new elements of representation in human relationships. She deals with Films like *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Blade Runner*, *Bicentennial Man*, *Robocop* and *A.I.* She questions actors about their humanity, what remains of it and how to live a human life when the physical body is already left to enter cyberspace, or when expansions and expansions turn into metallic structures.

AI emerged with the premiere of the neo-noir and sci-fi film *Blade Runner* (1982), where androids played an antagonistic role and challenged their reality. It was in 1987 where something was created as one of the best films of the year: *RoboCop* (1987), where its protagonist is the result of a great physical and mental integration between man and machines. Then that character begins to regain the lost memories; his family in his previous human life while being used as a weapon against crime; therefore recognizing a broken identity in a constant struggle. But androids and artificial intelligence weren't the only characters on screen. Series like *Knight Rider* (1982), where the protagonist's car was an artificial intelligence confident and able to interact with people, and *The Little Miracle* (1987), from a sci-fi comedy in which the main character was a girl with an android taking part. She lived a middle-class American family life who was extradited as an adopted daughter. These productions were just the first station in the series of audio-visual productions of dystopian AI, the genre of which was not only a dive in science fiction, but also deals with moral issues and human conscience in other genres such as drama and comedy. This is also the case of the comedy-drama *Bicentennial Man* (1999), where the character of the late Robin Williams plays an android. He does his homework and seems to have developed Recognize emotions and empathy for people. With the arrival of a new the first millennium of the sci-fi drama *AI Artificial Intelligence* (2001), where the main character is an android boy, whose programming is the evolution of his ability to judge his own destiny. On the other hand, the world of digital animation has also realized this concept and how as a result, films such as *Wall-E* (2008) and *Big Hero 6* (2014) emerged. This is how the

HBO series *Westworld* started with technologically advanced amusement parks recreating the *Wild West*. The residents are artificially intelligent androids called 'Guests'. So the purpose of this park is what is behind the development of the conflict, because people who come there can make any fantasy come true. The 'hosts' without fear of injury, programmed to grant their wishes through surrogate people, especially the lower ones. The history of audio-visual TV series is told from the perspective of the minds of the 'hosts'. This series is a synthesis of drama and science fiction films of the 1980s, because these androids are starting to develop memories and emotions and about it to understand the physical context in which they are located and the purpose for which they were created. *Nietzschean Meditations: Untimely Thoughts at the Dawn of the Transhuman Era* by Steve Fuller emphasizes the Zarathustrian elements of his ideas as precursors to a new kind of being, the *Übermensch*. The book updates the image of beings in a variant of "transhumanism" that the interpreters violate to find a more cautious and pessimistic approach to the future of humanity in a modern "posthumanist" way of thinking. Fuller follows Nietzsche as he deeply and honestly examines the challenges the transhumanists of the future will face in their philosophical and theological roots, the impact of transhumanism on life and death and whether classical humanity remains.

The Bioethics of Enhancement: Transhumanism, Disability, and Biopolitics written by Melinda Charis Hall have been the subject of critical intervention in the bioethics and human development debate, stating that human empowerment is an obligation. Hall was inspired by French philosopher Michel Foucault to explore and discover why disability is central to the conversation. Improving the bioethics of improvement implies an in-depth reading and analysis of development ideas and the most zealous proponents of the last century, of today's transhumanist thinkers, and a commitment to researching development technologies. These include the desire to go beyond the body and decide who will live in future generations through new technologies such as genetic selection. Hall offers a new analysis that redefines the philosophy of growth and disability and argues that development should be a social and political intervention rather than a genetic and biological concern. Hall concluded that human vulnerability and diversity should be valued, not eliminated.

1.5 Importance of Transhumanism and Dystopian Research

The dehumanization of man, the humanization of the machine, the mysterious evolution of our species ties the threads in the depths of man and his culture. It's origin remains mysterious throughout the film; it's appearance has also been interpreted as a symbol of the gaze troubled by the fear that the film arouses in the spectator, fear of the unspeakable, fear of the obscene, the fear of the characters, of being hopeless in the face of the fading of his memory, of his death; as well as the fear of man in the face of the unknown, of which science with all its technology is unable to reveal any fragment. But science is only one of the ways to probe the unknown and there are at least two others, equally important, we could say complementary: magic and religion. Magic is not anterior to religion or science but like a primordial possession which affirms the autonomous power of man to create means to their desirable ends. Stock reminds the readers about "the importance of the study and research of the dystopian genre, which helps to contribute to readers' political life." (Van, 652–658)

Beyond human: from animality to transhumanism by Molloy, Claire, Shakespeare, Steven, Blake, Charlie explores what it means to call ourselves human in relation to our distant past, our possible future as a species, and our relationship to the myriad species we share on the planet. Drawing on the knowledge of zoology, theology, cultural studies and aesthetics, the international community explores the themes of our origins. The book prepares "people" for what many call our transhuman or posthuman future.

It studies our animal origins and the implications of a posthuman future to understand our relationship with humans and species. The qualitative analysis of this in modern films takes us to a possible confirmation to these problems and possible solutions of Human Enhancement and provides valuable information on how society presents its potential challenges. The emergence of new risks and new challenges come with technological and scientific progress, it's a part of the problem and the solution.

The difference between magic and science is only in what is known about the cause and effect of magical acts, but they take hold of the same optimistic dogmatic system: magic is meant to ritualize human optimism; science and

technology make man's environment familiar and allow him to use the forces of nature. Every film it is the result of technology but it possesses a sort of power that acts in other ways, different from those of the rational and exact understanding of what is proposed to us, going beyond, towards a reconciliation of otherwise unfathomable opposites, in the image of a pursuing all-human yet transcendent, universal, mystical consistency.

The function of religion is therefore that of socially conforming and making man's inadequacies bearable, controlling his fears, anguish and anxiety about the unknown, to do this it makes use of the gathering of men in assemblies. Dystopian Films makes extensive use of these sectors of human knowledge, sometimes or the other. It emphasizes what we believe, to the point of redefining the entire universe.

Religion and the Technological Future: An Introduction to Biohacking, Artificial Intelligence, and Transhumanism by Calvin Mercer, Tracy J. It deals in an era of rapid technological development. Humanity has never had such power in our auto biology. Biohacking, the attempt to manipulate people's physical, cognitive, emotional, moral and spiritual characteristics, has become a global phenomenon. This guide presents the religious aspects of biohacking, artificial intelligence and more, views on monotheistic and karmic and total ethics. These technological advancements are radically changing our society and us, integrating genetic engineering, tissue engineering, artificial intelligence, robotics, computer and human biology, augmented reality, brain stimulation and nanotechnology. The chapters deal with some political, economic, sociological and psychological aspects of this development. The technological future is already here, and it is up to us to decide on its moral and religious form. So in the words of MacKellar,

"transhumanism can be characterised as a multidisciplinary cultural phenomenon consisting of beliefs, norms, literature and social practices addressing not only scientific and technological changes but also deeper human existential concerns. In fact, it can be considered as an ideology of ultimate progress aiming at delivering humanity from the limitations of human nature, including the biological, mortal body. In other words, it welcomes technology as the main driving force of cultural change. It offers a vision of the right moral ordering

of self and society in relation to a technology-driven global transformation." (MacKellar, 161)

Film is fiction, but it can illuminate how crisis situations bring to light the most intimate texture of a concrete society and so much more. A Transhumanist film risks that border on reality: nuclear war, increase of the global temperature, genetic manipulation takes them all to a bigger scale. Dystopian Films express the point of view of a sector of society, its capability of decisively influencing it.

Scientists and sociologists are often wrong when they play to predict the future. Dystopian Films play the dice however with much more successful promising predictions. The disregard of human reaction, social changes, alterations in the power structure and the process of disintegration by science show a future disaster of our modern society. Dystopian Films are endowed with vivid realism. They anticipate technological findings and predict human behaviour. These films are an X-ray of the evolution of our risky society, the kindness of scientific and technological advances and the fears they generate is a sensation that is fast turning into a reality. This is what Realism film theory states: that cinema should strive to represent reality as faithfully as possible. André Bazin, a notable proponent in *The Ontology of the Photographic Image (1945)* advocates the use of cinematography technique to capture the realism of life.

1.6 Origin of Dystopian Films in Fantasy

The Dystopian Films genre can be traced far back in fantasy. Dystopian Films is a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and knowledge, and whose main formal expedient is an imaginary frame alternative to the author's empirical environment. The seventeenth century in years of important scientific ferment around mathematical, physical and above all astronomical discoveries, saw a rediscovery of the fantastic linked to the theme of the exploration of surreal spaces which keep the differences between the real world and the narrative world widely spread. In search of a foundation, scholars have set out to investigate in depth the world of imagination which flourished at the beginning of the twentieth century: among others were Jules Verne and HG Wells.

Dystopian Films is affected by the influence that comes from the stage of

scientific development reached by humanity in the process that determines the form rather than the content. As Franklin *Future Perfect: American Science Fiction of the Nineteenth Century* says:

"there was none of the greatest American novelists of the nineteenth century, and indeed few of the second-rate ones, who did not write something science fiction or at least one utopian fantasy tale." (Franklin, 130)

Rather than choosing a reliable scientific assumption, the sci-fi writer looks to consistently develop even the most improbable premise, which is nevertheless never assumed as a paradox but rather as something completely explainable and determinable, possibly with a technology yet to be discovered.

As can also be understood from this cinematographic reflection, it is not a question of scientific disclosure or of a prophetic function. As a work of fiction the sci-fi says nothing more than what chemistry, physics and other sciences can say in their respective fields. Yet the attendance of the best films of this genre is able to enable the audience to imagine changes in the real world and hypothesize possible adaptations.

Dystopian Films according to Aldani premises:

- “(1) Fantastic representation of the universe, in space and time,...
- (3) operated according to a logical-scientific consequentiality, capable of placing the reader,
- (4) through the exceptionality or impossibility of the situation,
- (5) in a different relationship with things.” (Aldani, 63-66)

Dystopian films with the alteration of space-time coordinates deal specifically in what the people think are exceptionality or impossibility of the situations. These are represented or connected to a focus of the narrative which as we have seen focuses on an exceptional world in which exceptional facts are performed by normal and not very characterized characters, it still refers to the dimension of the fantastic, and in particular to that fantastic genre that is dystopian films.

1.7 Dystopian Societies in American Films

In dystopia the protagonist or the protagonists do not suffer from the disorientation aroused by the external traveller who accidentally finds himself visiting the utopian island; on the contrary they are agents acting in that society which they often oppose after a process of awareness. This awareness problematizes the answers that society provides them.

The following of the utopian genre in the postmodern age is due to the limited situations proposed, due to the lack of a clash between perfection and the nature-including mankind- that should live it; if there is any clash that is already resolved at the very origin, already lived and the choices already made. The missing link between utopia and science fiction opens up a whole new universe narrative in which the characters become again bearers of conflict and clash, and indeed creates dystopia.

This thesis among other things agrees with the observation that in most of the films analysed in this research, dystopian or anti-utopian meanings emerge predominantly probably because dystopia focuses on the characters as the real engine of an action. The fading world is better suited to the cinematographic means of communication, which, as Roland Barthes states, probably prefers a signification through the characters and their relationships (*dramatis personae*) rather than through the development of a plot.

If utopia is a narrative based on a better world, dystopia portrays a less perfect or more oppressive world. But both utopia and dystopia, as Huntington suggests, are exercises in imagining coherent totalities, in making an idea work in particular a scientific idea regardless of the fact that one is a promoter of social progress or a supporter of a liberal and the other is oppressive or in some way undesirable society. While the utopias flatter the reader by revealing a better idea than the current one, dystopias bring forth an approaching nightmare.

The first literary works to be defined as essentially dystopian share the same themes: negative vision of science, oppression and rebellion, dehumanization of society, technological progress, and reflection on reality and the distortion of reality. The settings are almost always future, less often imaginary or past, in the latter case they give rise to a particular configuration of past's alternative to ours. But fundamentally we see dystopia maintains a strong link with the real contemporary

society, of which it wants to criticize, make an example and warn for the upcoming time.

If we pretend to be more positivists than we are and imagine society as an organism composed of wilful institutions, streets full of dissatisfied individuals, it would appear clear to us that dystopia is the representation of a 'disabled' society, in which something or more than something is not in the right place. That is we are talking about a decadent, sick society that causes a disease in its individuals. A "dysfunctional" society, to use the words of Erika Gottlieb, in her work on the comparison between the Anglo-American and Russian dystopian fiction; it suggests that the causes of that type of 'disturbance' in social organization are to be traced historically, and it is here that the dystopia reveals, how it has a connection with the current reality. In dystopian films, screenwriters take a scientific hypothesis and rigorously develop it to its extreme negative consequences. Consequently, as Hava Tirosh-Samuelsan suggests, "The transition from the human condition to the posthuman condition will be facilitated by transhumanism, the project of human enhancement that will ultimately yield the transformation of the human species from the human to the posthuman." (Hava, 710-734)

Patricia Warrick argues that there are four fundamental modalities within which to portray scientific-technological dystopias, which probably correspond to four basic mythological units: The theme of Prometheus and the improper possession of knowledge; the ambiguity of technology; the effects of humanity's rejection of its technology and the changing role of master and servant, creator and creature. (Warrick, 118)

1.8 Cyborg in the Society

Cyborgization has generated a whole process that begins with the inanimate objects for reaching to being human. Donna Haraway (1991) places on the experimentation the interest to analyse what it implies: the cracking of the dichotomies between the natural and the artificial. Latour (2007) expands Haraway's study considering that it was precisely modern arrogance that prevented thinking beyond dualisms, branding all mixtures from being monstrous. Another of the defenders of this type of experimentation is the founder of the World Transhumanist Nation, Nick Bostrom (2005). Philosopher at the University of Oxford who joins

David Pearce to propose the acceleration of technological experiments with the end of having alternatives of artificial 'organs' that could replace life current.

According to Nietzsche, transhumanism takes up the importance of advancing in scientific experimentation, as a basis for coming handy as the human hand; anticipating a future extension from the human giving a promise of happiness and survival. This transcendence raises the experimentation towards Bio-orgs (hybrid organisms biological), the cyborgs, the silorgs (experimentations with silicon), the symborgs (cyborgs symbolic), the geoborgs (cyborgs genetic), the humborgs (humanoids) and the mind uploadable robots.

Extropians who separate themselves from the transhumanists by defying even death and aging consider the importance of this type of experiment. Another point to take into account is not only the biological but also the cultural cyborg, since experimentation must be extended to what they imply for transhumanists; whether or not they are extropians. Where the culture is technological it represents the layer from the nature that it covers and defines our bodies. In this way, in the cyborg are traces of both capitalism and patriarchal dynamics and genealogies, "going through time from the age of the bodies who use artefacts until the era of bodies turned into artefacts" (Sadaba, 236)

It is essential for authors like Sadaba, (2009) looking at the cyborg overcoming the technical and looking at the animated, inanimate, the technophobia and everything is what implies it at the big business of futurology. The cyborg body has two types of borders and simultaneous problems, between animals, organisms, humans and self-governing machines and human organisms, making it autonomous. Cyborg society also refers to the strong relationship between the organic and the mechanical whether that be with artificial organs or not. They are part of the so-called cyborgologies: restorative, standardized as they restore to an indistinguishable normalcy. These have postures that are reconfigurable.

Within the multicultural experiments it is seen in *The Cyborg Handbook* (1995) by Chris Hables Gray, the interaction between the cybernetics theory and the African diaspora are bound to racism and to methods of social control. These make them understand that science should be used to allow man to exist in other types of different environments, which incorporate elements exogenous to current realities; and extend self-regulatory control in adaptation to new environments.

Thus the cyborg through experiments, aids surveillance and detection of

certain radioactive elements, metabolic, hypothermic or involving oxygenation, cardiovascular control, perceptual problems, variation of the temperature, etc.; step forward in the scientific progress of man and what this it implies on the wide dimension of knowledge. The cyborg thought of as the perfect man to go to space - infilms- makes one think of the experimentation to achieve improvement in real life.

Following the experimentation of cyborgs the importance continues working with artificial organs and drug users (for attaining immunity), towards the adaptation of man to the environment and space, trying to power the artificial organs, the reduction in body temperature, depression and fatigue.

In this way Driscoll in 1963 poses the cyborg between different contexts such as the system of life, biocybernetics, modems, hypothermia, systems artificial, hypermetabolism, simulation, environmental, drugs, adaptation, nutrition, mineral metabolism, and the sensory deprivation. To him cyborg is the “study of man and the theoretical possibility of incorporating artificial organism drugs and/or hypothermia as integral parts of life support systems in scale craft design of the future, and of reducing metabolic demands and the attendant life support requirements” (Driscoll, 76)

Likewise, war experiments such as those exposed show how the cyborg is viewed from the rational paranoid. The cyborg sees the very machine that combines the omnipotent fantasy of self-control with the fear of direct aggression against the emotional and bodily limitations which we see simply as an imaginary future.

The new soldier cyborg is an operator that behaves like a virtual cyborg in real-time, man-machine interface with weapon structures of military systems, in which the computer simulation prepares and strengthens an omnipotent fantasy that combines a logic of aggression and the fear of the cyborg soldier.

For his part, Figueroa (1995) poses within the experiments of cyborg; a coordinated relationship between two entities conceived as organisms that from the experience of the prosthesis, involve the replacement of the body. This makes plastic and metallic frameworks(cyborgs) a gear of the system that supports the technological society. They combat the postmodern reproductive life, transformative and manipulated, involving the creation of bodies(cyborgs).

From a medical viewpoint Casper (1995) argues that cyborgs need to be relocated to the conditions of their origin. Cyborgs are technological fetuses, what

they become may serve to make them appear natural and full of uploaded knowledge to make more like themselves thereby turning them into a mother cyborg or techmom. They are a part of new political subjectivities. Casper (1995) also considers another type: the brain-dead pregnant women, who almost like corpses show a body over which others decide generates a strong reflection on power and technological body.

1.9 The Cyborg metaphor in Cyberpunk Films

Within the Dystopian Films genre the relationship between man and technology falls perfectly within the framework of this research on the forms of representation of technique in the fiction of a scientific topic. The original perspective from which cyberpunk relates to a theme that can be traced throughout dystopian film production is identifiable in the metaphor of the interface between the human being and the machine.

Beside this cyber-thinking presents a common substrate with literary visions and scientific interpretations of Artificial Intelligence. This can be seen both at the literary level for example Philip K. Dick and William S. Burroughs, from the 1950s and 1960s, anticipated many of the themes of Gibson and Sterling. At the cinematographic level: for example, *Terminator* could almost be considered an unofficial remake of *Cyborg 2087* directed by Adreon in 1966: one of the first films with cybernetic organisms as protagonists.

But the analogies between the theme of the interface, site of a meeting between the organic and the electronic, and that of reflection on man go beyond iconography and post-human, artificial or robotic belonging in all or part of the characters of these stories. These analogies are pushed into a literary substrate that on the one hand anchors cyberpunk to the SF genre, although with a centrality, cohesion and reciprocal solidarity of the themes dealt with which is quite peculiar; on the other hand, cyberpunk has in common with postmodern fiction. As Brian McHale says, it tends to "literalize" or "actualize" what is presented as a metaphor in postmodern fiction" (McHale, 138-139).

In modern literary works in which the ego is mostly undermined by tendencies towards fragmentation and decentralization, points of view multiply on reality without affecting the singularity of the point of observation, a subjectivity that is still coherent and stable after all. For this type of literature, the label of perspectivism was

found to be opposed instead to the disintegration and dispersion of the ego typical of the most recent elite fiction especially American. Authors express this existential situation by depicting it through linguistic, structural or visual metaphors, rather than representing within the narrative world, as cyberpunk does, characters of an entire humanity devoted to the protean mutation of one's self to dispersion for example in Bruce Sterling's *The Broken Matrix*.

For these and other narrators the label of 'postmodernism' was coined; in fact, although the typical expressions of contemporaneity are most recognizable in the video-sound performances in the architecture, in the design and in the computer-graphic, in the second half of the twentieth century there are literary examples of reaction and extremization of the modernist poetics from the questions about the knowability of the world to the programmatic doubt towards the very status of reality. According to the French philosopher Jan-Francois Lyotard, every metanarrative critically resonates with the foundation of the themes of virtual reality and telematic networks.

Dante's Persons: An Ethics of the Transhuman by Heather Webb explores the concept of the individual as presented in Dante's play. It is necessary to achieve the integrity of the individual. Dante presents a vision of "superhuman" potential in which man after death is fully integrated into a network of individual relationships based on mutual recognition and interpersonal help. The purpose is to actively represent and build a community of mortals where the integrity of each person's personality is achieved by recognizing the identities of the exceptional personalities.

Cyberpunk is therefore a postmodern genre granting the label a broader breath than that which McHale assigns to it as reflection on the world and 'worldliness', the theme of the centrifugal self and the theme of death.

In its best expressions cyberpunk has nothing to envy the classics of literature of the second half of the twentieth century in terms of stylistic research. If we think of authors such as Ballard or Gibson, we note that the stylistic operation also occurs on the language and not only on the narrative structure. And again in a text like *Neuromancer*, in which the idea of a sequential and univocal reality is abandoned, language becomes a machine, and the reading of the divination. By expressing itself as a mutant prosthesis cyberpunk seems to bring and proliferate science fiction,

typically the province of technological art, at the forefront of creative explorations of our unique age (Larry, 4).

The other theoretical element around which cyberpunk theories gather is the ego and their negation of individual and collective death. They see the differences between an organic or electronic based data processing system as null and void and therefore weave links with the fields of computer science, neurological and literary research, and in general with all the technologies that emerged victorious since the Second World War. But the perspective is exactly the ironical: instead of discovering our functioning in detail and reproducing it artificially (AI) as an epistemological perspective we try to pursue rather an amplification of intelligence (AI), or an improvement in our ability to access to information and to communicate it to others that develops through a global connectivity of systems and human-machine interfaces. The interest of this type of studies in the internet phenomenon is expanding and also refers to authors outside of cyborg transhumanism, such as Lynn Margulis, and her vision of the biosphere as a data processor, not far from the idea of infosphere of Pierre Lévy. It could be defined as the set of informing and informed agents, information channels and information itself. Human-computer interfaces play a key role, determining the quantity and modalities of the exchange of information between man and machine. It is for this reason that authors even far from a Marxist ideology approach to the critique of culture and media, such as Alan Cooper an interface design professional or Donald A. Norman who pose the problem of the enormous power that is deposited in the hands of programmers⁴ and computer code companies or even simply in the design of everyday objects which are now almost always electronic and therefore in need of interfaces. Trashing⁵ follows these; for those who are able yet don't have the means. So cyberpunk manages the complex relationships between human actions (instructions), machine actions (execution) and feedback (the responses generated by the system).

The interface in cyberpunk fiction is the relationship between man and machine objectified in a technology that binds human biology and scientific matter together. The connection, it would be better to say the fusion, of the flesh respectively with steel and silicon, to which I refer with the terms of body interface and topological interface which characterizes the imaginary cyborg and open towards what Vernor Vinge calls "the Technological Singularity" (Vinge, 168) a new era of

post-biological development, of interaction through interconnected systems, outside the three spatial dimensions, adding artificial senses to our organs.

There are two types of interfaces which are analysed separately for the sake of clarity but which are almost always presented contextually. The metaphor of the cyborg is analysed first, carrying out an excursus on the sciences and technologies of reference in the film sector, from cybernetics to neurology up to the latest developments in biotechnology. The other is that of the telematics and information technology which is not intended to be merely definitive presentations of the subject but to provide a framework, in which I studied the films and directors, literary and cinematographic techniques. I also hope that they can help to understand the real implications of these technologies, not in reference to a prophetic value of dystopian films, but rather in view of reflection on the intelligent application of science.

The cyborg as a metaphor for the new humanity is observed in the different interpretations given by its essays, from Donna Haraway to Bruce Sterling, and literary criticism, from cultural studies to postmodernism and to the ideas of Scott Jeffery.

I have also devoted a brief discussion of the technological and cultural premises that have made current developments in telematics possible and therefore to a formulation of the characteristics of cyberspace. The issues related to virtuality are dealt with reference to literary sources but above all to cinematographic followers. In particular the info-cultural movement of hankering is examined in relation to its socially antagonistic position, on the one hand, and its tension or extension to the very American myth of the frontier world⁶.

The Matrix, in particular deal with the poetics and aesthetics of cyberpunk cinema: problems such as the signification of the work of art, referentiality and self-reference, the virtuality of the demographic sign, hybridization between film and video game; and yet individual identity, free will, hacker antagonism, and whatever else is simmering in the cauldron of Dystopian Films. We will see on the basis of these considerations, as an analogue of the subdivision between body and topological interface that between tangible cyber and intangible cyber, on whose borderline David Cronenberg's cinema of mutation and otherness has moved.

1.10 The Cyborg: Human Enhancement (H+)

The 'cyborg' short for cybernetic organism, implies a constructive, practical and aesthetic procedure in the direction of the robotic humanoid. A lot of technophobic dystopian films are not any machine or android trying to imitate animal features and features but rather a new type of biological organ that is intimately and physiologically interlaced with the machine.

We could mention some cinematic cyborgs such as the invincible Iron Man; an abominable combination of organic and metallic in the *Avenger* series. The standard-bearer of cyber-cinema Keanu Reeves equipped with artificial memory in the *Matrix* series; then the cyber police officer Tom Cruise in *Minority Report* (2002), with their artificial eyes, the Marvellian Hulk and *X-Men* series connected to the atomic explosion and its uncontrolled effects are the result of evolution and adaptation of the species. According to Saniotis

"Transhumanism is a school of thought which endeavours to engineer the human body beyond its present capabilities. The goal of transhumanism is for future humanity to become post-human—humans with superior physical and mental capabilities who have mastered techniques in achieving immortality. Both Abrahamic religions and transhumanism privilege the body with attaining transcendent dimensions." (Saniotis, 166)

Transhumanism and Society: The Social Debate over Human Enhancement by Stephen Lilley presents the public debate on technology development and examines transhumanists' calls to ignore human nature and environmentalists' arguments in defence. This book provides an overview of controversial topics and presents the discussion in an orderly and constructive manner. Readers learn about the debates about humanism, the tensions between science and religion, the interpretations of socio-technological revolutions.

The technology is no longer worn but literally incorporated by means of genetic engineering and then through an arsenal of eye wiring, inserts of chips and memories on neural tissues, skull jacks, shells, armour and biomechanical limbs. In *Starship Troopers* a military enlisted man, uncovering his mechanical leg from

behind the counter, proudly turns to Rico: "the Mobile Infantry made me the man I am today!" (Starship Troopers, 19:19–19:22)

In cyberpunk the compromise with technology is almost never accidental, but sought after and desired even where it is the result of an unfortunate episode of an accident such as in the film *Robocop* (2014). Peter Murphy is a policeman in Detroit in the throes of a crime out of control when he is attacked and riddled with bullets by a gang he was hunting. Although there is undeniably a more immediately spectacular component capable of satisfying every type of audience what makes these productions attributable to the cyber genre is the personal side of the two cyborgs; their inner dramas, the difficulty, above all initial, to accept the diversity brought about by the new condition, fears and reflections, hesitation and discouragement, rather than the mere exaltation of physical strength.

Even in less successful cinema cyberpunk explores and imagines solutions for a life beyond death, a life that relies on synthetic amplification of perception, prosthetic techniques, and electronic memories. The tension is always in the movement from the organic to the artificial, even at the risk of undermining the humanity of the portrayed subject, transforming the character into a hybrid that from time to time experiences a spasmodic dilation of the ego or a dilution that threatens stability, as in *Universal soldier* (1992) directed by Roland Emmerich. Emmerich's film, which culminated in a watchable prequel to Mic Rodgers *Universal Soldier: The Return* 1999 proposes a variation on the theme of Robocop: memories and feelings resurface and create obstacles in the psychology of the cyborg. Although in Emmerich's film where cyborgs are real human weapons, soldiers too were programmed to kill. Universal soldier appears serious like all Emmerich's films, not very thorough, determined and granitic in his desire to exclude any ironic accent, therefore appreciable as an action film and very little as Dystopian Films.

The solutions imagined by literature and by the cyberpunk cinematic imagery are constantly put to the scrutiny of experimentation in a cycle of reciprocal feedback between an artistic representation of the problems of humanity and techno-scientific solutions. *Transformation of Collective Intelligences: Perspective of Transhumanism* by Jean-Max Noyer deals with the production of knowledge and intelligibility as changing. This is a sober debate about 'performative science' and 'performative society'. But one thing arises and is confirmed by several names: transhumanism,

posthumanism, speculative posthumanism. It seems like a great story, about the future of our existence without entering the study of the Anthropocene. The work was also presented as a concrete utopia with anthropology and techniques. This book shows how collective intelligence cleverly places itself between the intertwining of ontological horizons and the "process of biotechnological maturation".

The 1960s was a stirring of beating between two opposing theoretical factions of apocalyptic and integrated; with the consequent interpretations of the cyborg from time to time as a manifestation of the oppressive rationality of technocracy as a hi-tech version of the phallocratic power. As a metaphor, the made-man cyborg is engaged in the construction of an ultra-personalized identity in a world that leaves him without social affiliations, a world that has replaced politics with biology. In a similar context Donna Haraway proposes her vision of the cyborg and genetic technologies as a breaking point of the natural link between the sexes, in a perspective of freeing the woman from her role of reproducer of the species and therefore of social emancipation of the female sex.

Constructing Womanhood and the Female Cyborg: A Feminist Reading of Ex Machina and Westworld (2017): a dissertation by Zoë Seaman-Grant focuses on the birth of humanity in the female cyborgs of the *Westworld* series and the development of public empathy. One of the author's goals is to talk about sexual assault. The crimes committed by cyborg men against cyborg women in science fiction films depict the cyborg's and humanity's vulnerability and complicity. This text is highly critical of man and mentions artificial machines that are morally superior to man. This dissertation contains information related to the subject of my research, because it helps to understand how history is interpreted from a feminine point of view.

1.11 Dystopian Totalitarianism

To speak of totalitarianism associated with the word dystopia, which I have said referring to imaginary societies in films, might sound strange, given that such a nightmare was really lived with profound and lasting suffering. But we must not forget that when the first dystopian literatures were written totalitarianism ferociously unleashed the peoples against the people leading all on the verge of a complete catastrophe. The second is that utopia in general as we have already clarified

maintains an indispensable relationship with the present with respect to which it is placed from time to time as a warning or as a hypothesis for improvement. Finally, as underlined by definition taken from the work of Erika Gottlieb on the comparison between the anti-utopia of the Soviet East and the West and for all the reasons listed above, the totalitarian model has in itself something of every unimaginable dystopian nightmare.

Dune (2021) directed by Denis Villeneuve, remains the closest cinematographic realization to produce numerous reinterpretations and has established itself within a couple of years as a sort of archetype as a warning of the state of complete subjection and enslavement in which man can be relegated to a completely new form of government such as the totalitarian regime. It's different from the despotic, dictatorial or tyrannical forms known until the nineteenth century. The cult of the state here is mixed with xenophobic elements, autarchy and corporatist capitalism, a cult of strength and of the leader - the guide - which tends to take all power to it by depriving the individual of all personal freedom. Hannah Arendt in *The Origin of Totalitarianism* provides us with one of the most complete analyses of the phenomenon, argues that the key element which decisively favoured its rise was the decline of a social system linked to classes which they dissolved into an indistinct mass: a very large group of individuals characterized by the repetitiveness of attitudes and by an increasingly autotomized society. Some power elites had an easy game managing to understand before others that it was necessary to organize, care for that mass and that the tools to do so were available to anyone: crude violence and an ideology that carried within itself unequivocal imprints of an imperialist and racist nationalism. As Saurabh Dube says

"orientations that render power – of state, nation, empire, modernity, patriarchy, or discipline – as dystopian totality, frequently a distant enemy. Against this, on offer is the work of difference – of community, subaltern, alterity, border, and margin – as “unrecuperated particulars,” ever an antidote to depredations of dystopia.⁶⁸ Much more than formal analytics, we are in the face of structures of sensibility, tissues of sentiment, which then undergird critical orthodoxies, also underlying their distinct production of time and space in the quotidian key" (Dube, 47)

Alarmism and the fear of the foreigner is one of the best levers of propaganda obtained by resorting to the constant threat of a distant but always looming, a war whose origin anyone ignores but whose necessity no one doubts. Since individual free will is crushed, humiliated and continually lashed by the inquisitive gaze of the government through surveillance, the dystopian ruling party is simply a machine as are its members regardless of their hierarchical position. And it is precisely the technical level of mass conditioning which is one of the characteristic figures of the totalitarian dictatorship.

The decline of the utopian genre thus receives a definitive eclipse with the tragedies of the two world wars: totalitarianism and the atomic holocaust. On one hand the two world wars have brought us to the brink of an atomic war and which have also led to talk of the 'end of history', the decline of ideologies on the other, the dismemberment of the system but not the end of the logic of alignment which today is expressed in a new preventive crusade. These have convinced writers and thinkers of the validity of the equation progress = regress.

Berdiajev's words, placed by Huxley⁷ as the epigraph of *Brave New World*⁸, well exemplify this intellectual worry which expresses the perceived danger of the historical affirmation of a positive utopia:

“Utopias are achievable, life proceeds in the direction of utopias. The question, therefore, is how to avoid it's realization, how recover and safeguard a non-utopian society, less perfect and freer.” (Berdiajev, 3)

In those years what bewitched the consciences of many was precisely the attempt to create a better society, without pockets of backwardness, indigence or illiteracy, without realizing that in reality it was precisely on the widespread insecurity and popular discontent that the totalitarianism had taken hold in years of difficult economic crisis and social change. In Italy fascism led the masses to vote and once it installed itself in power it led through the troubled seas of international politics of the epoch. The ideal was of a single party to whose control everything had to be subjected, of oppression, of the violence of the state against citizens, of the control over consciences, mobilization and militarization at every level of the social

ladder.

"Technology never reaches its particular specificity in a neutral context with neutral ends. Rather it is always "lived" - always historically permeated with political, economic and social contents" (Sobchack, 12-50)

Research into Technocracy systems should not be ignored without a reference to Norbert Elias and his *Around the Civilization Process* (1939). Elias studies the state organization from two points of view, inherited from Weber and from the influence of Freud in every cultural sector of the time. For Elias the state is characterized as the holder of the public monopoly of physical violence and as apparently capable of legitimately exercising emotional control and repression. In analysing the perspectives of a hypertrophic bureaucratization and of a technocracy that reigns over individuality, we cannot exempt ourselves from some hints to the fundamental theories of Max Weber⁹ and in-depth by Elias himself who identifies the fundamental aspect in rationalization. The engine of modern society is no longer oriented to an ethical-religious thought: although it is precisely a religious denomination that has promoted it symmetrically but destined for logic of increasing production and reducing waste and consumption. For Weber, who was neither an idealist nor a materialist, but rather a conflict theorist, who reflected at length on the mechanisms of the struggle for power rationalization was like a double-edged sword, in the sense that it represented an increase in formal procedures and a weakening of the existing capacity of human beings to consciously pursue their own goal.

This logic is expressed at every level of the social scale identified by Weber at the level of classes, groups of political power. The state, seen as an organization evolved in the same sense starting from the formation of the large and articulated national administrations in the 17th-19th centuries and with an administration of force it dominates all other organizations. With these reflections the German sociologist and economist lays the foundations of modern sociology. Furthermore Elias, with his sociology of configurations, underlines how this process was not directed or wanted by a particular social group, but arose spontaneously as an unplanned product of the interaction between several individuals, which are always in a relationship of functional interdependence, measurable on the basis of power, which expresses the

rate of this mutual dependence.

In films like *Brazil* (UK, 1985), which represents a satirical degeneration of some trends in our society, the functions of the bureaucracy are seen as a model expression of the complete and rationalization of the state apparatus and also for creating a space for discussion and laughability for the public. But I also want to portray the form of a power so pervasive in the control of individuals as to induce the appearance of an individual self-constriction at the psycho-genetic level. Gilliam, by distorting the image of the upper class in a labyrinth of mirrors shows misdeeds and sins, he is also concerned with underlining the vices of the powerful and their own slavery towards the system of power, determined by an economy of self-expression. A young, wealthy employee Sam Lowry is obsessed with his work at the Ministry of Information and goes into crisis after meeting a woman named Greist, who is the same one he dreams of chasing every night. His dreams represent his ego's struggle against a world of repression, and begins to build a conscience. But in the end the police kill Greist accused of terrorism and imprison Sam, which leaves him only room for one last thought of happiness with the woman of his dreams. Within a Weberian terminology, we could say that in *Brazil* (1985) the extreme rationalization of the organizational structure of the state, dominated by a monotonous technocracy associated with a pervasive power of control and a repressive punitive system of which the ministry of information is an agent structure, has social repression, generating loneliness, decadence, dismembering class and class relations. Similarly in a totalitarian dictatorship the society tends to divide itself into two distinct internal party, and the mass of people governed with a legitimacy that comes from the revolutionary leadership rather than from the legal-rational authority of the constitutional rule of law. For Gilliam it is important to criticize the emergence of a catastrophic, vulgar society, in which its protagonists seem to be the only ones to gradually acquire a conscience, while they wander among helpless, frightened, but totally submissive to the logic of control.

In the narrative world evoked by Gilliam, power does not have a recognizable face like that of Orwell's Big Brother¹⁰, but it is a soulless leviathan made up of the thousand officials and dignitaries of the system, each with its own small slice of power, each stacked on the top. it's a social step there does not seem to be a centre

from which power emanates, as in a totalitarian-type regime; but there is still the bureaucratic monster, which totalitarianism itself could not do without to assert itself, also on the basis of the mechanism of unloading and splitting up the responsibilities for every possible error thereby paving a way for horror.

Where totalitarianism wants to have complete control, a technocratic regime is satisfied with the absolute power to apply the law, where totalitarianism finds a new law, bureaucratic regimes tend to defend the old law. The general and main function entrusted to power seems to be that of maintaining the existing order and bureaucracy is the means by which an obtuse and irrational conservatism seems to have harnessed a society.

1.12 Hedonistic Dystopia

Films are part of a line of critical thought that elaborates reflections in a fantastic-scientific key and the other comic-grotesque the relationship between man and machines. It was soon realized that the machine did not provide free time and although it alleviated the fatigue of work, it changed its relationship with man forever, making the worker purely dependent on the robot or controller-assistant of the machine. Passivizing the creative functions of the individual in monotonous sterility of factory work, getting used to its rhythms, forging us to its patterns of action, rearranging the entire production system and deeply affecting the social fabric of class. The machine has effectively made us its slaves. Here we mean machines above all in their primitive, industrial form: all machines. Although the perspective of artificial intelligence and the developments of robotic and cybernetics make us glimpse even through the most recent cinema terrifying horizons in which machines take control over the human race, we are referring here to the artifact-symbol of an enveloping system, which is also located outside the factory gates and beyond working hours. Machines shape the entire social space and inform us of our minds, forces us to be subjected to a tyrannical technocracy in the name of productive efficiency and the free market.

Black Bodies and Transhuman Realities: Scientifically Modifying the Black Body in Posthuman Literature and Culture by Melvin G. Hill speaks on the scientific modalities of the black body that makes a valuable contribution to the dialogue about

Posthuman darkness. The book examines the black body in the context of transhuman reality from different literary and artistic points of view. These cultural, political, social and historical aspects of the black deincarnation structure also make this function potential and signal the possibility of a transcendental black subjectivity. In this context, many issues seem to parallel traditional hegemonic philosophies and religious issues. The chapters show how literature, based on its historical and social context, contributes to a broader reflection on the black transcendence of subjectivity in a post-human environment, examining interpretations of the "old" and visions of the "true new man".

In 1932 Aldous Huxley, a cynical and disenchanted observer of his time, an uncompromising critic of every conception of science, lucidly reflected on the depersonalizing power of Science in *The dangers of power*¹¹ which he imagines applies to every aspect of human life. According to Aldous Huxley in one of our next generations there will be a method to make people love their conditions as some slave in the cotton fields with a mental condition; it will produce dictatorships without any struggle; a painless, effortless concentration camp for entire societies in which people will be effectively deprived of their freedoms, but will give in happily to folly.

"The dictators of the past needed highly qualified collaborators even at the minimum level: men capable of thinking and acting in a dependent manner. But in our period of modern technical evolution one can also do without these men; thanks to modern communication methods, it is possible to mechanize low-level management. In this way it was possible to train a new type of manager: the one who receives orders uncritically." (Bonsignore, 127)

The pessimistic and anti-positivist vision of science, satirically advocated in *Brave New World* (1932) coincides with the historical moment in which the great crisis of 1929 -lasting for 20 years between the two world wars- fully invested Western societies, and the credibility of the capitalist democratic regimes seemed to waver. Even before Nazism took power in 1933, Mondo Nuovo denounced the nightmare prospect of a totalitarian society fascinated and impregnated by scientific progress. He was convinced that it could offer its citizens compulsory happiness. It is enough to understand that the States constituted the future of Europe. In *Brave New*

World (1932), the writer stages a sort of after-war that brought humans to the brink of mutual destruction, everything was industrialized and standardized, from work, to leisure, to death, including the production of the race, the result of pure genetic chemical manipulation, as well as the identity of people, which the book defines as “the greatest socializing and moralizing force of all time” (Huxley, 23)

In several Dystopian Films such as *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)*, the denial of sexuality pushes the character to act illegally in his society, then to flee or oppose it openly and knowingly. In *Brave New World* it seems that power is really destined to self. It cannot be attacked from the outside, because outside it there are only reserves where people die of hunger and disease; it cannot be affected internally by members of a totally subjugated society. The only threat could come from the higher genetic caste who has been educated in greater flexibility of thought and choice in having to direct others. These controllers of the new world, chosen from among the best of the men, men of ingenuity, perhaps warriors or scientists, such as who are forced to choose between exile and the ascetic and conscious role of controller that led to the renunciation. As Franco Carretta writes in *Il Nuovo*, in a review of a new edition of Huxley's essays:

"If the organization of a society is bad (as ours is) and a small number of people have power over the majority and oppress them, any victory over Nature will inevitably only serve to strengthen that power and that oppression" (Carretta, 139)

For this English writer, even democracies, which he noted as increasingly inclined to structure them as oligarchies around specific groups of economic-commercial interest, are subject to a repetition of a cyclical trend. The masses first surrender part of their freedom to power groups in exchange for protection and security, only to feel impatient and rebel when the need for freedom takes over again. The only path is the growing capacity of control, and of enslavement to its own interests, of the dominant group, a capacity directly proportional to the perfection of the tools that science and technology put at its disposal.

Viroid Life: Perspectives on Nietzsche and the Transhuman Condition by Keith Ansell-Pearson deals with Nietzsche's notion of 'superman' which continues to haunt the postmodern imagination. The appeal to "persuade" is no longer considered mere

rhetoric. The future reality leaves an artificial "superhuman" in the character who looks down on us all. Driven by this awareness, Keith Ansel Pearson's evolution has gone out of control and the machines are taking over.

He connects Nietzsche's biological thoughts with questions about the modern understanding of technological evolution. Viral life; Nietzsche's perspective and Nietzsche's philosophy of the superhuman state are used to explore the 'non-human' nature of our future. Keith Ansel Pearson clashes with Nietzsche and Darwin before introducing new characters, such as Giles Deleuze and Guy Debord, to outline the new.

Genetic manipulation is taken up in films as a dystopian key. In the centre of our space in the world lives the genetically selected human beings in order; perfectly healthy and intellectually gifted who dominate those born in the old way (normal people who aren't born of any cyborg or machine manipulation. Within workplaces the genetic elites are admitted to calculate the equations. The ambitious genetically manipulated humanoids infiltrate to realize the elite dreams, and are forced to live with the "valid" people.

In this perspective knowledge is neutral in itself and potentially advantageous, determines a form of guilty control, because science is used to discriminate against the invalid in the workplace or to justify a murder. Science is definitively the final boundary of dreams: an unexpected boundary by an invalid man.

Starship Troopers (1997) is another film using similar impulses, deliberately affected and exaggerated, but in a completely different tone, exciting and humorous. It sets the scene in a phase of human history of capitalist and beautiful space exploration. The film insists and explains the reasons for this political choice, and the consequent division of society into *citizens* and *civilians*.

It is for this reason that to be a citizen in a dystopian society one must render the service, enter directly into the apparatus of power, the administrator of legalized violence. The societies imagined by these films are built on these principles and the mobile infantry. The administrators embody them with traditions and aspirations: in the exaltation of sacrifice, of the expression of muscular strength, in the epic of beauty and blood. The heroes face many severe trials, such as the destruction of their

hometown by a meteorite or a global climatic issue thrown by the monstrous inhabitants of the Earth.

At this point, the counterpoint of space-earth settings that concerned the military training of the protagonists gives way to an interspersing of splendid special effects like the fleet of spaceships in flight or a not so splendid display of cars on the soil of the alien planet. These star wars which pay tribute to the lives of many young people and some of the protagonists is an opportunity to meet someone from the outer universe as truly as ambitious as ourselves. Dutch director Paul Verhoeven faithfully takes anti-utopia for its militarist, expansionist and xenophobic, and wants to satire the embarrassing society of the present. Recent American dystopian films are a mockery that also leads to a precise critique of a certain social and political project.

The mass conditioning linked to the explosion of the advertising phenomenon involves the improvement of its means by research in the scientific prosthetic fields. Nowadays television as a means of marketing is one of the most investigated hotbeds by multiple disciplines. The theme of conditioning through the media system has been represented for years in cinematic dystopian films. In the famous scenarios of *Blade Runner*, signs and billboards are set, while spaceships fly low over the roofs. The same trend can be seen in the work by Spielberg *Minority Report*. The hyper-violent society of *Robocop* is dominated by a consumerist and greedy spirit that permeates both the criminal slums and the skyscrapers of mega-corporations.

1.13 The myth and the hero in Dystopian Films

The mythical or other religious elements echo all throughout human history. Judeo-Christian faith is often presented in literary dystopian films. The *Bible* represents an invaluable mythographic patrimony for the dystopian film director who can take the biblical knowledge for granted and resonance that plot among the western audience. Sir James Frazer in that monumental work of literary mythography *The Golden Branch* (1890), constitutes one of the most used plots for science fiction cinema: in periods of crisis or infertility the sacrifice of the king calms the earth and opens the door to bliss. Usually whenever in a dystopian film, novel or movie someone dies or is an antagonist, a villain, or is a representative of some larger social group then they sacrifice the interest of the community but just keep repeating the same myth from a different angle. Although most dystopian films directors simply

reinterpret or twist existing myths and the directors transpose literary works into motion pictures, some writers have dedicated themselves to producing new mythologies, such as Frank Herbert with *Dune* (2021) brought to the big screen by David Lynch.

However the most relevant contribution to the study of myth writing is certainly that of the Frenchman Claude Lévi-Strauss, who studies myths as that sector of symbolic production of thought for practical application purposes which has itself as its object. Lévi-Strauss starts from a structuralist conception of culture and his discourse on mythology develops parallel to the linguistics of De Saussure: the myths are not units endowed with being autonomous or having absolute meaning, but they take on a meaning in relation to the other myths. In oral societies the realm of savage thought, myths not only give a key to access the subconscious of a culture to interpret its social relations, but also provide a model of organization such as to contribute to change social institutions.

“One understands then how mythical thought can be capable of generalizing and so be scientific, even though it is still entangled in imagery. It too works by analogies and comparisons even though its creations, like those of the ‘bricoleur’, always really consist of a new arrangement of elements, the nature of which is unaffected by whether they figure in the instrumental set or in the final arrangement” (Strauss, 13)

Mythologies of Transhumanism by Michael Hauskeller examines the extent to which transhumanist arguments depend on the authenticity of stories about the meaning in which they are rooted. Michael Hauskeller explores these stories and the basic understanding of human nature, building on the key ideas of transhumanist philosophy: the possibility of self-planning and human immortality, the elimination of self-design and human immortality. A better word than transhumanist theory is also utopia, a form of human natural history, the growing integration of the human development project into the mainstream of culture. *Are You a Transhuman?* by Fereidoun M. Esfandiary too provides a series of self-assessments to determine whether trends align with future trends and lifestyles.

Virtual Immortality: God, Evolution, and the Singularity in Post- and

Transhumanism by Oliver Krüger talks about Hollywood, television series, and films that have promoted the ideas of posthumanism and transhumanism. According to this radical view, humanity and all biological life are obsolete. The traditional way of life is inefficient at processing information and too unsuitable for crossing the highest frontier: the cosmos. While humanity may be replaced with their artificial descendants, posthumanism predicts that they will become an immortal part of a transcendent super intelligence.

From the point of view of language, both myths and fairy tales are characterized by a meta-language, which allows them to be distinguished from novels. In fairy tales even more so in myths, the words and rules of discourse operate on two levels: the first is that of the normal meaning, which is grasped by following the narration; the second is that of meta-language, where words become elements of signification, in relation to an additional significant system, which is situated on another level.

Lévi-Strauss traces this pervading and profound effectiveness of the symbolic system of myth, especially those with a tribal structure, where the pace of social change is slow, the value of tradition high, contacts with the outside world is limited. This setting is also followed in the plot of *Mad Max: Fury Road (2010)* in the citadel. In this type of society myths form as ritual and religious approaches serve and penetrate below the empirical appearance. It also possesses a type of approach to reality unlike the scientific or fictional science which flourished at the turn of the most turbulent periods in history. For Strauss,

“The creative act which gives rise to myths is in fact exactly the reverse of that which gives rise to works of art. In the case of works of art, the starting point is a set of one or more objects and one or more events which aesthetic creation unifies by revealing a common structure. Myths travel the same road but start from the other end. They use a structure to produce what is itself an object consisting of a set of events (for all myths tell a story). Art thus proceeds from a set (object + event) to the discovery of its structure. Myth starts from a structure by means of which it constructs a set (object + event).”
(Strauss, 17)

Myths settling down over time conceive human relations and the norms of society as constants determined by the supernatural. A dystopian film on the other hand mediates or even denies the great divergence between two cultures: artistic and scientific. Darko Suvin approaches this matter as cognitive estrangement. Like the Russian formalists and as Bertold Brecht points out in *Dramas for a scientific era*, so too dystopian films' stories start from a fictional, literary hypothesis and develop it with scientific rigor and consistency. Moreover unlike myth Dystopian Films has in common with literary naturalism an empirical, scientific approach with reality.

According to Roland Barthes, cinema due to its very ability to deposit itself in collective memory to deform and transform its contents by virtue of the public of the time is constituted as mythography. That is a mythical system characterized like traditional literature or other forms of communication. Furthermore we can underline that myth contains a strong ideological charge. Therefore mythology is part of semiology as a formal science and of ideology as a historical science: study of ideas in form.

1.14 Transhumanist Films' Audience

1.14.1 Relationship between Man and Machine

A world has been created for the film audience where Android is highly developed and people can really enjoy it, and Androids here means fully humanized robots or robots that look like humans. And they behave like us; they have no soul, no spirit, and no part of consciousness. But they are like us; just as we take machines as a means to our ends so too machines take us as a means to their end. *Transhumanism, Nature, and the Ends of Science: A Critique of Technoscience* by Robert Frodeman formulates a social, political and aesthetic critique of transhumanism and the rapid growth of scientific knowledge in general. Today, instead of improving our lives, science and technology make us weaker and more childish. It is time to set the limits of the ambition unleashed by technical and scientific knowledge. The transhumanist goal of human upliftment encompasses a number of dangerous social pathologies. Like transhumanism itself, these diseases are rooted in or consistent with an ethic of "plural". It is excessive love of our tradition driven by the liberal norms of our culture. But living at the speed of electrons is doomed to fail. The author gives a

naturalistic description of human well-being, paying attention to the natural rhythm of life. The interdisciplinary nature, and goals of transhumanistic science are important to scholars in many disciplines, including social and political philosophy, philosophy of technology, scientific and technological research, environmental science, and political advertising.

Posthuman Bliss? : The Failed Promise of Transhumanism written by Susan B. Levin is an in-depth and well-documented exploration of the pitfalls of transhumanism that brings us back to what it means to live well. Proponents of the "radical" development of transhumanism urge us to look for a biotechnological extension of selected abilities, mainly cognitive abilities, beyond the limits of humans to become obstacles for beings with such abilities. For those who share this view, the advancement or development of science and technology by mankind can also be a moral constraint. Therefore, the human risk of our response to transhumanism is enormous. Susan B. Levin questions the common transhumanist commitment to spirit and soul, ethics, liberal democracy, knowledge and reality, demonstrating that humanity is a self-transcending "fantastic human". Levin poses a serious challenge to the transhumanists' claim that science and technology support their view of posthumanism. Levin argues that transhumanists lack an avalanche of theoretical and practical "conceptual evidence" for cognitive psychology, biology, and neuroscience, and often rely on dubious or outdated views in these areas. After an in-depth discussion of why transhumanism should be rejected, Levin advocates a holistic view of the good life rooted in Aristotelian virtue, but compatible with liberal democracy. Yet the future is a very human world: it allows us to see worthy goals for ourselves as human beings and do the indispensable work of self-knowledge, rather than relying just on technology and scientists. According to Kansteiner, "television, film, museums and memorials, could still provoke passionate feelings in audiences steeped in interactive digital culture and living at a point in time when the remembrance of the Final Solution transitions from the dynamic realm of communicative memory to the settled realm of cultural memory" (Kansteiner, 305-344)

1.14.2 The characteristics that predominate in dystopia:

The Ghost in the Shell (2017) shows that an artificial intelligence suddenly starts to hurt people, and the question is whether to find this ghost in the network and

who to follow as people are half robots in the dystopian world of future intelligence. It is interesting because this film has had a huge impact on science fiction over the past three decades. *The Ghost in the Shell* (2017) is a great reference. The dystopia it represents depicts a new world that weakens many of the perversions of today's society. It's very important within a dystopia, because ultimately it's about what humanity returns to, like the eternal return to crisis, going through some things, but creating new ones that you will never go through. However, the problems are more complicated and we will never be done with them; we'll have to leave some of the solutions to the robots. *Perfecting Human Futures: Transhuman Visions and Technological Imaginations* by J. Benjamin Hurlbut, Hava Tirosh-Samuelson tells people have always dreamed of a better future. From the quest to conquer death to the quest to rule the world, the imaginary vision of the technological future reveals the obligations, values and standards of builders. Today, the human future is challenged by new technologies that promise radical control over human life and a look at the consequences of human improvement. This interdisciplinary publication brings together scholars from the fields of science and technology, sociology, philosophy, theology, ethics and history to explore the imagination of technological advances that promise the limits of the body. people and countries. With a particular focus on transhumanist and posthumanist perspectives, the book explores new ways to explore their utopian and eschatological dimensions, placing innovative ideas, institutions and practices in a broader context. This book prompts ordinary readers to discover in today's map of imagination, this is where I can refer to the fact that technological innovation is the source of progress, the force behind social and historical transformation and the essence that defines life.

1.14.3 The negative portrayal of science and technology in Dystopian Films:

There are often situations where science causes these problems. When it overcomes scientific or technical impossibilities there are those who misunderstand it like in *The Terminator* where Skynet detects and kills its enemies. One way or another we create what will be our enemy and that enemy will be very powerful and will end up with us. *Westworld* has created androids that look like creatures we love, want and no longer care about; they are really the seeds of rebellion, and they have

this essence and chaos; and we can't possibly afford to do that because our life is messy enough. It's a very humanistic story, deeply rooted in the myth of Prometheus, who freed us from the gods and set us on fire. According to the myths, we are born of revolution, we rebel against our own creators and eventually become creators to be destroyed by our creations. "SF novels, stories, and anthologies appeared beginning in the early 1970s. The audience for such literature was and is still forced to think freshly about our species' place on earth. Science fiction, almost from its beginning, has been a popular genre, from pulp to cheap paperback" (Moore, 45-65)

1.14.4 The most common human conflicts in dystopian films:

Many social reviews are mixed, especially in western societies where social issues such as classicism, racism, xenophobia and even classism are at play. These issues ultimately have a solution but lead to alternate issues of differences.

Transhumanism: Evolutionary Futurism and the Human Technologies of Utopia by Andrew Pilsch places modern transhumanism in a broader narrative of a rhetorical modality he calls "evolutionary futurism" that encompasses multiple texts and philosophies. He interprets transhumanism as rhetoric, as opposed to a loose group of extremist figures examining the intersection of three major paradigms that shape contemporary Western intellectual life: cybernetics, evolutionary biology, and spiritualism. Analysing this conflict, his work traces belief in a digital, evolutionary, and collective future through texts written by theologians and mystics, biologists and computer scientists, political philosophers and economic thinkers, and authors of science fiction and conceptual fiction. Pilsch examines the long history of evolutionary futurism and concludes that we need to see more clearly the new contribution of transhumanism to the destruction of our current geopolitical relations, which inspire radically utopian ideas.

1.14.5 The narrative techniques in a dystopian genre:

The bases of these dystopias are to control the structure of the character, because if this antagonistic or negative force is present, this force can in some way contribute to the recovery of the character. There is no turning back in that ancient world (our present world) that can restore balance. There are dystopias where the protagonist is the same source of rebellion, and then what happens is a complete

break from the first, providing new horizons where creators and creations are one level, or creations are one level superior. These dystopian stories always appear at critical moments, when tensions, especially problems of coexistence between creators and creations, only appear when everything explodes, this tension is more than explosive.

1.14.6 Filmic Dystopia cradled in social environment:

Evil is not always associated with existence. Sometimes this AI work can be born free from the possible cause of evil but it is society, the injustice and what it sees in us that evolves the AI. *Religion and Transhumanism: The Unknown Future of Human Enhancement* by Calvin Mercer, Tracy J. Trothen questions on if technology should be used to improve human skills such as knowledge and longevity. This stimulating dialogue between 'transhumanism' and religion helped me to explore the development technologies that could fundamentally change human society and the way that they interact with each other.

Transhumans call for revolution, identifies the weak, the oppressed or the marginalized and then initiates it. A full stop here would tag transhumanists as agents of chaos but evil has already been introduced to us and what society is doing is just adapting that ability and turning it into another form of evil. Adam, Eve and the Snake have the same weight to be blamed for evil just as much as people blame AI for evil. Transhumanist Joe Sanders says

“Consciously or not, producers of popular entertainment work under one comprehensive rule: Don't rock the boat. People enjoy temptations or threats that momentarily distract them from their familiar, mundane surroundings. However, the audience does not enjoy being led into unfamiliar territory.” (Sanders, 83-91)

Christian Perspectives on Transhumanism and the Church by Steve Donaldson, Ron Cole-Turner is a thought on Christians who have always faced constant change. It deals with the difference between traditional development and technological development. Possibility of theological ideas and spiritual practices that help Christians meet the challenge of living in a technological world without fear of conforming to their values. This is a book that encourages Christians to understand

and address the profound challenges facing the Church in a technological and transhumanistic future.

The problem is that science progresses in small steps within the limited fields of research. Its benefits are slow to convert into everyday technology and they also follow the economic flow and the relative distributions of wealth. At the current stage of knowledge and social distribution it is the specialists and technicians who have access to first-hand information as they are the only ones able to understand, manipulate and make it understandable and usable to most. But despite everything, science hardly has an immediate and liberating impact and feedback on society, without counting the thousands of failures, difficulties and frustrations that a researcher faces even in pursuit of a research.

Dystopian Films returns to the myth of science the promise of freedom and control. While science deals with necessity, fiction offers freedom. As science explores and explains what absolutely must happen, fiction creates its own sequences and the consequences. While conventional fiction is bound by the laws of the probable, Dystopian Films is free from that constraint. Paradoxically, Dystopian Films is one of the least scientific fictions, because it owes almost nothing to the facts of experience.

From these observations Huntington derives in addition to the presence of purely literary conventions, an important consequence inherent in the form: the natural development of the importance of science for the genre, which emphasizes the starting idea, a hypothesis and on the other hand a certain carelessness in the formation of dystopian films as intertext is also easily observed in films: of plots, situations, settings, stereotyped characters and particular idioms, in a game of textual familiarity.

1.14.7 Transhumanism concepts in monotheistic religions:

There is always a kind of identity crisis of not being a part of some particular group and the group sees that and simply ignores it. *Post- and Transhumanism : An Introduction* by Robert Ranisch, Stefan Lorenz Sorgner shows the scientific advances in genetics, neuroscience and artificial intelligence that have put an end to our traditional human approach. Faced with the current crisis of humanism some of the

strongest movements today are posthumanism and transhumanism. While posthumanism redefines what it means to be human, transhumanism actively promotes human upliftment.

Social identity and the fight against the injustice of the ruling class is a common human example. There's always a sense of harmony in these dystopian stories between creators and the creation. It's not uncommon for a character or hero to go halfway alongside creators and creations and leave to diverge towards a different group of creators and creations with differing ideologies. So we can say that Transhumanism calls us for empathy, recognition of the weaker or less privileged section and so much more.

What unites these three systems of belief, magic, science and religion is the will to satisfy human desires of security and domination, in the sense of control and understanding of the chaos and extreme changeability of the phenomenal world. It is no coincidence that myths according to Lévi-Strauss act in oral cultures as a powerful system of classification. Religion in its various manifestations includes myths that reason around the origin of man, living forms and the earth, around the origin of divinities and around the fundamental oppositional dualisms of societies for example on good and evil, on life and death.

The monotheistic religions, of which the Jewish faith is the prototype, with its privatization of the sacred, enclosed within the confines of a god-for-the-nation monopolize a cult whose mythographic foundations were already intertwined in popular memory in a series of 'saving' myths; stories of promises and alliances between a god and a chosen people. Religion, myth, utopia is intertwined here in a collective and public dimension, as the Scotsman Robertson Smith had already guessed in 1889 in his study *Lectures on the Religion of Semites* (1889). With the Christian and Islamic religion, the influence of the administrators of the cult and the centralization of the religious apparatuses transform religion into an institution. The alliance becomes personal we could say; between the one god and the single man. The bonds for the faithful increase together with the protection granted by the god to his church: this time the promise is eschatological, absolute, irrefutable and impossible to deny it is the moment of the invention of 'faith'. It concerns one's own other world to be collected in a dimension located beyond death.

In this perspective, religion is an institution that aims at some sort of ordering and organization of the social world of entire masses of believers, and a utopian element certainly acts in it, which pushes towards the side of tolerance and rationalization, of composition of conflicts in the name of a more perfect principle than that in force in the world of believers. In the Old Testament Bible this excerpt goes

"I have observed the misery of my people in Egypt and I have heard their cry on account of their overseers; in fact I know his sufferings. I went down to free him from the hand of Egypt and to get him out of this country towards a beautiful and spacious country, towards a country where milk and honey flows" (Exodus, 3)

But there is also a jumble of elements linked to fears and anguish, a sense of guilt and fear of the damnation of the soul. Christianity starting from the theology of the classical world has developed a whole literature and a tradition around a dark world; the evil kingdom of Satan, the eternal rebel against God, and inhabited by the ranks of the damned in perpetual horrible torture as opposed to an ecstatic and contemplative Paradise of infinite bliss. Dante's *Inferno*, indeed the whole *Divine Comedy* could be considered a utopia, or we could say anti-utopian places of transit. However spiritual societies that are highly hierarchical schematic logically divided Paradise according to the logic of the time.

During the sixteenth century the Protestant creed, which abolished all clerical intermediation between god and the believer through the dogma of grace and brought back the promise of individual redemption in the real world through the doctrine of predestination momentarily distanced its path from that of utopia. But Luther's Catechism catalysed energies and opened the field to a series of religious movements with a high utopian potential.

Notes

1. *Utopia* was first written in Latin in 1516 and only later published under this name in England. In this work, of evident Platonic inspiration, we find all the traits of the subsequent positive utopia: happiness, order, and well-being.

2. The term Science Fiction was coined by Hugo Gernsback, the electrical engineer, founder and editor of *Amazing Stories* magazine (1926, considered by many to be the birth date of science fiction). Already since 1911 on *Modern Electrics* the story of the magazine's director and founder, also Gernsback, appears in instalments: *Ralph 124C41+: An adventure roast from the year 2660*.

3. Terminator saga Films in particular the *Terminator Salvation*(2009) narrates the taking of control by *The rebel machines*.

4. The legal protection regime for software in circulation is essentially divided into two macro categories: proprietary software and free software (public domain). The proprietary one is copyrighted for a duration of 90 years (if the right holder is a company). Although most software in the market is proprietary, free software are distributed in a way that anyone can use, copy and distribute it even in modified form. This means that the source code of the program must be available, so the expression *open source* could be considered in practice a synonym. If a program is free but without copyright permission it means that anyone, by modifying it, can add restrictions to it, while if it has copyright permission (we say *Copyleft*) it is not possible to apply additional restrictions. The General Public License (GPL) embodies the principle of copyleft by ensuring that no one can steal the program and hide its codes.

5. 'Trashing' is the practice, widespread among the first hackers, of rummaging through the paper and electronic garbage of large hardware and software companies in order to recover valuable information and miscellaneous material with which to upgrade their machines or replace parts.

6. Frontier Worlds are recently settled worlds which may not be totally explored or have a fully established government in place.

7. Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), English, professor at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in Boston. Nephew of Thomas Huxley (one of the founders

of the British *Round Table*), brother of Sir Julian Sorell Huxley (first director of UNESCO, and several years president of the *Eugenetics Society*). Aldous was also a member of the *Fabian Society* and the *Golden Dawn*. He experienced first-hand the use of hallucinogenic drugs and described his visions in two apologetic works: *The Doors of Perception*(1954) and *Heaven and Hell* (1956). His most famous work, *Il Mondo Nuovo* (1932)

8. The original title of the book, *Brave New World* (literally: "*wonderful new world*") is taken from one of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611). In this text (resumed in theatre and cinema by Peter Greenway) Miranda, the daughter of Prospero, who had never seen humans but her father, sees the young princes of Naples disembark from the ship wrecked following the storm and exclaimed : "*Magnificent humanity, wonderful new world that knows how to feed such perfect beings!*". For Huxley, this title is an antiphrasis, as the world it describes is beautiful. It is a society of houses, immutable, perennial, it is the same world that exiled it together with her father, the Duke of Milan. Contrary to the suspended dimension of the island of Prospero, in the world that is new to Miranda everything is planned: in the shrewd rationality of court life there is no longer room for chance, magic, alchemy, my to. In Huxley's New World of the past, the classical monuments of all civilizations have been torn down, literature set on fire, museums destroyed, history erased.

9. The Max Weber Theory of Bureaucracy proposes that all business tasks must be divided among the employees. The basis for the division of tasks should be competencies and functional specializations. In this way, the workers will be well aware of their role and worth in the organization and what is expected of them. 64

10. Big Brother is a fictional character and symbol in George Orwell's dystopian 1949 novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Big Brother's name reflects the idea that he will protect and watch over the people, guiding them as an older brother would his younger siblings.

11. Franco Carretta, *Huxley, the dangers of power*, *Il Nuovo*, March 6, 2003. The article was published on the occasion of the publication in bookstores, fifty years after the first edition, of Huxley's essay *Science, freedom and peace* a dense reflection of learned references on the risks of concentrations of technological power.

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