

Newton Lee (ed.): *The Transhumanism Handbook*, Springer, 2019

The word “*transhuman*” first appeared in Dante’s *Divine Comedy* (Paradise, Canto I). It describes the fate of the human body from the eschatological perspective. In the contemporary acceptance of the term, from the fact that we have no say in our births, we cannot ignore the fact that due to the evolution of science and technology, we can now aspire to live longer, healthier and more capable. The fundamental question that arises is what is the price and, depending on it, what are the limits that this process must accept.

In the volume we report, the editor gathers the contribution of over 70 authors who express themselves from the most different positions on the phenomenon that falls under the term of transhumanism. The main topics covered relate to the following issues:

- the whole picture of transhumanism is described from both secular and religious points of view
- artificial general intelligence and superintelligence are explained and demystified to give a realistic picture of the possibilities and limitations of these emerging technologies
- provides a realistic picture of the radical expansion of life and rejuvenation to avoid unjustified expectations from the perspective of what must remain alive and consistently connected to existence as a whole.
- the roles of blockchain and cryptocurrency in transhumanism are explained with pros & cons
- transhumanist economics, ethics, philanthropy, philosophy, and politics are thoroughly examined to highlight the positive and negative implications in a balanced way.

Man has become too powerful to afford to ignore his technological abilities. In this regard, Max Tegmark, a professor at MIT, is quoted in the introductory text written by the volume's editor:

I feel we are in a race that we need to win. It's a race between the growing power of the technology and the growing wisdom we need to manage it.

The volume is an invitation to moderation in the use of technologies that can only become dangerous through misuse that people promote. In this sense it is quoted the Swedish philosopher Nick Bostrom which in a 2017 interview says:

So if there are big existential risks, I think they are going to come from our own activities and mostly from our own inventiveness and creativity.

The volume we point out invites a well-tempered use of technologies in the transhumanist approach that cannot be and should not be avoided. From the moment primitive man made a cane to help him walk, the process that emerges today in the form of transhumanism began. Only our ability to discern between good and evil is what can give the consistency of transhumanism that can improve the human condition by keeping it naturally connected to existence.

Reading the texts in the volume we are reporting will allow us to form an opinion on the following quote:

Transhumanism is the next logical step in the evolution of humankind, and it is the existential solution to the long-term survival of the human race.

Aren't there other solutions to preserve the human race? Should the human race be preserved forever?

Editor