A THREAT, A NEW RELIGION OR A CHANCE FOR IMMORTALITY? POLISH OPINION-FORMING PRESS DISCOURSE ON TRANSHUMANISM

Marcin Szewczyk and Andrzej Adamski*

University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszow, ul. Sucharskiego 2, Rzeszów, 35-225, Poland

(Received 20 September 2021, revised 18 November 2021)

Abstract

The conducted research aims to determine the scope of the understanding of transhumanism disseminated in opinion-forming magazines in Poland. Eight weeklies from 2019 to 2020 were analysed, and the study showed that the topic of transhumanism appeared in the studied publications quite rarely. The attitude of the weeklies towards transhumanism also reveals a relationship to each weekly's worldview. While the discourse of the weeklies generally does not fuel fears associated with transhumanism, it nonetheless shows that social development in Poland has not kept pace with technological development. Especially religious-conservative magazines do little to bring their readers closer to one of the most pressing and up-to-date ethical and theological challenges facing humanity.

Keywords: transhumanism, media, discourse, studies, religion

1. Introduction

The accepted scope of the definition of transhumanism, and its understanding and connection with human enhancement, may be determined either by the first civilization created by Homo sapiens [1; D. Masci, *Human Enhancement. The Scientific and Ethical Dimensions of Striving for Perfection.* 2016, https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2016/07/26/human-enhancement-th e-scientific-and-ethical-dimensions-of-striving-for-perfection/, accessed January 6, 2021] or by modern bioengineering technologies [2; L. Schmertzing, V. Hoogewys, *ESPAS Global Trends 2030: Future Science Panel*, European Parliamentary Research Service Blog, https://epthinktank.eu/2015/12/10/espas-global-trends-2030-future-science-panel, accessed on 11.11.2020]. It can also be assumed that we are already in an era of preparation for it. Indeed, with

^{*}Corresponding author, e-mail: aadamski@wsiz.edu.pl, tel.: +48 178661463

developments in Genetics, Robotics, Information technology and Nanotechnology (GRIN) [3], the goal of transhumanism will be to achieve the point of technological singularity by the individual as well as the species. From the transhumanist background, there also arise paths towards technological immortality - the first one connected with cryonics and freezing the human body, and the second one with the abandonment of ageing processes and creation of biotechnological systems maintaining human life in infinite time horizon [4].

Any of these simplified categorizations of transhumanism will be burdened with a significant misinterpretation and will have significant consequences in approaching it. At one extreme, transhumanism will refer to every extracorporeal improvement of the human body, whereas on the other it will link this concept with posthumanism [5], simultaneously strengthening the ethical aspect.

The main purpose of this article is to define the scope of understanding transhumanism as it is presented on the pages of the weekly press ('weeklies') in Poland. Press discourse is a factor shaping public opinion, and the analysed weeklies, which at a basic level exist mostly thanks to the very character of opinion and the fact that they are designed to shape certain attitudes and beliefs in society, and evoke the intended reaction based on extensive journalism [6; 7; Z. Bajka, Tygodniki opinii - co to takiego?, https://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/ artykul/tygodniki-opinii-co-to-takiego, accessed on 1.11.2020], have a chance to be the most decisive factors of influence [8, 9]. The second aim is based on the fact that among Polish weeklies of opinion there are Catholic and centristconservative and right-wing-conservative weeklies, which often present views close to the teachings of the Catholic Church. This aim is to explain to what extent the press discourse on transhumanism in Poland is determined by the approach to transhumanism appropriate to Catholic theology and whether Catholic and conservative weeklies in Poland use their position on the media market to present to their audiences a topic which is a big challenge to theological reflection.

The identification of this discourse will be facilitated by the introduction of a minimal set of key phrases supporting the identification of the articles' message on transhumanism. In such a situation, it will be unnecessary to provide either general or detailed definitions of this phenomenon.

In the opinion of some researchers, transhumanism related to the improvement of the human being is a concept consistent with European humanism [10, 11]. This is rather an oversimplified and controversial statement. However, it cannot be ignored in the context of Harari's statement about a "humanist religion" that "worships humanity, and expects humanity to play the part that God played in Christianity and Islam, and that the laws of Nature played in Buddhism and Daoism" [12]. According to the same author, the contemporary continuation of the "humanist schism" may be the "new technoreligions" which "can be divided into two main types: technohumanism and data religion" [12, p. 446]. On the other side of the debate, we can find the voices of philosophers and theologians who try to conciliate the Christian vision of the

world with transhumanism and even encourage Churches and religions to be open and involved in this trend. It ranges from the Russian cosmism of Nikolai Fedorov to the "relatively new" movements calling themselves "Christian transhumanism" [4]. Sometimes the ideas of Teilhard de Chardin are involved in this context [13]. In the opinion of Redding, humans were created in the image of God and given power over all things [14]. What defines human nature is its transcendent potential. Science and technology and the ability to discover and understand the world and create new things are expressions of the power of the human mind. Radical longevity is the desired future of humanity, while death is our enemy and will be defeated. The entire physical Universe will be transformed and brought into a state of flourishing life. Undoubtedly, we should also note here the ideas of Ray Kurzweil [15, 16] and entire publications, capturing the multifaceted references of transhumanism to religion and Theology [17-19]. Of course, there are also numerous critical approaches, portraying transhumanism as "technologizing transcendence" [20] or pointing out that "the transhumanist vision of a posthuman superintelligence is not only unrealistic, it portends the kind of tragedy we expect from a false messiah" [21].

However, in societies with a significant level of declarative Roman Catholic religiosity such as Poland, this raises discussions in the field of Ethics and thus becomes a socially important topic. The idea of transhumanism is treated as an 'unauthorized entry' into an area exclusively 'reserved' for God, or an attempt to take humanity away from the people. This approach is prevalent in Polish theology, which has mainly taken over the critical aspect from the discussion among theologians worldwide about the possibility of reconciling transhumanist ideas with religious ones. It is pointed out that man in the world of transhumanism does not need God, who saves - but creates himself and, in the same way, makes autosoteriology [22]. Transhumanism is sometimes even reduced to a self-salvation [23] or transgression that leads to the negation of culture and, as a result, to nothingness [24] or it is placed between utopia, technology and gnosis [25]. Attempts to objectively balance the arguments of both sides, encompassing "both the attitude of transhumanism advocates to the religious overtones of their position and the strategies of critique of transhumanism by Christian theologians and philosophers of religion" [26], are rare and tend to come from outside the theological circles. Rare (though appearing progressively!) are statements that ethical problems do not prevent us from continuing more and more advanced experiments. We can no longer expect scientists to refrain from morally questionable experiments and we can no longer hope that these experiments will fail - so we should work on solving ethical dilemmas and working out acceptable compromises [27].

This attitude influences general public discourse and has become one of the most important topics in society.

The foundations of transhumanism have historical roots reaching back to before the twentieth century [28]. However, its fullest foundations can be found in the authors of science fiction [29]. Nonetheless, it is difficult to use the scope defined by them because of a very wide range of ideas currently described as absolutely 'futuristic' and often 'anti-utopian' as well as the very way of presenting them, which usually goes beyond principles of Ethics and Bioethics. Extreme examples of such an approach could be a micro-novel by Alastair Reynolds called 'Diamond Dogs' [30], which dehumanizes the perfected human, and China Miéville's reality of the Bas-Lag world (e.g. in 'Perdido Street Station' [31]) with forms of punishment connected to preserving the substance of humanity or being part of a specific species consisting of a combination of living organisms with steampunk devices. Less explicit yet equally futuristic ideas appear in many other novels. Ian Douglas's 'Star Carrier' series, focusing on GRIN technologies and striving to achieve technological singularity and supporting the human brain with co-resident artificial intelligence (AI) (e.g. in Peter F. Hamilton's 'The Night's Dawn Trilogy' series) are worthy of mention. Indeed, in this trilogy there is another transhuman example: the transfer (not recreation or simulation) of a full human personality to an electronic medium (John Scalzi's 'The Last Emperox' [32]).

Almost any scientific activity that combines GRIN technologies can be assigned to transhumanism. Similarly, its scope covers specific and current issues such as AI, big data, functional magnetic resonance, the Human Brain Project and virtual reality [M. Walker, *Transhumanism and Radical Enhancement*, 2014, http://eugenicsarchive.ca/discover/tree/545f9d2dbb4dbcc59 8000001, accessed on 11.12.2020]. However, determining the scope of transhumanism based on such a far-reaching range of discoveries, inventions, phenomena and primarily human concepts is ineffective from the point of view of the planned research.

Despite reservations regarding the redundancy of quoting a definition of transhumanism, in order to confirm the scope identified in connection with the above-mentioned literary examples analysis, the and further press considerations, it seems necessary to provide some definitions of the scope encompassed by transhumanism: "the possibility and desirability of fundamentally improving the human condition through applied reason, especially by developing and making widely available technologies to eliminate ageing and to greatly enhance human intellectual, physical, and psychological capacities" [N. Bostrom, The Transhumanist FAQ: A General Introduction -Version 2.1., World Transhumanist Association, 2003, https://www.nick bostrom.com/views/transhumanist.pdf, accessed on 6.01.2021]; "a philosophy [...] that seek[s] the continuation and acceleration of the evolution of intelligent life beyond its currently human form and human limitations by means of science and technology, guided by life-promoting principles and values" [33]; and "an international movement dedicated to the proposition that contemporary technosciences can enhance human capabilities and ameliorate or eliminate such traditional verities as mortality. It holds that human evolution is incomplete and that we have a responsibility to further our evolution through technology." [34]

With the above in mind, it is also important to carefully take into account all the already implemented human improvements, including non-physical prostheses such as the Internet, which expands human possibilities at the level of

information and the storage of quickly available data. However, the scope of transhumanism cannot be narrowed down to the concept of the permanent connection of the human body to any improvement, including electronic interfaces. Advanced bioengineering is undoubtedly a permanent component of the idea of transhumanism, being one of the most important elements of discussion taking place in the field of Ethics. However, reducing transhumanism to this issue would reduce it to the level of cyborgization, which, in turn, would significantly scale down its scope as all concepts so obvious from the point of view of transhumanism - such as nanobots, nanotechnology and cryonics would be excluded. Although these technological solutions directly interfere with the human body, they do not become immanent parts of it; they only affect it [35]. This is even the case with universal nanobots: 'beings' that may not leave the human body and which only reside in it, waiting for specific tasks to arise. In turn, the undoubtedly related issues of AI regarding transhumanism will be mainly related to this as ideas discussed in the above-mentioned novels by Scalzi and Hamilton [32, 36-38], which offer visions that propose an idea that may materialize in the distant future, although probably a closer one than that with technological singularities. On the other hand, another current topic in this area is the Brain-Computer Interface (BCI), with work being carried out on it with some success. In turn, in part, and in the context of referring to AI, this is an element of the use of new technologies that will lead to the development and implementation of superintelligence (SI). From the point of view of possible doubts resulting from religious and moral conditions, it would be worthwhile taking bioethics issues into account [Bioethics Observatory - Institute of Life Sciences UCV, Our Observatory Gives a Transhumanism Lecture in the Week for Life of the European Parliament - Brussels, 2018, https://bioethics observatory.org/2018/03/our-observatory-gives-a-lecture-in-the-week-for-life-atthe-european-parliament-brussels/25234, accessed on 11.12.2020]. On the other hand, due to the development of sciences supporting the implementation of transhumanist concepts, it seems appropriate to supplement this list with Neuroscience. This is a field of study and research that is probably most closely related to the majority of existing and possible concepts of human improvement. Based on the above, the initially identified set of issues strictly falling within the scope of transhumanism and constituting the basis for the selection and initial analysis of press materials are transhumanism, cyborgization, bioengineering, BCI, nanotechnology, nanobots, neuroscience, SI, posthumanism and technological singularity.

2. Analysis

2.1. Objective and methods

The basics of quantitative content analysis were used to collect and organize the data [39-40; R. Langer, Working Paper/Intercultural Communication and Management, 26 (1997) 1-38]. The analysis, which by itself

does not allow for a full connection of contextual circumstances with social reality [41], is important in shaping the image of transhumanism given the diverse ideological approach of the surveyed weeklies. In addition to this, it was necessary to use elements of linguistic pragmatics and critical discourse analysis as well, thus allowing for an effective analysis of the evaluation contained in the message and its embedding in social reality.

Language as such - including the language of the press - does not remain passive towards reality; it interprets it [42, 43] and organizes it through labelling and naming things and phenomena [34-46]. The language of each type of communication will reflect an evaluation, depending on the speaker's conscious choice of linguistic constructions and their structures, including sets of meanings that can be encoded within them [47, 48]. The context - herein referring to the credibility of a specific publication and its ideological orientation - which influences the interpretation of linguistic signs, will obviously be an important element for constructing meaning on the part of the recipient [49]. A discourse based on such foundations of social and cultural contexts (including ideological ones) will form a complex communication structure. Treating it in such a way will make it possible to identify elements of the otherwise poorly visible organization of reality and social order in the discourse and its constituent statements that are thus reflected in communication practice. This allows us to see an element of the organization of reality and ensuring social order in the discourse at a basic level of language. Such a basis allows for the identification of poorly visible relationships between communication events and language and the wider context and social and cultural phenomena - reflected in the media practice of public and private communication and thus in a contextually broadly defined discourse [50, 51].

2.2. The scope of the study

The analysis covers the eight most widely read Polish weeklies as of 2020, each representing a certain worldview to varying extents. They are Polityka (L), Gość Niedzielny (CC) (CR), Newsweek Polska (L), Sieci (CR), Tygodnik do Rzeczy (CR), Tygodnik Powszechny (SR) (CC), Niedziela (CC)(CR) and Gazeta Polska (CR). These weeklies can be broadly categorized as follows: two of them are Catholic (C), one is secularly religious (SR), two are liberal (L), one is centrist-conservative (CC) and the rest are conservative-right (CR) in orientation. These divisions did not significantly affect the general narrative about transhumanism, although they did translate into the frequency of discussing this very topic [52; 53; C. Wolfram, Lifespan of News Stories, 2018, https://www.christopherwolfram.com/lifespan-of-news-stories, accessed on 1.12.2020; Schema Design and Google Trends, The Lifespan of News Stories, 2019, https://www.newslifespan.com, accessed on 1.12.2020]. This study included all the articles from the above-mentioned weeklies from 2019 and 2020. The authors have assumed a definition of a Catholic periodical in the legal sense, i.e. periodicals that are guided by the principle of ecclesiality. In addition, there is also an approach to recognising the Catholicity of a medium according to the criteria of content [54].

2.3. The selection of keywords

Due to the very general nature of the weeklies, a preliminary identification analysis of 50% of issues from 2013 to 2020 preceded a systematic analysis of press material, which allowed for the additional selection and clarification of the keywords used in the study. This was necessary even if it did modify the accepted scope of phrases and keywords. In terms of technological novelties, English abbreviations such as BCI and SI are often used in Poland. However, their use here was abandoned because initial searches, regardless of how they were formulated and specified with other keywords, came back with completely random results. A similar case was observed with the word *hibernacia* (cryonic), because this word is always used in Polish in the sense of 'freezing' or 'stopping' a process or phenomenon, including in politics, the economy, culture, and social life; the equivalent 'cryonics' is a word so specialized that it does not appear in the analysed publications. The same was true of the words *nanoroboty* (nanobots) and nanomaszyny (nanomachines). The term nanotechnologia (nanotechnology) produced largely disappointing results due to references to the technology of producing smart materials and substances rather than to humans. Similarly, the word neuronauka (neuroscience) did not give satisfactory results, focusing mostly on issues of psychology, emotions and health, both on a general level and in connection with medicine. The word superinteligencia (superintelligence), which in the identified articles only referred to AI and had no reference to humans, transhumanism, or posthumanism, was rejected as well. The proper Polish equivalent of 'posthumanism' (postczłowieczeństwo) gave no search results. The word 'cyborg' gave many random results; of those thematically related to development and technologies, there were only those related to AI and robotics. The last keyword, which gave hope for several results due to a survey of Catholic weeklies, was bioetyka (bioethics). However, it turned out that it only identified articles relating to the Covid-19 pandemic and abortion. The final set of keywords used to identify press articles on transhumanism in Polish weeklies included *transhumanizm* (transhumanism), cyborgizacja (cyborgization), bioinżyneria (bioengineering), interfejs mózg-(nanotechnology), komputer (BCI), nanotechnologia posthumanizm (posthumanism) and osobliwość technologiczna (technological singularity).

2.4. Specifying the content analysis

Studies using quantitative content analysis take into account multiple aspects, whose descriptions provide a basis for open conclusions concerning the examined content. Most frequently, such studies are fully open to specific and individual goals that can be obtained as a result. This study used an extrapolation method with no hypothesis adopted for it. Also, many aspects were omitted, such as the length of an article, data concerning illustrations, and the name of a text's author. On the other hand, basic ordering factors were considered. Due to the substantive content of the articles, some indicators exerted only a minor impact on the objectives of the analysis. These included the article title; the web address; the date of publication; the press genre; the subject of the article; the connection of the article with transhumanism; the keywords identifying the article; additional keywords and phrases related to transhumanism; references to ethics; the scope of the definition of transhumanism; the placement of the described phenomena related to transhumanism; the overall attitude to transhumanism; and the approach to specific issues accommodating transhumanism.

3. Results

The first result of the research, drawn purely from the perspective of the press analysis, boils down to the statement that for some years two (conservative) weeklies - *Sieci* and *Gazeta Polska* - did not publish a single article that made any references to transhumanism. Most articles devoted to this subject were published in the two liberal weeklies: *Polityka* (6) and *Newsweek Polska* (4). In the other magazines, transhumanism popped up less frequently. Altogether, transhumanism was referred to twenty-one times in eight magazines over two years, even though the keyword searches identified twice as many articles. These articles, however, did not deal with transhumanism in any way and did not contribute anything to the delineated scope of the study. For example, 'nanotechnology', a word relatively frequently identified in the searches, was used with material engineering solutions and had nothing to do with the improvement of human beings. Only half of the identified articles concerned transhumanism directly and almost exclusively.

In terms of the objective of this study, one needs to observe that 'transhumanism' was the word that most frequently identified articles referring to transhumanism as it is broadly understood. As a generic term, it fits in very well with the way non-specialist messages are conveyed in weeklies. Other keywords, such as 'BCI' (six times), 'cyborgization' and 'bioengineering' (three times), 'nanotechnology' (three times), and 'technological singularity' and 'posthumanism' (one time), popped up less frequently. There are other phrases and words that belong to the surveyed subject area, and could be considered keywords, but these were not searched for. These words and phrases included 'human transcendence', 'eternal life as software', 'freezing bodies', 'brain in the machine', 'mood programmers', 'bioethics', 'transgenics', 'migration to cyberspace', 'computer implants', 'upgrading of organs', 'enhancing human intellectual capacities', 'digitizing the human brain', 'genetic engineering', 'transhumanist alliance between a person and a machine', 'man-machine symbiosis', 'blending electronics (or technology) with the human body', 'transferring the human self to machines', 'mind uploading', 'eternal life in

machines', 'cryopreservation of the head' and 'subcutaneous implants'. AI, *in vitro* and the Internet appeared the most frequently among subjects that were on the fringes of transhumanism yet which were viewed as a part of it by authors of the articles.

In two cases, mechanisms forming part of transhumanism were discussed as phenomena that had already been around for a long time; twelve articles referred to contemporary times, which were most frequently seen as the beginning of what is yet to happen. Only four articles out of the examined body of texts did not perceive transhumanism as something that belonged to the future and focused only on the present. Ethical issues were tackled in five articles.

Most of the surveyed articles provided a neutral description of phenomena linked with transhumanism. Four out of twenty-one (two in *Polityka* and one in Newsweek Polska and Tygodnik Powszechny respectively - all non-conservative magazines) were very positive in tone, whereas five (published in conservative weeklies: two in Tygodnik do Rzeczy, two in Niedziela and one in Gość Niedzielny) were negative. The positive approach expressed in the articles referred to such things as surgeries of any type (including cosmetic surgery interventions) that improve the functioning of the human body (including after an accident), helping people with disabilities, extending a patient's life, and the replacement of organs. Negative aspects which the authors (or the people they quoted in their articles to substantiate the main ideas) mentioned included transgenics, the potential to electronically interfere with the human mood, and posthumanism as such. Concerns have also been expressed that the possibility of intruding on human nature will endanger human freedom and, by extension, the possibility of establishing a religious relationship with the Creator; even transhumanism has been uttered as 'a modern version of eugenics' (Niedziela 47/2019). Half of these articles contained specific terms that evaluated the approach to transhumanism. Importantly, negative valuations also appeared in articles with neutral, descriptive, or positive attitudes to transhumanism, but they usually took the form of fearing for the future. A detailed analysis of some of them can be found below. There are also detailed references to phrases and sentences that define transhumanism, sometimes offering a full definition, and sometimes only specifying its understanding. Such references appeared in ten out of the eighteen articles in total.

4. Findings and conclusions

The research shows that issues of transhumanism rarely appear in Polish weeklies, even as references in articles devoted to other issues. The slightly higher frequency of such references in non-conservative weeklies may be associated with their slightly broader thematic scope. However, it is not the case that Catholic and right-wing weeklies focus exclusively on social issues and news. Not referring to transhumanism, even in terms of ethical issues, is surprising in this context because it is conservative and right-wing movements, usually connected with the Catholic Church, that articulate the dangers of

transhumanism much more often. This articulation primarily applies to the religious concept of man and questions about the scope of humanity in any technological modification of the human body and the scope of human activities in this area, which, according to some ideologists, is 'reserved' only for God.

The concerns that arise from the non-liberal narrative relate to the abandonment of humanity and are often closely related to the question of where posthumans begin. With this type of reference, it is clear that the delimitation of this boundary is related more to the attitude towards morals and faith and to other people than to any strictly defined percentage of electronic parts that a human body contains. A negative approach to the general concept of transhumanism and posthumanism is evident in a positive attitude to supporting human health and fitness. This is similar to some extent with the nonconservative weeklies, although the message is formulated differently. Transhumanism is treated as an obvious future that will come anyway, which is why a large number of articles are neutral in tone and why the overall approach to the issue is positive. However, there is a concern that a high degree of cyborgization will affect the consciousness of modified individuals. transforming their moral attitude, relationships with other people and consequently their degree of humanity.

Regardless of the ideological profile of the printed media, the positive aspects associated with transhumanism relate to the extension of healthy life expectancy and the possibility of helping people with severe disabilities. Some authors also refer to those aspects of transhumanism that extend the perceptual and operational capabilities of the human body and mind. The scope of this concept can be actually defined at a certain basic and general level in this way. The dangers and negative aspects of transhumanism are much more widely emphasized, relating primarily to its consequences and to equating man, or at least thinking about man, as being one with a machine entity (or at least a hybrid of man and machine) because the machine can be freely modified and developed, whereas man has natural limitations which can lead to unknown and unpredictable consequences should they be exceeded. According to some authors mankind can take advantage of the possibilities that fall within the category of transhumanistic improvements by either creating 'paradise' or 'hell'. Everything depends on the direction of the further development of these ideas and concepts. Among the negative effects is the development of technocapitalism, the emergence of a biological caste (like in Andrew Niccol's film 'Gattaca'), the development of anti-Christian techno-utopias (like in Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World') and making transhumanism the path to a revolution that has nothing to do with ethics and has no moral foundation. Some conservative and Catholic authors viewed transhumanism itself as an emblem and symbol, defining it as a value and a threat that was imposed upon the human species ('by Europe', and by implication the European Union), equating it with other 'dangerous' phenomena, such as the right to abortion, euthanasia, transsexualism, same-sex marriages, eugenics, veganism, the New Age and environmentalism. The authors care for the preservation of humanity by

mankind but at the same time misunderstand its essence. This is evidenced by treating the concept as another keyword and trying to generate an automatic and negative approach to it as part of accessibility heuristics [55].

The identification of the equivalents of words and phrases of transhumanism contained in the analytical coding made it possible to define the scope of understanding the concept contained in the analysed weeklies. In principle, it did not differ from the area and keywords adopted in the introduction to this analysis, although it often specified and supplemented them. A significant gap that was revealed was the omitting of cryonics justified in the introduction to the study. This is undoubtedly one of the methods of proceeding within transhumanism, but, as the identified texts have shown, this is only complementary, and no text devoted exclusively to this concept appeared over the researched period. Among other key expressions, the vast majority refer to the transfer of human consciousness to an electronic medium (e.g. digitizing the human brain and eternal life as software) followed by supporting the brain's capabilities by connecting it to electronic devices (e.g. man-machine symbiosis and blending electronics/technology with the human body). These are the main aspects that the articles on transhumanism focus to the highest degree, which is also visible in the results obtained through keyword searches (BCI).

The domination of futuristic thinking about transhumanism shown in the analysis indicates the incomplete construction of its image. The authors could not see that the technologies of the future begin in the present day, even if they are not yet perfect and individual ideas cannot be fully implemented. This affects the definition scope of transhumanism, but not as much as the references to the past, where the scope of transhumanism extends not only to completely new concepts but also to every transgression of human limitations, including the invention by mankind's ancestors of the first tools and clothes as well as computers and the Internet. In this way, transhumanism is defined as a natural process that is permanently inscribed in the history of the evolution of Homo sapiens. Most combine this process with advanced technologies that can take a man out of nature and put power entirely into his own hands. The justification for such action appears clearly in one of the articles, where the author argues that without clothes and tools man would not have survived the departure from Africa, whereas current and future improvements - based on electronics and technology - are a natural consequence of those actions. This in turn affects all ethical doubts, reducing the power of such doubts and attacks, or at least shifting considerations in this regard from an area of fearing something completely new and unknown to a sphere of ethics related to natural human development focused on the use of human inventions, even if they are to some extent revolutionary and even if they enter completely new areas of human activity.

Slightly less specific definitions speak of the entanglement in time and the desire to overcome this dependence, treating Homo sapiens as a kind of machine that can be upgraded or showing a desire to connect man with technology. Among the non-definition clarifications of transhumanism, there is also the

indication that it is an improved version of religion, completely devoid of the mystical aspect [5].

In the context of AI development, there is also a suggestion about the direction of its evolution in connection with the concept of transhumanism [56], which is about making people look like machines and machines look like people. This is connected with the question about the borderline between man and artificial creatures (especially marked in Philip K. Dick's 'Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?' [57]) and specifically what percentage of human electronization takes humanity away (appearing in Michał Głuszkowski's 'Sybirpunk' trilogy [58]). In this respect, the analysed articles exhibit changes rolling out alongside a two-way street, which is the resulting fear and specific dilemma that would result in rejecting the final humanity of the main character of Isaac Asimov's 'I, Robot' [59]. The transformations resulting from human improvement can be very advanced and lead to a level of rejection of the human brain as a carrier of consciousness, regardless of the number of potential biological parts of the human body left, in favour of a very complex electronic recording. This, however, would amount to reaching the level of posthumanism, but such a creation would not become an android or a computer. A similar (yet, from the point of view of the authors of the articles, much more terrifying) direction of change could apply to androids (or more broadly robots and computers), which could become fully independent from humans, primarily in terms of free will and independent decision making. Even in the case of the reverse process and the placement of consciousness, which AI would first of all have to achieve, in the biological medium, it would remain AI and not a human being, achieving only as sort of 'postAI-ism' or 'postandroidism'. Although none of the analysed articles presents the above line of reasoning, it is fully based on information and interpretations contained therein and ultimately leads to an indication of a range of humanity that would not be related to either the biological carrier of consciousness, the degree of improvement (especially related to preserving good health) of the organism, or the primary origin of consciousness. Moreover, at a higher level of analysis of humanity (even in the post-humanistic version), the most important thing would be the attitude to the rest of humanity and a sphere that can be categorized as a moral attitude. Therefore, the factor of the ideological profile of the weekly is irrelevant; each of them presented materials that are ultimately similar - albeit with the use of different terms of description - to the clarification of what humanity is within the framework of changes resulting from transhumanism.

Taking into account the scope of the understanding of transhumanism (defined by individual concepts appearing in the articles covered by the study) and its definitions, there is no deviation from the foundations specified in scientific definitions. Relatively rarely is there a direct indication that it is a mental and social movement, that it is very diverse, and that it is already taking place and is not just a futurological dream. The Polish discourse in weeklies is strongly antinomian. The narrative of liberal weeklies does not particularly stoke fears arising from connecting concepts related to transhumanism. On the other

hand, the narrative of right-wing and Catholic weeklies presents a fearful and critical attitude towards transhumanism - if this topic appears in their pages at all. As a rule, it is passed over in silence and omitted. We can even speak about a form of negation by silence. This is partially the result of the thought presented by Polish theologians, who are very critical of transhumanism. However, even this critical theological approach does not find its way into the pages of Catholic and conservative weekly magazines. Thus, they do not create an opportunity for a clash of views or constructive, scientifically based discussion on issues related to transhumanism. The above phenomena conclude that social development in Poland is not keeping pace with technological development. Religious-conservative magazines do little to bring their readers closer to one of the most pressing and up-to-date ethical and theological challenges facing humanity.

References

- [1] M.D. Bess, Technol. Cult., 49(1) (2008) 114-126.
- [2] M. Almeida and R. Diogo, Evolution, Medicine, and Public Health, 1 (2019) 183-189.
- [3] J. Cordeiro, *The Boundaries of the Human: From Humanism to Transhumanism*, in *The Transhumanism Handbook*, L. Newton (ed.), Springer, Cham, 2019, 63-74.
- [4] K. Nowaczyk-Basińska, Kultura-Media-Teologia, **28**(1) (2017) 74–89.
- [5] A. Sandberg, *Transhumanism and the Meaning of Life*, in *Transhumanism and Religion: Moving into an Unknown Future*, T. Trothen & C. Mercer (eds.), Praeger, Santa Barbara, 2014, 3-22.
- [6] E. Katz, Przekazy i Opinie, 61-62(3-4) (2017) 59-88.
- [7] T. Mielczarek, Rocznik Prasoznawczy, 1(1) (2007) 33-53.
- [8] K. Podemski, Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny, 83(3) (2011) 241-262.
- [9] M. Bartoszewicz, Historia i Polityka, 27(34) (2019) 57-69.
- [10] F. Ferrando, Theology and Science, 18(1) (2020) 1-6.
- [11] A. Thomas, International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, **41(3/4)** (2020) 331-347.
- [12] Y.N. Harari, *Homo deus. A Brief History of Tomorrow*, Signal Books, New York, 2016, 464.
- [13] D. Grumett, Transformation and the End of Enhancement. Insights from Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, in Transhumanism and Transcendence. Christian Hope in an Age of Technological Enhancement, R. Cole-Turner (ed.), Georgetown University Press, Washington DC, 2011, 37-49.
- [14] M. Redding, *Christian Transhumanism: Exploring the Future of Faith*, in *The Transhumanism Handbook*, L. Newton (ed.), Springer, Cham, 2019, 777-794.
- [15] R. Kurzweil, *The evolution of mind in the twenty-first century*, in *Are we spiritual machines? Ray Kurzweil vs. the critics of strong A.I.*, J. Richards (ed.), The Discovery Institute, Seattle, 2002, 12-55.
- [16] R. Kurzweil, *The singularity is near: When humans transcend biology*, Viking Press, New York, 2005, 672.
- [17] B. Goss, Christianity's Rigged Debate with Transhumanism, in Christian Perspectives on Transhumanism and the Church, S. Donaldson & R. Cole-Turner (eds.), Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2018, 75-115.

- [18] S. Donaldson, Do Bigger Brains Mean Smaller Gods? Cognitive Science and Theological Perspectives on Transhumanism and the Church (or, Why We Can't Outrun Faith), in Christian Perspectives on Transhumanism and the Church, S. Donaldson & R. Cole-Turner (eds.), Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2018, 151-171.
- [19] M. Leidenhag, Religion Compass, 14(11)7 (2020) 1-9.
- [20] H. Tirosh-Samuelson, Technologizing Transcendence: A Critique of Transhumanism, in Religion and Human Enhancement, T.J. Trothen & C. Mercer (eds.), Palgrave Studies in the Future of Humanity and its Successors, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2017, 267-283.
- [21] T. Peters, Forum Philosophicum, 24(2) (2019) 259-278.
- [22] P. Bortkiewicz, Ethos, 28(3)(111) (2015) 114-127.
- [23] S. Nowosad, Roczniki Teologii Moralnej, 5(60) (2013) 59-81.
- [24] M. Lipowicz, Ethos, 28(3)(111) (2015) 57-80.
- [25] K. Adamski, Roczniki Teologii Moralnej, 4(59) (2012) 105-129.
- [26] D. Misztal, Religijne aspekty transhumanizmu, in Granice sacrum. Wymiary religijności w myśli współczesnej, T. Sieczkowski & P. Grabarczyk (eds.), Wydawnictwo UŁ, Łódź, 2017, 135-156.
- [27] G. Osiński, Scientia et Fides, 9(1) (2021) 149-176.
- [28] C. Coenen, Humana. Mente: Journal of Philosophical Studies, 7(26) (2014) 35-58.
- [29] D. Livingstone, *Transhumanism: The History of a Dangerous Idea*, Sabilillah Publications, Scotts Valley, 2015, 402.
- [30] A. Reynolds, *Diamond Dogs*, Gollancz, London, 2003, 206.
- [31] C. Miéville, Perdido Street Station, Macmillan, London, 2000, 867.
- [32] J. Scalzi, The Last Emperox, Tor Books, New York, 2020, 320.
- [33] M. More, The Philosophy of Transhumanism, in The Transhumanist Reader: Classical and Contemporary Essays on the Science, Technology, and Philosophy of the Human Future, M. More & N. Vita-More (eds.), Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, 2013, 3-17.
- [34] K.N. Hayles, Wrestling with Transhumanism, in H+/-: Transhumanism and Its Critics, G.R. Hansell & W. Grassie (eds.), Metanexus Institute, Philadelphia, 2011, 215-226.
- [35] J. Cohen, Religions, 11(11) (2020) 584.
- [36] P.F. Hamilton, The Reality Dysfunction, Grove, New York, 1996, 955.
- [37] P.F. Hamilton, The Neutronium Alchemist, Warner Books, New York, 1997, 999.
- [38] P.F. Hamilton, The Naked God, Pan MacMillan, London, 1999, 1174.
- [39] W. Pisarek, *Analiza zawartości prasy*, Ośrodek Badań Prasoznawczych, Kraków, 1983, 204.
- [40] M. Lisowska-Magdziarz, Analiza zawartości mediów. Przewodnik dla studentów, Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków, 2004, 128.
- [41] D. Biber, S. Conrad and R. Reppen, *Corpus Linguistics: Investigating Language Structure and Use*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, 312.
- [42] J. Bartmiński, *Stereotypy mieszkają w języku. Studia etnolingwistyczne*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marie Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin, 2007, 360.
- [43] T.M. Holtgraves and Y. Kashima, Pers. Soc. Psychol. Rev., 12(1) (2007) 73-94.
- [44] K. Dilkina, J.L. McClelland and L. Boroditsky, Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, 29 (2007) 215-220.
- [45] S. Ervin-Tripp, J. Soc. Issues, 23(2) (1967) 78-90.
- [46] B.L. Whorf, Language, Thought, and Reality, in Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf, J.B. Carroll, S.C. Levinson & P. Lee (eds.), MIT Press, Cambridge (MA), 2012, 448.

- [47] L. Hess, Expressive Meanings and Expressive Commitments. A Case of Meaning as Use, in Philosophical Insights into Pragmatics, P. Stalmaszczyk (ed.), De Gruyter, Berlin, 2019, 93-223.
- [48] A. Awdiejew, Wartościowanie wymuszone a szacunek dla odbiorcy w dyskursie politycznym, in Język polityki a współczesna kultura polityczna, J. Anusiewicz & B. Siciński (eds.), Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Polonistyki Wrocławskiej, Wrocław, 1994, 49-56.
- [49] M.-B. Hansen, The Semantics of Pragmatic Expressions, in Cognitive Pragmatics. Handbook of Pragmatics, H.-J. Schmid (ed.), vol. 4, De Gruyter Mouton, Berlin, 2012, 587-611.
- [50] N.L. Fairclough, Discourse Soc., 4(2) (1993) 133-168.
- [51] T.A. van Dijk, Critical Discourse Analysis, in The Handbook of Discourse Analysis, D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen & H.E. Hamilton (eds.), Blackwell, Oxford, 2003, 352-371.
- [52] I.C. Meijer and T.G. Kormelink, *Changing News Use: Unchanged News Experiences?*, Routledge, London, 2020, 132.
- [53] A. Stępińska, Media, Kultura, Społeczeństwo, 9-10 (2014/2015) 7-18.
- [54] A. Adamski, A. Jupowicz-Ginalska and I. Leonowicz-Bukała, Religions, 11(4) (2020) 190.
- [55] D. Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2011, 499.
- [56] E. Watson, *Humanizing Machines*, in *The Transhumanism Handbook*, N. Lee (ed.), Springer, Cham, 2019, 233-246.
- [57] P.K. Dick, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, Doubleday, New York, 1968, 210.
- [58] M. Gołkowski, SybirPunk, vol. 1-3, Fabryka Słów, Lublin, 2020.
- [59] I. Asimov, I, Robot, Gnome Press, New York, 1950, 253.