



What World Do We Want?

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Abstract

Amitai Etzioni's *From Empire to Community* traces the fundamental socio-political problem of our time to that of maintaining human primacy. He argues that the tendency of our technological means is to overtake our ability to assign worthy goals for their application. His analysis of the possibility of forming a cosmopolitan order can be applied fruitfully in a posthuman context in which emerging technologies pose a challenge for constructing a posthuman political and moral order. In this context, the task is to maintain posthuman primacy. I show that there are several converging lines of thought and supportive social factors that underwrite the construction of a posthuman cosmopolitan order. I argue that self-consistent recursivity must be applied to the very procedural character of reflexive modernization of institutions and to the creation of posthuman beings that may participate in the creation of a future cosmopolitan social order.

Introduction

In his 1795 essay, "Perpetual Peace," Immanuel Kant asserted that a universal community had arisen among human beings, but only in varying degrees, and that such a community was necessary for achieving perpetual peace. As evidence of its existence, Kant noted that a violation of rights in one part of the world is felt everywhere (Kant 2002, 107-108). Whether Kant was correct that humanity had entered into a universal community is a matter of fact. It seems clear that his assertion that a violation of rights in one part of the world is felt everywhere is very nearly true today. The events outside my home town of St. Louis illustrate the fact. Many people around the world identify with those in Ferguson, Missouri, who feel that their rights were violated by the unjust killing of an unarmed eighteen-year-old black man. The communication technologies we possess have made it possible for injustices to be seen with a remarkable immediacy. If the kind of universal human community Kant described in the late eighteenth century is to develop to an even greater degree in the future, technology will be an underlying condition of its possibility.

In *War and Human Progress*, John Nef argues, contrary to Kant, that promoting perpetual peace as a goal would likely lead us unwittingly into war:

Let us not hoodwink ourselves with notions of perpetual peace and of the millennium. These only increase the danger of war, for they rest upon a misunderstanding of human nature. Men and women are not angels. It is certainly their duty and their delight to create here on earth, in so far as they can, something that resembles the heaven of their dreams. But they should not confuse this with heaven itself. The result of such confusion will not be the gain of either earth or heaven. It will be the loss of both. (Nef 1950, 416)

The second part of Nef's book is concerned with limited warfare and humane civilization. The third part deals with industrialism and total war. It is a difficult judgment to make as to whether setting an ideal like perpetual peace for ourselves has a value precisely because it is unattainable or whether such ideals undermine our efforts to produce a more humane existence. But surely a movement from total war to limited warfare would represent progress toward a more humane existence, and a movement from limited warfare to total war would represent a decline.

Is a universal human community as Kant described it the kind of world we want? And who is the "We" that would make up such a community and decide what world is wanted? Is there a "They" that must stand over against the "We" of a given group that defines it as a distinct group (Etzioni 2004, 19)? And, in an age of posthuman reflection, must the universal community include only human beings? Could posthuman beings be something higher than what Nef sees as human nature and yet lower than angels? These questions might lead our reflection on the possibility of a posthuman politics.

Posthuman primacy

In order to introduce greater clarity into our reflection on the possibility of a posthuman politics, I will draw upon a distinction and linguistic convention that I introduced in my 2013 monograph, *Posthuman Personhood*. I will use the term "Human^B" and its cognates to designate biological humanity and the term "Human^M" and its cognates to designate moral humanity, i.e., persons. So, the issue of a posthuman politics is partly a question of the meaning of the term "human."

The phrase "posthuman politics" seems to imply that such a political regime is posthuman^B. Emerging technologies such as genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and advanced pharmacology hold forth the possibility of a posthuman^B condition. Many who reflect on such a possibility imagine an improved condition, perhaps one in which virtue pills produce a self-control greater than human^B beings have historically been capable of.¹ Such an enhanced self-control would be a condition for a posthuman^B politics that would remain human^M or humane.

Without such a technologically induced self-control, we might face a condition in which our technological means outrun our ability to control them, or to set morally worthy ends to justify them. This is the challenge Amitai Etzioni considers to be central to modernity overall, and particularly to a postmodern and perhaps posthuman^B condition. Etzioni argues that the technological developments that ushered in modernity were so rapid, and of such fundamental significance to the form of human^B life, that they produced a condition of alienation as our means outpaced our ability to apply them rationally.² "The defining characteristic of the modern age is the enormous expansion of human capacity, the vast increase in the power of instruments" (Etzioni 2004, 5). This is not just a matter of self-control as a traditional virtue, but of the control of our technological means. Of course, if we are alienated from the technological means of expressing our subjectivity or agency, we suffer a lack of self-control: "In sum, all too often the logic of instruments has taken precedence over the rationale of ends" (Etzioni 2004, 6).

This is not a new observation. In his 1940 book, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction* (1940), Karl Mannheim employed a version of the concept of contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous in analyzing the imbalance that is introduced into a society when the means it employs outrun the ends it may rationally^R set for them.³ Mannheim stated that this phenomenon was first noticed by the art historian Wilhelm Pinder in *Das Problem der Generation in der Kunstgeschichte Europas* (1926). Mannheim argued that different kinds of rationality may develop at different rates, so that the instrumental rationality (“Rational^I”) embodied in our instruments (including our methods of social control) outruns the substantial rationality (“Rational^S”) that involves understanding any system or structure. The result is anxiety:

Thus here, too, we see that the social source of rationalization can be clearly determined and that indeed the force which creates in our society the various forms of rationality springs from industrialization as a specific form of social organization. Increasing industrialization, to be sure, implies functional rationality, i.e. the organization of the activity of the members of society with reference to objective ends. It does not to the same extent promote “substantial rationality”, i.e. the capacity to act intelligently in a given situation on the basis of one’s own insight into the interrelations of events... The violent shocks of crises and revolutions have uncovered a tendency which has hitherto been working under the surface, namely the paralyzing effect of functional rationalization on the capacity for rational judgment. (Mannheim 1940, 58)

This may be seen as a root cause of the movement to alter ourselves so as to produce a posthuman^B being. It is an attempt to assert our agency over the technological means available to us. But the existential task of posthumanity^B remains one of preserving what Etzioni called “human primacy.” According to Etzioni, human primacy involves making means serve ends rather than allowing means to pervert our purposes. And he holds that this alienation of modernity is becoming transnational. There are, in his view, challenges that now transcend national boundaries and that call for a cosmopolitan pancultural community. Human primacy, in his view, is really a condition for the possibility of choosing a world that we want.

Etzioni is not concerned with the issue of the posthuman^B. But his notion of human primacy can be understood from a posthuman^B perspective in terms of maintaining human^M primacy. Surely, a posthuman^B condition is one in which we hope to maintain human^M primacy. Indeed, human^M primacy would seem to be a condition for the possibility of bringing about a posthuman^B condition that is something other than a mere historical accident. The accidental formation of a posthuman^B condition would not contribute to the constitution of a posthuman^B politics. As the traditional art of the possible, politics represents a realm in which agents can shape the world through their collective deliberative choices. A posthuman^B condition that arises by chance seems not to be one that would produce a world that we want. In this regard, we should note that Ulrich Beck has argued that the human condition has become cosmopolitan (Beck 2006, 2). He goes on to argue that a cosmopolitanism that is not chosen is a deformed cosmopolitanism:

There can be no doubt that a cosmopolitanism that is passively and unwillingly suffered is a *deformed* cosmopolitanism. The fact that really existing cosmopolitanism is not achieved through struggle, that it is not chosen, that it does not come into the world as progress with the reflected moral authority of the Enlightenment, but as something deformed and profane, cloaked in the anonymity of a side effect – this is an essential founding insight of cosmopolitan realism in the social sciences. (Beck 2006, 20–21, italics in the original)

If an authentic cosmopolitan order requires that it be one we choose, what are the conditions for the formation of such a social order?

Moral dialogue

Etzioni posits cross-cultural moral dialogue as necessary for the transformation of the international order from one of empire (or semi-empire) to one of community. The communitarian position he has developed recognizes the informal social bases of political culture, including a common core of moral values and a civil society that applies soft power to maintain social order. Is such a common morality and global civil society possible? The postmodern emphasis on difference would lead us to be skeptical of the possibility of a pancultural community having both a civil society dimension and a moral dimension. But Etzioni argues that such conditions already exist in a nascent form.

With regard to the concept of a common moral core of values, Etzioni points to social scientific studies that indicate there is a broad multicultural consensus on moral values. Shalom Schwartz and Anat Bardi have found that there exist groups of values that represent motivational types that are governed by a guiding value and that these guiding values are ranked relatively consistently by people cross-culturally. They conclude their study, "Moral Dialogue Across Cultures," as follows:

The consistent findings across the three sets of samples lead us to conclude that the pancultural value hierarchy we have identified may reflect a "true" order of pancultural norms fairly well. Benevolence, self-direction, and universalism consistently emerge at the top of the values hierarchy, in that order. Security, conformity, and achievement are located in the middle of the hierarchy. Hedonism, stimulation, tradition, and power are consistently at the bottom of the hierarchy. (Schwartz and Bardi 2000, 166)

And so, Etzioni believes there is a basis for a cross-cultural dialogue that could provide a foundation for the formation of a pancultural community.

Beyond the empirical data regarding common moral values, there is a theoretical basis for a pancultural moral dialogue. Seyla Benhabib has promoted a dialogical ethic with the goal of establishing a global dialogical community. She notes that the Enlightenment raised the possibility of a universal human community. The postmodern reaction to this universalism has been to emphasize the differences of local communities. The challenge of our time is to balance the concerns of the local with those of the universal community, because diverse societies have become interdependent as a result of contemporary technologies of transportation and communication. "In this context, the articulation of a pluralistically enlightened ethical universalism on a global scale emerges both as a possibility and as a necessity" (Benhabib 2007, 250).

In addition to the procedural ethical approach of a dialogical ethic, we should note that there have been interesting attempts to formulate a substantive universal ethic within a religious context. Hans Küng (2004) developed an ethic of global responsibility, while Karen Armstrong (2011) has suggested an ethic of compassion. Both of these ideals are supposed to appeal to the core commitment of the major religions. Quite distinct from the religious fanaticism we have seen in recent years, Etzioni envisages a soft religion developing in various religious traditions (including Islam) that could provide a basis for tolerance and moral dialogue (Etzioni 2004, 88).

Regarding the formation of a global civil society, Etzioni points to the many non-governmental organizations that exist as well as to supranational organizations. He notes that many contemporary problems cannot be addressed by national governments alone. International networks, such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and the International Red Cross, have developed to take on the role of addressing transnational problems. Like Benhabib, Etzioni thinks this foreshadows the formal institutionalization of a global form of government. "We may," says Benhabib, "need to envisage a transition from the 'soft power' of

global civil society to the *constitutionalization of international law*” (Benhabib 2006, 72, italics in the original).

And so, Etzioni’s communitarian perspective posits the need for both a global government and a global civil society. It is interesting that Kant thought in these terms, perhaps without the sense of organic unity of Etzioni’s sociological conception. In the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, Kant asserts:

The formal condition under which alone nature can attain this its final aim is that constitution in the relation of human beings with one another in which the abuse of reciprocally conflicting freedom is opposed by lawful power in a whole which is called **civil society**; for only in this can the greatest development of the natural predispositions occur. (Kant 2001, 299–300; 5: 432, emphasis in the original)⁴

And the fifth proposition of Kant’s Universal History asserts, “*The greatest problem for the human species, to which nature compels him, is the achievement of a civil society universally administering right*” (Kant, 2002, 112; 8: 22, emphasis in the original).

The eighth proposition asserts, however:

One can regard the history of the human species in the large as the completion of a hidden plan of nature to bring about an inwardly and, to this end, also an externally perfect state constitution, as the only condition in which it can fully develop all its predispositions in humanity. (Kant 2002, 116; 8: 27)⁵

Etzioni holds that a global government requires a global civil society to limit the power of the state. Without this, a global state might become tyrannical. Here Etzioni describes what he calls a “Special Kind of Subsidiarity” (Etzioni 2004, 188-189), in which there is a mix of hard and soft power. “[T]he more that social order is based on persuasion and the less it is based on coercion, the closer we are to a good society” (Etzioni 2004, 49).

It is a special problem to consider how a cosmopolitan order having a formal governmental structure might develop. Etzioni sees several informal global authorities crystallizing into a formalized governmental structure. And so, he believes that there exists an informal Global Safety Authority that has arisen following the 9-11 event. The World Health Organization can be seen as a nascent Global Health Authority, The International Criminal Court as a Global Justice Authority, and various treaties, such as the Mediterranean Action Plan, could portend the formation of regional environmental authorities that could eventually form a Global Environmental Protection Authority. Rather than jump immediately to the level of a global governmental structure, Etzioni suggests that various regional entities could merge to eventually constitute such a formal structure:

In time, measured in generations rather than years, I can envision a world of perhaps twenty regional communities, further grouped into a smaller number of supraregional ones, crowned by a Global Authority and a global civil society. (Etzioni 2004, 197–98)

East and West

Etzioni's sociological perspective on world developments suggests that a cosmopolitan order in the future will not represent the hegemony of Western culture, a homogenization of cultures under the pressure of globalization. He does, however, see a worldwide tendency to emulate American suburbs in building and traffic patterns (Etzioni 2004, 57) (surely, this would be the worst of all possible worlds!). He sees a movement to a middle position between the West's emphasis on autonomy of the individual and the East's emphasis on authority and social order. In his view, all societies must find their own balance of autonomy and order.

Avoiding cultural homogenization would seem to be one challenge of an emerging cosmopolitanism. Another is the application of social engineering to the problems we face as a global community. This is the more likely outcome of a loss of human^M primacy. In his study of enlightenment ideals in *The World We Want*, Robert Louden notes that the goal of the Enlightenment thinkers was to expand the freedoms of all persons and establish equality, especially in the areas of education, politics, and religion. It was not the establishment of a technocratic state (Louden 2007, 4). Here Michael Fischer's anthropological studies are helpful in assessing the reactions of persons within the rapidly developing present-day social worlds of emerging technologies and the alteration in consciousness they produce. Fischer has applied the ethnographic method of anthropology to identify and further develop new approaches to social critique. Its emphasis on the individual strikes an effective counterbalance to Etzioni's sociological approach. And it is remarkable that Fischer points to the uneven interaction of cultures, not the homogenization of cultures, as the defining problem of the twenty-first century:

[T]he challenge is that the interactions of various kinds of cultures are becoming more complex and differentiated at the same time as new forms of globalization and modernization are bringing all parts of the earth into greater, uneven, polycentric interaction. (Fischer 2003, 3)

This thesis is compatible with Etzioni's view that the cultures of East and West are changing each other as they interact, with the possibility of achieving a balance of autonomy and authority in the middle of the political spectrum where a cosmopolitan order is possible. The goal Fischer has set out is the development of "institutions of second-order, or reflexive modernization" (Fischer 2003, 2). Is that not the overarching telos of a cosmopolitan order? Kant saw the enlightenment as aiming at replacing the natural world with a world of freedom. According to Louden:

At bottom, Kant's philosophy of history is a theory about the movement over time from the necessity of nature to the morality of freedom within the human species – an account of humanity's "external" progress (improvements in visible cultural and social institutions), which itself serves as a preparation for "inner" moral change. (Louden 2007, 104)

Now, within the contemporary posthuman^B context, it is not just the moralization of the human^B species that many people advance. It is, rather, a set of posthuman^B beings that may arise as a result of our own efforts at self-enhancement that will moralize the world. This view presumes that posthuman^B beings can be moralized. At any rate, the development of reflexive institutions would seem to be a necessity whether they are human^B or posthuman^B.

Reflexive modernization

Fischer's treatment of reflexive modernization, what Beck calls "second modernity," is interesting in that it posits the possibility of forming self-critical communities as modern institutions dissolve under the pressure of globalization. Fischer sees new forms of life emerging that are groundless in that they do not have a narrative justification. This is what he characterizes as an ethical plateau. For Fischer, reflexive

modernization carries with it the prospect of deliberative democracy within a cosmopolitan context of action. He notes that there are now risks, like environmental degradation, that are transnational and that require “more participatory and decentralized decision making while requiring more sophisticated modeling and regulatory regimes” (Fischer 2003, 47). This also applies to the social organization of science. He asks in this regard,

Are the technosciences creating new subjects (cyborgian bio-machine hybrids, genetically engineered new life-forms, self-disciplining objects of testing regimes, bureaucratically recognized/excluded citizens, etc.) but also new political stakes and processes that escape traditional institutions and categories of politics and regulation? (Fischer 2003, 150)

Reflexive modernization has the effect of undermining traditional political structures, especially the nation-state, leaving individuals facing both local needs and transnational crises. And yet, contemporary communication media allow individuals to organize at both the local and the transnational level. They are then able to contest traditional expert systems. “The ideal is an informed public, one that can modulate the dilemmas of expertise versus lay understanding” (Fischer 2003, 173). What is interesting about the formation of new reflexive institutions is their autopoietic character. New forms of life arise in response to the breakdown of institutions which may eventually develop a narrative justification. Life, in this way, precedes thought. But it also prompts reflection on the social processes of globalization. Fischer argues that self-organizing, reflexive social institutions are more flexible and inclusive than traditional modern institutions (Fischer 2009, 51).

If we can steer these developments in the direction of a greater democratization of transnational and sub-political institutions, we may be able to have a cosmopolitanism that we choose. This conforms to Etzioni’s notion of an active society applied in a time of globalization and within a posthuman^B context. It is remarkable that Etzioni has described the active society, “a society in charge of itself rather than unstructured or restructured to suit the logic of instruments and the interplay of forces that they generate” (Etzioni 1968, 6), as being closer to a city-state than modern society in the intensity and breadth of its political life (1968, 7). In this regard, Beck sees the refeudalization of social relationships following upon the dissolution of modern institutions (Beck et al. 1994, 44) and Saskia Sassen has pointed to the role of global cities in the process of globalization (compare Sassen 2001). This would seem to provide a perfect theoretical context for applying Etzioni’s concept of the active society to present-day problems.

Beyond the issue of the self-organization of reflexive institutions is their self-maintenance. It is interesting, in this regard, that Christopher Kelty has referred to “recursive publics.” A recursive public “is vitally concerned with the material and practical maintenance of the very means of its own existence as a public, as a collective independent of other forms of constituted power” (Kelty 2008, 2).⁶ And so, a recursive public is constantly monitoring itself, experimenting and altering itself so as to maintain itself. This is consistent with Scott Lash’s account of reflexive communities. They must continually pose to themselves “the problem of their own creation, and constant re-invention” (Beck et al. 1994, 161). They must “embrace the way institutions reflect upon, contest and construct the very ‘semantic horizon’ on which they are based” (Beck et al. 1994, 208).

I believe that this notion of a recursive public can provide an insight into the ethical and political orientation we should espouse in order to construct a cosmopolitan order that we can freely choose. In order to be sustainable, any cosmopolitan civil society or governmental body must be reproducible. But the danger of a reflexive institution is that the demand for constant reinvention may be undermined within a posthuman^B context in which posthuman^B beings may arise that could undermine the entire inventive process that led to their existence. Hans Jonas depicted the absurdity of an irreversible process of creation that is self-defeating from a practical point of view:

[T]he cumulative self-propagation of the technological change of the world constantly overtakes the conditions of its contributing acts and moves through none but unprecedented situations, for which the lessons of experience are powerless. And not even content with changing its beginning to the point of unrecognizability, the cumulation as such may consume the basis of the whole series, the very condition of itself. All this would have to be cointended in the will of the single action if this is to be a morally responsible one. (Jonas 1985, 22-23)

The orientation of self-consistent recursivity, or perhaps, recursive self-consistency, must be applied to the very procedural character of reflexive modernization of institutions and to the creation of posthuman^B beings that may participate in the creation of a future cosmopolitan social order. For, to be practically consistent, a process of self-constitution cannot be self-defeating, consuming the whole series of preceding decisions. But the paradox of freedom is that we may freely choose to undermine our freedom. This was a point Etzioni emphasized in an early work, *The Active Society*: “An increase in options is an expansion of the freedom to choose, but this includes the choice to destroy everything, even freedom itself” (Etzioni 1968, 6). Nick Bostrom has modeled precisely this kind of self-destructive development with the advent of the possibility of superintelligent beings. A superintelligent being that we freely create may destroy the possibility for future free actions. Such a possibility is what we must avoid as we consider how to collectively regulate the formation of new institutions and new posthuman^B beings. At minimum, we must establish a sort of default position that renders the process of reflexive institution building tenable. An analogy for such a position may be seen in the practice of suspending automatic computer trading if we foresee that its continuation may undermine the market altogether.

It is interesting, in this regard, that Beck’s conception of a risk society indicates that threats like the ecological crisis give rise to a “semantic horizon of avoidance, prevention and helping” (Beck et al. 1994, 50). It is significant, then, that he has proposed a new modernity that is founded on principles of precaution and reversibility (Beck et al. 1994, 33). And Etzioni is to be commended in this regard for advocating a principle of restraint (Etzioni 2004, 135). It is also noteworthy that, as Lash has pointed out, “Charles Taylor has shown how such procedural ethics [as a discourse ethic] are themselves a substantive good and ‘source’ of the modern self” (Beck et al. 1994, 152). And so, Beck sees a role for the modern nation-state as a site for negotiation among diverse interest groups as social functions traditionally carried out by the state are taken up by transnational organizations and sub-political groups. While he realizes that such negotiation forums do not guarantee successful consensus formation, “They can, however, urge prevention and precaution and work towards a symmetry of unavoidable sacrifices” (Beck et al. 1994, 30).

Closing reflection

I hope to have shown that there are several converging lines of thought and supportive social factors that underwrite the construction of a posthuman^B cosmopolitan order. Amitai Etzioni’s sociology provides evidence of social factors tending in that direction. Seyla Benhabib’s political science approach advocates a dialogical ethical methodology that affords a decision procedure consistent with the universal democratic aims of a cosmopolitan order. And, perhaps most remarkable of all, Michael Fischer’s anthropology gives us a glimpse of new forms of life that are emerging in the context of contemporary technoculture. His work, *Anthropological Futures*, ends with a section “Conclusion and Way Ahead” that focuses on Cosmopolitanism, Cosmopolitics, and Anthropological Futures. He sees contemporary anthropology as inserting Kant’s thought on the possibility of a cosmopolitan future into the present-day context of globalization:

In the twenty-first century, cosmopolitanisms and cosmopolitics have become two of a series of slogan terms that primarily revive, rework, and restart the processes that Immanuel Kant observed and promoted, albeit today under transformed conditions of teletechnological globalization or

mondalization, with its built-in divisions, wars, new stratifications, frenzied position taking, and need for new forms of ethnographic and cultural critique. Post-Kantian anthropologies are postings of Kant into futures he could not imagine, futures that are returns on Enlightenment investments in expanded global portfolios. (Fischer 2003, 150, italics in the original)

The goal of the Enlightenment, according to Kant's conception, was the moralization of the human species. Now, within the contemporary posthuman^B context, it is not just the moralization of the human^B species many people advance. It is, rather, a set of posthuman^B beings that may arise as a result of our own efforts at self-enhancement that will moralize the world. But this presumes that posthuman^B beings may be moralized as well. It is questionable that a morality of freedom could arise from the technological manipulation of human^B beings or the simple programming of posthuman^B beings. At any rate, the development of reflexive institutions would seem to be a necessity whether they are human^B or posthuman^B. Slavoj Žižek opines, with an echo of Habermas:

Maybe the problem is not biogenetics as such but, rather, the social context of power relations within which it functions... Enlightenment remains an unfinished project that has to be brought to its end, and this end is not the total scientific self-objectivization but – this wager has to be taken – a new figure of freedom that will emerge when we follow the logic of science to the end.⁷

Žižek's reference to a wager is reminiscent of the original French title of Jacques Ellul's work, *The Technological Society*: it appeared in French as *La technique, ou, L'enjeu du siècle*. Ellul also wrote a book titled, *The Technological Bluff*. We might hope that a greater reflexivity in our social institutions would allow us to avoid making wagers that are too great and being lured by a technological bluff. The lofty goals of many theorists of a posthuman^B future, such as immortality, universal abundance, and universal peace, present a striking contrast to the restraint Etzioni exhibits in setting out a goal for human improvement that is reachable, asking, "What will make for a safer, healthier, freer, and more caring world, one in which all people will have a rich basic minimum so that they can live with dignity?" (Etzioni 2004, xii).

While the highest good, as Kant depicted it, is unachievable, it can serve as an ideal unifying endpoint for our moral efforts. That is the role of our loftiest goals. Louden's remarks on Kant's conception of the highest good can be seen to apply in a posthuman^B context if we understand the term "human" in the sense of moral humanity (human^M), including both human^B and non-human^B beings that may exist in the future:

When the highest good is articulated in this more comprehensive sense [as the systematic union of all of practical reason's ends], it becomes an ideal that unites all of our efforts to construct a moral world. Seeking peace, reducing poverty, promoting respect for human rights: these along with still other Enlightenment ideals all compose different aspects of the highest good. (Louden 2007, 219)

As we theorize various paths to a posthuman^B future, we must not allow "the logic of instruments and the interplay of forces that they generate" (Etzioni 1968, 6) to form our conception of the coming world. Rather, we must work to shape the world according to the demand of our own rationally^R considered goals. All we need to complete the picture Kant began to paint is to set out a worthy ideal of a posthuman^B enlightenment. We would do well to give Ernst Cassirer the last word on enlightenment:

Actually the fundamental tendency and the main endeavor of the philosophy of the Enlightenment are not to observe life and to portray it in terms of reflective thought. This philosophy believes rather in an original spontaneity of thought; it attributes to thought not merely an imitative function but the power and the task of shaping life itself. Thought consists not only in analyzing and dissecting, but in actually bringing about that order of things which it conceives as necessary, so that by this act of

fulfillment it may demonstrate its own reality and truth... We must find a way not only to see that age in its own shape but to release again those original forces which brought forth and molded this shape. (Cassirer 1962, viii, xi-xii)

Notes

1. See Hughes 2014.

2. I use the term “Rational^S” to refer to substantial rationality, “an act of thought that reveals intelligent insight into the inter-relations of events in a given situation” (Mannheim 1940, 53). I use the term “Rational^I” and its cognates to refer to instrumental rationality, “the coordination of action with reference to a goal” (Mannheim 1940, 53). “Rational^R” will refer to reflexive rationality, a type of rationality that is directed to the intelligent choice of ends.

3. See my “The Contemporaneity of the Non-Contemporaneous or the Problem of Uneven Technological Development” (Wennemann 1993). Parts of Karl Mannheim’s *Man and Society* (1940) appeared previously in 1935 in German under the title *Mensch und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter im des Umbaus*, a title that is interesting in a posthuman context. Compare p. 15 of *Man and Society*:

It is only by remaking man himself that the reconstruction of society is possible. The reinterpretation of human aims, the transformation of human capacities, the reconstruction of our moral code are not a subject for edifying sermons or visionary utopias. They are vital to us all, and the only question is what can reasonably be done in this direction.

4. Where relevant, I have supplied the volume and page numbers for the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences edition of Kant’s works as well as the page numbers for the translations.

5. See Axinn 1994, 266, where the author points to these varying formulations.

6. Cited in Fischer 2009, 89–90.

7. Slavoj Žižek, *Organs Without Bodies*, quoted as an epigraph in Fischer 2009, 191.

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