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Does Technology Create Value?

Süleyman Hayri BOLAY[1]

There has been an ongoing dispute on 'whether technique and technology create value' for more than half a century in Turkey. Is technology an indispensable element of need which shall definitely be acquired? What is it behind the obvious technique and technology that has a power to create value? What is the philosophical basis of the idea "Human Machine?" Can we use the technology we purchase with an ease of mind by satisfying our needs? Should we continue to buy more technology without damage awareness just because it satisfies our needs? Should we produce technology instead of importing it? Can we prevent the damage if we manufacture our own technology? How did technology affect our values and in what way? If technology creates a value, how and with what means does it do that? Does technology mechanize humans? Can humans become machines? Can robots replace humans? Can humans become robots? Can the human, mechanized and robotized, lose its liberty? Can humanistic features be preserved? The statement is in search of answers to these questions.

Of course if we regard all these questions, the universe and the man as one and acknowledge these as a whole, we can give more accurate answers. Worshipping, and working towards the guidance of his religion will be the main elements which will grant the most sacred place to the man in nature. The man has an honorable place in the universe. Societies and civilization can easily disperse if cultural features of mankind are not acknowledged. In this case, culture will produce a stereotypical persona without culture, personality, or any ideal; who will work like a machine. Regarding people as a machine, a tool, will fail to reinforce its spiritual level. According to distinguished Professor Hilmi Ziya Ülken, the dispersion that we see in the West is a result of the fact that cultural features of the West see people as machines, without acknowledging them as a whole.

1   Gazi University, Professor Emeritus, Ankara, Turkey / shbolay@hotmail.com

For, according to him, man is not only a rational being, but also a spiritual being.[2] The reason for this is that emotions and the feeling of love are what people get in touch with each other, enabling them to understand others, before the mind. Erich Fromm (1900-1980) defines educational sciences, which ignore these features of man, as follows: "Education produces machines that behave like people; and people who behave like machines..." According to him, a human being is a *machine* which is running on a certain level of sexual energy called "libido" due to influence of materialistic ideas of 1900's and dominance of Freud's libido tendencies.[3] Again, according to E. From, the modern man has become an object for the blind economic focuses of power that is running his life; worshipping his own hands and transforming himself into a product of its own."[4] He asserted that; the man has become to robot, a machine which starts to worship its own efforts. This pagan-like machine, alienates the man from his own lively, vital, powers."

On the other hand, Fromm states that the principle behind monotheism relies on the fact that humans have no limits, but neither of their own features can represent the whole being of man. Humans are created as a resemblance of God and hence they are the carriers of his unlimited powers.[5] However, the modern secular approach is interpreting this human nature as materialized people who have been turned into machines and thus have lost their supreme qualities from their birth, and become worshippers of their own products.

On the other hand, the real question should be how dependent are the humans and social life to technique and technology. To answer this question, of course, we shall first ask what is technology and technique. The concept "technique" is derived from the Greek word "*tekhne*" which has been given many different meanings. Heidegger states that this word is originally related to the concept of information/episteme at first, but later on it was also given different meanings, such as "bringing to life." According to him, this provisional feature is not about production or ability

2   Hilmi Ziya Ülken. *Felsefeye Giriş* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), 2: 11.

3   Ibid, 41-42.

4   Ibid, 92.

5   Ibid, 71.

to produce; but is about *creating something new*.[6] In that case we need to discuss this concept further in its application today.

I. What Is Technique?

As science is the continuous practice of learning and understanding the universe and beings it needs to be applied, realized with certain actions. As it also shows itself at the level of technique we may describe technique as modifying different tools for attaining a specific goal or for a certain purpose to meet present needs. Therefore, technique can be regarded as a product of man's will to control the surrounding environment. It shall also be noted that this will also serves as an agent for man to dominate the world spiritually.

Oswald Spengler states in his book *Man and Technique* that the most basic instinct of living beings is to compensate their weaker side and accomplish superiority among other beings. Therefore, technique can be regarded as a natural tactic of human life.[7] Man shall use technique as an agent, a medium to impose its influence upon its surroundings. Technique, from this perspective, and according to the statement of Heidegeer, is a form of resurfacing other elements. He, defines technique as a medium, rather than a goal. Technique, as a medium, alienates people from each other. And unfortunately, this alienation results in many different issues.

Technology is, on the other hand, includes all scientific concepts, intellectual researches, defined rules, data and methods which are developed for acquiring new products by means of techniques. Technology, then, can be regarded as the concept of acknowledging features of tools, materials and objects in terms of their effects on man's perspective. Through this perspective, technology becomes a cultural activity. In fact, technique and technology, even though primitive, has been present since the first man on earth. In some manner, technique and technology can be found everywhere that man resides. Therefore, the Qur'an includes a chapter (*sûrah*) called "Hadid/Iron". In this chapter, it is said that God provided man with iron as a strong and beneficial material to distinguish the ones who will use it

6   Martin Heidegger. *Die Technik und Die Kehre*, translated into Turkish as *Teknik ve Dönüş* by Necati Aça (Ankara: Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları, 1998), 18.

7   Quoted by Nabi Avcı, "Teknoloji ve İnsanî Değerler Meselesi", *Türk Yurdu*, 27 (1989), 53-54.

to help others with the belief of Allah and Muhammad the Prophet in their minds (Hadid, 57/25). Also, the Prophet David was taught how to make armor. The fact that Allah has filled a valley between two mountains with iron to prevent a wild tribe from attacking others, the wise man Dhul-qarnayn sealed the gates with copper to protect them. This shows us that technique and technology were both rather advanced even in those times.

Yunus Emre; shared the following poem for a reason:

"İdris nebi Hulle biçer,

Prophet Idrîs saws heavenly dresses,

biçer Allah deyu deyu."

And he saws saying Allah Allah.

We can infer from these lines that technique and technology is taught and used even in the Heaven. A contemporary Turkish thinker M. İzzet has interesting ideas about technique and technology. He asks the question of how dependent is social life to technology. "In fact, technique is a means which the civilization uses to process its surroundings." Techniques are between nature and man because major industrial movements which are created by development of techniques is a common consequence of focusing human ideal towards nature. Thanks to the technique, humans have a major control over soil, its products and nature. Human beings also develop, mature and rises above his nature "because it adapts its habitat to surrounding nature". This way he creates both its tools and himself. Unless our technological research progresses, our knowledge of civilization will be based on missing or even decaying principles.[8]

Techniques which have been used by men in Stone Age or Bronze Age continuously changed and evolved. Along with military technology, civil technology and scientific developments it has reached at higher levels. In other words; humanity has never been far away from technique and technology and has always lived alongside it. Today, same also applies. Nobody seems to be able to live without (credit, etc.) cards, planes, buses, telephones, radios, TV, dishwashers or washing machines. On the other hand, nobody goes to pilgrimage on camels. Therefore, we can say that development of new tools, techniques and usage of these for communication, teaching, travelling, information and livelihood is an essential part of

8   Mehmet İzzet. *Makaleler*, ed. Coşkun Değirmencioğlu (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1989), 240-242.

humanity. In this respect, human beings are in need of technology. They have to develop and use it. They will not be able to live without it. Therefore, to blame technology in a dramatic way is not a logical action. Is not applying a technique using our mind skillfully within the world of realities and controlling the natural forces that may harm us?

In fact, technological advancements have many benefits for us. Our information on civilization and society would be based on a corrupt structure without technology. Also, one of the major benefits of science and technology is its ability to assist cleaning misleading information from minds of man. The main issue here is to ask if technology poses any sole moral value or not. It is not possible to refuse technology and mechanization because refusing consequently leads to discontinuation, backwardness and devastation. On the other hand, is a machine with freedom possible?

Technology on the one hand facilitates people's work and as such it is an essential part of our life, but on the other hand it leads us into a competition of destroying people, even mass massacre and wars. There is also a competition for new weapons because of technology, human societies are inventing ever new weapons. How can we get over this? Modern technique is of course totally different from the past one. Why? Because, modern technology is based on natural sciences of the New Age. Heidegger states that; *modern technique challenges the nature*. Why a challenge? Because, according to him, technique has a constant requirement to acquire all the energy it can get from nature. Heidegger warns us about this danger of modern technique while he informs us that technology also involves the ability and power to protect us from this constant challenge. Therefore, it has been believed that appearance of technique will also prevail its protective features for man because, through this perspective which approaches with a dialectic focus, just like the inert "being" concept of Hegel which involves mutual presence with the opposite, we see that technology may have the ability to protect itself from the danger it creates. But, the present state of affairs is not exactly like Heidegger explains. The main problem of this philosopher arises at the exact point that he regards man and nature as being sufficient in themselves.

His claims do not seem very accurate because, technique is only a means for creation. This instrumentation, makes people become instru-

ments themselves. In this case, how can we say that the man is sufficient by himself? It is always possible that the concept of *tekhne* may dominate the man. For, contrary to Heidegger's claims, human being is not an independent being itself. He cannot be! Because man needs to be connected to a Creator more strongly than he needs other people and beings. On the other hand, is it not a logical assumption that storage and the ability to use the environment can make a person superior human? Is this not going to refer to humanity as the absolute dominion of the earth? Yes, humanity has started to think that everything that can be produced in nature is a product. It is always possible to be deceived. Here again, humans face the threat against human beings.

II. Negative Impacts of Technology

Is there a danger here against the human spirit? Such a danger may be resulting from sacralizing, enrooting technological mindset. Behind this sacralization lies the belief that technique and technical thinking give us the most accurate and true knowledge about reality. We can call this "technic worshiping". The greatest danger of technological thinking is the fact that it leads man to think that he is the sole creator of values because *this* technic worshiping mentality regards nature, environment and the universe as a resource of satisfying humane desires. Of course, here a practical "human-centrism" is the dominant approach. Such a person and such an understanding does not accept a being, an authority, an agent, a Creator other than his own being; moreover, this approach does not accept the possibilities and values that come from metaphysical sources, trusts or believes in things he has done with his own technology, So that he will be able to glorify himself. Therefore, as seen in the period of enlightenment, such a person puts his mind in place of the Creator thus turning himself into a machine and a god.

A. Naturalistic Conception of God

But, where does this ideology of sacralizing human mind come from? The first candidate for this is the naturalistic conception of God primarily represented by Spinoza (1632-1677) who identified God with the nature and created a naturalist mindset which asserted that, nature is God itself. Thus, God of Western mindset, so to speak, was lost in the universe. A new step has been taken when the age of enlightenment has arrived: "Man's continuous tendency to highlight egoistic values as well as its practices which brought him far away from himself has led to expansion of ego across the universe; resulting thus in adopting power and authority of God in a misguided way."[9]

Thus Newton's conception of the universe, which was based on God, has been isolated from divine basics and relied on a solely positivist mindset. Now, people has started to rely on unmistakable rules and formulas of mathematics and geometry to explain the Universe in a mechanized manner. Kant was expelling god from the field of information and morale. This way, the Man has been alienated from envisagement of Universe. It was like he was lost in a mechanical universe. Due to advances in Natural Sciences; adjectives which were previously related to God such as holiness, divinity, dynamism and mysticism were started to be used for defining the Universe. Humanist mindset which has been relied on the ideas of Enlightenment Age were claiming to be liberalizing the ego of man while trying to remove the dependency of human mind on a divine will. This is based on the words of Descartes (1596-1650); "*Cogito ergo est*" (I think, therefore I, myself create the reality in the universe). Encouraged by these ideas, supporters of the mindset characteristic of the Enlightenment Age have tried to establish principles which are independent of God subsisting by themselves and are solely based on naturalistic way of thinking. Descartes inaugurated a new pathway for the mindset of enlightenment by creating a mechanical world conception which conceives the universe as working like a machine. At the same time this conception led to the idea that an animal is a machine. Three-quarters of a century later, De La Metterie (d. 1751) has taken these ideas of Descartes further and declared that humans are also machines in his book *Machine Man*.[10] Today, there are men of science and philosophy who adopt this materialist mindset. Another representative of materialist mind and human is the French cytologist and 1965 Nobel Prize winner Jacque Monod (d. 1976). He said:

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9   George Frankl. *Western Civilization: Tragedy and Utopia*, translated into Turkish by Yusuf Kaplan (Istanbul: Açılım Kitap, 2003), 175.

10 See Julien Offray De La Metterie, *L'homme Machine* (Paris: Denoël/Gonthier, c1981).

"a cell is a machine; animal is a machine; therefore, a human being is also a machine."[11]

The idea of automatic machines eliminates the human element as an actual agent. It represents domination of automatism in machinery and technology. Machines cannot adapt themselves to all conditions. Likewise, living beings, despite the machine-like appearance, are not machines because they have a purpose. A machine cannot set a goal for itself and then run after it. If a human becomes mechanized then will not the "machine man" be nothing but a robot which has been deprived of its spirit, mind, heart, faith and love? We have asked whether machines or technology can create values and it seems that our answer is "yes". But what kind of a value? As we see in the poem of Turkish national anthem poet, the great, Mehmet Akif's depiction of Western civilization and technology as "the monster with a single tooth" is surprisingly successful explanation of this technology created value. We can easily see an accurate example of this by looking at the following poem of renowned communist poet Nazım Hikmet:

> *Trumm trumm*
> *Trum trick trock*
> *I want to be a machine*
> *My brain, my flesh hungers to be,*
> *A machine I want to be;*
> *I am dying to have all these generators and dinamos,*
> *My tongue licks the copper wires,*
> *Automatic trains chase locomotives,*
> *In my veins mechanized,*
> *I want to be a machine,*
> *Trumm trick track,*
> *There needs to be a cure,*
> *And I'll be only happy then,*
> *A turbine I'll put on my stomach*
> *And I'll wear a propeller on my tail,*
> *Trumm trick track,*
> *I want to be a machine,*

11 Frankl, op. cit., 207.

As is known, machines do not have a homeland in the true sense. A car belongs to the one who drives it. The one who has invented the cell phone should be the one using it. Nazim Hikmet's crazy desire to be mechanized gives us a true depiction of mechanized human model. In any case, this is one of the most accurate examples of the automatic people, created by the technology, rather than values. So if a human being melts in nature and society, if ideology translates him/her as a robot, then a person in the example of Nazim Hikmet becomes crazy to become a machine. Why? To produce more. To create more values as byproduct. More for prosperity ... But does life just consist of these?

B. Can Machinery and Automation Replace Humans?

Hilmi Ziya Ülken has dealt with the concepts of technique, machinery and mechanization for a long time. He asserts that mechanization, cybernetics, automats and robots, which are practical and technical results of naturalism, cannot replace human beings. He confronts the idea explaining humane functions mechanically as if a machine and regarding humans as redundant with automatical controls. Mechanization means development of the automatism. Man behaves as himself with the guidance of his mind, using his will and freedom. Machines do not have this feature. "It just tries to fulfill its intended and established purpose." At this point, Ülken asks: "Is a machine with free will possible?" Seeing this impossible he adds: "Looking for made-up, mechanical reasons for providing an answer to the question of the reason of nature is an inert practice."[12]

C. Relationship Between Technique and Culture

Nureddin Topçu has come up with influencing ideas half a century ago about the relationship between technique and culture. According to him, technique is "a mandatory result of culture. It is a fruit of culture tree, a natural leakage of culture." He adds further "separation of technique from culture is like a boy, denying his father." In his perspective, "the concept of culture penetrates in our souls. Our lives can only flourish with its guidance." If you ignore it, the clash between spirit and body will bring devasta-

12 Ülken, op. cit., 107.

tion. European civilization could not prevent this danger."[13] Topçu in this way relates technique and culture with social ethics and states that "technique shall always stand one step behind culture, this is an ethical mandate, technique shall serve to the ruling of culture, and otherwise technique poses an important danger" and warns us that "*technique shall be a blind and destructive danger if it is not led by the culture.*" On the other hand, it becomes impossible to avoid hearing the voice of the technique in phrases such as "I want to be a machine" when culture is ignored completely.[14]

Here we can ask the following question: Cannot technique produce a unique culture for itself, with all its predominance and allure? We say yes it can and it does. On the other hand, this culture that has been created by the technique, is not a spiritual and moral one such as the one Topçu states, but a completely materialistic concept which totally depends on mechanization and production. If we remember the famous movie producer Charlie Chaplin then I would like to remind his movie, in which he makes fun of mechanization and device craze. In the film Charlie Chaplin shows the ridicule of mechanization as follows: A man sits at the table, eating dinner. A mechanical hand puts the food into his mouth. Another mechanical hand wipes his mouth after each bite. Then, suddenly a malfunction occurs in the hand which gives the food. But, the other hand automatically continues to wipe the man's mouth... Could there be a better example than this to depict the fact that a machine will continue to do what it has been told to do without mind or spirit even if it is broken with zero efficiency and any bit of rationality? This extreme worship like addiction to technology makes people see that everything around them is a product of their own technique. This approach and understanding, as also stated by Eric Fromm, become an act of idolatry leading the masses into worshipping their own efforts and products.[15]

III. Who Will Pay The Bill For Technology?

Technology is a product of human mind, imagination, dreams, researches and actions. Of course this rapid advancement of technology in

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13 Nurettin Topçu. *Kültür ve Medeniyet* (Istanbul: Hareket Yayınları, 1970), 13.
14 Ibid, 17.
15 Eric Fromm. *Yeni Bir İnsan ve Yeni Bir Toplum*, translated into Turkish by Necla Arat (Istanbul: Say Yayınları, 1984).

the last two centuries would have a price to pay; and indeed it requested that price. So, what's that price? This bill has begun to be paid for over 250 years of industrialization and mechanization, with machines starting to dominate the technology. Number of people who say that technology causes important problems for human life, is not low. Of course major technological changes and developments appeared after the industrial revolution and emergence of technologically developed communities. These changes are also considered as a technological bombardment. Under such a bombardment; traditions, believes and cultures of societies have witnessed deep vibrations, changes, and even material, spiritual and moral devastations.

Interpersonal and inter-social relationships were mechanized, and materialized even more, so to speak. Harmonious relations between people and societies have lost their value. Industrial societies which have advanced in the direction of industrial and technological development; have lost the control of the continuously developed culture without any moral value. It has become a virus which destroys the other surrounding cells. The values which are reflected by Western science and technology have always been materialistic concepts based on human greed to earn more wealth. These values have been transformed into an always-unsatisfied ambition of winning, a Darwinist competition and exploiting ideology and an uncontrollable mentality of growth. The world has been filled with the billions of products waiting for their buyers. Natural sciences have been guided to new researches by using many of these also technological products. Then, Naturalism produced new elements of information and imposed these to the rest of the world as the unchangeable, sole truth. It directed individuals and societies to manufacturers with endless propaganda and advertisements. It has created new and unlimited needs. For example, how many people are there on earth that do not use cell phones?

These are all done in the same way. And what is that way? Of course it is *rationalization*. What does this concept involve? Following words have been widely used together with this expression: "*Freedom, personalization, communication and spread of these values.*" Rationality involves different elements such as appreciation and evaluation. "*Rationalization*" of society is about industrialization of scientific and technical

progress. The key issue here is not mere usage of technique but using it as an instrument to acquire dominance on nature and a rule over humans. This is of course a well calculation and a calculating rule. Machines and mechanization grinds down humane characteristics of man, and it deeply intervenes in his being. For example, our ability to think is reduced by using calculator and becoming dependent on it while we are using the pen and pencil and some of our organs it actually progresses. Intervention of machines to humane characteristics can blunt creative powers of man. A sociologist goes to a region, a village and hands out questionnaires. Then he picks them up and enters into computer. The rest is up to the computer. It calculates, evaluates and decides on features of that particular region. Is it wrong? Of course it is not. It is beneficial in saving time. On the other hand, mechanization imposes particular molds that make humans artificial, standardized beings. Back in the olden days people would test and then choose with their own free will. With mechanization everyone has to use the same products almost every time. The choice is based solely on brand recognition. The arrangement of the houses of the family, the decoration, the arrangement of the cities are almost the same. Is not subjectivity and creativity going to disappear in such an environment?

Machinery and mechanization save time and of course, certain needs can be satisfied in a quicker manner by working with machines. On the other hand, capitalist market creates much more needs for people in return for this time saving. On one side technology eases work of man, and creates indispensable benefits. But on the other side, it puts people into a competition which may lead to a mass clashes and warfare. Man take sides in a race of armament and warfare inventions, as well as start wars to try their new toys. How can these be solved? As Russell says, of course, our only solution will be including morals and ethics into the great power of science. Philosophy, will fail to prevent the clash by itself. All beings need to have a strong faith, only this way we can "love others, because of our love for the Creator."

Machines will not consider race, religion, morality, nation or tradition of others because it cannot adapt itself to other's characteristics. With a continuous deterministic production tendency, it is busy with flooding the earth by producing masses of unnecessary goods. Consultants called technocrats invent new ways and methods to beat and destroy opponent companies. They change the quality, the ingredients or the secrets of the goods they produce. Companies which are left behind in this race are damaged or expelled from the market. In other words, this is the exact Darwinist, tiger-like, live-or-die life struggle. These "tecnocrats" who started to emerge as a new social class with the development of technology, create a dictatorship. These people control and designate the fate of societies. This mechanization and technocracy, lead to a new *economic fascism,* which is more dangerous than the fascism we know. Other fascist regimes can be eliminated, but this one cannot.

A. One Dimensional Man

Technology, in the words of Herbert Marcuse is creating a "one-dimensional man" almost everywhere. According to him, advanced industrialized civilization fails to provide a safe, reasonable and democratic environment of civilizations. Here, rights and freedoms are surrendered themselves to the hands of society's highest echelons. Traditional principles and their meanings are lost.[16] According to Marcuse, industrial society strangles libertarian needs and ideas in an effective manner, while maintains the dominant pressure of welfare community.[17] This way, technology is able to rationalize loss of human freedom and makes a free order of living technically impossible. Thus, according to Marcus, technological rationality protects injustice of power rather than prevailing it; which consequently leads to a totalitarian society. The most annoying side of industrial civilization is the fact that irrationality has been given a rational character. In this civilization object alienates people from the world. People identify themselves with materials; and find their souls in music players and cars. The instrument which connects individuals to the society has been changed. Thus, not the sole usage of the technique, but the technology itself has become a dominant power over nature and man.

Today, people and organizations can be watched or eavesdropped even as they relax in their bedrooms. New and reliable behavior-modifier education and propaganda techniques, mind-stimulation tools posing as

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16 Herbert Marcuse. *One Dimensional Man*, translated into Turkish as *Tek Boyutlu İnsan*, by Aziz Yardımlı (İstanbul: İdea Yayınları, 1986), 21-22.

17 Ibid, 26-27.

practical utilities of communication, new and effective counter-guerilla techniques, mind blowing types of drugs for controlling and regulating human mind; are only a few of dangerous instruments which have been produced, and stocked in masses by authorities. Erol Kılıç defines this single-dimensional people as differing from materialists as follows:

A person who relies on materials to go on his life, is living in exile from his heart... Modernism, which increases the gap between the material and the meaning, has made Man a single winged being. Modern man is more like a robotic being; machine without remorse, spirit or will... Entirely focusing on dominating the nature; adopting earning and interest as the only goal; doing anything he can to attain his goal, even in return for his life...Ecological disasters, chemical weapon, dispersed countries and people with wars that fill the headlines everyday... Okay, violence and death have been around since Kabul; but it won't be wrong to day that, lethality of our time is fueled by the inverted values of modernism.[18]

B. Genetic Engineering

Developments in genetic engineering is one of the direct consequences of technology's intended purpose. This branch of engineering creates "new beings with new features" by modifying human genes. On the other hand, we know that studies in the field of genetic engineering is intended to solve some crucial problems of people. Yet, these studies have important biological, psychological, sociological, economic and moral issues. Problems arising from consumption of genetically modified products still dominate the headlines in our country as well as the rest of the world. Also, diseases and discomforts resulted by these products have become a major concern for governments. As an addition to these; implementation of concepts such as fertilization via sperm banks, in-vitro fertilization, and surrogate motherhood; create important problems in families and cause family disasters. Mechanization takes moral values into account during its efforts of increasing the number of consumers. It denies these values and forces people to ignore ethical principles.

It seems that technology aims at appraise people according to the comfort, luxury and consumption they possess. For; mechanized and in-

18 Mahmud Erol Kılıç. *Hayatın Satır Araları* (Istanbul: Sufi Kitap, 2013), 15.

dustrialized societies are based on wasting, not saving. Machines to mechanization save time. We become more competent to meet our vital needs by the help of machines. But in return, capitalist market puts new problems, bills and other weights on our shoulders. Thus Enlightenment and rationalization approaches praise a monotonous, mathematical, technical, mechanized world perspective which is based on materials, nature, and mechanized elements.

IV. Does Technology Create A Value?

We are now in a better position to answer our question which is definitely "yes". It indeed created added values. It makes people wealthy; enable them to live a rich, comfortable and luxurious life. Makes him one of the richest people in the world. Makes him embrace a life which is based on wasting everything. Increases reputation of businessmen and industrialists around the world. On the other hand, all these values are materialistic. The values we try to emphasize here are moral, spiritual principles. Is technology capable of creating an ethical system such as Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam? It certainly cannot. This brings us to discuss the nature of actual values which are beneficial for humanity and at home with their primordial nature.

A. What Is "Value"?

We can give following answers to this question: Man acts in accordance with a certain ethical and moral system of which he himself constitutes a part. In fact, "values" are parts of man's existence, belonging to his spirit. They do not come from the outside world. Value is an action, an activity. Values are established to prevent conflicts and unrest which may occur if acts of man are performed randomly in an uncertain environment. These values enable man to choose what is more valuable for himself and acknowledge its surroundings accordingly. As these values expand and open themselves, man is also elevated to higher levels of humanity, his personality develops and his actions become more meaningful. For example, Selimiye Mosque in Edirne continues to enrich the value of both Selim the Second, who built it and its architect, Mimar Sinan ("Sinan the Artchitect").

In this sense a value is something to be desired, sought after. A value in this sense is something to be desired, and sought after; more importantly it is something bestowing meaning to life and that which mainly protects one from evils, sins and false addictions. Spiritual values are values of metaphysical origin. Thanks to these values, humans can protect their hearts from darkness, or they can become able to clean and purify their selfish desires. A value does not impose itself on people, people adopt it voluntarily. Sartre and similar thinkers had claims that life is "ridiculous". On the other hand, if life is ridiculous, then in life values are absurd, not true values. If values are wound up because of such insights, then values start to be seen as ridiculous, which leads to anarchy of values.

Also, it should not be forgotten that value has a goal and a rhythm. It is only necessary to establish a harmony between the purpose and the means. In addition to this, it is necessary to consider the correct rhythm between the values system and the goals toward which that system aims at. If God does not exist, as Sartre and other atheists say, then values which define man do not exist either. In such a case, there will be no value or personality, but egoism. In fact, as values are adopted accordingly, a "commitment" is present to these values. This commitment is only possible with faith, a religious belief.

From this perspective, it can be easily understood that the main question is whether technique can represent moral/spiritual values. Technology tries to cut the relationship between the mind and superior beings; as it tries to eliminate all differences in perspectives towards life because technique gives us information only about reality of an object in the outside world. On the other hand, it fails to provide any information about metaphysical realities.

B. What Should Be Done Against the Danger of Mechanization?

Technology comes from a different belief and cultural environment, together with its own principles. Also it brings values such as problem solving, or increased productivity together. It establishes its own system by imposing its own values to civilization. "If technique becomes the main element of materialistic production then it will be able to re-shape the entire culture and design a new historical integrity and world

conception."[19] What is the main element to determine direction, speed and function of technological advancement? According to Habermas, "social interests are determined."[20] Moreover, "scientific-technical developments have already started to impose re-organization of social infrastructure in terms of its rational intentions; making these rational goals more and more mandatory."[21] On the other hand, elements of national culture can resist to technology if historical heritage has not been damaged and cultural elements have not been dispersed. These elements, if suitable conditions are established, can resist to fundamental influence of technology by creating new cultural principles. The important thing here is the fact that, elements of national culture, especially a conscious religious life shall be kept alive. To acquire this goal, today's conditions must be evaluated and designed according to previous developments.

C. Is It Possible to Struggle Against Technology?

Technology may feel the need to modify itself as a result of the strong opposition leveled by local cultures and traditional values. But, is it possible to struggle with this technology? Is it possible to make products of technology inert? Of course this shall be realized by means of keeping religion, the real pillar of national culture, alive. This struggle can only be accomplished by means of considering man as meaningful spiritually and filling his heart with love of Allah, His holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and our country. This will surely fill his heart with a divine light. Every person shoud be supported by his family, his society, his state and other relevant assisting organizations during this struggle and shall never be left helpless. Obligatory responsibilities of the community shall be evaluated clearly. There is a tradition of Islamic culture and wisdom. Human beings are God's caliph on earth, but, they shall not forget that, each human being is helpless, destitute and weak against the divine power of Allah. Only this way, man can avoid worshipping himself.

On the other hand, we should not surrender ourselves to technol-

19 Jürgen Habermas. *Technik und Wissenschaft als Ideologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1968). Translated into Turkish as İdeoloji *Olarak Teknik ve Bilim* by Mustafa Tüzel (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1997), 40.

20 Ibid, 54.

21 Ibid, 65.

ogy. In other words, man shall not be captive of technique and machinery, but shall dominate and control it. How can this be possible? This depends on how we understand human nature. The successful perspective is the one that does not perceive human nature in a materialistic way. A human being should not be isolated from spiritual values and turned into a machine like being. Man, as a being is indeed not self-sufficient, and hence needs a creator fulfilling his needs. In fact human beings are in utter helplessness when left by themselves. For example, in the midst of all the abundance man still feel needs for many other things that are missing and he thus feels his poverty; moreover, he feels helpless before the concept death in the depths of his mind. But, unfortunately, he forgoes his helplessness and begins to worship his ego.

Actually a human is a divine being. He has been created from the breath of his Creator, as stated in the Qur'an and other holly books in other religions. This is a divine status which has also been set forth by the religion. This status assigns the title of God's vicegerent (Qur'anic term *khalifah*) on earth to Man. If man manages to use these values and divine features accordingly, he can free himself from animal instincts and the carnal desires of his lower being. Only this way he can go beyond his physical features. *A mechanized man only produces and thus fails to think of anything else. He continuously consumes what he produces and creates artificial values with production.* For, ruling organizations create needs first. Other people are forced to feel the need to share these needs. Therefore, we shall struggle against these approaches so that people shall not worship machines, and alienate from each other. This can only be possible with a strong spiritual, moral, principle and mental strength.

It is possible for man to protect himself from falling into captivity to nature and the thing he has shaped himself on these conditions. Otherwise, he can neither transcend himself nor renew himself. In modern paganism, man submits to the projection of some of his qualities, and worship them. However, in monotheism, and especially in Islam, the fact that man has no restrictions on his feelings is the dominant principle that none of his individual qualities can represent the whole of his being. As God's creature man has unlimited qualities as the embodiment of His eternal names. Therefore, the person who believes in God's unity and binds him-

self firmly to this belief does not turn his production and work into an idol and worship it.

Endless respect towards technical mentality leads to belittlement and even to the denial of a life based on traditional and spiritual values. Technical and technological mentality or machine guided mentality can neither protect, nor console man about his worries and fear for death and sufferings of life. Will technological achievements naturally lose hope if they make man dependent on technique and make it a shelter for him? Will technical thinking connect us with life and provide values that will guide us in life? If not, will it not turn us and our societies into ruthless crowds without any significant roots, and souls? Does not technology develop weapons of mass destruction instead of providing a better life? Does it not lead even the higher power of science devoid of wisdom to the wholesale extermination of humanity? Does not technology bring societies in which family values, privacy, respect, and morality to the brink of aimless herds? If the values that constitute the soul of people and societies have disappeared and technical and matter replaced them, then does not it cause the loss of human dignity and honor? I think it does. For when man abandons the guidance of virtue, prudence and mercy which the Creator has granted, he has neither human dignity left nor any honor and respect.

Not even that much. It is an apparent truth that the West uses science and technology to penetrate into countries it desires to use as a colony, deteriorate their culture and social balance to acquire its constant goal of total world domination. And through this perspective, when we consider the argument of whether "technology creates any value" in our country; then we shall easily state that, it creates new values to demolish the social values in its future colonies, and deteriorate previously established cultures of that society. Modern production techniques replaced traditional and family values with productivity principles and personal interests to create an imposed, artificial lifestyle. What is not natural here is that the modern production culture does not esteem the traditional and does not distinguish the material from the non-material; moreover, it puts the means in front of the goal which is neglected in the backward plane in which case the goal becomes means. In a true culture, all the activities of the people were within a whole which was very meaningful for them. However, in

contemporary culture the needed meaningful spheres were imprisoned in a limited amount of confined spaces. What is dominating today's life is the machine industry, which keeps the system up to date, continues on its way with the soulless specialists under its control. What is noteworthy here is the process that changes the significance which is attributed by a being called man to modern knowledge and technology. This process is an axis shift in the sense of value that initiates the great change called industrialization. Modern technology instead of making the new knowledge an occasion for offering thanks turns it into an opportunity for pride.

Reducing the meaning of man to sole positive ideologies results in massification of man and in melting his being which is then lost within masses. This massification enables external factors to dominate internal factors as a result of the strong and reckless tendency towards technology. Inner values are ignored, sacrificed to technology and mechanical civilizations which fed on one-dimensional development of natural sciences and materialism. The structure of technology deteriorates not only material, but also spiritual and mental features of man; aiming to cut his connections with the Divine Creator; therefore, eliminating the metaphysical dimension and spiritual depth of man.

However, what is to be done in technology and science / knowledge production is to establish a balance in every way, to understand the human nature and penetrate more deeply to understand the universe, to give an opportunity to establish the bonds between man and Revelation. In establishing the balance metaphysical truths must be in the central place. Technology is dominating the societies wherever it enters today and it carries the mentality of that place to its own sphere. What is more specifically emphasized here is the mechanization and technology developed after 18th century in order to develop and protect Western colonialism behind which is contemporary Christian mindset and modernization mentality. Technology exploits modernization, and Christianize it as it exploits. Therefore technology is an instrument for spreading Christianity in developing countries by means of corrupting their cultures and using them as colonies.

In this century mechanization and technology are not entirely suitable for cultural lives of other nations as these are concepts developed in foreign, particularly western cultural environments; according to the common history, traditions, and principles of living and faith of Western nations. These elements of technology are subjected to different changes by the dominant culture as the technology penetrates into that particular society. The host culture also experiences different influences of this technology. Technology and technique do not create love. There was once a famous song in Turkey which was sung by the youth long ago with the following lyrics: "She has a car, so beautiful. Also has a driver, private and exclusive." And the song, especially the chorus, ended as follows: "Unfortunately, it does not have a soul." The song is saying that unfortunately the car, the machine, does not have a soul. Then the machine does not have a spirit. Therefore, it would be would be pointless to expect a mindless instrument to enrich divine and moral values of individuals, families or societies.

In that case, the fact that technology prepares the ground for globalization, and the resistance of cultures to a uniform community structure and urbanization; yet at the same time these cultures try to absorb technology, shows that the nature of technology, even its content, and essence can be changed. This is a fact that the elements of national culture can survive or be revived, even if they have suffered destruction.

Therefore, here, no matter whatever culture, whatever invasionist mentality, which ever conception of science and power technology may represent it will find in one way or another an indigenous culture in opposition and indeed it must find such a reaction; and these are national cultures. Basis of national culture includes religion and language. Just as it was in the past, unified nature of civilization is protected by the language and the religion in today's world also because both of these make up the common ground for the diversified societies. Religion, has become an ideal of Turkish nation throughout history. Religious ideals have been merged with ideals of the state. Therefore religion should definitely be given the upmost importance in terms of culture and moral values. Only this way, deformation of cultural changes, resulting from the clash between civilization-culture and technology can be avoided.

We can protect our own genuine values and create new values for ourselves with the guidance of our own cultural structure if we manage to produce technology and science according to our perspective towards life.

An individual shall not base his/her morale and ethical values on concepts of others but shall determine the best and the most beneficial approach on a personalized level. Continuity and maintenance of ethics and ethical values depend on adoption of a divine and absolute source, a creator. For, this will enable commitment to the rules of an Absolute Being. Only this way, ethical values and rules may be universally valid. Even people who claim to be atheists will benefit from the ethical environment relying on application of these strong values.

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