

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

Welcome back to the new issue of *Ilahiyat Studies*.

This issue of *IS* features seven research articles on transhumanism and artificial intelligence, as well as two book review essays.

In the first article, “The Production of Human Reproduction: Impacts of Transhumanism’s Inconsistent Reproductive Policy on Classical Ethical Principles”, Esra Kartal Soysal provides a critical analysis of the reproductive policy of the transhumanist movement, which deconstructs some of the principles of classical ethics and modern bioethics, such as nonmaleficence, beneficence, autonomy, justice, and human dignity. The article’s main thesis is that transhumanism’s overoptimism is rooted in radical pessimism. To that end, the article examines transhumanism’s understanding of human nature and its goal of reproduction-free humanity. It also attempts to clarify the effects of *evolutionary trade-offs* and *directed evolution* on enhancement. The author argues that the state of imperfection attributed to evolution by transhumanism is the key to development. He also questions the potential danger of authoritarian eugenics in creating individual-social polarization.

In the second article, “Freedom as an Issue in the Context of Transhumanism and Artificial Intelligence, Digitalization, and Robotics (AIDR)”, Ahmet Dağ presents a thought-provoking examination of the relationship between human physical and cognitive development and freedom. The author considers the continuity of the correlation between matter and freedom throughout antiquity, Renaissance, Enlightenment, industrialization, and twentieth-century technological developments. Transhumanism further radicalizes this correlation, aiming for the civilization of superlongevity, intelligence, and happiness. According to the author, a careful analysis of the AIDR processes and transhumanism

reveals that the potential biological freedom based on biotechnology may yield a result inversely proportional to social freedom, and the difference between augmented and nonaugmented humans can give rise to a master-slave reality. Furthermore, humans, who are said to be saved from the limitations of their nature or of God, are left to the mercy of technology-based capital.

In his engaging article, “Islamic Classical Theism and the Prospect of Strong Artificial Intelligence”, Enis Doko attempts to establish a philosophical basis for the existence of conscious and intelligent machines and their potential compatibility with Islamic beliefs. To prove his case, the author focuses on the discourse of functionalism, which provides a theoretical framework for realizing strong AI. When mental states are expressed in terms of functional roles, an artificial system that simulates the functional organization of the human mind can achieve genuine mental states and consciousness. In pursuing the subject matter, the author analyzes the mind-body dualism in the classical theistic view and shows how mental states arise in at least two different substances. In line with these arguments, the article concludes that the possibility of the emergence of strong AI is not surprising from the classical theistic perspective and even confirms classical theism, albeit not very strongly.

Seyithan Can’s article, “Critique of Transhumanism’s Concept of Humans from the Perspective of Islamic Thought”, evaluates the ontological approaches of transhumanism from a theological perspective. The article compares the concepts of “transhuman” and “posthuman” in transhumanism and human perfection in Abrahamic religions. The transhumanist approach views humans as inherently deficient, claiming that humans will achieve maximum competence through science and technology in the process of posthumanization. This perspective contradicts the Islamic concept of perfect creation. While transhumanists base human centrality on the body, Abrahamic religions have based the concept of human perfection on the ability and capacity to contemplate. Given these considerations, the author concludes that Abrahamic religions fundamentally differ from the transhumanist tradition, which focuses on bodily perfection by emphasizing morality.

Meryem Şahin and Mücahit Gültekin invite us to analyze the story of al-Sāmirī to explain the interaction between religion and robotics in Muslim culture in their article, “The Interaction of Religion and Robotics

and al-Sāmirī's Calf (the Golden Calf) as an Early Theomorphic Robot". The authors argue that the details of the perception of robots differ depending on their role, and there is a correlation between the attribution of sanctity to entities in Muslim societies and negative attitudes towards that entity. Giving robots the roles of subject, agent, or proxy may lead to resistance against social robots in Muslim societies, as seen in the story of the artificial calf and its fate in the story of al-Sāmirī.

"A Criticism of Transhumanism from the Society 5.0 Perspective in the Context of Social Values", by Abdulkadir Büyükbingöl and Taylan Maral, compares transhumanism and Society 5.0 in terms of their objectives. The authors discuss the concepts of God, human, intelligence, and gender equality in the context of transhumanism. They conclude that while both approaches generally adopt a pragmatic attitude, their perspectives on individual and social values differ. Therefore, transhumanist goals need to be reconsidered in light of the spiritual well-being of societies in mind.

The final article, "The New Materialism and Post-Humanist Studies", by Sait Yılmaz, aims to explore the future of the world amid an ongoing technological revolution and its effects on human beings, whose lives are being manipulated by global elites. The main thesis of the article is that the world is turning into a kind of "company technologism" and is trying to dictate its new global story. Based on this assumption, the author draws attention to the possible threatening consequences of transhumanism to raise awareness of human transformation.

We, the editorial team, are grateful to our authors, referees, and readers for their continued support and look forward to being with you in the next issues of *Ilahiyat Studies*

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