



Knowledgeable Research

ISSN 2583-6633

Vol.02, No.06, January, 2024

<http://knowledgeableresearch.com/>

The concept of Imminent humanism and its Anthropocentric implications

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Abstract:

Imminent humanism, at its core, is a doctrine that places the human being at the center of philosophical and ethical considerations. It deems humanity as having intrinsic value and asserts the primacy of human interests and concerns. The paper shall concept has profound anthropocentric implications, as it focuses on the welfare, rights, and dignity of humans above all else. Anthropocentrism, in the context of imminent humanism, refers to the belief that human beings are entitled to special consideration and that their needs and desires should be prioritized over the interests of other species or the environment. This perspective stems from the unique capabilities and moral responsibilities that humans possess. Anthropocentric Posthumanism is a philosophical framework that aims to reassess the relationship between humans and the environment, challenging the traditional human-centric view. It advocates for a shift towards a more inclusive and interconnected understanding of existence, recognizing the impact of human actions on the planet. This approach encourages a re-evaluation of our place in the natural world and calls for a move away from anthropocentric thinking. It emphasizes a holistic and respectful attitude towards all living beings and the environment as a whole, while also recognizing the agency and value of non-human entities. Additionally, this philosophy promotes a symbiotic relationship between humans and technology, where both are seen as equal and mutually dependent. Overall, it presents a new way of thinking about the human-nature relationship, fostering inclusivity and sustainability. Our paper is an endeavour to comprehend the concept of imminent humanism in-depth and its ramifications and also to understand anthropocentric posthumanism.

Keywords: *Imminent Humanism, Anthropocentric, Post-humanism, Environment, Technology*

The Alter Humanism expounding's in relation with Anthropocene

The Oxford Dictionary defines Posthumanism as “The term posthumanism was used for one of the first times in Ihab Hassan’s Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthumanist Culture? (Press, 2018). It is an umbrella term used to denote a range of related and even starkly different ontologies, epistemologies, methodologies, approaches, scientific and philosophical frameworks, and so on,

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Received Date: 12.01.2024

Publication Date.29.01.2024

which is why there is no one conception of posthumanism but many posthumanism's. In the realm of political philosophy, a more specific interpretation regards it as a meta-ideology or meta-theory that calls for the theoretical repositioning of the human subject from philosophical and political assumptions and considerations, with the goal of achieving a more comprehensive and fair understanding of concepts.

The term posthumanism was used for one of the first times in Ihab Hassan's *Prometheus as Performer: Towards a Post humanist Culture?*, in which, he makes an attempt to understand or lay the case for cultural posthumanism (Hassan, 1977). He claims,

"We need first to understand that the human form [...] may be changing radically, and thus must be re-visioned. We need to understand that five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that we must helplessly call posthumanism"

(Hassan, 2018).

Posthumanism is utilized in a variety of fields to represent diverse concepts. The topics within posthumanism encompass efforts to alter worldviews and analyze changes in the functioning of the cultural and natural world. Regardless, it signifies a shift from the primarily modern view of the human subject and its associated legitimizing structures, necessitating significant redefinitions of many fundamental concepts. Likewise, the posthuman might manifest as a human with a post-anthropocentric or post-humanistic consciousness, a cyborg (an organic and machine hybrid), or a fully artificial intelligent machine, among other real and virtual entities that are presently inconceivable.

The necessity for redefining terms and conducting new research in emerging fields is driven by recent developments, innovations, and discoveries in science and technology. This includes areas such as information technology and biotechnology, as well as advancements in social sciences. These developments have led to the need for new ideas to address challenges such as climate change, damage to the natural environment, social segregation, and exploitation based on speciesism.

Essential viewpoints of Anthropocentric perspectivism

Anthropocentric posthumanism, a meta-ideology, is focused on egoism, exclusivism, instrumentalism, and similar beliefs. It revolves around the idea that humanity, particularly its privileged forms, represents the centre of the universe and the ethical culmination of material and biological evolution. Consequently, humans are viewed as the most deserving of legal, ethical, and moral consideration due to their consciousness and capacity for thought. This ideology regards non-humans, including certain human groups, as subservient or as objects of exploitation in order to enhance the subjective experiences of superior humans. The notion of human superiority and the lack of moral and ethical consideration for other animal species is characteristic of the discriminatory ideology known as speciesism. This mindset involves exploitation and discrimination based on differences in species.

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This perspective is not exclusive to Jewish and Christian theology and can also be identified in Aristotle's *Poetics* and Immanuel Kant's moral philosophy.

Certain anthropocentric philosophers endorse a perspective known as the cornucopian viewpoint, which disputes assertions about the finite nature of Earth's resources and the potential for unchecked human population growth to surpass the planet's carrying capacity, leading to conflicts and food shortages as resources dwindle. Proponents of the "cornucopian viewpoint" Choose and contend that the projections of resource constraints and population growth are either overstated or that technological advancements will be able to address future scarcity issues. In either scenario, they do not perceive a moral or practical necessity for implementing legal regulations to safeguard the natural environment or restrict its exploitation.

The Anthropocene narrative should be recognized for its important role in drawing attention to the critical issues surrounding climate change. This narrative portrays humanity as a species that is intensifying its destructive impact on the Earth System. Various historical events, such as capitalism, colonialism, slave labor, and the spread of radioactive isotopes through nuclear weapon testing, have been implicated as contributing factors to the current predicament of a planet teetering on the edge of collapse within different discourses of the Anthropocene.

The recognition of human impact on the Earth during the Anthropocene era has been impressive. Nevertheless, geologists caution that attempting to track our influence over deep time may be difficult to comprehend. If the scientific community has not officially recognized the Anthropocene as a geological era, it raises questions about the validity and implications of using this term across various disciplines.

According to the findings of Atmospheric Chemist, Paul J. Crutzen in *Geology of Mankind* it was recognized as early as 1873 by Italian geologist Antonio Stoppani that humanity was exerting a growing influence on the Earth's systems, which he described as an "anthropozoic era." The term Anthropocene was originally coined by biologist Eugene Stoermer, but it was Crutzen who brought the term into popular usage.

Ever since the proposal of Anthropocene as a new geological age, it appears that the Humanities have taken control of the narrative and developed it to the point where, according to Rosi Braidotti, it has evolved into what she calls an "Anthropomeme". She further elaborates that it has spiraled out of control and entered a phase of "epistemic accelerationism", where a good idea quickly becomes exaggerated. Braidotti argues that the term Anthropocene is too ambiguous and, in many ways, misses the critical point of the convergence effect. According to Braidotti, Anthropocentric Humanism is characterized by fluctuating moods and an emphasis on imagining disaster, preventing a full understanding of the complex emotional landscape. This has resulted in a scholarly environment of anxiety. Braidotti urges scholars to appreciate the extraordinary scientific and technological advancements but also stresses the importance of analyzing events in the context of a critique of the human and the anthropocentric. In the text *Screening the Posthuman* by Pansy Duncan, she mentions that

“More specifically, scholars associated with the posthuman, like Stacy Alaimo, Rosi Braidotti, and Donna Haraway, have begun to yoke this figure to the "Anthropocene," understood as a geologic epoch dating from the first evidence that human beings had significantly altered earth's ecosystems. This emerging dialogue between the posthuman and the Anthropocene should come as no surprise. For while elevating the human to the status of geological agent, the Anthropocene also strips the human of its claims to mastery over the natural world - describing, as it does, a set of far-reaching phenomena, like anthropogenic climate change, accelerated species extinction, and changes to the form of the earth's surface, which exceed our control and threaten our existence”.

(Duncan 243)

Compartmentalising Anthropocentric realities

Tim Hayward (1997) defined anthropocentrism in two ways: first, as the affection for one's own species, and second, as prejudice against other species. This perspective aligns with the differentiation between "strong" anthropocentrism, which believes non-human entities only have value if they benefit humans, and "weak" anthropocentrism, which is seen as unavoidable and even beneficial as it emphasizes the self-interested desire to protect the environment, as formulated by Bryan Norton (1984). In the first scenario, a valid concern for human well-being can be considered "natural" and noble, as taking care of one's own species recognizes the need for a balanced, healthy, and naturally bountiful environment for human prosperity. Likewise, it is assumed that while anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric perspectives differ, people will strive to preserve the environment upon which they (or their concern subjects) depend. This convergence theory, or environmental pragmatism, assumes that in environmental protection, both anthropocentric and eco-centric motivations ultimately achieve the same results in practice. Norton (1984, 131) asserted that weak anthropocentrism serves as a basis for critiquing unsustainable practices, thereby furnishing an adequate foundation for environmental protection without the "questionable ontological commitments made by non-anthropocentrists in attributing intrinsic value to nature." In the second case, anthropocentrism involves a focus on human interests to the exclusion or at the cost of the interests of other species (Hayward 1997, 52). Strong anthropocentrism has been tied to various environmental issues, from the destruction of natural habitats to the mistreatment of animals utilized for consumption and medical experimentation (Norton 1984). In his work "The Arrogance of Humanism" (1978), American biologist David Ehrenfeld outlines the repercussions of this exclusion.

Why to distinguish Anthropocentrism from Critical Posthumanism-Anthropocentric Posthumanism has been a central element of European humanism since its inception, with few exceptions. It not only retroactively legitimizes the process now known as the Anthropocene, but also actively contributes to shaping the present. This is a point of criticism, interrogation, and debate. Therefore, the question arises: What is Critical Posthumanism critical about? Is it the current state of affairs, the factors that led us here, a particular way of philosophical thinking, or the human desire to survive and the drastic measures taken to achieve this? One significant problem is the subject/object division, which Romanticism attempted to overcome or at least minimize. It is necessary to question the basis, legitimacy, and potentially disastrous consequences of this division. I believe that initiating this

investigation through the concept of 'agency', as many Critical Post Humanists do, is highly problematic. While the ability to act is crucial in the Kantian moral framework that we still adhere to, granting objects agency raises questions about ethical responsibility and the distinction between subjects and objects. Moreover, when examining Kant's moral philosophy and our legal systems with this perspective in mind, we discover a significant problem: Only action creates a moral person, while those who are being subjected to another's agency are by default considered non-moral actors.

Movies like- *The day after tomorrow*, 2012 and *The Fifth wave* showcase a fundamental theme that nature if deprecated, will emerge out to be exceptionally horrifying and outrageous and the complete structure of humanist is going to collapse because of this.

The need of hour

Anthropocentric posthumanism is a philosophical viewpoint that questions the traditional concept of human exceptionalism and aims to restore a more balanced relationship between humans and the natural world. Rather than prioritizing human interests and abilities, this perspective emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living beings and the planet as a whole.

A fundamental aspect of anthropocentric posthumanism is the acknowledgment of the negative impact of human activities on the environment and other species. It recognizes that humans have often exploited and harmed the natural world for their own gain, leading to significant ecological and ethical repercussions. By focusing on the role of humans in shaping the future of the planet, anthropocentric posthumanism seeks to promote a more accountable and sustainable approach to human existence.

Another important aspect of this perspective is its insistence on the blurring of distinctions between humans and other forms of life. Instead of reinforcing the idea of a clear separation between humans and nature, anthropocentric posthumanism advocates for a more fluid and interconnected relationship. This vision of interconnectedness promotes a deeper awareness of the impact of human activities on the broader ecosystem and a recognition of the value and significance of non-human beings.

When exploring anthropocentric posthumanism, it is crucial to consider the implications for ethical and political action. This perspective challenges traditional power structures and calls for a more inclusive and equal treatment of all living beings. It also requires a reevaluation of human interactions with the natural world, advocating for more sustainable and considerate practices.

Conclusion

In conclusion, anthropocentric posthumanism provides a thought-provoking and alternative perspective on the relationship between humans and the natural world. By emphasizing the interconnectedness of all living beings and the planet as a whole, this approach challenges traditional ideas of human exceptionalism and promotes a more responsible and sustainable approach to human existence. It also encourages a reevaluation of ethical and political systems, calling for a more inclusive and equal treatment of all living beings. Post-humanism in anthropology often encompasses

a broad range of subjects, including nonhuman species, technology, and ecology. This approach is frequently linked to concepts of social change, responsibility, and the coexistence of multiple species (Haraway 2008). Additionally, post-humanist anthropology explores the hierarchical relationship between humans and nonhumans, drawing on traditional ethnographies that focused on animals, plants, and other organisms. It also extends its scope to contemporary topics such as microbiomes and nano-machines. Scholars in environmental anthropology have embraced post-humanism as well, recognizing deep ecology, animal rights/welfare, and ecological justice perspectives. From a post-humanist standpoint, all communities, indigenous or not, should have inherent rights, and humanity as a whole should bear responsibility for nonhuman entities. Post-humanism also emphasizes the need for human activism in environmental protection and challenges the fundamental principles of humanism, rejecting speciesism, human chauvinism, and human supremacy.

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Received Date: 12.01.2024

Publication Date: 29.01.2024