THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRANSHUMANISM

This page intentionally left blank

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRANSHUMANISM A Critical Analysis

BENJAMIN ROSS University of North Texas, USA



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India Malaysia – China Emerald Publishing Limited Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2020

© 2020 Benjamin Ross Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83982-625-2 (Print) ISBN: 978-1-83982-622-1 (Online) ISBN: 978-1-83982-624-5 (Epub)



ISOQAR certified Management System, awarded to Emerald for adherence to Environmental standard ISO 14001:2004.

Certificate Number 1985 ISO 14001 INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

CONTENTS

Introduction		
1.	Redesigning Humans	5
	1.1. Transhumanist Philosophy I: Summoning	
	the Posthuman	7
	1.2. Transhumanist Philosophy II: Epistemological	
	Certainty	13
	1.3. Resisting Transhumanism: Bioconservative Views	18
	1.4. The Language of Enhancement through the Lens	
	of Automation	25
2.	Engaging with Transhumanism	37
	2.1. The Three Supers of Transhumanism	38
	2.2. Mythic and Religious Precursors to Transhumanism	43
	2.3. Modern Philosophy and the Emergence of	
	Transhumanism	49
	2.4. Science Fiction: Transhumanism in the Cultural	
	Imagination	55
	2.5. Realizing Transhumanism: Contemporary	
	Institutions	61
3.	Living "Forever": Transhumanism and Mortality	73
	3.1. Human Immortality as Amortality	75
	3.2. The Ontology of Amortality	80
	3.3. Social-Political and Metaphysical Concerns	
	Raised by Amortality	89
4.	"Unlimited" Intelligence and Well-being	99
	4.1. Questioning the Emergence of Superintelligence 1	01

	4.2. Faith in Superintelligence: An Inevitable	10/
	Singularity?	106
	4.3. Engineering a Perfect World: Infinite Well-be	ing 115
	4.4. Problematizing Transhuman Hedonism	119
5.	The Role of the Philosopher in Transhumanism	127
	5.1. The Overhuman: Proto-transhumanism or	
	Critique?	128
	5.2. Questioning Cyborg Values	136
	5.3. Nietzsche's Philosophy: The Revaluation	
	of Values	142
6.	Transhumanism and Buddhist Philosophy: Two	
	Approaches to Suffering	147
	6.1. Deconstructing the Self versus Enhancing	
	the Self	149
	6.2. Failing to "Empty" Emptiness: Deconstruction	
	as Reification	155
	6.3. Buddhist Philosophy as an Alternative to	
	Transhumanism?	162
Сс	onclusion: Contesting and Considering	
Transhumanism		
Rei	ferences	177
Index		