

Into the Matrix - Pt. 1

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Blue binary code technology tunnel[/caption]

Part I – The Human Being or the Machine?

The technological advances of the last decades have drastically changed our lifestyle, so much that it is hard to recall how life used to be in the past. What Did human beings do with their time before Youtube, Facebook, Twitter? How did people live before status updates, selfies, e-mails?

There are two common approaches to the technological acceleration of our times.

The first, held by many people, is that technological progress signifies cultural progress. According to this world view, better technology means a better society, and in general a better life.

Some even believe that all of humanity's problems will one day be solved by technology, which just needs to take one more step in its endless progress, in order to end misery and provide a healthy and comfortable life to all.

The second approach, which is more minor in scale but still present, sees technology as the mother of all evils. According to this world view, all our problems are rooted in technological progress and the only solution can be the complete detachment from technology and its evils.

Let us see how both approaches can find support in real life.

Technology has generally improved certain medical practices, sanitation and the quality of life of medical patients all around the world. It has allowed us to communicate easily with people on the other side of the world and to reconnect with people that we have lost touch with. It also has given us access to an immense variety of different forms of virtual activities, and made information more accessible than ever before. It has made our life more convenient in many

ways.

At the same time, technology had developed new and sophisticated weaponry that can kill more people with more “efficiency” (and with AI entering the military market, this will just get worse). It made the mass production of “junk-food” possible, lowering our quality of life and increasing the risk for fatal and life altering illnesses. Its uncontrolled use destroys our environment and allows the inhumane treatment of farm animals.

In the personal level, technology many times disconnects us from those who are close to us, distracting us constantly, and pulling us from where and when we are, and not always to better or more useful activities.

It seems then that for every positive point, we will find a matching negative one. This is because, at the end of the day, technology is a tool, and like every tool it is can be used for good or for bad. In itself, it has no moral value.

A knife, which is a form of technology, can be used to slice a tomato, or to stab a human being. The moral value of a tool is endowed to it by the only being we know of that can understand and perceive morality, and that is the human being.

Technology therefore does not equal progress. A better tool does not make a better man.

In the words of philosopher Jorge Angel Livraga, the Roman chariot driver was not less intelligent or wise than today's sports car driver. Is the tablet user of today necessarily wiser than the ancient Egyptian scribe? Reading common youtube comments, we can definitely answer in the negative.

The important was, is and always will be the human element and not the machine. We commonly seek for answers in the development of new techniques and technologies. Instead of focusing on the human element and encouraging a positive transformation through education, we focus on changing and sometimes improving technical aspects, because it is easier and more tangible.

However, technology cannot solve the problems of humanity or of the individual, because it is a material means, and **material means can only bring material results.**

If we accept that human beings are not just matter, than in order to solve the profound, existential problems that afflict humanity today, we need profound, deep means, which must be philosophical and spiritual.

That is why today, more than ever, we need to activate our most precious technology - our minds, in order to discern and use technology in an intelligent manner, in a way that does not put the human element in a secondary place, and does not limit us from experiencing life in all its splendor.

Technology is also not the great devil.



The only devil in this world perhaps is the human being, when he is not conscious of his own eternal self, and when his acts originate in the lowest aspects of his existence.

Exactly when he acts like a robot, and not like a human being.