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REVIEW

Transhumanism as Modern–Day Necromancy

Philip Højme

Graduate School for Social Research (GSSR), Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, The Polish Academy of Sciences

Abstract: *This essay seeks to engage critically with the transhumanist goal of achieving the technological possibility of transferring consciousness into a computer. The general aim of the critical impulse of this essay is to interpret the various techno-optimistic attempts at transcending the bodily condition of life as being a kind of modern-day necromancy. By alluding to the magical or ritual notion of necromancy, this essay will show how the rationale behind Transhumanism and mind-transfer are premised on a desire to overcome life itself by becoming immortal. Necromancy, whereby a sorcerer or practitioner suspends the dialectics of life and death, elevates the human to an inhuman position by attacking the very foundation of life itself – reviving the dead. This essay will juxtapose Transhumanism with necromancy by interpreting the goal to develop mind-transferring technologies in relation to texts that describe various technological means for practicing the art of necromancy or dark magic. By reinterpreting Transhumanism in this manner, this essay will show how the ritualistic, magical, or mythical foundations, that humanity had earlier called upon to overcome the fragility of their bodies have survived in the premises that underlining the modern-day endeavors to overcome the body via technological means.*

Keywords: Death, Life, Necromancy, Technology, Transhumanism

Introduction: Beginning of the Séance

Allow me to begin this essay by presenting a pedestrian account of Transhumanism as understood as a philosophical (as well as an ethical and anthropological) discourse concerned with the various paths that humanity could take to transcend their bodily and mental limitations or enhance their capabilities[1]. Understood in this way, most Transhumanist endeavours revolve around the notion that humanity could (and should) overcome their limitations and become posthuman[2] – or to say, in other words, to improve themselves beyond their natural limitations. In opposition to, what I would call naïve techno-optimism. This essay seeks to expand on my earlier suggested critique of Transhumanism[3], which provided a critical account of Transhumanism's *mythological origins*.

Horkheimer and Adorno once argued, in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*[4], that enlightenment ways of thinking revert to the myth of rational universalism. Hence, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, rationality becomes irrational when it fails to question its own universality; "enlightenment believes itself safe from the return of the mythical. It equates thought with mathematics. The latter is thereby cut loose, as it were, turned into an absolute authority"[5]. The gist of Horkheimer and Adorno argued that the rational becomes irrational when it sets itself up as a universal category or an absolute authority. By taking

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[1] Vita-More, Natasha. 'The Transhumanist Manifesto'. (HumanityPlus, 2020), https://www.humanityplus.org/the-transhumanist-manifesto.

[2] Bostrom, Nick. 'The Future of Humanity'. In *New Waves in Philosophy of Technology* Edited by Jan-Kyrre B. Olsen, Even Selinger, and Søren Riis: 186–216 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), https://www.nickbostrom.com/papers/future.pdf..

[3] Højme, Philip. 'Whose Survival? A Critical Engagement with the Notion of Existential Risk'. *Scientia et Fides* 7(2): 63–76 (2019). https://apcz.umk.pl/SetF/article/view/SetF.2019.016.

[4] Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002)..

[5] Ibid. 18.

this critique of enlightened thought as its founding cue, this essay will present a critical account of the Transhumanist wish for developing mind-transfer or mind-uploading technologies[6,7].

This essay's central aim is to illuminate Transhumanism's mystical core under its techno-optimistic veil. The first section of this essay will be a succinct account of the contemporary discussion of mind-transfer as Transhumanist thinkers have suggested it. Additionally, this section will also engage critically with an opponent who has problematised the ethical aspects of mind-transferring technologies in reference to theo-ethical counter-arguments. In short, this essay will reinterpret the just mentioned wish as a return to the archaic mythology of necromancy or dark magic. The second section moves on to reinterpret the attempt at developing mind-transfer technologies in light of a selection of older as well as modern accounts of the rituals and associated magical 'technologies' (potions, rites, and so on) needed to reanimate the dead or awaken their spirits (necromancy). We return to Horkheimer and Adorno's critique in the last and concluding section. This section aims to juxtapose Transhumanism in general and mind-transfer in particular with those mystical and magical traditions commonly associated with necromancy or magic rituals.

I.   **Transhumanism and Mind Transfer**

Transhumanism, used as an umbrella term, covers a wide range of philosophical, anthropological, technological, and theoretical positions, which could all be described as sharing the following general goals. First and foremost, Transhumanists seek to transcend the various limitations that currently block humanity from progressing. Overcoming these blocks could potentially lead to a higher level of consciousness, a life free from suffering or death, increased individual freedom (e.g. the right to change

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[6] Geraci, Robert M. 'Mind Uploading'. In *Encyclopedia of Sciences and Religions* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. 2013), 1322–23, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-8265-8_201030.
[7] Wiley, Keith. 'A Taxonomy and Metaphysics of Mind-Uploading' (Seattle: Humanity+ Press and Alautun Press. 2014).

one's body, mind, and so on using bodily or cognitively enhancing technologies), or to secure the survival

of humanity or "Earth-originating life"[8],[9]. Secondly, Transhumanism is a political program that is most

often conceived of as being based on liberal ideas of society[10]. Accordingly, Transhumanists strive

towards a future society wherein individuals are as free as possible, meaning that the constraints on

individuals' freedoms are minimal to non-existent; individuals are free to lead the life they think best.

Thirdly, Transhumanism is a biological, social, and technological anthropology of the human species that

sees the current stage of humanity (*homo sapiens sapiens*) as temporal, thus meaning that for

Transhumanists, becoming posthuman is virtuous and the teleological aim of human endeavours[11].

One of the earliest modern articulations of mind-transfer has been attributed to Bacon by Engels,

who wrote that:

"Bacon, already advanced the demand that his new empirical, inductive method should

be pursued to attain, above all, by its means: longer life, rejuvenation – to a certain extent,

alteration of stature and features, *transformation of one body into another*, the production of a

new species, power over the air and production of storms"[12]

Besides suggesting what we nowadays call mind-transfer, Bacon's position was described as

suggesting aims that are generally comparable with Transhumanism. Both Bacon and present-day

Transhumanists have an optimistic perception of the possibilities that technological progress would lead

to, and according to both, humanity ought to be concerned with improving its material and intellectual

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[8] Bostrom 2009, 10.
[9] Bostrom, Nick. Existential Risk Prevention as Global Priority. *Global Policy* 4(1): 15–31 (2013), https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12002, 20.
[10] Baily, Doug; et al. 'The Transhumanist Declaration'. (HumanityPlus, 2009[1998]), https://www.humanityplus.org/the-transhumanist-declaration.
[11] Bostrom, Nick. 'Transhumanist Values'. In *Ethical Issues for the Twenty-first Century*. Edited by Frederick Adams (Charlottesville: Philosophy Documentation Center Press, 2003), 3–14.
[12] Engels, Frederick. 'Dialectics of Nature'. In *Karl Marx Fredrick Engels: Collected Works*, 25: 311–588, (New York: International Publishers, 1987[1925]).

conditions. However, it is well beyond the scope of this essay to give a complete account of Transhumanism in general and the Transhumanist conception of technology in particular.

Therefore, the following account of Transhumanism will be limited to accounting for mind-transfer[13] or mind-uploading[14] in a broad sense as all technologies that aim to emulate human consciousness in a machine or otherwise digitally. These technologies are grouped to comprise a single group of futuristic inventions that converge around the wish to digitalise the human mind, leading to a blurring of the strict demarcation between machine and body, or software and biology.

By the term mind-transfer technologies, I mean to allude to a wide range of hypothetical technologies that would be able to, in some way or another, create a digital copy of an individual's consciousness. I will, however, refrain from discussing how various accounts of consciousness might impact the feasibility of mind-transfer technologies[15]. Advocates for these technologies, despite their differences, seemingly share three fundamental notions necessary for the feasibility of mind-transfer. First, there is a correlation between brain structure and consciousness; this is called physicalism[16]. Secondly, it is within the scope of future technological progress to scan a human brain and make a digital copy of an individual's consciousness based on this scan. And thirdly, the human mind is computable, meaning that human consciousness could function at least similarly in a computer as it does in the brain. This position is called computationalism[17][18].

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[13] Asimov, Janet J. 'Mind Transfer' (New York: Walker Publishing Company, 1988).

[14] Sandberg, Anders, and Nick Bostrom. Whole Brain Emulation: A Roadmap, Technical Report #2008‑3 (Oxford: Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford University, 2008), www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/reports/2008‑3.pdf.

[15] Sandberg, Anders. 'Feasibility of Whole Brain Emulation'. In *Philosophy and Theory of Artificial Intelligence* Edited by Vincent C. Müller (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer, 2013), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-31674-6_19.

[16] Sandberg and Bostrom 2008.

[17] Fodor, Jerry A. The Modularity of Mind (Cambridge: MIT Press. 1983).

[18] Wilson, Robert A. 'Wide Computationalism'. *Mind* 103(411): 351–72 (1994), http://www.jstor.org/stable/2253744.

The ethical implications of mind-transfer have been accounted for in Osiński's article, *Theological and Ethical Aspects of Mind Transfer in Transhumanism*[19]. Osiński's article will provide a concise account of the contemporary debate about mind-transferring technologies and other topics often discussed within Transhumanist circles in relation to mind-transfer; artificial intelligence, information technologies, cognitive science, nanotechnology, and biotechnology.

According to Osiński, the possibility of inventing mind-transfer technologies encounters certain limitations related to mathematical language's inability "to predict states in non-linear dynamic systems"[20]. Nevertheless, Osiński continues and outlines current research into the topics mentioned above in relation to mind-transfer as proof of the continuing advancement of this research. Osiński's article concludes by stating that, based on the current state of the art of technologies related to mind-transfer, "we are already very close to achieving the technical feasibility of mind transfer"[21]. However, Osiński is not a techno-optimist when it comes to mind-transfer. Instead, Osiński takes a Thomist position towards ethical issues related to mind-transfer, a position which Osiński refers to as "the right perspective"[22]. Osiński is seemingly spurred on by an idealistic or religious influence that prescribes an apprehension towards Transhumanism from within a religious framework. Therefore, by directly referring to the ideal of religion, Osiński's critique stands squarely within a tradition that, not unlike Transhumanism, aims at bettering humanity. Osiński, in particular, writes that "it is difficult to say today which problems are more important: those requiring improvement of technology or those concerning the condition of contemporary man. The ethical condition of modern man must certainly be improved, but not only by means of technology"[23]. It is not clearly stated, but the above reference to Thomism is suggestive of the

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[19] Osiński, Grzegorz. 2021. 'Theological and Ethical Aspects of Mind Transfer in Transhumanism'. *Scientia et Fides* 9(1): 149–76 (2021), http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/SetF.2021.005.
[20] Ibid. 156.
[21] Ibid. 171.
[22] Ibid. 151.
[23] Ibid. 172.

possibility that theology could reasonably be thought to constitute, according to Osiński, a philosophical position that could improve 'the ethical position of modern (hu-)man(s)' to *make humanity better suited for the future to come or the kingdom of heaven?*

Osiński's essay concludes by asserting that because the technical feasibility and scientific curiosity pushing boundaries, discussions about mind-transfer technologies can no longer be entertained as purely techno-optimist musing. Therefore, the feasibility and curiosity about these kinds of technologies must force even its starkest critics to seriously engage with the possibility that it is no longer a question of if but rather when mind-transferring technologies will be invented. Osiński critiques amount to the statement that "[w]e can no longer expect scientists to refrain themselves from morally questionable day-to-day experiments"[24]. Hence, according to Osiński, it is up to ethicists or theo-ethicists to engage with the associated moral questions that stem from scientific and technological progress.

However, Osiński's critique is not a novel critique of science, technology, or progress. Not only religious thinkers but also Critical Theorists (the Frankfurt School and Horkheimer and Adorno) have critiqued science for its possible and actual misuses. Therefore, my critique of Transhumanism and mind-transfer will refer to Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectics of Enlightenment* as an alternative to Osiński's theo-ethical argument. This book contains two interesting arguments. First, Horkheimer and Adorno identified that the natural or positive sciences lack self-reflective criticism of the methods[25] associated with these sciences. The book, therefore, contains an argument against blindly believing in science as a corrective of social ills. Secondly, *Dialectics of Enlightenment* contains an elaboration of how the myth of enlightenment progress made science deeply infatuated with its own (unlimited) possibilities.

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[24] Ibid.
[25] Horkheimer and Adorno 2002, 10–12.

Not only this, but science and society also became so self-centred that they reverted to mythical thinking[26] about how they could bend Nature to their will using rational thinking.

Besides these critiques, Horkheimer and Adorno also critiqued Darwinism because the theory failed to understand how its grand theory or totalising gestures meant that it simply followed in the footsteps of the enlightenment and thus came to 'serve the enlightenment's wish to conquer Nature'[27]. It is nevertheless quite interesting that Horkheimer and Adorno's saw a strong connection between, on the one hand, positive science and rationality and, on the other hand, Darwinism and mythical thinking.

Concerning this connection, the scholar Jesper V. Kragh argues something quite similar. Kragh writes about modern spiritism and its rituals that "Darwinism, natural science, the idea of progress, and emancipation were thoughts that the spiritists let themselves be inspired by"[28]. Kragh nevertheless points out that this does not mean that the spiritists did not take issue with the general materialism of those 'freethinkers' who rejected religion in general and Christianity in particular. From Kragh's comments, we can therefore ascertain that even if this paper attempts to juxtapose the Transhumanist wish to overcome death *via* mind-transfer (an aim that Transhumanism shares with both necromantic cults and spiritists), this should *not* be taken as suggesting that Transhumanism is directly relatable to the spiritual endeavour of these more religious or cultist worldviews. Transhumanism is closer to those materialists that the spiritists despised because of its techno-optimistic belief in the transcendence of Nature.

Transhumanism can, nevertheless, be compared with spiritists and necromantic cults because of their shared 'mythological origin' with these, in so far as the latter, not unlike Transhumanism, aims to transcend death by extending consciousness beyond its current limits. Thus, the push to develop

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[26] Ibid. xviii.
[27] Horkheimer, Max. Eclipse of Reason (London, New York: Continuum), 123–127.
[28] Kragh, Jesper V. 'En Anden Verden: Streftog i Spiritismens Seancer Og Ritualer'. In *Ritualernes Magt: Ritualer i Europæisk Historie 500 - 2000*, edited by Ulrik Langen, 163–95, (Frederiksberg: Roskilde Universitetsforlag, 2002).
, 176. My translation. Orig. Da. "Darwinismen, naturvidenskaben, ideen om fremskridt og frigørelse var alt sammen forhold, som spiritisterne lod sig inspirere af".

mind-transfer capable technologies shares certain underlying premises with spiritism, necromancy, and dark magic, because all of them aim to overcome death or Nature.

II.   Necromancy and Rituals of Dark Magic

The first link between Transhumanism and necromancy that I will propose is that both attempt to 'communicate with the dead'[29]. Both mind-transfer and necromancy aim towards immortality through either technology or rituals, mediums, psychics, and clairvoyants. Transhumanism is a materialist philosophy that pursues its goal *via* material means. According to Kragh comments, this means that the spiritualists would oppose Transhumanism because of its explicit materialism because this aligns Transhumanists more closely with the freethinkers that the spiritists critiqued for rejecting religion.

The practice of necromancy has been described in many different sources. Not to overburden the reader with textual accounts of necromancy, I will limit the following to a brief selection of those accounts that are most relevant for my argument. Both in the Old Testament's *Saul and the Witch of Endor*[30] and the *Occult Practices*[31], the bible warns its followers against both magical rites and necromancy. Moreover, descriptions of necromancy also appear elsewhere. In earlier texts such as the ancient Greek literature by Homer and in later texts such as the various versions of *the tragedy of Faust* – a body of literature that traces its origins to the *Faustbuch*[32]*,* a medieval collection of magical rites and practices. In the literary works of both Marlowe – *The Tragical History of D. Faustus*[33] – and Goethe – *Faust*[34] – the

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[29] Schoonmaker, Nancy G. Mystery and Possibility: Spiritualists in the Nineteenth-Century South (doctoral dissertation, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010), https://doi.org/10.17615/9xgy-3z06. Accessed 19.01.2022. 1–12, 1–12.

[30] 1st Samuel 28.

[31] Deuteronomy 18.

[32] Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. 'Faust'. In *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Online publication, n.d.), https://www.britannica.com/topic/Faust-literary-character.

[33] Marlowe, Christopher. The Tragical History of D. Faustus (London, New York: Routledge, 1990).

[34] von Goethe, Johann W. Faust (Garden City: Halcyon House, 1940).

protagonist Faust were cast as a 'modern'-day necromancer who attempts to gain power and knowledge by entering into a pact with the devil.

In Homer's *Odyssey*[35], Odysseus ventures to the land of the dead to learn what the future holds (a rite known as *nekyia*). By dappling with necromancy, Odysseus attains the rare privilege of transcending the bounds of mortal life by entering these lands normally reserved for the dead. Because of the rites and rituals that Circe taught Odysseus, in the 11th book of the *Odyssey*[36], the protagonist can transcend the temporal triad – past, present, and future – that normally binds mortals to a life lived solely in the present. Odysseus learns about the future by venturing into the past.

The gist of the archaic function of necromancy continues in the German literary tradition associated with *Faustian motifs*. In this tradition, dark magic, particularly communing with the devil, is used to enter into a pact with Mephisto, the devil in disguise. Beyond the reach of the mortal mind, knowledge and (magic) power are promised to Faust in return for Faust's soul. Thus, Faust gains immense power by bargaining the future in the present.

There is, however, an important discrepancy between Homer's epic and the tales of Faust. Whereas Odysseus lived a pleasurable life prior to the crew convincing Odysseus that they must leave Circe's hall[37] and set sail towards home, Faust rather bargains that the devil cannot satisfy Faust's desire for pleasure. The difference between these stories is that Odysseus leaves behind pleasure so great that 'Odysseus' wishes to return home was forgotten for a whole year'[38] whereas Faust doubts the possibility of this sort of pleasure and because of this feels secure to enter into a wager with the devil. Setting these differences aside, we are left with two stories that, in their own way, describe an enlightenment motif of

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[35] Homer. *The Odyssey* (Harmondsworth, Baltimore, Melbourne, Montreal: Penguin Books, 1916).
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[36] Ibid. 175-193[XI].
[37] Ibid. 158-174[X].
[38] Ibid.

humanity. This motif is strongly connected with humanity's everlasting search for overcoming its limitations.

Therefore, the practice of necromancy can be associated with two interconnected aims central to what could be called the human condition. The first aim is to seek power and knowledge or power through knowledge[39]. The second aim is related to the wish to control the future, as a means whereby humanity can overcome its weaknesses in the face of uncontrolled Nature. Therefore, what unites necromancy and Transhumanism is that both attempt to cheat death or Nature by transcending the bounds of mortality. When I state this as 'cheating death', I mean to indicate the many ways in which humanity has (and will) try to transcend their bodily and natural limitations. Attempts such as these constitute the Transhumanist *telos* where this ideology, humanity seeks to become more than merely human. They seek to become Posthuman.

In part on *Alienated Labor* in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*[40], Marx once remarked that humanity's shared species-being [their *Gattungswesen*] is that all humans 'eat, drink, and procreate'[41]. Based in part on Marx's remark as well as my earlier comments, I suggest that Transhumanism and the spiritists attempts at transcending death primarily constitute attempts at controlling the most material and common aspects of human life. These aspects are those that, as Marx suggested, connects each individual human's '*Wesen*' or being with its '*Gattung*' or species. I will elaborate on this point more in the last part of the essay. However, before we can move on from this part, a few comments need to be said about yet another intersection between necromancy and mind-transfer.

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[39] Foucault, Michel. The History of Sexuality Vol. I. (New York: Pantheon Books. 1978.

[40] Marx, Karl. 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, Alienated Labor'. In *Marx's Concept of Man* Edited by Erich Fromm (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1961), 93-109.

[41] Ibid. 99.

The quest for longevity (another tenet of Transhumanism) aims to achieve immortality in some form or another through technologies that can either halt or reverse ageing. Mind-uploading would, therefore, if human consciousness could be transferred into a computer, constitute a kind of longevity the human consciousness uploaded would have transcended the limitations currently associated with the body. A decentralised consciousness, uploaded to a network of servers located not only on Earth but also in orbit, on the Moon, or Mars, could stand the test of time, thereby extending human life expectancy dramatically. Moreover, if the system is based on the concept of a high degree of systematic redundancy, this could potentially maximise survivability to the point of *de facto* immortality.

Nevertheless, the wish for transferring one's consciousness onto a computer is, and I suggest that it is, indicative of a desire to prolong one's life, then this effort is very much similar to the pursuits of necromancers who likewise sought to transcend the material bounds of mortal life by communing with the dead. The desire for self-preservation, which has often been made central for human action[42] and also holds a central place in mind-transfer and necromancy alike, should therefore be interpreted as yet another permutation of humanity's many attempts at transcending their limitations.

III.   Trans(hu)mancy: Technologies Aimed at Cheating Death

Horkheimer and Adorno once wrote that "the rotten process of enlightenment reverts to magic"[43]. With this statement, Horkheimer and Adorno sought to emphasise that "[i]n magic word and content were at once different from each other and indissolubly linked"[44]. Thus, to link word and content, while at the same time preserving their difference is, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, how the enlightenment came to revert to mythological or magical thinking. Enlightenment became mythological because the

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[42] Hobbes, Thomas. 'Hobbes's Leviathan' (Oxford: the Clarendon Press. 1965), 99.
[43] Horkheimer and Adorno 2002, 133.
[44] Ibid.

inherent dialectical movement that connects and separates rationality and mysticism was thought as an either/or. This return to a pre-modern mode of thinking constitutes the limit of enlightenment rationality – that point where enlightenment thinking or rationality becomes mythical or irrational.

This paper's critique of Transhumanism thus goes beyond the ethical problems associated with attempting to save humanity. It does so because it proposes an understanding of how those scientific and technological endeavours that aim to develop mind-transfer are implicitly embedded in a mythological transcendence of death as well as Nature itself. Rather than being novel, contemporary attempts at developing mind-transferring technologies inscribe their endeavours in a long line of mystical thinking that aims to overcome the human species' bodily limitations. Hence, the immanent critique proposed by Horkheimer and Adorno could productively be used to critique Transhumanism in general and mind-uploading in particular.

So far, I have shown that the *telos* of Transhumanism has, as its primary aim, the overcoming of natural barriers in common with necromancy – both Transhumanism and necromancy seek to go beyond the bodily or natural limitation experienced by present-day humanity. In their own way, each seeks to transcend death by using technology or magical rites and rituals.

Such a critique of technology, reason, or enlightenment is not only something that can be found in Horkheimer and Adorno, and a similar critique can also be found (implicitly) in Lars von Trier's *Riget*[45]. Particularly in the development that the Swedish neurosurgeon Helmer undergoes. In the first season, Helmer disdains the Danish for their lack of 'rationality'. However, after this season Helmer (portrayed as a rational doctor from Sweden) becomes crazed from having to deal with those '*Danskjävlar*' ('Danish scum'), embarks on a journey to Haiti to learn Vodoun[46] (sometimes also referred to as Vodou or

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[45] von Trier, Lars. Riget (TV show: Danmarks Radio, 1994; 1997; 2022).
[46] Michel, Claudine. 'Vodou in Haiti: Way of Life and Mode of Survival'.*Journal of Haitian Studies*8(1): 98–109 (2002), http://www.jstor.org/stable/41715120.

Voodoo) in an attempt to use its poisonous elixirs against another protagonist, the reserved doctor Krogshøj.

In von Trier's show, Vodoun, a religion or cult that is often associated with spirits and sorcery, is taken up by the rational Helmer in an attempt to gain control over the wholly irrational Danish health care system. Hence, myth is utilised in the service of rationality, and it is precisely in being utilised in this manner that Vodoun, necromancy, or myth, helps lure out the immanent irrationality resident in rationality. And my suggestion, that Transhumanism is a form of necromancy, does the same. By showing how the *telos* of these two positions are similar, despite Transhumanism claiming to be an enlightened or anti-metaphysical philosophy, we can infer that Transhumanism is engaged in an endeavour similar to both archaic necromantic cults and modern-day mysticism as well as Vodoun (a religion which has had some impact on the Christian spiritism[47]).

Nature, the great leveler, is harnessed or utilized for the human species (Gattung). Transhumanism and the various mythologies and cults referred to so far can therefore be said to engage in mythologically or ideologically inspired schemes that seek to make Nature into culture, thereby making it part of that which humanity can control. By controlling Nature and overcoming death, these two widely different positions overlap with their shared concern for the self-preservation of the human species and individual consciousness. Thus, Transhumanism should be understood as a novel permutation of the desires central to ancient necromantic cults and modern spiritists alike.

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[47] Schoonmaker 2010, 327–333.

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