

Contribution to the international meeting against the techno-sciences (Italy – July 2019) by anarchist Dino Giagtzoglou, prisoner of the Greek state

Comrades

I start this letter with a certainty. I am sure that our life experiences are very different as well as the starting points of the struggle of each and every one. I also think that with many of you we have different ideological origins and disagreements or contrasts on individual issues. But I firmly believe that the will to resist the plans of Domination, stemming from the awareness of the fundamental social alienation that alienates us from ourselves and nature as a whole, and the revolutionary passion for the destruction of the mega-machine of Power unite us in a common vision of a world free from the shackles of civilization. By going through a variety of analyzes, striding kilometer distances and eliminating in practice the language obstacles, since we recognize that there is the community of struggle for total liberation, we can really keep the flame of the revolt lit and the wager of the social revolution open. I therefore send a warm greeting to the Resistenze Al Nanomondo collective and to all the participants in the international meeting against the techno-sciences, expressing in advance my eagerness to fill the gaps in knowledge, that my absence will undoubtedly cause, by studying your reflections, your conclusions and everything you can get me through the actions and collaborations that will come from your fermentations in Italy.

But let's take things in turn. For 21 months now, I have been pre-trial detained in the Greek prisons because I made the decision, like many fighters around the world, to realize my ideas by taking a battle position in the social war and fighting against power, here and now. So I am in prison because I put my ideas into practice beyond the limits of the law and certainly not by accident.

With the firm conviction that the revolution will either be lawless or it will be nothing, I wanted to give a concrete example – in the first person and in the present tense – of what revolutionary solidarity could mean, beyond the dipoles of innocence and guilt, of legality and illegality, by providing shelter to a persecuted comrade. That is why I am buried in tons of cement and iron, risking to be condemned for the “terrorist” attacks with booby-trapped letter envelopes on EU officials, executives of economic organizations and credit rating agencies sent in the spring of 2017, with which I have denied my correlation since my arrest, but the odds of my conviction for them remain high. Of course no one was found in prison simply because one decided to fight against oppression and exploitation. My current status is the actual proof that I made mistakes. Mistakes in some decisions I made in relation both to myself and to other individuals with whom I misguidedly felt we have been sharing a common struggle. Mistakes that cost dozens of years of imprisonment, mistakes that may be unforgivable, but certainly neither them nor prison itself can cancel my permanent determination for struggle, struggle, struggle... under any circumstances. So I can only breathe through the endeavors of the comrades who are outside the walls and continue the struggle. I want to support such efforts because through them I am inspiring and essentially exist, I live for them! And so I see these three days too.

But is it just that? Is it just a meeting of individuals and groups struggling? In my opinion, certainly not. Having studied only a small part of the work of some of the speakers today, I know that they are comrades who have gone the extra mile in analyzes and critiques of the modern technological paradigm and not only... But I want to emphasize the up-to-date anti-technological critique developed by the comrades, alongside individual struggles and respected analyzes of other themes, not only because it falls within the topic of today's meeting but also because I think it is something that is too absent from our broader milieus of struggle. Unfortunately, critique of technology (and I am talking about complex and high technology), which is never neutral, but it is the tangible expression of the scientifically structured power, is very disproportionate to the conditions it forms at environmental, social, political and economic level. And if what I say looks like a more general

criticism of the radical-revolutionary front then it is definitely a criticism that also targets me personally. I think that in this area, not to get away from the topic by entering other fields, our analyzes (and “our” refers to a more general context and certainly not to the speakers of the event) are extremely behind, and consequently the current struggle against Domination is both ineffective and in the wrong direction. The above conclusions are briefly documented, but I gradually realize the various manifestations of this problem that we can clearly see around us, at least in these lands. In Greece, the comrades (anarchist or not) who have studied modern technologies and the ways they affect humans and life as a whole are just a few. In the last few years, with a delay but in a hurry, I watch with great concern and awe the technological developments, trying to develop a critical analysis of the current state of the civilized world of Power and its various intertwined structures, systems, institutions and mechanisms, by seeking and studying thoughts of companions who thoughtfully shed light on this ubiquitous dimension of domination, either their analytical tools are derived from the class struggle perspective, radical ecology or the anti-civilization anarchist views.

A very recent event that made me very nervous was on 19-20 November 2018, just two months after Thessaloniki International Fair with the USA being the honored country and the contracting of a memorandum of understanding between Microsoft and the largest public university institution in Greece, AUTH, when one of the summits of the Singularity University was held at the Athens Concert Hall next to the US Embassy, for the first time in this country. One day later, the 20th InfoCom World conference, which is an institution for Telecommunications, IT & Media in Southern East Europe, took place in the same venue. This is the annual meeting of digital market executives in order to implement the Digital Transformation in the GIGAbit era and its central theme was the development of 5G networks. Also this year, from 10th to 12th of January 2019, the 2nd Symposium of Assisted Procreation “New Horizons in IVF” took place again at the Concert Hall, focusing on the latest developments in assisted procreation with the participation of scientists from all over the world and themes such as in-vitro activation of ovarian tissue, creation of the first human egg in the laboratory, therapeutic modification of genes in vitro, and news from the wider use of «Spindle Transfer» in clinical application. At this conference, through a videoconference on the role of mitochondria in procreation, which was broadcast live online, by the American Society for Reproductive Medicine to 7,000 scientists from 100 countries, the first pregnancy using the method of maternal spindle transfer to a Greek woman was announced.

Here I want to talk about the first event. Both days of the Singularity Summit* were live-streaming broadcast to many public universities in Athens and the Greek province as well as to the collaborating with SingularityU and on the face of it “neutral” national research centre Demokritos, where a few days ago in early July in co-operation with the Singularity’s faculty the Singularity Youth Summer School was organized for the second time to introduce young people to artificial intelligence and biotechnology. The magnitude of the Singularity Summit, regardless of where it takes place each time, in accordance with other international industrial, business and research ventures (e.g. Human Genome Project and Human Brain Project and certainly IBM’s Smart Planet vision), in my opinion, is similar to that of NATO conferences and the summits of relevant international organizations for the military-industrial complex, as it is a powerful symbol of the global domination of transnational techno-scientific lobbies. I point out the multinational character of this organization despite the on paper American “aegis” because, contrary to the outdated anti-imperialist view of one and absolute Empire, I have come to deem a worldwide ruthless struggle against the representatives and the structures of the armed wing of modern civilization, which is the techno-science of Domination, to be the only pertinent and consistent “anti-imperialism”.

The Singularity, in this case, is just a figure of speech, a metaphor, perhaps a marketing technique, without this reducing the importance of the singular crime that is happening at all. As you may already know, it is a concept derived from Physics, of course detached and drained from its true meaning and content, so as to fit into the techno-scientific propaganda of the time it was born.

Originally responsible for this plagiarism (because this is what it is about) is the polymath mathematician and computer scientist John von Neumann (with a significant contribution, inter alia, to thermonuclear reactions and the construction of a hydrogen bomb suitable for intercontinental ballistic missiles), who spoke first about singularity because of technological progress, following the working hypothesis of mathematician Irving John Good about the “super-intelligent machine,” that is, the point in earthly space-time when Artificial Intelligence will reach a higher level of transcendence of the most advanced human intelligence, after which no prediction for the future of humanity will no longer have any sense. Later, technological singularity became popular by the also mathematician Vernor Vinge, while other futurists such as the futuristic transhumanists Ray Kurzweil and Peter Diamandis, founders and decision makers of the University of the... Singularity, also embraced this techno-maniac theory. However, the real crime is not the expropriation of a concept widespread in good part amongst the scientific community. Artificial singularity has absolutely nothing to do with the essential uniqueness, distinctness, diversity and the limitless and unexplored wealth of the natural world... And how could it? The University, which is a Silicon Valley think tank and is headquartered in a NASA-owned site, collaborates with the DARPA of US Department of Defense, MIT and the world’s leading technology behemoths, and its main sponsor is Google, could be nothing but a bloodsucking organization that purposefully accumulates profit and power, through the façade of scientific leading experts, until the small “armies” it trains colonize the whole biosphere. Of course, as in every individual technological innovation, here too the pretexts are in abundance (like the title of Peter Diamandis book). Pretexts and disguises of the most abominable plans of tomorrow, a figment of the morbid imagination of the most awful mechanistic and reductionist perceptions of today, while tracing their authoritarian genealogy, we find their cultural origins in the Inquisition and the Witch-Hunt of the Middle Ages. This is because, among others, also the “movement” of transhumanists and techno-scientists apply and aspire to expand similar interrogation practices of torturing experimentation on the whole biosphere in order to completely objectify, quantify, standardize, instrumentalize, automatize, homogenize and domesticate wildlife and nature, with an uncanny ideology as a bootstrap that attempts to propagate through these summits each year in various countries across the globe. Unfortunately, however, it is not about some “mad scientists” or “science fiction”. The Singularity undertakes to nurture the best researchers and prepare world leaders to implement plans to address the so-called “great challenges of humanity”. Thus technology takes on the role of “the saviour of humankind”. Who cares if for all human suffering, environmental pollution, ecological crisis the capitalist, technological and industrial society is to blame? After all, history teaches us over time that more technology does not come with a happier or more free world...

Many times the most on paper innocent, insignificant and harmless research programs and experiments have historically led to the most heinous atrocities with devastating effects on human and the planet. Exactly the same technological developments that are presented through supposedly beneficial and entrancing applications in civil society are used for military purposes. The research itself begins for military purposes and ends up in our home in the form of an “innocuous” microwave oven or an internet connection (see ARPANET). For example, scientists who discovered nuclear power in their time were considered upright researchers (one was actually against the Third Reich and the persecution of Jews) and their subject matter studied in their exclusive (and isolated from the rest) field of interest a neutral research work, with the well-known to everyone now results of the atomic bomb. And the examples of interconnecting military and civil applications from the same techno-scientific research are not over. So let us wonder how we can consider one research to be good, while another bad, when a small and seemingly irrelevant piece of it can be used and is used as a complement to the puzzles of a more general development, the plan of which is always determined by the powerful. Obviously, not all researches are of the same significance and the same consequence, this is an easy finding. However, it is not necessarily those just carrying out research and projects specifically on nanotechnology or genetic engineering, for example, that one’s work can be utilized for harmful purposes (which are definitely presented as a public service as well as

the “benevolent” institutions of the banking groups). Fortunately, some comrades reject easy inferences and convenient analyzes and avoid bringing reality to their political alignment because, unfortunately, reality is relentless. A researcher – always – operates within the dominant techno-scientific paradigm. She cannot escape this even if she is the most “moral” person across the world. The ills and problems caused by a system of domination and exploitation are impossible to be cured and solved once and for all with the tools and methods of the same system in its predetermined frameworks. Scientific research is never neutral. Even if it can be temporarily used for beneficial purposes (see cancer treatment), the direction of the plans of Domination cannot be changed from within. Of course, every participatory system (such as democracy) does not only need those who research, execute, obey and blatantly support and protect its operation, but also those who – always within acceptable contexts – disagree, question it, criticize it, counterpropose, improve it and therefore equally support it. When looking at the technological world from a radical point of view, we should not slip into the case-based reasoning, because this is not a question of custom solutions to our personal problem or our personal comfort and the full range of technological possibilities that we may enjoy (or even use in the war against power) on a daily basis. I think the right thing is not to focus on a single tree, but on the burning forest. Because, at the end of the day, to be free and not to be limited by anything but the laws of nature, all laboratories, factories and machines should be destroyed just like prisons...

But the techno-fetishist fanatics of the Singularity, at the... University, have another opinion. The atonement of human (and not only) nature is undertaken by the new “deus ex machina” of the transhumanists: the “god-man” Cyborg. So, they wander around the globe undisturbed and trot out their merchandise as solutions to all the problems of the world. So, we hear about various inconceivable “patches” on the multiform holes that human civilization has opened in the bodies of all animals and the body of Earth. From brain-computer interfaces to overcome human natural limits and digital automated governmental “ecosystems” to “solutions” to climate change, “treatments” for diseases caused by the existence of industrial civilization, or even “immortality”. Transhumanists have an artificial or robotic “solution” for everything, as they have contrived to create a metaphysical absolutist ideology that dictates the causality of transformation of human beings into trans-humans and then to post-humans or their decline to subhumans. In short, they claim that physical “flaws”, “unnecessary” emotional and biological processes, genetic and procreative frailties, mental deficiencies can and should be eliminated through the intervention and the literal integration of technology into the human body, including the brain. In this context, natural human procreation will become obsolete, or even useless, as the new techno-children with advanced technological intelligence will be able to reproduce and plan their own evolution. Sons and daughters will no longer belong to families, communities or natural environments, but will be property of those who own the laboratories in which they were either built or replicated. Consequently, the transhumanist ideology embraces the human-machine fusion with religious reverence. And as it is known some of the greatest crimes against humanity have been committed in the name of religion... It would be “unnecessary” to refer here further to the treatment these guys hold in store for the rest of the living beings (in the footsteps of the anthropocentrism established for centuries now), since I have already outlined what this technological onset marks for human nature. For all this and many other things, the “prominent personalities” of Singularity University, among other technophiles, cultivate the ground – already fertile due to contemporary technological addictions – through these conferences in the various countries they visit as a touring theatre of the techno-scientific community. Most important, however, is not the presentation of their plans, but the design of the future itself, which in their sessions takes place too! It is not about advertising campaigns and trade fairs, nor about “bazaars” of new technologies. No, not at all. The ultimate goal of all this, of course, is the dominance and absolute control of data, information, materials, vital functions, natural phenomena, food reserves and energy resources. But above all the control of the way people think, the image they have about the relations between them and with nature, their perception of the world itself, since what has always been the real target is the mind...

With already applied and widespread GPS and RFID technologies, sophisticated facial recognition software, “augmented reality”, the Internet of Things (IOT) applications, precision agriculture and cloud computing and Big Data systems (the Next Internet in two words), diffusing exponentially and their full development being imminent, we can see that the convergence of the various technosciences and exponential technologies in combination with the above is far more pervasive and threatening than the – known to everyone – “smart” technologies that flood the technological world. It goes far beyond a mere upgrade, and we would say that this is a fundamental restructuring of Domination as a whole. Threatening both for humans and for the natural environment. It is indeed a “revolution”, which has been defined as the 4th industrial revolution and is already under way. Its key element is the “harmonization” of both the industrial and the digital world. Or, the merging of tangible physical reality with the virtual reality of cyberspace and whatever follows on from this. The building of cyber-physical systems, with “physical” being a very relevant and vulnerable concept. As a result, the digital organization and control of all the global systems – physical and artificial, business and societal – in real time, by the powerful who hold the power, can foreshadow only an insurmountable technological dystopia... With the prospects of monitoring patients via digestible computer sensors and wearables, interconnected social insurance registers and criminal records with banks and other public and private entities, and interviews of work applicants by artificially “intelligent” robots being only a foretaste of what will follow. The convergence of Nanotechnology, Biotechnology, Information Technology and Cognitive Sciences is the no. 1 wager of the 21st century for leading technology companies – and not only – world-wide, and is already happening to a certain extent. It is also the first step on the ladder of the transhumanist vision. The further development and deepening of nanotechnology, genetic engineering and reverse engineering, neurosciences, artificial procreation, and robotics, in direct interaction with the computer world, shape the prospect of a radical mesh of the cyberspace with the material world on an interplanetary scale. They eventually convert all living beings and ecosystems from living and inaccessible organisms, complex natural processes and chemical compounds into algorithms, and digits into binary codes that can be encoded and redesigned at will by any fucker who holds the power. Bytes, Atoms, Neurons, and Genes all come into the scientific scales and are priced according to their utility in the meat grinder of civilization.

From all of the above, I think it can be understood that the world, as we know it so far, undergoes a gradual but profound transformation. One could object here that human history is full of “world-changing” incidents, conflicts and rearrangements, but the basic structure of the world remains the same for centuries. I would disagree, starting by posing the argument of the ignorance of the majority of the world’s human population, including most of us, about the structure of the existing technological order, the functioning of the machines and the capabilities of complex technological apparatuses. Of course, this does not mean that people are to blame or that they should learn how to construct, develop and run complex technological apparatuses. Unlike the massive internet connection’s use, for example, and the information that is widely available, we, “ordinary people”, even if we wanted to, are not able to know the real potential of technology and science before they come to light and get a fair extent of publicity as well as they become available in the retail market. But even so, the potentialities offered through technology to the general public are infinitely less than the power of the major multinational companies in the field, a fact that reveals, among other things, the inherent inequality of the techno-scientific system, since it usually offers trivial and banal functions and capabilities that people have developed for millennia through the basic physical capacity of senses and mental perception. These are applications and tools of piddling importance in comparison with the range of power that their technologies hold and provide to the bosses of the world and usually totally superfluous since for thousands of years people have served the same needs and functions without them. The buzz around a technological invention usually stimulates illusions and stupidity rather than true senses and intelligence. The illusion, for example, that the internet would lead to the liberation of humanity and wisdom, has completely collapsed. I am not

going to enlarge upon the development of this idea and its collapse now, but the examples are countless... It is enough to remember the events of the Arab Spring where the internet was initially used by the insurgents, but then it became apparent in a deafening way who really keeps it in their grip. Technological fate is thus written by the elites who, in constant interaction and collaboration with research centers, universities, state institutions and international organizations, on the face of it, “innocent” and “innocuous”, are planning the future of the world. The ever-expanding conjunction between industry and research no longer requires barbed wire fences and military outposts, since it takes its form in facilities fully legit in the social imaginary. If DNA and biometric data banks (embedded elements in the upcoming Citizen’s Card, which is already being prepared by the Greek state under the direction of its foreign patrons to replace the identity card) are the first tiles in the mosaic of the direct and visible bio-political control, then sensors, nano-chips, invisible implants make up an inconceivably deep and vast grid of domination and exploitation not only for humans but also for every living being.

CCTV cameras and the military, police and intelligence agencies’ monitoring systems are “drops in the ocean” in the face of the impending colonization of every social activity, every natural process, every person, every object, animals, plants, waters, the soil and the atmosphere. We can imagine a future (not too distant) where the boundaries between public and private will be from too vague to invisible, since everything around us will be in live and direct connection with digital systems of power. Two quick examples of such – simple (and yet so far) – massive applications have been developed in the states of Estonia and the United Arab Emirates. Of course, the aforementioned transformation does not only concern the repression of the defiant. Repression and social control are just the most indicative examples that concentrate the essence of Domination. As it is known, those who hold power have always had imperialistic aspirations. The transformation of the world therefore affects and will affect even more all the areas of social life, even the most intimate moments of private life, from our most innermost thoughts and emotions up to the unexplored aspects of the whole natural world, first striking the wildlife and then the excluded, the unskilled, the weakened, the marginalized, until they eliminate them or make them gears in the social apparatus.

The major problem for us, WHO WANT FREEDOM and we want to fight for it along with other people, is that most people prepare and are keen on such a perspective if they are not actively involved in the work to achieve it. Thus, we will experience the dead ends of a totalitarian society, in which, on the one hand the possibilities of resistance and the opt-outs will be continually diminishing, and on the other, new technological applications will be claimed as a “right” and the effort to access and acquire them will be baptized “struggle” (as is already the case with medically assisted procreation and surrogate gestation who find supporters among postmodern and liberal tendencies such as queer theory and trans-feminism adherents). We will face conditions where outsiders who do not conform to technological developments and imperatives will be automatically flagged to the authorities via the Internet and the outlaws will probably be automatically locked-up inside their home or car until they get arrested and sent to a concentration camp... China’s example now holds the lead in this perspective through the pilot implementation of a social credit system’s programs for bank deposits, supermarket shopping, social media activity, road behavior etc., and has developed the largest panoptic control networks with countless both steady CCTV cameras and camera drones (even in the form of birds) that are directly connected to the police and operate with facial recognition technologies, i.e. artificial intelligence of person identification. China is accused of kidnapping Turkish Muslims, while maniacally chasing political dissidents and their families and thus setting up a grid of modern “McCarthyism”. Besides, it extends its technological experiments through the “sinicization” of the African continent and using Nigerian faces to refine the machine learning technologies that develops, say, the giant company Alibaba and not only. By the way, it is remarkable that at this time, if I’m not mistaken, the world’s largest investments are made in the field of Artificial Intelligence, creating a Cold War climate between China and the USA (with some

obvious samples sounding the alarm already given by the dispute of corresponding tension more for control than for the trade of the new 5G telecommunication networks, which is the basis for the development of “smart cities”) and reminding of a war that probably never ended with unpredictable consequences, proportional to the development and use of nuclear weapons... In our continent, Finland is at the cutting edge of its growth, having already developed a national strategy for artificial intelligence, claiming titles and grants from the European Commission, taking also advantage of the presidency of the Council of the European Union since 1st July, for the mega-project it develops. It has invested in working with Estonia and Sweden to become Europe’s first “laboratory” for artificial intelligence applications. The director general of the Ministry of Economy said that AI is the flagship for the development of a series of digitalization applications, namely digital governance. I only mention that the Finnish company Nokia said it will train its entire workforce in AI.

But when I talk about techno-scientific totalitarianism I do not mean that the machines will rule people but that the ones who control these machines will have a totalitarian authority so powerful and diffused that their overthrow will be impossible, since neither the knowledge, nor the agency will be available for the aspiring rebels to stop it. As noted above, the unhorsing of the Prince-Human is made by a new “*deus ex machina*”, the mechanical “god-man” or Cyborg, but in full alignment and compatibility with the desires of the rulers and the needs of the free market economy. The “free” choice of technological interventions and modifications in body and nature will be as given and predetermined as the choice of voting for one or the other political parties in democratic elections. In conclusion, the delegation of our lives to technological giants and bosses (since the economy is moving fast towards the full assimilation of technology if the latter has not already integrated the first) will mean the delegation of freedom and welfare of all biosphere to the machines for which it would be wise to remember what the Luddites did in their age, except that the survival and existence of our own and the entire planet is now literally threatened. That is why we need to see what we are willing and able to do and how we will fight. That is why the importance of the three-day international meeting is tremendous and I hope it has the best prospects so that with calmness and accountability, without arrogance and in the spirit of cooperation and respect of all comrades, we see how we can jointly devise plans for the destruction of this authoritarian monstrosity that is the modern civilization.

For the end, I would like to quote briefly and just informatively four events that caught my attention and I want to share with you because they made me feel too troubled as they will certainly make you too in case you do not already know them. Although I do not have to contribute some in-depth analysis and criticism at this time and with all due respect, I bring to your attention up for consideration the genetic modification of children in China, the robotic womb transplantation in Sweden, the artificial procreation with maternal spindle transfer in Greece and the three-dimensional bio-printing of human heart that recently happened in Israel.

I’m sure some of you have already gone crazy with all that, but believe me, I can understand how you feel and imagine the stifling atmosphere in the place when such conversations are opened with real indignation and anguish about where this world is heading to...

I wish you good luck in your discussions and a good fight!

Dinos

* This year the SingularityU Summits, among other countries, are going to be held again on 8-9 October in Milan and on 11-12 November at the Athens Concert Hall.