

## ***Homo Deus* and His Way to Happiness: Humanistic and Intercultural Dialogue**

**Oleh Masiuk, Nina Bilokopytova, Karim El Guessab,  
Oleksandra Sorokina and Olena Zaika\***

**Abstract:** The team of authors has done systematic work to update the interpretation of happiness in the global high-tech world, and also created the basis for studying the path to well-being in these conditions. The aim of the work was to analyze the happiness of a modern person and search for its criteria at the level of humanistic and intercultural dialogue. We paid special attention to attempts to improve human nature. In our opinion, such optimization leads to an obsession with creating subjectively comfortable worlds that do not interact with each other. As a result, we came to the conclusion that the understanding of happiness and well-being during the ‘renewal’ of a person depends on the vision of freedom of existence and self-development, which is formed in different ways in East and West. The team of authors sees the resolution of this contradiction as the beginning of a successful coexistence in a global and highly developed community.

**Keywords:** freedom, happiness, well-being, superman, *Homo Deus*, humanity, intercultural dialogue

### **INTRODUCTION**

Development is a natural human need, conditioned by the need not only to surpass oneself and others, but also to take one’s place in the social world. Most people are constantly trying to move forward to new accomplishments. They hope to achieve an inner feeling of joy of being, happiness. The increase in the possibility of interfering in existence gives rise to the question of the humanity of such actions or rethinking their parameters. This will determine whether a person’s vision of life changes with him.

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\* Oleh Masiuk; Nina Bilokopytova; Karim El Guessab; Oleksandra Sorokina; Olena Zaika (✉)

Department of Philosophy, Public Administration and Social Work, Zaporizhzhia National University, Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine  
e-mail: nina\_turk@ukr.net [Nina Bilokopytova] (corresponding author)

Since ancient Greece, thinkers have tried to understand what a person is, what he should be and how to learn to live in harmony with the world. Over time, the debate over the balance of «human-world» interaction and the continuous improvement of existence has formed an intercultural plexus of views on proper existence. The current concept can be considered the development of Yuval Harari, who identified the need for maximum human approach to God (*Homo Deus*) through technobiological and technosocial transformations, as well as predicted the further development of this area.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, heads of states realized the need to improve man, but they pursued only their own interests. That is, in fact, the renewed man was not a creator, but a creation designed to achieve a meaningful social goal. They tried to rethink Nietzsche's idea of the superman for the benefit of the state, but the consequences were quite dubious and tragic.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, man himself posed new challenges to himself and others. If earlier he argued with nature, God, state power, today he is already arguing with the actual consequences of his activity: the artificial intelligence and the forthcoming ecological catastrophe. Using acquired creative skills, a person creates his own world, but this "new god" in many cases is not able to make him and others happy.

Thus, the study of the process of human renewal on the path to happiness is an important topic for socio-philosophical research. To do this, in this article we will consider the main stages of human renewal, changes in attitudes towards happiness and humane existence, as well as the state of intercultural dialogue in this area.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

First, let's pay attention to the desired state of existence. Let's single out three leading views on the content of happiness, from which we can form a holistic view of it. Reflecting on the nature of this phenomenon, Vladimir Dal (1989-1991, 371-372) distinguishes in it the division into effective complicity and ownership of the share in the case, as well as the perception of success, temperament in life. In this statement, the emphasis is on the inclusion of the singular in the common on the basis of a joint movement for success. This is important because all approaches to improving a person involve his activity, oriented to the inner world.

Vyacheslav Busel has a different point of view. For him, happiness is "a condition of complete satisfaction with life, a feeling of deep

satisfaction and boundless joy that someone experiences” (Busel 2005, 1637). There are no signs of dialogue and the need for cooperation to achieve the desired. However, in this view there is a rich emotional color, which is fixed in a state of boundless but short-lived satisfaction with life.

Happiness, according to al-Farabi, is the achievement of perfect knowledge and high moral standards, which even after the death of an individual or the disappearance of this generation can serve humanity. Happiness occurs when all evil is eliminated and the human soul and mind in their knowledge reach the highest level - merging with the eternal world mind (Al-Farabi 2000, 157). Since we achieve happiness only when we have beauty, and beauty is inherent in us only through the art of philosophy, it follows that it is through philosophy that we achieve happiness (Khairullaev 2005, 29).

By combining these positions, we get a holistic view of happiness. It is a state of satisfaction from the ongoing period of meaningful life, a harmonious reflection of one’s own existence in the surrounding space, as well as self-improvement aimed at serving humanity. Thus, a person’s happiness must lie in his balanced relationship with the world.

To detail the study, let us turn to the existing vision of individual and collective happiness, where “morality certainly does not know and does not want any happiness of its own without the happiness of another, does not know and does not want any isolated happiness, isolated and independent of other people’s happiness, based on their misfortune; she knows only friendly, common happiness” (Feuerbach 1971, 487). The above moral compass needs to be rethought, as the status of *Homo Deus* stimulates progressive autonomy. That is, we need a new morality that would help organize the happy coexistence of the creators of their own lives in society.

Usually a new morality is derived from the Western set of benefits of coexistence. In this case, it is important not only tolerance and equality in relations with other participants in public relations, but also non-interference, which aims to provide opportunities to enjoy their creations and their lives. Thus, the renewed person is not characterized by traditional values and identities, but by the priority of a separate happy existence.

In the works of Ludwig Feuerbach you can find other components of the foundation of the new morality, if you look at them from the present. He found the limits of happiness in social relations: “Morality cannot be abstracted from the principle of happiness; even if she

rejected her own happiness, she would still have to acknowledge the happiness of another; otherwise the basis and subject of responsibilities towards others disappear, the practice of morality itself disappears (Feuerbach 1971, 487). If we look at this statement through the prism of changes in man caused by scientific and technological progress, we will see the expansion of the space of identification, which transforms the vision of happiness. Under the pressure of globalization, the conditions of human coexistence are changing, and in which the benchmark for the identity of modernity is developing. As modern as a person can be, he is as happy among his peers.

Now let us consider in order the stages of change of human status, which is aimed at constant self-improvement to achieve the ideal. One of the first to describe the highest form of human existence was Friedrich Nietzsche, who singled out the superman who had to determine his own future: “I teach you the superman. Man is something that needs to be surpassed. What have you done to surpass it” (Nietzsche 2002, 299). That is, happiness is the freedom to decide one’s own destiny and to control one’s own life. Accordingly, the superman is a rebel who protects his inner world.

The superman became the mainstay of Western culture and led it to industrial happiness. At the same time, he stood up for the protection of national and cultural traditions in the East, maintaining the isolation of this world. The influence of these superhumans stimulated the deepening of the civilizational conflict, which increased the number of unfortunates around the world.

The idea of constant progress, laid down in industrial society and substantiated by the positivists, was reflected in the vision of happiness. The constant development and improvement of living conditions were not identical to the feeling of joy of life, which was reflected in the works of the humanistic approach. Karen Horney’s awareness of this situation on a personal level is manifested “when a person does not feel happy, despite the fact that he has all the conditions for it” (see Fet 2016, 188). The contradiction between the growth of material goods and the lack of joy of being transforms the vector of search.

In the future, the person changes the potential vector of activity, increasing his own subjectivity in the world around him. The posthuman emerges as a being who wants to build a world around himself:

Perhaps we are ready to enter the post-human future, in which technology will allow us to gradually change our essence over time. Many people agree with this chance under the auspices of human freedom. They want to maximize the freedom of parents to choose which children to have, the freedom of scientists in research, and the freedom of entrepreneurs to use technology to make a profit. (Fukuyama 2004, 307)

Based on this position, we conclude that the posthuman dreams not only of having control over his life, but also to spread his subjectivity in all its spheres.

The ongoing stage today is a technical-biological attempt to create a divine being on earth,

[U]sing technology to create *Homo Deus* - a largely perfect model of man. *Homo Deus* will retain a number of essential features of *sapiens*, but at the same time will have unprecedented physical and mental abilities that will allow it to withstand competition with the most advanced algorithms. (Harari 2018, 413)

In fact, it is a description of man's attempt to realize his secret desire to become on the same level with the Almighty, where he transforms himself and others not only socially but also biologically. That is, there is a violation of the existing harmony of existence, which calls into question the possibility of happiness. The ideas of transhumanism, designed to improve human life, are currently being implemented in the material spheres, without interfering to sphere of human spiritual existence. This is in fact an imitation of the basic issues of the concept of industrial happiness.

The genesis of *Homo Deus* on the way to creating one's own view of a happy life is based on the vision of man as the quintessence of volitional efforts, which is guaranteed to lead to the desired result. The posthuman is the victory of the mind over the senses, the primacy of the ability to solve any problem with an informed decision. *Homo Deus* is a union of the superman and the posthuman, which has acquired a new quality not only through the struggle for world domination, but also through the mastery of the process of creation, which is the highest level of harmony and happiness.

At the same time, if the passion for human modernization was previously considered an exclusively Western priority, today it penetrates into the countries of the East, which are subject to Westernization and Western standards of harmonious existence. It started with the spread of cosmetic and surgical changes in humans, but over time is likely to move to the cyberbionic level. However,

reliance on intercultural dialogue requires the preservation of natural diversity in human life, the happiness of 'being yourself'.

So, if we understand happiness as the harmony of internal and external social worlds, then in the first two stages it is difficult for a person to become happy, because they have limited humanity. At the same time, *Homo Deus* is the actual embodiment of the human vision of happiness through the ability to build their own external world and create their own harmony in it, which is relevant for both Eastern and Western culture. However, the transition to transculturalism and transhumanism is of great concern to many people around the world.

Let's pay attention to possible difficulties on the way of this renewed person to happiness. The lack of synergy creates the illusion of sufficiency of the inner world, in which the person focuses on constant transformation and improvement of himself for the future. That is, the internal self-sufficiency of being is formed on the basis of interference in the process of one's own existence. Thus, the road to happiness is inseparable from the preservation of humanity and purposefulness of life in the framework of humanistic dialogue.

This person's activity in search of harmony extends not only to other participants in social relations, but also to the outside world. Creativity is the personification of human search for happiness. It reflects the intention for constant change in the future, regardless of the assessments of the present:

The restlessness of human thinking drives us not only to correct shortcomings, but also to rework what seems ideal. Man destroys not only what is bad, but also what is good. (Eagleman & Brandt 2018, 144)

If we adhere to the thesis of creativity as a path to happiness, we can conclude that *Homo Deus* enjoys destruction and transformation, which raises the question of the principles of combining high technology and happiness.

The tangible reflection of happiness in the social space is well-being and its measurable equivalent welfare, which are indicators of acceptable human life. Prosperity is objectified and serves as a template for the realization of the common vision of a better life. Happiness is always personified and is not repeated in a single scenario. That is, we capture the simulacrum of a happy life, which is realized through objectified reflections and forms an image of proper existence.

It is worth retrospectively tracing the origins of the relationship between happiness and well-being:

When we were hunters and gatherers, the ability to accumulate material goods - and, above all, food - often became a decisive factor, which depended on whether we could survive another drought or cold winter. Accumulation has become our second nature. (Ben-Shahar 2012, 86-87)

It follows that well-being and welfare are associated with accumulation and are the reverse side of happiness, which is aimed at overcoming the fear of future non-existence. However, a big question arises as to what cultural identity will be able to accumulate greater high-tech potential in order to become a model for a new happy world.

Western postmodern societies have a similar pattern of well-being, which is revealed through visualization:

Disneyland is a wonderful model of interweaving and interpenetration of simulacra. This is, above all, a game of illusions and fantasies: pirates, the border area, the world of the future. This imaginary world is believed to be the reason for the success of the institution. But what attracts crowds of visitors much more is the social microcosm, the religious delight of miniature America with all its virtues and shortcomings. (Baudrillard 2013, 21)

If *Homo Deus* can be happy only in the process of creation, then under the given conditions we get a field of potential problems and space for change. From the very beginning, a renewed person is surrounded by visions of well-being, which are encoded in the variants of possible existence. These simulations in postmodern times contribute to the degradation of the creative potential of mankind.

Accordingly, the possibility and nature of happiness of a renewed person depends on his intentions in society. At the same time, the priority is a global vector aimed at society as a whole, so as not to violate the creative freedom of its members and not to impose their will on them. A unique world opens for us, in which creative freedom is not declared, but recognized on a personal level by everyone who claims the status of a *human creator*.

Simulations act as channels through which energy is displayed in search of happiness. As an example,

Disneyland, a space for the regeneration of the imaginary, is similar to the recycling plants located elsewhere, as well as in itself. Today, waste is recycled everywhere, and dreams, phantasms, imaginary (historical, fairy-tale, legendary) children and adults are waste. (Baudrillard 2013, 23-24)

That is, Western society of the postmodern type needs a person of function who properly realizes the purpose in it. In order not to be distracted from her social duties, she is offered ready-made patterns of happiness, such as Disneyland, in which a person can imaginatively compensate for the misfortune of his/her own life.

The East, unlike the West, incorporates ideal images of a happy life into objective reality. These include the United Arab Emirates, which has become an acceptable example of an “Arab fairy tale” with artificial islands and advanced technology not only in the East but also in the West. Other attempts to restore the eastern paradise on earth are perceived by the global world more cautiously and without understanding.

Let's turn to quantitative indicators. If you look at the countries with the best technological development in the 2020 Legatum Prosperity Index, such as the United States, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Estonia, Singapore, China, they are not in the first place. They faced the eternal problem of how to stimulate the development of technology and material well-being, but not to lose human capital and a balanced social space. That is, the proportion of the combination of material and spiritual as a reflection of civilizational dialogue, which is quite important to maintain in the pursuit of a new technological way of life, does not lose relevance.

Thus, the loss of the ‘human-social world’ connection, regardless of the level of their separate development, reduces the overall level of happiness and well-being in the country. In addition to a renewed person, there must also be a perfect society, a real utopia that will correspond to the vision of the desired existence.

A comparative analysis of the results of different countries in the Legatum Prosperity Index (2020) reveals the need to intensify intercultural dialogue to understand well-being and prosperity. The first Asian country in this ranking is Singapore (fifteenth place), and the leader among the countries of the Arab world is the United Arab Emirates (forty-second place). These countries are most fully involved in the Westernization process, and therefore fall better under the Western understanding of welfare. However, many other countries in Asia and Africa, which have their own ideas about the harmony of coexistence, are in lower positions. Note that these countries do not need simulations that channel the search for pleasure and happiness, but need ‘happy’ partners to accompany their on the path to prosperity.



If we analyze the components of the 2020 Legatum Prosperity Index, we can see that the border of the rift between East and West is freedom, which pulls the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Turkey closer to the middle of the list of prosperous countries. A compromise view of freedom will not only make the countries' positions in the rankings closer to reality, but will also create a platform for a more thorough dialogue between them.

Solving the situation of indicators of prosperity in the East and West is possible through the development of global standards of existence based on intercultural dialogue. Then freedom, service to society, and a purposeful life would play an equally important role. This would lay the potential for the creation of a real *societatem perfectam*, which would meet the requirements of a renewed person, regardless of his geographical origin and nationality.

## CONCLUSION

Subjunctive “superman” or “new man” is a social combination and a desirable horizon of socio-cultural and anthropological transformation. At the same time, we must be aware of feeling an inner vigilance after the restoration of this new superhuman way, the communication that it initiates the dehumanization and devaluation of all the positive-human, which may need to be preserved in the search for happiness.

The transfer of human existence to the cyberbionic and socio-technical levels has influenced the need to rethink the moral and ethical parameters of coexistence and balance in intercultural dialogue. The civilization that first masters the new technological way will actually decide what is happiness and prosperity in the global world. At the same time, great hope is placed on a happy person who will be able to rise to the level of co-creation and universal parameters of a dignified existence.

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