Inhumanity and Sexbots:
On Incestuous Relations with Sexbots*

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Abstract:
British multimedia artist K. Davis has joined the campaign against sexbots initiated in 2015 by K. Richardson and E. Billing in the project *Logging on to Love*. Using photography, video, and sound design, she draws attention to how sexbots rearticulate the widespread treatment of humans as objects and underlines the commodification of sex. For Davis, sexbots in this sense are not simply human products, but anti-humanist tools. On the other hand, sexbot creators and their proponents argue that sexbots can aid people in their occasional loneliness, but also in reducing the sex trade or becoming an effective therapeutic tool. Therefore, sexbots are a controversy creating boundaries between humanity and inhumanity. By examining these differences, I argue in this paper that being human or inhuman in relation to sexbots can only be fully understood with regard to incest, which can contribute to understanding sexbots in a more symmetrical sense than the one offered by their critics and defenders.

Keywords: sexbots; incest; inhumanity; imagination

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1. Introduction

In 2015, in her project *Logging on to Love*, British multimedia artist and activist Kate Davis joined the campaign against sexual robots (also known as "sexbots" or "pornbots") initiated by Kathleen Richardson and Erik Billing. By using photography, video and sound, Davis uses sexbots to demonstrate the risks of sex virtualization in sexual intercourse by questioning human intimacy and the relationships that are being replaced by technology. In her words, the ideas behind sexbots are a reminder of the patriarchal system that constructs our society and reinforces relations of power that do not recognise women as fully human but rather as objects. This is the reason

Davis has adopted a humanistic worldview that normalizes the communication of sex and reconnected with the essential question of what it means to be human. From her perspective, sex robots may be conceived as perfect lovers, but they are not like humans in a very key way. They have no voice, they don't bleed, they don't cry, vomit, feel pain or age; they also have no memories, thoughts, feelings or desires of their own, and their biggest appeal to men is that they will never say no. Davis' big question concerns whether it is healthy to encourage a person to create relationships with something that is so anti-human.[1]

In its aim, *Logging on to Love* is an interesting counterpoint to Hans Bellmer's cycle *Die Puppe*.[2] Through photographs of dolls installed in very seductive positions, Bellmer expressed his desire not only for political freedom in the Nazi regime, but above all for the freedom to dream and realize his most hidden erotic fantasies. This is, after all, one of the defenses of the existence of sexbots and their more systematic incorporation into human relationships, which makes the sexist escapism that has occupied many artists and intellectuals possible.[3] Where Davis sees enslavement and inhumanity, sexbot advocates, following Bellmer's dream, search for the emancipation and realization of humanity made possible via available technology. Therefore, sexbots are a controversy setting the boundaries between humanity and inhumanity that postulates the following questions in particular: What kind of model of a human are these critics and defenders of sexbots using and how do they understand the role technology plays in building human relationships, including sex? Are they really as anti-human as they are portrayed by Davis, or can the existence of sexbots contribute to a reterritorialization of human sexuality and intimacy and under what conditions is this reterritorialization realized? By examining these questions, I will argue via the following deliberation that being human or inhuman in relation to sexbots can only be fully understood in relation to incest. This was partially indicated by Davis' portrayal of sexual intercourse with sexbots as unhealthy, and I believe that the issue of incest can contribute to the understanding of sexbots in a wider sense than the one offered by their critics and defenders.

1   Davis, K., Logging onto Love: How digital technologies change interhuman relationships. Available online at www: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7suUZFzwrU4 [cit. 16. 1. 2023].
2   Bellmer, H., *Die Puppe*. Berlin, Gerhardt Verlag 1962.
3   Kubes, T., New Materialist Perspectives on Sex Robots. A Feminist Dystopia/Utopie? *Social Sciences*, 8, 2019, No. 8, p. 7.

2. What Are Sexbots?

Sexbots are versions of social robots designed for interaction with humans, and as such they have many forms. For example, *Jibo* as a non-sexual assistance robot is more of a loudspeaker. *Aibo,* which is made by Sony, is an intelligent robot-dog, and the robot *Pepper* comes in the form of a humanoid. It is 140 cm tall with a head and openings that resemble human eyes and a mouth. Its body is equipped with wheels, and there is an information screen on its chest. According to SoftBank Robotics, the Japanese company that created *Pepper,* it was designed to provide personalized recommendations with the ability to help people find exactly what they are looking for and, if needed, to communicate with an entire work team. It collects data during the conversation and learns about people's tastes, traits, preferences and habits. It helps customers design responses and better react to their needs. *Pepper* is also able to gather new information to help better understand customers and the company that uses *Pepper's* abilities.[4]

The autonomy of social robots and their ability to interact in complex ways like *Pepper* can make them suitable as assistive and therapeutic tools, the applications of which are sought out in medicine, psychology or elderly care. In particular, studies focusing on the interaction of social robots with elders have shown that social robots are often perceived as patient, willing to listen and non-judgmental, stress-reducing and encouraging openness and willingness to share information.[5] By comparison, sexbots differ from social robots. Sexbots are strictly humanoid robots with human features designed to enable the possibility of sexual intercourse and pleasure. For this reason, some refer to sexbots as relational artifacts[6] with an emphasis on their ability to substitute humans in creating sexual and emotional attachments. It is sex that situates this kind of social robot on the dark side. While social robots are perceived as having the potential to improve human care in medical, psycho-

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4   Based on the official information of SoftBank Robotics. Available online at www: https://us.softbankrobotics.com/pepper [cit. 16. 1. 2023].

5   See e.g. Bickmore, T. – Caruso, L. – Clough-Gorr, K. – Heeren, T., "It's just like you talk to a friend". Relational Agents for Older Adults. *Interacting with Computers*, 17, 2005, No. 6, pp. 711–735; Lee, J. K. – Breazeal, C., Human social response toward humanoid robot's head and facial features. *CHI Extended Abstracts*, 2010, pp. 4237–4242; Kidd, C. D. – Taggert, W. – Turkle, S., A sociable robot to encourage social interaction among the elderly. *Proceedings of IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation*, 2006.

6   Cf. Turkler, S. – Taggar, W. – Kidd, C. D. – Dasté, O., Relational artifacts with children and elders: the complexities of cybercompanionship. *Connection Science*, 18, 2006, No. 4, pp. 347–361; Cox-George, C. – Bewley, S., Sex robot: the health implications of the sex robot industry. *BMJ Sexual & Reproductive Health*, 44, 2018, No. 3, pp. 161–164.

logical or social contexts, sexbots in this regard are highly controversial. On the one hand, there are optimists who hope for their emancipatory potential; on the other are pessimists who fear the reinforcement of current dominations, especially between men and women, as suggested by Davis.

Who, then, supports sex with robots? Mostly David Levy,[7] who has created a coherent argumentation for why humans should not be afraid to have emotional and sexual relationships with robots. According to him, sex robots can become a suitable therapeutic tool in sexual surrogacy. Based on the therapeutic principles elaborated by William Masters and Virginia Johnson,[8] Levy adopts the premise of physical contact in professional sex surrogacy as a fundamental therapeutic tool for breaking down sexual dysfunction, which patients use to learn to work with their own and their partners' bodies to discover the possibility of their own sexuality in relation to each other. According to Levy, the ethical controversy of paid sex surrogacy is one of the reasons for drawing robots into human sexuality. Not only do we get rid of the ethical dilemma between helping the client and paid sex, but we also contribute to solving the sexual problems of lonely men and women by equipping the robots in question with psychosexual knowledge and skills.[9]

He also points to the systematic insertion of various tools into human sexuality in order to achieve orgasm. For Levy, the vibrator is a prime example of what for many women has become an alternative complement to their sex lives and sometimes a more reliable means of achieving sexual satisfaction. However, it is not just a sexual aid – it is also a tool of independence and a way to realize the right to enjoy one's own sexuality to the fullest. Levy uses other, now widespread sexual aids, such as artificial vaginas or sex dolls, to show how we systematically compose certain tools into human sexuality. Sexbots, he argues, are simply the next logical step that will allow many to fully experience and realize their sexuality. We just need to take a mental leap that is similar to other sexual "sins" such as homosexuality or masturbation in the past. For Levy, sex robots also offer a host of other benefits, such as the reduction of prostitution, underage pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and pedophilia. They also offer many sexual opportunities that can upset established conventional gender categories, allowing people to experiment with homosexual sex or homosexuals experimenting with heterosexual sex using robots that allow humans to realize their intimate needs.[10]

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7   Levy, D., *Love and Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships*. London, Harper Collins ebooks 2008.

8   Master, W. H. – Johnson, V. E., *Human Sexual Inadequacy*. New York, Bantam Books 1970.

9   Levy, D., *Love and Sex with Robots*, pp. 216–219.

10 Ibid., p. 301.

However, others are skeptical of this optimistic vision. Kathleen Richardson, director of *The Campaign Against Sex Robots*, has been at the forefront of criticism of the more systematic incorporation of sex robots into human life. In her view, sex robots are not simply therapeutic or emancipatory tools, but a means of reinforcing and reproducing gender inequalities. Based on the reading of Ovid's *Pygmalion*, she points out that this story is not about love, reciprocity and empathy, but about a non-reciprocal relationship. The existence of the sex robot is inspired by this unempathetic form of relationship, which manifests itself in the sex trade and unbalanced gender practices, where 80 % of men buy sex from women. It is this unethical level that is reflected in the design of sex robots as a pornographic representation of women and which problematizes the definition of human rights. If we project the idea of humans as things into sex robots, we question the claim for the recognition of robots/things as humans in the future. What appears on the one hand as a progressive step to secure the rights of others on the other hand fundamentally justifies the current lived experience of women as property.[11]

Kate Davis has joined this critique, warning that it is not necessarily liberating; it can reinforce the existing power relations and have devastating effects on interpersonal relationships, especially by using artificial intelligence in connection with sex.[12] In an interview with *Indie Magazine*, she stated verbatim:

> Putting AI into sex dolls and giving these dolls a "brain" is a troubling prospect. What this means is that the robot's owner has the opportunity to customize its "personality" and demand the inanimate object to tell you it cares about you. Sex robots take away women's humanity and our ability to have and express feelings, thoughts, needs and desires of our own.[13]

It is not a general system with a capital "S" that is criticized in this proclamation (just as Bellmer wanted to escape in his desire to dream), but rather "Patriarchy", which dehumanizes womanhood in terms of the ability to have and express feelings, thoughts, needs and desires. What matters is not sim-

11 See Richardson, K., The asymmetrical "relationship". *ACM SIGCAS Computers and Society*, 45, 2015, No. 3, pp. 290–293; Richardson, K., Sex Robot Matters: Slavery, the Prostituted, and the Rights of Machines. *IEEE Technology and Society Magazine*, 35, 2016, No. 2, pp. 46–53.

12 See Milner, D., Sexbots and cybersex: Kate Davis explores "relationship replacement". *It's Nice That*. 2018. Available online at www: https://www.itsnicethat.com/articles/kate-davis-logging-on-to-love-digital-050118 [cit. 16. 1. 2023].

13 See Hovve, J., Tech-Artists On Sex Bots and the Alarming Future of the Female Body. *Indie*, 2018. Available online at www: https://indie-mag.com/2018/03/sex-bots-artists/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023].

ply generic humanity, but rather the humanity of women destroyed by perversity in men. In such a view, men are presented as inhuman beasts with a tendency to manipulate women as objects of their desire but not as full-fledged human beings. Incidentally, this is the main motive of the feminist criticism of Bellmer's work.[14]

On the other hand, when we compare this pessimistic critique with Bellmer and especially Levy's position, which can possibly be described as an optimistic belief, we find a similarity between them. They have in common a model of humanity that is conceived in opposition to technology, grounded in the Enlightenment idea of the human as an independent entity whose reflective capacities enable him to transcend the given social and natural world and achieve the full autonomy that makes the human unique. In this sense, for optimists, technology is a vehicle for breaking out of existing relationships and thereby achieving basic rights and freedom, including self-determination as a base for the realisation of full humanity. For the skeptics, on the other hand, technology reinforces existing power relations and stereotypes that devalue humanity. These skeptics seek to create a condition in which power asymmetry is replaced by a symmetrical reciprocity that protects the humanity of each person reduced in Davis' humanistic view somewhat asymmetrically into womanhood.

3. The Hybridization of Man and Technology

In this model, humanity is conceived as an essential difference of humans that persists in time. It cannot be changed; it can only be developed or suppressed. At the same time, however, it is indeterminate in its specific parameters and definable only in opposition to what threatens or develops it, where difference originates in foundational dichotomies of culture/nature, subject/object or human/technology. Only on this basis can Davis claim that sexbots are anti-human. As she has proclaimed, sexbots have no voice, blood, feelings, memories or desires; they are merely machines, and their composition to human sexuality contributes to empowering power asymmetry and devolving humanity in general.

However, there are studies that suggest that people form systematic and very intimate relationships with technology, blurring these dichotomies.

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14 See Killiam, M.-T., Mutilation of Women by Surrealist Artists. *International Journal of Arts Theory & History*, 12, 2017, No. 1, pp. 49–65; Taylor, S., *The Anatomy of Anxiety*. New York, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 2000; Wetzel, H. J., Hans Bellmer's Dolls and the Subversion of the Female Gaze. *Inquiries Journal*, 13, 2021, No. 1. Available online at www: http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/articles/1857/hans-bellmers-dolls-and-the-subversion-of-the-female-gaze [cit. January 16, 2023].

A robotic vacuum cleaner is different from a regular vacuum cleaner. Firstly, it is autonomous and does not require human assistance. Secondly, it is reactive. It can react and adapt to obstacles. This attracts both children and pets for the creation of interaction, in which they use the robotic vacuum cleaner as a partner in a game. Similarly, it does not only change the cleaning routine by increasing the frequency of cleaning – the robotic vacuum cleaner also contributes to increased cooperation and interest in cleaning among all household members based on its presence and technological capabilities. On the other hand, it also supports other activities that take into consideration the robot's needs, which are primarily related to removing obstacles and creating an environment that is comfortable for the device. This leads people to name the robot and attribute personality traits and intentions to it, including its individuation and gender.[15]

Richardson is skeptical of these tendencies. She sees it as another version of anthropomorphism, in which humans realize their fantasies of bringing inanimate objects to life by attributing human properties to these objects, within which intelligent technology functions as a "Philosopher's Stone" by breathing life into non-living materials.[16] However, this is not necessarily the case. On the contrary, the studies mentioned above are interesting in their rethinking of relationships and the hybridization of technological objects. Their users do not deny that they are mechanical instruments, just as the authors of the texts point out that, in the context of their use, gender standards are not transformed. Nevertheless, in comparison with other instruments such as regular vacuum cleaners, they are different. Humans create and rethink their relationships with them, but do not do so with other instruments. All that matters is the creation of empathy and the interrelatedness between humans and technology, which is an integral part of the human experience. On the other hand, as was indicated in Richardson's skeptical argumentation, which is also valid for optimists, the anthropological model of skeptics is not fully able to distinguish and explain this aspect conditioned by the increasing importance of artificial intelligence.

This is mainly due to the fact that this model does not sufficiently take into account the agency of things. Things act in their own specific way. The

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15 Forlizzi, J. – DiSalvo, C., Service robots in the domestic environment: a study of the roomba vacuum in the home. *Proceedings of the 1st ACM SIGCHI/SIGART conference on Human-robot interaction (HRI06: International Conference on Human Robot Interaction)*. New York, Association for Computing Machinery 2006, pp. 258–265; Sung, J. – Guo, L. – Grinter, R. E. – Christensen, H. I., My Roomba is Rambo. In: Krumm, J. – Abowd, G. D. – Seneviratne, A. – Strang, T. (eds.), *UbiComp 2007: Ubiquitous Computing. UbiComp 2007. Lecture Notes in Computer Science.* Berlin, Springer 2007, pp. 145–162; Sung, J. – Grinter, R. – Christensen, H., Domestic Robot Ecology. *International Journal of Social Robotics*, 2, 2010, No. 4, pp. 417–429.

16 Richardson, K., Sex Robots Matters, pp. 47.

principle of this position has been expressed very precisely by Jane Bennet,[17] as she points out that matter allows us to shape the ways in which we interact with it. Man-made objects transcend their status and display a capacity for independence and aliveness. It is this technological mediation that makes it possible to abandon the outdated Enlightenment anthropological model derived from foundational dichotomies in favor of these hybrid human-technology configurations and to better reflect on our entanglement with these non-human agents. The key terms are hybridity, fragmentation, fluidity, diffraction, enactment, translation, becoming, material-semiotic relationality, multiplicity and the ontological politics[18] that undermine classical dichotomous divisions. In this sense, the delineation of man is in close relationship with the entanglement of humans and non-humans, whose specific mode of existence is enacted in the actual sets of material or technological ordering.

This is particularly evident in the use of new reproductive technologies, which disrupt traditional definitions of gender, fatherhood, motherhood or family by attacking the definition of body and reproduction as a process that is autonomous from social and technological intervention.[19] Similarly, through gene manipulation, genetic engineering can create hybrid, transgenic organisms that defy species distinction and subvert natural species diversity.[20] However, the collapse of overarching and foundational narratives is not only positively received as a way of envisioning a new human free from the shackles of the modernist project,[21] but also with the fear that the basis of the coherent and legitimate identities of man, woman, animal or human would disappear. For example, in her research on surrogacy, Helena Ragone[22] noted that the interlocutors were revising the natural category of motherhood defined primarily by pregnancy and birth in favour of a more compre-

17 Bennet, J., *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things.* Durham–London, Duke University Press 2010, p. xvi.

18 Law, J., Actor Network Theory and Material Semiotics. In: Turner, B. (ed.), *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory.* Chichester, John Wiley & Sons 2009, pp. 141–158.

19 See e.g. Balsamo, A. M., *Technologies of the gendered body: Reading Cyborg Women.* Durham–London, Duke University Press 1996; Preez, A. du, *Gendered Bodies and New Technologies: Rethinking Embodiment in a Cyber-era.* New Castle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholar Publishing 2009.

20 Lee, K., Patenting and transgenic organisms: A philosophical exploration. *Techné: Research in Philosophy and Technology*, 6, 2003, No. 3, pp. 166–175; Ho, M.-W., *Genetic Engineering: Dream or Nightmare? The Brave New World of Bad Science and Big Business.* Bath, Gateway Books 1998; Wheale, P. – McNally, R. (eds.), *Genetic Engineering: Catastrophe or Utopia?* Hemel Hempstead–New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf–St. Martin's Press 1988.

21 See e.g. Haraway, D., *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century.* New York, Routledge 1991, pp. 149–181; Haraway, D., *Modest_Witness@ Second_Millenium. FemaleMan©_Meets_Oncomouse™: Feminism and Technoscience.* New York, Routledge 1997; Halberstam, J. – Livingstone, I. (eds.), *Posthuman Bodies.* Bloomington–Indianapolis, Indiana University Press 1995.

22 Ragone, H., *Surrogate Motherhood: Conception In the Heart.* Boulder, Westview Press 1994.

hensible basis delineated by the social and nurturing role of the adoptive mother. On the one hand, the genetic contribution of the surrogate mother is downplayed and motherhood is re-theorized in favor of the adoptive mother's desire to have a child as the reason for its existence and thereby its actual origin in relation to the possibilities of surrogacy. The situation is similar in the case of artificial conception. Women who utilize egg donation emphasize motherhood achieved through pregnancy and downplay the biogenetic relationship, while those who use a surrogate mother's body give importance to their genetic contribution.[23] A similar attitude can be found in the case of homoparental families. Lesbians prefer a single donor in order to maximize the biogenetic links between their children, meaning that children conceived in this way are related not only with respect to their mother but also with respect to one male donor.[24] The same strategy can be found in the case of gay parenting. The preference is given to gestational mothers, when the intended father provides sperm and fertilization is achieved in vitro. For these men, family is defined largely by the physical resemblance between parent and child and between siblings. The gestational mother herself is an important factor. The gay couple chooses the egg donor based on physical appearance, educational attainment and the reasons why the woman became a donor with the assumption of biogenetic transmission of valued traits associated with the concept of a good person.[25]

This is not simply a conservative revitalization and reinforcement of existing categories as described by Haraway and Braidotti,[26] but rather a strategic naturalizing, in which actors create coherent and legitimate bases for the child resulting from new reproductive technologies and therefore define them as full human beings. Where Haraway and Braidotti give attention to technologies as the effective instrument of deconstruction, people in praxis

23 Cussins, Ch. M., Quit Sniveling, Cryo-Baby: We'll Work Out Which One's Your Mama! In: Davis-Floyd, R. – Dumit, J. (eds.), *Cyborg Babies: From Techno-Sex to Techno-Tots.* New York–London, Routledge 1998, pp. 40–66; Ragone, H., The Gift of Life: Surrogate Motherhood, Gamete Donation and Constructions of Altruism. In: Cook, R. – Sclater, S. D. – Kaganas, F. (eds.), *Surrogate Motherhood: International Perspectives.* Portland, Hart 2003, pp. 209–226; Teman, E., The medicalization of "nature" in the "artificial body": Surrogate Motherhood in Israel. *Med Anthropol Q*, 17, 2003, No. 1, pp. 78–98.

24 Hayden, C. P., Gender, Genetics, and Generation: Reformulating Biology in Lesbian Kinship. *Cultural Anthropology*, 10, 1995, No. 1, pp. 41–63; Sullivan, M., *The Family of Woman: Lesbian Mothers, Their Children, and the Undoing of Gender.* Berkeley, University of California Press 2004.

25 Lewin, E., "Natural" Achievements: How Lesbian and Gay Families in North America Make Claims to Kinship. In: Bamford, S. (ed.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Kinship.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 2019, pp. 253–276.

26 Cf. Haraway, D., Modest_Witness@Second_Millenium. FemaleMan©_Meets_Oncomouse™: Feminism and Technoscience, p. 128, 168; Braidotti, R., *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics.* Cambridge, Polity Press 2006, p. 2.

tend to invent new methods for the reconstruction of the identity base, in which they intertwine technology with expectations, social values, laws and technical standards. However, this entanglement is not conceived as unrestrained free play; it is realized in relation to something that could devaluate the reconstructed base of kin.

In her research, Jeanette Edwards[27] has noticed that respondents thinking about the implications of new reproductive technologies very often began to articulate incest as one of their potential risks. For example, they developed scenarios in which a child with donated gametes meets his or her donor in adulthood. Without knowing they are related, they fall in love and have children. Another example involved children of the same surrogate mother who, not knowing they were related, could fall in love and have children. The main concern was that children resulting from such unions would be disabled or deformed. According to Edwards, the concern in her respondents' field of vision is not simply the fear of the inappropriate mixing of certain biogenetic material, but rather the general proximity of the identical, which figures into medical discourse as well.[28] While in its case proximity is defined biogenetically, in lay discourse it is defined much more broadly. In England, for example, children conceived in the same womb are too close regardless of their genetic relatedness.

The occurrence of accidental incest serves as a clear boundary that must not be crossed and as a base for defining what it means to be human. The apprehension of dehumanization, both in the realm of new reproductive technologies and in Davis's arguments, places sexual intercourse with sexbots in the same category, which can be classified as incestuous. However, what is incestuous in relation to sexbots?

4. What Is Incest?

To answer this question is not simple. According to Elisabeth Archibald,[29] incest as a notion has its roots in the Latin word *incestum*, which relates to "unchaste behaviour" that can cause pollution and in which a sexual relationship is probably the most significant. In this sense, Horace in his *Odes*[30] refers

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27 Edward, J., Incorporating Incest: Gamete, Body and Relation in Assisted Conception. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 10, 2004, No. 4, pp. 755–774.

28 See e.g. Gené Enric, P. – Wilgaux, J., Incest, Embodiment, Genes and Kinship. In: Edwards, J. – Salazar, C. (eds.), *European Kinship in the Age of Biotechnology.* New York–Oxford, Berghahn Books 2023, pp. 112–127.

29 Archibald, E., *Incest and Medieval Imagination.* Oxford, Clarendon Press 2001, p. 13.

30 Horace, *Odes* (3.3). Available online at www: https://nodictionaries.com/horace/odes-3/3 [cit. 16. 1. 2023]. In the Czech version, the notion "incestusque iudex" is translated as "nečistý soudce" (impure judge); cf. Horatius, *Odes and Epodes* (*Ódy a epódy*). Král. Vinohrady, L. Bradáč 1923, p. 99.

to Paris as a *fatalis incestusque iudex* (fatal unchaste judge) because his lust influenced his decision to give the apple of discord to Venus, who promised him the most beautiful woman in the world as a reward. Similarly, sexual intercourse with a Vestal Virgin was considered unchaste (incestum). The principle persisted into the Middle Ages, when intercourse with a nun was considered incestuous, as was intercourse between relatives.

Maurice Godelier,[31] on the other hand, points out that incest comes from the Latin word *in-castus*, which qualifies an act, relationship or person who has become impure through the performance of a forbidden form of sex. The defilement involved not only the person who caused it, but also those around him, such as friends or neighbors, as well as the place where the heinous act took place. This is very often expressed in terms of sickness, and hence Davis's label of "unhealthy" for sexual intercourse with sexbots.

Impudence and pollution figure here as two complementary realms of meaning indicating unacceptable forms of sex as types of behavior that go against the principles that prevent pollution and threaten good morals. Such types of behavior can be found in every society, and this makes what we have come to refer to as incest a definitional problem. On the one hand, it seems to be a universal phenomenon that forces us to think of incest as having some objective cause that should be discovered. On the other hand, however, the specific forms of incest taboos vary, and it is questionable whether, for example, the Roman definition of incest is commensurable with Greek practice, which did not have an overarching concept for such forms of sex and certainly did not directly link it to pollution (miasma) as the Romans did.[32]

Concerning this definitional ambivalence, David Schneider[33] pointed out that the literature on incest is largely speculative, highly theoretical and built on the assumption that everyone knows what they are talking about. Its insidiousness lies in the fact that every society is characterized by certain prohibitory rules evoking the universality of incest; at the same time, however, they differ from one another, sometimes in fundamental ways. This leads some theorists to argue that this high variability of incest taboos does not compose a general class of behavior and it is not possible to understand it outside of the context of the particular culture in which they occur.[34] These cultural relativists tend to take into account the cultural logic that renders

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31 Godelier, M., *Metamorphosis of Kinship*. London, Verso 2011, p. 325.
32 Parker, R., *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion.* Oxford–New York, Clarendon Press 1983.
33 Schneider, D., The Meaning of Incest. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 85, 1976, No. 2 (June), pp. 149–169.
34 Cf. Needham, R., Remarks on the analysis of kinship and marriage. In: Needham, R. (ed.), *Rethinking Kinship and Marriage.* London, Tavistock 1971, pp. 25–26; Schneider, D., The Meaning of Incest, p. 163.

particular prohibitions of incest incommensurable and untranslatable. On the other hand, universalists look for an explanation of some general hidden mechanism with the potential to organize cultural patterns in particular ways.

In this sense, the naturalists focus on answering the question of why people have a natural fear of incest, which leads to explanations focusing mainly on the natural conditioning of avoiding sex with close relatives. On the contrary, the social determinists are interested in answering the question of why people have incest taboo while searching for the reason why and how society regulates a natural inclination to incest.[35] In this sense, the naturalists' version has its roots in Westermack's hypothesis of "familiarity does not breed",[36] which was consequently developed in the sociobiological studies of kibbutz marriages[37] or by research on the marriage of patrilineal parallel cousins[38] using social proximity as a major cause of the lack of sexual attraction accompanied by low fertility or high divorce rates. On the contrary, others focus on the proximity associated with inbreeding avoidance expressed in much of the work of primatologists or evolutionary psychologists, who argue in favor of inbreeding avoidance as an evolutionary mechanism characteristic of primate species, including humans.[39]

In contrast, social determinists consider James Frazer's critical objection to Westermarck's hypothesis. According to Frazer, it is very difficult to understand why there is a need to reinforce deep instinct by law.[40] The argument was subsequently developed by Sigmund Freud,[41] who emphasized that human beings have a natural inclination towards incestuous relations, which have to be regulated by the law. This assumption built a space for the

35 Wolf, A. P., *Incest Avoidance and the Incest Taboos. Two Aspects of Human Nature.* Stanford, Stanford University Press 2014, p. 1.

36 Westermarck, E., *The History of Human Marriage.* London, Macmillan 1894.

37 Shepher, J., Mate Selection among Second Generation Kibbutz Adolescents and Adults: Incest Avoidance and Negative Imprinting. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 1, 1971, pp. 293–307; Shepher, J., *Incest. A biosocial view*. New York, Academic Press 1983.

38 McCabe, J., FBD Marriage: Further Support for Westermarck's hypothesis of the Incest Taboo? *American Anthropologist*, 85, 1983, No. 1, pp. 50–69.

39 See e.g. Bulger, J. – Hamilton, W. J. III. Inbreeding and reproductive success in a natural chacma baboon, Papio cynocephalus ursinus, population. *Animal Behaviour*, 36, 1988, pp. 574–578; Charpentier, M. J. – Widdig, A. – Alberts, S. C., Inbreeding depression in non-human primates: a historical review of methods used and empirical data. *American Journal of Primatology*, 69, 2007, No. 12, pp. 1370–1386; Moore, J. – Ali, R., Are dispersal and inbreeding avoidance related? *Animal Behaviour*, 32, 1984, pp. 94–112; Parker, H. – Parker, S., Father-daughter sexual abuse: An emerging perspective. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 56, 1986, No. 4, pp. 531–549.

40 Frazer, J., *Totemism and Exogamy. A Treatise on Certain Early Forms of Superstition and Society.* London, Macmillan and Co. 1910, p. 97.

41 Freud, S., *Totem and Taboo. Resemblances Between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics.* New York, Moffat–Yard and Company, 1913.

formation of the social determinists' theory, which emphasizes the regulative role of social rules with a focus on the stability and harmony of social groups or social order in a wider sense.

In particular, Claude Lévi-Strauss[42] began to combine Freud's assumptions with the ideas of Edward Tylor (1889),[43] Emile Durkheim[44] and Marcel Mauss.[45] In his view, the incest taboo is a special institution that removes man from the womb of chaotic nature and places him in a world of organized and predictable social relations.[46] It is an act of humanization that has appeared in relation to incest prohibition forbidding marriage with a mother, sister or daughter. The consequence of this primordial act is a transformation of the biological conditions of procreation (without rules) in the artificial framework of taboos and obligations, within which the first and most important is the shift from the nature of the consanguineous family into the social imperative of the absolute gift of woman. It is this exchange system conditioned by exogamy that gives rise to kinship as proper human relations. It combines principles of affinity and consanguinity, which leads to the production of human society specified by kinship categories defining kinship distance or proximity between the ego and its potential mate.

Françoise Héritier called Lévi-Strauss' version "incest of the first type" and pointed out in her book[47] that Lévi-Strauss' theory considered only consanguinity-related prohibition based on filiation and ignored prohibition concerning affine relatives (e.g. mother in law, daughter in law, husband's sisters etc.), which is also part of incestuous prohibitions. This prohibition aims at limiting indirect homosexual relationships between blood relatives of the same sex (mother/daughter, father/son, sister/sister, brother/brother) who have the same partner, leading to physical intimacy that is unthinkable between blood relatives. Héritier called it "incest of the second type".

This does not simply place the related categories in the field of vision as is evident in the case of Lévi-Strauss, but bodily fluids circulating between bodies and sets of prohibitions aimed at preventing the same fluids from intermingling. To have sexual intercourse with a wife's sister means to unite the two sisters by transferring the sexual fluids of one sister into the womb

42 Lévi-Strauss, C., *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston, Bacon Press 1969, esp. Chapter II: The Problem of Incest.

43 Tylor, E. B., On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions: Applied to Laws of Marriage and Descent. *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XVIII, 1889, pp. 245–272.

44 Durkheim, D., La Prohibition de l'inceste et ses origines. *Année sociologique*, 1, 1898, pp. 1–70.

45 Mauss, M., Essai sur le don: Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques. *Année sociologique*, 1, 1925, pp. 30–186.

46 Lévi-Strauss, C., *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, p. 25.

47 Héritier, F., *Two Sisters and Their Mothers. The Anthropology of Incest*. London–New York, Zone Books 1999.

of the other. This theory does not link necessarily symbols to the existence of language but rather to corporeality and anatomical differences.[48] It is this difference between bodies that establishes the distinction between the categories of identical and different. Although Lévi-Strauss assumed incest of the first type to be universal, Héritier shows that it is derived or derivable from incest of the second type. What is forbidden in incest between blood relatives is definitely the intercourse of identical blood or more generally an identical substance. Therefore, according to Héritier, primary incest can be understood through incest of the second type. What is perverse about Oedipus is not that he had sexual relations with his mother (primary incest), but that through her similar/the same sperm was mixed together in her womb (secondary incest).[49]

However, Héritier's conclusion is not accepted unanimously. In *The Metamorphosis of Kinship*,[50] Maurice Godelier points out that a man's sexual relationship with his wife's sister or mother is not considered incest among the Ashanti. On the other hand, the Ashanti punish with death two kinds of sexual relations that primarily concern hierarchical relations (sex with the wife of the chief) and with the gods, not kinship relations.[51] Therefore, according to Godelier, it is necessary to understand that forbidden sexual unions not narrowly reduced to forbidden marriages give the incest taboo its form and content, and it is not necessary to assume the primacy of incest through the contact of identical substances. Instead, Godelier emphasizes that humans have been faced with two possible choices: 1) to marry with or without exchange and 2) to unite like the gods or differently from the gods, in which the prohibition of incest symmetrically concerns identity and difference.

> As a consequence, and logically, in societies that forbid sexual unions between close relatives, humans are not allowed to imitate gods. The relations humans entertain with the gods are invoked here either to forbid or to allow relations between close relatives. Unions between humans always involve the whole society and cosmos.[52]

This principle is a kind of universal invariant. It refers to the symmetrical prohibition of sexual relations between hierarchically organized species in general terms that should be separated because they are too different from

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48 Ibid., p. 201.
49 Ibid., pp. 269–270.
50 Godelier, M., *Metamorphosis of Kinship*, p. 340.
51 Ibid., p. 340.
52 Ibid., p. 463.

each other or, conversely, because they are too similar, such as spouses being identical. The acceptable use of sex lies between these two extremes of identity and difference.

5. Identity and Difference

But identity and difference of what? Lévi-Strauss talks about identity and difference being formed in relation to classification systems. Héritier emphasizes bodily and anatomical differences. However, Godelière no longer speaks simply of classification and likewise avoids speaking directly of bodily or more generally corporal differences between species. Instead, he emphasizes the accumulation of the identical within incest, as well as the bridging of differentiations or hierarchically ordered and disconnected elements within it. This does not fully correspond to the described classical universalistic theory of incest prohibition and is much more consistent with the idea of incest as was developed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.[53] Both of these scholars reject the perspective typical of social determinists in which incest is seen as an obstacle to the establishment of society and the prohibition of incest as a motive or cause of its existence. In their view, there is no general prohibition of incest, but only of incestuous sequences creatively linked to sequences of (other) prohibitions (e.g. dietary customs). In this way, incest is an ambivalent act against the represive forces of the existing system represented by social institutions, ideologies and power relations, and creates the possibility for the enactment of a state that can oppose the constituted system of differantiation spread between possible and forbidden relations. At the core of this act is the imagination of a possible human(s), and it can be understood as the image of a human that becomes real via the gathering and assembling of identical and contradictory elements inscribed into the individual participants in incestuous entanglement.

Da Vinci's ideas of flying machines based on the flight of birds or bats are exactly this type of imagination – a certain gathering of ontological propositions based on the observation of birds that inscribe the aerodynamic requirements into the material for the possible flight of machines heavier than air (seemingly contradictory elements). In this sense for Deleuze and Guattari, the existence of society is not necessarily based on a system of exchanges conditioned by an abstract prohibition of incest, but rather on the inscription of code series produced by desires (e.g. to fly) constituting new

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53 Deleuze, G. – Guattari, F., *Anti-Oedipus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press 2010.

individuals, bodies and matters in the broadest ontological sense and built on their processual syntheses. As Guattari explains in his example on the "society" of the orchid and wasp.

> The orchid's code opens up and absorbs a portion of the wasp's code. A portion, because the rest continues to be foundational to the wasp's unvarying structure … [thus] a new being was produced, a new power, a new machine.[54]

What makes sexual intercourse with sexbots incestuous is its potential for breaking hierarchically ordered differences between humans and machines. This leads to the imagination of possible humans and inhumans, who can be formed in the inscription process initiated by the entanglement of two penetrable entities within which biological reproduction can be replaced by data reproduction. To clarify, sexbots cannot simply be conceived as an instrument for sex as desire, but rather for sex as reproduction. When combined with artificial intelligence, they are not simply just another pet or things with which an emotional relationship can be built, nor can they be seen merely as a better sexual aid. Sexbots with artificial intelligence are built as a sophisticated interface that allows the inscription of synchronizing code series between humans and machines that are threatened by the massive datafication of human sexuality. Therefore, the central questions are: What is inscribed to humans and sexbots in their possible affinity, what kind of filiation can be reproduced in this affinity, and which human(s) can we imagine in the real consumption of sex with robots?

6. Affinization with Sexbots

The idea of the transhuman was constituted simply as improving human capabilities in using current technologies.[55] However, this is not what sexbots represent; they are the counterparts of transhumans in their effects. They are designed as a tool that can replace inadequate or satisfying relationships with people centered around sex. In this sense, Davies and Richardson are right in pointing out that sex with robots is not explicitly about symmetrical reciprocity. Sexbots can substitute or perhaps complete under-fulfilled or under-realized sexuality. As a result, designing sexbots can be understood as a set of inscriptions in which market requirements are combined with

54 Guattari, F., *The Anti-Oedipus Papers.* New York, Semiotext(e) 2006, p. 270.

55 See e.g. Garreau, J., *Radical Evolution: The Promise and Peril of Enhancing Our Minds, Our Bodies and What It Means to be Human.* New York, Random House 2005, pp. 231–232.

current technological possibilities mirroring actual stereotypes in sex and gender relationships.

This is evident in the case of the Synthea Amataus company, which designed the robot Samantha in 2017. The device was formed at the intersection of market requirements and actual technological possibilities and, as Samantha's creators Sergi Santos and Maritsa Kissamitaki noted, it began with a brain equipped with artificial intelligence. The need for a certain kind of body appeared later. In interviews with *The Sun* and *The Mirror*, Samantha's designers explained customer behavior, stating that sex dolls were being bought by wives as gifts to their husbands, and that they had begun to supply improved sex dolls to the market.

> We started researching it and found out – before anyone was making the robots – that wives were buying them for their husbands because they understand the kind of need that their husbands have, and how this could benefit their relationship.[56]

With this strategy, Sergi and Maritsa have a good understanding of their clients' motives to have a sexbot. In their view, on the one hand, they are people who are socially awkward or for some reason have no social life, or people who have a social life but feel lonely. With the aspiration to create the perfect companion, Sergi and Maritsa are constantly innovating their sexbots. They add built-in vibrations that make the dolls sensitive and responsive to touch, thereby creating the illusion of a living human created in three modes: with a romantic, familial and sexy nature, including the possibility of sexual synchronization with the user and programming the sexbot to orgasm.[57]

The Abyss Creations company has similar ambitions. Within the project *Realbotix*, its engineers have created a robotic talking head equipped with artificial intelligence that can be mounted onto *RealDoll* bodies, targeting the ability to choose the appearance of the robotic companions to suit the customer's taste. Using the app, it is possible to design a virtual girlfriend targeting a choice of 11 body types, 30 styles and 31 faces.[58] The robot re-

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56 Ibid.

57 Davidson, T., Robot sex doll inventor says homemade erotic cyborg called Samantha has SAVED his marriage. *The Mirror*, 2018. Available online at www: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023]; Xie, Q., Easy Bargain 'Samantha' sex robot creator who calls himself the 'Robin Hood of sex' shows off his latest dolls. *The Sun*, 2018. Available online at www: https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/4916473/samantha-sex-doll-robin-hood-barcelona-sergi-santos/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023]; Walker, A., My date with a sex robot: An exclusive tour of the infamous workshop where 'the Robin hood of sex' built Samantha. *The Mirror*, 2017. Available online at www: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/weird-news/date-sex-robot-stroke-samantha-11521560 [cit. 16. 1. 2023].

58 See online at www: https://www.realdoll.com/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023].

members the client's name and preferences and engages in chats, even on sexual topics. The aim is to develop a fully responsive robotic body with skin that would correspond to human temperature, which can help to bridge the feelings of distress and aversion to robots.[59]

In 1970, Masahiro Mori published an article[60] in which he presented the results of his research focusing on the emotional response to the appearance of robots. It was expressed by a graph in which the increasing curve starts to fall at a certain point, which Mori dubbed "the uncanny valley" and characterized as the moment when robots start to look remarkably similar to humans and still have something that makes them different and evokes a sense of distress. It is possible that sexbots will succeed in bridging this uncanny valley. Advanced technologies simply allow sexbots to be attractive robots specifically by a sexualized body of desire. For example, the aforementioned company Abyss Creations has received an offer to make a sex dog thanks to its advanced experience in sexbot design,[61] and the Japanese company Trottla makes sex dolls resembling five-year-old girls, attacking the boundaries of zoophilia and pedophilia.[62]

Is this panic justified? According to some, the response is an overreaction. Sex in this case is not directly related to animals or children, but to machines that can take the form of a desired body.[63] On the other hand, critics such as Davis and Richardson persist in arguing for a reduction of human empathy in sex with robots and an affirmation of an exploitative relationship between men and women, into which women figure as sexual objects. However, this is not the point. Just as human sexuality cannot be reduced to reproduction, it is very naive to think that it can simply be limited to an equal partner relationship. Can one imagine trying to prohibit vibrators in this view? On the other hand, the prohibition of vibrators equipped with artificial intelligence is a slightly different task. While "smart vibrators" do not replace biological reproduction, they bring the reproduction of data into play.

In 2012, software engineers Dema Tio and Steven Kik introduced the first smart vibrator in the world with the possibility of being paired with the Vibease app's audiobooks and synced with vibrations that vary according to the storyline. It also offers the possibility to include the partner in the process through the installed text, voice and video chat function, as well as an

59 See Owsianik, J., State of the Sexbot Market: The World's Best Sex Robot and AI Sex Doll Companies. *Future of Sex*, 2022. Available online at www: https://futureofsex.net/robots/state-of-the-sexbot-market-the-worlds-best-sex-robot-and-ai-love-doll-companies/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023]; Lee, J., *Sex Robots: The Future of Desire*. Cham, Palgrave Macmillan 2017, pp. 2–3.
60 Mori, M., The Uncanny Valley. *IEEE Robotics and Automation*, 19, 2012 (1970), No. 98, pp. 98–100.
61 Lee, J., *Sex Robots: The Future of Desire*, p. 4.
62 Richardson, K., Sex Robot Matters, p. 48.
63 Ibid., p. 1797.

interactive touchpad for partners to change vibration intensity with a few easy swipes. Today, Vibease offers three products targeting different tasks in the use of vibrators based on a pairing system between the vibrator and the partner's phone. This is mediated by the Vibease server, which collects and evaluates information for better personalized pleasure seeking.[64]

The Vibease system precisely illustrates how very intimate desires and body sensations are being exteriorized through current digital technologies and privatized by a third party. The responsive artifact equipped with the possibilities of artificial intelligence is therefore constituted as an interface that enables the effective datafication of the human and its sexuality and, as a consequence, leads to overcoding of desire for the human body in favour of the desire for the machine body. This turn is realized through the mobilizing of an aesthetic proximity and body similarity between humans and sexbots that blurs the distance and boundaries between man and machine and contributes to the camouflage of their identity. As a result of the possible composition of sexbots into human sexuality, the human agent disappears and a new form of sexuality related to technical objects is formed. This creates the notion of "technophilia", a sexual dimension undermining the difference between "free" and "mechanical" sex that is conditioned by actual technological possibilities and the implementation of artificial intelligence into the sex industry. Design emphasis on a fully responsive robotic body and coherent reactions as is being developed in the design of chatbots Alexa or Siri or as it is known in the case of the ChatGPT will lead to the fulfillment of human emotional and physical demands; on the other hand, it makes it possible to build a database of human intimacy intended for machine learning so that sexbots can be more effective seducers.

In parallel to Richardson and Davis' asymmetry, the result is a reciprocal symmetry, within which sex is exchanged and transformed into information and vice versa. Similarly, like Deleuze's and Guattari's orchid absorbing a portion of the wasp's code, sexbots equipped with artificial intelligence absorb a portion of the human's code. *Seducere* here is no longer reducible simply to the sex business and the objectification and increasing commodification of women's bodies, but to the objectification of hidden and intimate desires made possible by its massive datafication. In this sense, sexbots in their sexualized designs are an interface between humans' sexual fantasies and arti-

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64 See online at www: https://www.vibease.com/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023]; Christy, T., Introducing Vibease, the World's First AI Vibrator. *Hive Life*, 2019. Available online at www: https://hivelife.com/vibease/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023]; Wynn, M. – Tillotson, K. – Kao, R. – Gonzalez, A. C. – Murillo, A. F. – Camargo, J. – Mantilla, R. – Rangel, B. – Cárdenas, A. A. – Rueda, S. J., Sexual Intimacy in the Age of Smart Devices: Are We Practicing Safe IoT? *Proceedings of the 2017 Workshop on Internet of Things Security and Privacy*, 2017.

ficial intelligence, which can potentially produce new creative beings, new power or machines to use Deleuze's and Guattaris's notions once again.

I am led to this idea mainly by recent advances in the use of artificial intelligence. In 2017, AlphaGo, an artificial intelligence developed by Google, competed against the best player of Go in the world. The duel is interesting not simply because of the machine's victory over the human, but because AlphaGo won in an unusual and until then unknown move.[65] In the 2020 CASP (Critical Assessment of Protein Structure Prediction) competition, using *AlphaFold's* artificial intelligence, DeepMind (which is also owned by Google) determined the exact shape of a protein in 3D based on information from sequenced acid, allowing the shape of proteins to be viewed from different angles and at different sizes to identify whether certain amino acids are mutated in a disease. The result is interesting in another way. AlphaFold works with input information (amino acid sequences) and a huge amount of data of already known structures of different proteins that are stored in public databases. Based on this data, AlphaFold learns what the structures look like and can therefore design their shape quite accurately. The problem is that none of the AlphaFold authors know exactly what the AI has learned. Despite the well-known algorithm that AI operates on, we are unable to determine how the AI will arrive at a result based on the input data.[66]

Another example: On the occasion of the 700th anniversary of Dante's death, the robot Ai-Da invented by Aidan Meller at Oxford University was introduced. Ai-Da is designed for the public performance of poetry, which is written using algorithms for the creation of new unique poetry based on Dante's legacy. During the recital, AiDa performed this poem widely shared by public media.

We looked up from our verses like blindfolded captives,
Sent out to seek the light; but it never came
A needle and thread would be necessary
For the completion of the picture.
To view the poor creatures, who were in misery,
That of a hawk, eyes sewn shut.[67]

65 Menick, J., Move 37: Artificial Intelligence, Randomness, and Creativity. *Mousse Magazine*, 2016. Available online at www: https://www.moussemagazine.it/magazine/john-menick-ai-1-2016/ [cit. 16. 1. 2023].
66 Callaway, E., It will change everything': DeepMind's AI makes gigantic leap in solving protein structures. *Nature*, 588, 2020, pp. 203–204.
67 Ryan, H., Meet The Robot That Can Write Poetry and Create Artworks. *CNN*, 2021. Available online at www: https://edition.cnn.com/2021/11/27/tech/ai-da-robot-intl-scli-gbr/index.html [cit. 16. 1. 2023].

According to Ai-Da's inventor in an interview for CNN, he noted that the robot's ability to imitate human writing was so great that, if you read it, you would not know it was not written by a human. He said:

> The Ai-Da project was developed to address the debate over the ethics of further developing AI to imitate humans and human behavior. […] It's finally dawning on us all that technology is having a major impact on all aspects of life and we're seeking to understand just how much this technology can do and what it can teach us about ourselves.[68]

The mentioned examples suggest that artificial intelligence has a creative potential that we do not fully understand and addresses a much more general issue related to the question of what consciousness is. Although there is no clear definition of the term and it cannot be adequately defined based on a counter definition of subconscious or unconscious, advances in artificial intelligence and their implementation in social robots make sexbots a serious risk. As an interface connecting humans with AI, hidden human sexual desires can be transformed into a huge data archive and subsequently turned into a tool for manipulating humans, firstly by humans themselves and later by AI. The case of Cambridge Analytica, which documents how it is easy to misuse data from social media for manipulation with public opinion, should alert us to such a possibility. Although sexbots are still only imperfect machines, their potential in the combination of AI and human sexuality can be transformed in the context of the massive datafication of human behaviour and sexuality into the Promethean gift or co-evolutionary tool of AI, where the risk lies not in the differentiation of man from machine, but machine from man. How was this said by Ai-Da? *"A needle and thread would be necessary – For the completion of the picture. To view the poor creatures, who were in misery, That of a hawk, eyes sewn shut."* Is that the rising of AI consciousness with the Promethean task, which delineates robots from the poor human creatures trapped in their misery?

7. Conclusion – The Great Rearrangement?

The interweaving of humans with sexbots would allow information about the inner human fantasies to be provided to AI, which can then become public and be turned into knowledge of human sexual behaviour. While the Encyclopedists dreamed about knowledge that would have practical applications in both a technical and social sense that would enable the achievement

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68 Ibid.

of human freedom, in the case of AI it is more about cybernetic knowledge targeting the influence over human behaviour through information. There is always a physical force that influences an interaction between two or more entities. Cybernetics, however, works with the assumption of the control based on information characterized by the principle of feedback. In the case of sexbots, this would act as a co-evolutionary tool of mutual inscription between human and machine. Nevertheless, the risk is not small. Co-evolution does not necessarily suppose a symbiotic relationship, as it was seen in Deleuze's and Guattari's favorite example of the orchid and the wasp, but also parasitic or even predatory relationships. This indicates that humans themselves have been involved in an experiment within which they are no longer mere remote observers but rather sources of data – objects for further mining, analysis, and the evaluation of their desires and sexual pleasures, which will be mirrored in the reactions of sexbots.

In this turn, we are in danger of becoming more like Olds and Milner's rats – when the pleasure centers of their brains were masterfully stimulated by the scientists, the rats stopped eating and died of hunger.[69] Similarly, people may become empty shells once they find themselves in offline mode, just like their robotic counterparts. Just as Prometheus gave humans knowledge and skills, we humans give AI information that is potentially usable as a source of desire and pleasure in this connection. What was human becomes technical, and what was technical can become an instrument of AI mastery and human imprisonment, seduced by sexual desire, much as the obsessed scientist Nathan was imprisoned in the movie *Ex-Machina*.[70] Is it the dream destiny of humans trapped in their misery of pleasure due to their unchaste behaviour influenced by desire to have a sex with machines, or is there a possibility of this human-machine connection that will announce the emergence of the *Novacene* – a new age as was imagined by James Lovelock?[71]

The Promethean myth[72] is not simply about the definition of man as a being imagined and created by gods, but also about the creation of a new ecosystem due to the loss of the counterpart by the imprisonment of the Titans. Even the gods cannot exist only on their own, but always in relation to others who have taken shape in the form of humans and animals. Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus created a new sphere that comes

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69 Olds, J. – Milner, P., Positive Reinforcement Produced by Electrical Stimulation of the Septal Area and Other Regions of Rat Brain. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*, 47, 1954, No. 6, pp. 419–427.

70 Written and directed by Alex Garland, 2004, UK, 108 min.

71 Lovelock, J., *Novacene. The Coming Age of Hyperintelligence*. Cambridge, MIT Press 2019.

72 Cf. Hesiodos, *The Songs of Iron Age* (*Zpěvy železného věku*). Prague, Svoboda 1990, pp. 507–617; Platon, *Protagoras* (*Protágoras*). Prague, Oikoymenh 2015, 320d–321d, pp. 27–29.

alive through the incestuous connection of the divine and the human initiated by Prometheus's gift, which is understood from the gods' perspective as theft. This is similar to human beings: In the Anthropocene, the human and his society became the dominant force of nature and thus lost the counterpart of difference. In the Anthropocene, natural processes have been turned into the effects of human society. Humans, like the ancient gods, cannot exist without a relationship to the difference and, in using artificial intelligence, they create for themselves a counterpart that can come alive through the gift/theft connection of the human with the technical based on the incestuous mediation role of sexbots. This leads Lovelock to imagine the entanglement of carbon and silicon worlds in the name of saving the planet Earth from global warming. They have a similar temperature limit of 47 ºC for the possible functionality of both worlds.[73] Who knows? Maybe this incestuous relationship with machines would not be as unhealthy as Davis suggests, but worth this strange alliance in the name of human survival. What kind of humanity will be formed in this great rearrangement?

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73 Lovelock, J., *Novacene. The Coming Age of Hyperintelligence*, pp. 57–66.