

BOOK REVIEWS

Mekanikleşen Hayatta İnsan ve Özgürlük Sorunu (Humans and the Problem of Freedom in Mechanized Life) by Sebile Başok Diş (Konya: Çizgi Publications, 2019). pp 144. TL33,25. ISBN: 978-605-196-324-2.

Today's world, which is intended to be understood by notions such as technology, hyper-reality, age of artificial intelligence, is attributed 'new' as a whole, compared to the industrial revolution and described as a critical stage of transformation. In this sense, many important developments and problems are also emerging. One of these is the issue of freedom. As a matter of fact, in the universe surrounded by machines, mechanization is controversial in the context of freedom for the human being who links the realization of the possibility of a better and ideal life to the advance of the mechanism to control the multiplicity and transformation in life and to dominate everything. In this direction, Diş, in her own philosophical style, intends to discuss freedom in the world of machines by standing on factual grounds.

Sebile Başok Diş received her Bachelor's degree (2004) from Marmara University Faculty of Theology, Master's degree in Philosophy (2008) from Sakarya University, and Doctorate in Philosophy (2016) from Atatürk University, and is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy at Necmettin Erbakan University. Diş, who has so far published six (6) books and many articles and papers concerning moral problems, has investigated the intellectual development of our age from the perspective of the machine-human relationship, taking into account that humankind is a morally responsible being. The more important point is that his life is a trust. Based on such ideas, she has dealt with the concepts of freedom, evil, ethics, morality, and truth in her studies.

One of Diş's latest works, *Humans and the Problem of Freedom in Mechanized Life* (2019), problematically addresses the mechanization of human life and its positive and negative aspects, discusses the transformation of this relationship along with artificial intelligence, and examines human existence in terms of the production-consumption relationship. Such an analysis necessarily leads to the problem of freedom, and the work mainly points to this debate. The study reveals on what grounds the human-machine relationship has a necessary bond and points to the possible consequences of the humanization of machines (p. 7-9).

One of the most important issues revealed by current technological-scientific

developments is that human beings have a problem with their own existence. In this sense, in the preface, Diş points to the mechanization of human beings as a beginning. In the preface, she states that she limits the relationship between human beings and machines, and the problem of freedom reveals an analysis of the extent to which a human being's right to choose and his/her preferences belong to him in this age of technology. However, in the preface, Diş states that she will examine the mechanization of human beings and the humanization of machines under two main headings with content that is not chronological but tries to explain its historical foundations. Accordingly, in the first part, she starts with the mechanization of working life, gives examples of the mechanization of emotions, and finally, how the human body is mechanized, and critically conveys them in three (3) sub-headings and in the second part, she touches on the humanization of machines and deals with the inertia of human beings and the problem of freedom again under three headings.

In the first part, the importance of mechanization in human life and the evolution of human being (and their gradual transformation into an insignificant beings) as a result of opportunities it brings to them were discussed. Thus the pursuit of human beings' separating themselves from other beings in the process of existence, reinforcing their struggle for existence and dominating nature over the time was discussed through examples (p. 14-15). With the aim of facilitating their own life, the desire to rule, and the desire to keep life dynamic, the human being transforms the whole existence into a production-consumption relationship, leading to the formation of class distinctions between people. As a matter of fact, this class distinction leads to an increase in value in favor of the machine in the machine-human relationship. Adding to this tendency, Diş states that human beings also want to dominate their own bodies. She states that the trivialization and devaluation of the natural structure of a human being's body lead to the emergence of a new being, the *god of prostheses* (p. 55). Apart from this, the process of mechanization is not only limited to the body but also paves the way for the transformation of human's special qualities, emotions, mind, intelligence, and consciousness with artificial intelligence. Therefore, the work points out that as a result of this progress, human beings may become idle and unable to make their own choices, and eventually, a life in which freedom is eliminated will be established. According to Diş, the technological efforts of human beings, which also mean the alienation from nature and his/her own existence, increase the importance and value of mechanization depending on the process of production and consumption; it reveals a modernist perspective in which the problem of freedom is revealed and which assumes that time should be used economically (p. 52-54).

In the second part, Diş addresses the humanization of machines as the main problem, drawing attention to the fact that this situation leads human beings to become an idle being and to the problematic of morality and freedom regarding the extent to which the idle human being will be competent in choice and preference. Human beings endeavor to create a ‘better’, ‘useful’, ‘beautiful’ and ‘non-perishable’ body and, more generally, the order of life, reveals first of all the problem of security. The desire for a secure, controllable living space leads us to artificial intelligence, thus increasing expectations from artificial intelligence and paving the way for it to become an autonomous thing with a mind (p. 102). Conversely, a new human being is evolving in everyday life, one that becomes non-thinking, idle and lazy. In this context, with the process of decision-making in life, unpredictable reactions due to the decisions taken, rapid and unexpected decisions and reactions being taken away from human beings, there is no chance to talk about freedom. Diş states that as the weight of artificial intelligence and machines in human life increases, it becomes unclear whether human being’s preferences and choices belong to them or not, and that this uncertainty equally reduces the human being’s ability to reason, and as a result his/her freedom is prevented (p. 134-135). In this context, Diş discusses the problem of freedom within the framework of concepts of ‘making choices’, ‘making preferences’ and ‘reasoning’, and draws attention to the fact that as mechanization advances, the features indicating that we are free are disappearing. In our age, where needs are predetermined and the technical aspect of thinking has been transferred to a technological one, it is no longer possible for human beings to display an authentic attitude. In this respect, Diş states that as a result of mechanization, the level of human being’s comprehension of life with a sense of responsibility has fallen to the level of children, and as a suggestion, she draws attention to the fact that machines should exist as a tool in decision-making mechanisms rather than a life without machines (p. 136).

The fundamental analysis of today’s age, which is shaped by technology, artificial intelligence, mechanization, can be done either on an ontological ground with an epistemological content or in the light of the above-mentioned factual developments. Rather than ontological research, a factual analysis that is merely a quick treatment of a traumatic situation ultimately reproduces an attempt of understanding that is remained in the classical debates of the history of philosophy. Nevertheless, any attempt to understand developments that are factual and acute has a value that should be appreciated and supported. However, any discussion over the analysis of effects and implications of the problems that arise along with the current developments does not necessarily bring out a competent and inclusive solution,

but only helps to reveal the problem itself. In this respect, Diş’s work stands at a different point, does not overwhelm us with facts and keeps us away from reactive approaches. Analyzing the problem without taking a chronological stance, Diş is in a good position by drawing attention to human beings in answering the question of how technological-scientific developments, which is also a philosophical problem, have progressed. In this respect, the work, which is written to appeal to average readers, contributes to the philosophical analysis of current developments and points to the schizoid attitude of the subject, which also means “new” on an ontological ground and bears the problem of beginning.

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