

WHY WILL THE FACE OUTLIVE  
THE BODY, OR ON THE TECHNOLOGICAL FUTURE  
OF HUMAN EMBODIMENT?

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**Abstract:** Little would remain of man without the face. But why is the face so important? To find the meaning of the face it suffices to ask ourselves what would we lose if we had no faces? The face is full of significant symbols and centers of meaning. Smile and tears live on the face. The sparkle of the eyes and the taste of the tongue are all there. The wrinkles on the forehead and the softness of the cheeks. The beauty of the lips and the pride of the chin. The curiosity of the nose and the fluttering eyelashes of flirtation.

The article discusses the importance of the human face and its future in the world of technology of Posthuman era.

**Key words:** face, embodiment, body, personality, future, technologies.

A number of facial muscles provide a huge quantity of information about the emotional state, current intentions and attitudes of the man. Recognizing and decoding that information is key for the survival of a “social animal” which the human is considered to be. Therefore, the evolutionary development has favoured the survival of humans who paid attention and recognized the faces of the others<sup>1</sup>, of their tribesmen. Thus, the face has been more and more precisely mapped into our brains as the part of the bodies of the people surrounding us that determines sociality. The face has played an important role upon the formation of humanity [Bernard, 2005]. The good recognition of the face used to ensure a full-on communication, especially in the pre-verbal era of human relationships. Verbal communication is only possible thanks to the senses situated on or around the face: sight and hearing. But what is the socio-cultural role of the face and its philosophical interpretation?

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<sup>1</sup> Human capacity to recognize “agency” in nature’s active elements is designated in evolutionary biology as “hypersensitive agency detection device.” [Haidt, 2012: 269]. The animation and deification of various elements of nature and the nature as a whole is explained by the said sensitivity of the man [Barrett, 2000: 29]. Face recognition is closely linked to the idea of agency.

## 1. The catch of the face and resistances of the body

Face is an abstraction of the body. As a part of the body the face is *the body's hermit* – *there is least body in the face*. The face is much more differentiated, detailed, tender and expressive. It is the top aristocratic part of the body's upper half. It cannot move on its own and relies on the body muscles (the neck, the hips) to do it for it. But it is precisely the face that determines the body's location with respect to the looker: en face, profile, with one's back<sup>2</sup>. The body lineup is governed by the face which is the former's most representative part. The body is represented and socially identified through the face. The face is the body's passport, it is the certificate of the body. With its representative functions the face is moving away from the body. As a social entry to the body, a document of its integration into the world of subjects, the face is a sign placed outside and beyond the body. In this sense the face is not the body, it is the speaking opposition of the speechless body. The face is an answer to the body's contestation of the prerogative of human consciousness. The body is at a constant risk and in constant need – it can be hurt at every instant and every instant requires our attention as one for surviving. We must protect it and satisfy its needs of water, food, rest, etc. This creates a sense of vulnerability of the consciousness – it compromises itself by its constant dependence on the body: “The body is a permanent contestation of the prerogative attributed to consciousness of “giving meaning” to each thing; it lives as this contestation.” [Levinas, 1969: 129].

Defining the face as the part of the body “of least body” comes to defend the “prerogative of consciousness.” The consciousness owns a part of the body that is in its possession – it is the face. The face is qualitatively different from the “naked and hungry body,” it is above (even in purely physical terms) that body.

But the face does not exhaust the body. Although it is above the body, it is less than a body. Similarly to language, the face *typifies* the sensations of the body that are otherwise inaccessible in their uniqueness [Bergson, 1910]. The body gives the tinge of colorfulness of the states of consciousness, which can only partially be recognized on the face. The body gives the nuances of the face. *The body happens, while the face tries to signify that happening*. The body is a cauldron where all sensory sensations, impressions and feelings are merged and melted. This spontaneity of dynamic Ego living in the body finds its momentary manifestations in facial expressions. The face is a screen of what is happening inside the body but a screen simplifying the bodily dynamics to expressions/images which are understandable for the looking others. As Husserl says: “my animate bodily organism (in my primordial sphere) has the central “Here” as its mode of givenness; every other body, and accordingly the “other's” body, has the mode “There” [Husserl, 1960: 116]. The Other's corporeal presence, without a face, is opaque, impenetrable. The Other appears only through, in his/her face, mastered to an image.

The incomprehensibility of the body is also linked to its *duration*, to *its existence in time*. The body lives in time as continuity in which not even a single cause

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<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the face is always absent for its holder. The mirror is the only key to “our missing image,” an “echo of the face.” [Igov, 2002: 10].

repeats itself for every state is always different and new (every repetition and new state). To much greater extent the face is situated in a homogeneous space where we can search the objective rules of causation. As Henri Bergson says in *Time and Free Will. An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* in order to foresee the actions of a person we have to understand such person's experiences. However, we can only understand them by experiencing them:

“But if Peter and Paul (two randomly chosen subjects – *my remark* – S.S.) have experienced the same feelings in the same order, if their minds have the same history, how will you distinguish one from the other? Will it be by the body in which they dwell? They would then always differ in some respect, viz., that at no moment of their history would they have a mental picture of the same body. Will it be by the place which they occupy in time? In that case they would no longer be present at the same events: now, by hypothesis, they have the same past and the same present, having the same experience” [Bergson, 1910: 188]

The body is *the last, insurmountable difference*. The body is what constitutes me as precisely that subject that passes through and changes in time. The face, on the contrary, persists in its image. It is to much less extent dependent on time: even when the corporeal surface of the face gets covered with the wrinkles of old age, these wrinkles witness the old age of the body (the time having passed for the body), without compromising the meaningful depth of the face that preserves the essence (identity) of man.

Behind every face exists a dynamic sequence of states in time that transfuse and penetrate each other. The behaviour of the face is all actions that happen in the body. The body remains its tinges in the Ego, “which is in a perpetual state of becoming” [Ibid., p. 130], and “which lives and develops by means of its very hesitations, until the free action drops from it like an over-ripe fruit” [Ibid., p. 176]. The body is *pure duration in time*<sup>3</sup>, which cannot be represented and arranged as simultaneities in space. At the very moment when we attempt to reduce the constantly changing and inter-permeating states of the body to linguistic designations, to words of specific meaning, we efface them, removing precisely what is the most essential about them and reduce them to communication “banalities”. Thus, *the language* that help us understand each other and that makes communication possible destroys the spontaneity of our experiences and turns them from states lasting in time into units situated in space. In language the richness of our experience (including the richness of our corporeal experience) crystallizes into ordered and “interchangeable” feelings – a second self “covers the first one” [Ibid., p. 167]. If our entire essence is reflected (settles) in the states and each feeling contains the tinge of all others, then language “denotes these states by the same words in every case: so that it has been able to fix only the objective and impersonal aspect of love, hate, and the thousand emotions which stir the soul” [Ibid., p. 164]. Language is much more closely

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<sup>3</sup> The idea of Merleau-Ponty's idea of corporeal intentionality, of body as consciousness could also be read in this sense for every thinking and thinking with body, here and now. Whenever man thinks, (s)he thinks as a body that lasts in the moment of thinking [Merleau-Ponty, 2005].

linked to the face – it creates itself there and to some extent describes the face itself. The face speaks on behalf of the body by “solidifying” its fluctuations and makes them understandable for the other participants in communication. The price for the convenience to understand each other is *the body’s solidification to a face*. The homogenization of the incessant movements of the body to words designating static states. The face frames the body.

As *a speaker of the body* the face gets access to participation in the community of rational subjects. That access has been granted to merit the service of mastering (grasping) the body. The distancing of the face from the body is the effective strategy to win the confidence of the community made up of subjects who consider themselves disembodied. *The bodies enter the community as faces because the face makes encounter possible*. The face aestheticizes and ethicizes separately from the body, as its counterpoint. This requires increasingly greater and more stringent asceticism from the face in view of its corporeal origin. From a part of the body-object the face should be emancipated into an independent image-subject. This metamorphosis of the face requires skillful techniques of e-facing its corporeal origin. In his/her face one distances himself from his body. It is the haven of the subjectivity that has withdrawn itself from the flesh. The face is surrounded by body but it is powerful enough to turn itself from a “self-defending” into an “attacking” part of the body. Thus, the opposition (clash) between the face (soul) and the body also originates.

However, the trap for the face (soul) is not the body but the other way round: *the face is the trap for the body*, calming it down, personalizing it, individualizing it. The face distances ourselves from the body, disembodies ourselves and the Other and makes us interlocutors. The face is the birthplace of language and word. It is the beginning of every dialogue. It is defenseless (Levinas) but also restraining. The face, in contrast to the body, cannot be killed. Thus, hanging on the body, the face protects it from becoming an anonymous victim, a unit of mass statistics. The face absorbs the attention into the social interaction and the body participates as a part (the face is also a source of a great deal of non-verbal information) of the so-called non-verbal communication whose “supplementary” function is more and more often defined as key for communication. The face casts its shadow onto the body. The latter remains in the background.

## 2. Body and Face – metamorphoses and interactions

The face is *the individual*. It *makes the body indivisible*. Although it is made up of a number of organs, tissues and cells, which, as a rule, are replaceable (exchangeable), the face invalidates that substitutability of theirs and makes them a whole (hence the questions concerning identity in case of organ and tissue donation). The face integrates the parts into a unified body even where they have left its entirety. Thus, for instance, reproductive cells separated from the body can preserve their belonging to the body because of face’s indivisibility. A single face binds together all parts of the body. They are not units, they cannot be counted because they all have the same face. The face can conceal the decomposition of the body, its fragmentation and disease. It still makes us individuals even if the body is dismembered or plotted. Anatomy is a science that does not

know human face because the latter would prevent it from studying the parts of human body. The face is an enemy of anatomy because it does not allow it the latter to divide the body into parts (plotting) and to typify the remains as generically defined corporeal zones. Without the face the body would be an anatomical mannequin.

The face also stands behind *human rights*. The indivisibility ensured by the face is the fundament of inviolability of the body. The body is inviolable when it has a face. *Human rights are rights of its face*. Rights of faces. The law loves the face because it enables the former to set aside embodiment (irrationality, unforeseenness) of legal personality. With the face the law is sure that it would not be dependent on the contingencies of corporeality. The face is well-mannered, orderly, capable of bringing order into the body. That's why the law relies on the face, turns it into the second name of legal personality\*: the latter is called in law "natural person". Even the companies, which are "legal fictions", are represented into the legal space as "persons", "legal persons." The law likes working with faces because it is afraid of the body. The face is a normative island into the chaos of the body, a place where the "conquest" (regulation) of the body, its subjection to rational rules, can start from. The face is an ally of the law in its fight to discipline the body. Symmetry and orderly arrangement of the face, all elements of the face are ones of fixed position and proportion to one another, they are a promise of order into the body itself (a carefully kept haircut is also a promise of order, a promise dwelling on the head, in immediate proximity to the face). The esthetics of the face is a consequence of its orderliness. The latter is of normative character as well. A face that conforms to proportions is a beautiful face. The beautiful face is an expected face, it shows order and reveals health. The face is the social wrapping of the body cutting the unpleasant edges of incarnatedness.

But the face is the double agent who works not only for the order coming from the outside but it also represents *the "secret life" of the body*. The face lives on credit granted by the body. It is a part of the body and cannot exist without it. "Being is given to the body" [Slavova, 2014: 58] – to the body that is capable of going beyond itself. The face is the tip of the iceberg-body protruding above the surface of embodiment in order to make conscious social interaction possible. The face is the way out of the body. The essence of the self exits through the face, the essence of the self is manifested by means of it (and of the word). Age, diseases, hardships of the body sooner or later begin to live as signs on the face. *The order of the face has its cracks through which the body pours out*. Facial grimaces reveal the body behind (actually, underneath) it. The beautification of the face can conceal the body but only temporarily. When the carnival of the face gets off the stage of observation the body that has fell out of focus shows its imperfections. The body writes on the face. Sooner or later, the body catches up with the face. Although death is a bodily phenomenon it devours the face as well.<sup>4</sup> The

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\* In Bulgarian the word for "face" and for "person" is the same.

<sup>4</sup> Culture itself has been defined as a "willful care about preserving the existence against the threat of death and dying." [Goranov, 2014: 141].

body as the source of the otherness in ourselves is also the bearer of the most incomprehensible otherness – death.<sup>5</sup> The otherness of death is inaccessible for us, in contrast to the otherness of the Other whom, although we do not own, we may encounter as infinity (as a face): “only a being whose solitude has reached a crispation through suffering, and in relation with death, takes its place on a ground where the relation with the other becomes possible. The relation with the other will never be the feat of grasping a possibility” [Levinas, 1987: 76].

The inaccessible death provides us with access to the mortal Other. But what is most unbearable is the otherness of the dead Other, the death having struck the face of the Other. Death destroys the face as an image. In death the face becomes a mask, it is already expressionless [Levinas, 1993: 21]<sup>6</sup>. The otherness of the Other calling us to responsibility is already gone in the face. It has yielded to the otherness of the body, of mortality, of death which has also conquered the face through the body. The face of the dead man is “empty” and therefore alien and ominous. Life leaves the face. The face yields to the victory of death and shows the irreversibility of the latter. From a sign the face turns simply into a part of a dead body (dead organism). The eyes, “the window to human soul,” are closed and cease to emanate, to tell one’s life story.

The face is the *autobiographical part of the body*. What is written there is one’s story his/her personal (facial) history. Only a face can have an autobiography. The body has medical history (case history/anamnesis). The face keeps the traces of the body that has already happened. The face is the place in the body where the personality is born. But *personality* is one more step outside and beyond the body.<sup>7</sup> If the face is a part of the body, be it emancipated as a sign, personality is from the very outset constituted with the claim of independence from the body. Moreover, personality often fights against that body turning it into a necessary appendix to the face. The face is the ambassador of the personality on the territory of the body. The face is the feast of personality in the calendar of the body. The body remains between the thing (objects which are identical to themselves) and the face (the absolute Other, having turned into a sign).

The face as a synecdoche for the personality is *exterritorial*, it does not obey the “general” laws of corporeal surfaces: it does not dress, it is open (it does not get covered), its nakedness is not only recommendable but even mandatory. It is the most social and observed part of human body. If the brain (which is more and more often the substitute for personality in technological society) is the bureaucrat of the body, the face is its office. It is the façade of reason in the body. Even where reason strives for independence from the face, i.e. a person-

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<sup>5</sup> For the meaning of death for Levinas, see [Slavova, 2013]: “I understand myself as such as far as I experience the fear of dead, as nihilation [nūantisation], however, not in ontological sense but as the sensation of an I-ness left on its own.”

<sup>6</sup> Levinas points out that the death of the Other is the “first death.” My responsibility towards the Other is a responsibility before his/her death. His/her death is much more important and ethically constituting for me than my own death.

<sup>7</sup> For the relationship between “face” and “personality” see [Goranov, 2012: 172-173], where “personality” is defined as a dry distillate, an extract of human “face.” Personality is the “ontological density of the face” [Ibid., p. 175].

ality outside man's biological embodiment (the dream of transhumanism), the reason can be socially represented (as happens in all futuristic movies) by a face. Otherwise, the reason would be simply unrecognizable for people. Thus, reason (personality) continues to be dependent on one single part of the body: the face. The dialogue between two personalities, even where we have attempted to forget about their bodies, needs their faces.

### 3. The body is dead, long live the face!

Bodies are extras. The active actor, the agent is always the face. The body is biological background. It is not even a witness as the self is. The body becomes visible when it is being looked at by (the) face. *The face is what discovers the body.* The face seeks and brings sense. It tells stories, including the history of the body.

As a pure agent (actor) the face *is weightless*. Only bodies weigh. Without faces the bodies form a "mass," a pool of uniform and undistinguishable biological units. Only the faces raise up above them. When in a mass of bodies one recognizes specific faces they are no longer part of the "mass." Stereotypes and idealizations can hardly coexist with faces. Faceless bodies are the ideal stuff the mass is made of – in purely physical, but also in theoretical, terms. But faces can be a target of depersonalization, too, such as technologies that create robots with the same "faces." The mass production of one face, however, (at least for now) is just an imitation of a face. The robot's "face" remains a dead matter, a copy without vitality, a static double for human face. The machine cannot even wear a mask for it has no body to conceal. The face of machine will always weigh.

The face is not something given per se. The face is an *effort*. The face of the Other must be reached and achieved. It is not just a perception, the face goes beyond our sensual experience. What is written on the face must be read, recognized, turn into an image. It is not until then that the body can be loved as a face. The face reveals its depth gradually in the deepening interaction with the Other. The face appears when we start to speak to the Other, when we discern and obey the infinity in the Other enclosed in his/her finite body. Getting to the face-image (non-thing and non-phenomenon) demands an effort that we are not always ready to make. Sometimes we prefer to be surrounded by bodies without history and without faces – thus not demanding from us to be deciphered. These bodies are just part of the objects around us, passive and enduring surroundings, and not demanding faces, active subjects who change the plans of our lives. Only a face can scream "Help!" Only a face can state "Love me!"

The face of the Other will always look at us while requiring to be respected, to be *included into our world, into our common history*. Quantity is an enemy of faces. When we are surrounded by hundreds of people in some public place their faces are lost. The claim of so many faces is too grave for us to respond to it. Faces are getting undifferentiated and materialized to bodies. In the crowd faces are absorbed by bodies. The concentration of bodies leads to erosion of faces (concentration camps are an ominous experiment in this regard). Every individual story told by individual faces is drowned into the density of the bodies. The face requires space between the bodies. The effacement of a

one's history is undifferentiation of his/her face. All bodies become uniform, with the same anatomical typology. The crowd is a bad sequence of uniform units, a seriality of bodies whose organicity has prevailed over the idealization of the faces.

There is no *guilt* without a face. The body is a reflex, it cannot be bearer of guilt, it cannot be a "punishable person." Responsibility is an attribute of the face – the face that simultaneously calls to responsibility and is called upon to respond. For Levinas only the "face-to-face" relation is an ethical one, i.e. a relation of responsibility. The Ego comes to respond to the already Other. The Ego finds the Other who is in the foundation of Ego's existence. The being starts with the Other, not with the Ego. The face is an epiphany of the Other which reveals him/her in his/her nakedness and frailty and it is precisely for that reason that it requires obedience and care from us. The face as the defenseless otherness is infinity that brings us out of our self-sufficiency, out of our identity with ourselves. It is a commandment to assume responsibility, to take care of the Other as an alterity that is incomprehensible for us. The face is the center of the ethics of responsibility. We "respond" to the face and thus we allow its infinity (the infinity of its alterity) to break our dominance over the world. The face of the Other shows us that the world is not only ours, that there are also other subjects in it whose acts we cannot foresee and control. Our will crushes in the face of the Other. The face of the Other dethrones the supremacy of the Ego in order to call it to care for the Other, with no reciprocity. There is no symmetry between what the face requires and what the face gives. The relation of responsibility is asymmetrical, disproportional, beyond consideration.

The deformation of asymmetry which, for Levinas, is an essential characteristic of the ethical responsibility begins with the face of the Other.<sup>8</sup> It is precisely the face of the Other that calls upon us to give, that renders us helpless, that requires us to perform an unbearable and crushing duty. It promises us nothing other than infinite responsibility. But, Levinas insists, this is not an enslaving responsibility, on the contrary, it is a liberating one. It frees us of the enclosure of the Ego, of its identity, of its inability to hold difference that (s) he will never understand. The inability to understand the difference requires from us to take infinite care – for there is no way the care of infinity (such as the incomprehensible difference of the Other) to be finite. This responsibility of ours looks at us from the face of the Other. The face of the Other calls us to responsibility by depriving us from the possibility to hurt the Other – *every (physical) infringement against his/her body would be damage to the face* – a damage that is unbearable. The face turns the body into an ethically significant and protected

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<sup>8</sup> See the analysis of the ideas of Levinas in [Slavova, 2014: 10]: "The Other is always superior. The ethical relation is irreversible... The Ego does not expect anything from the Other, responsibility is non-reciprocal, the acts are unequal... The Other calls, commands, admonishes, (s)he calls to responsibility by his/her vulnerability but at the same time (s)he is a master as far as his/her helplessness places him/her always above the subject, makes him/her not feel guilty and responsible."

territory. But the responsibility that requires a face also presumes a body. The body of the Other makes him/her a face before which we can be responsible and our bodies provide the vulnerability which renders us liable. Thanks to the face we can sacrifice our body for the Other (a body subject to the ethical responsibility). Our corporeality gives us vulnerability that makes sacrifice possible before the face of the Other, which protects his/her body. The body of the Other makes us important – for we must take care of the face of the Other. Our body enables us to stand up for our words – for we can sacrifice ourselves.

This peculiarity of the body will ensure its immortality also in the technological scenarios of *post-humanist (post-corporeal) future of man*. But the point here is not functionality that can be imitated but an essential characteristic of human interaction. The Other in human civilization is a face. The Ego is a reflection in that face. The faces ensure a great number of signs for interpretation that occurs automatically and unconsciously, as a part of the communication between people. Even if technologies try to efface (overcome) the body as a source of risks and boundaries (the “ends” of the face are in the body) they cannot avoid one of its synecdoches – the face. The face is the hearth of the body. Its image will be preserved as human even in the futurist scenarios of the man-information. *For as long as the face exists civilization can still be called human.*

One can point out several characteristics of the face which will ensure its survival after the “overcoming” of the body in the era of post-humanism – an era when post-humanists think that human personality will “free” itself from the restrictions of the body (and will not be enclosed any more “with no exit” into the body<sup>9</sup>) and will exist as “free information.”<sup>10</sup> ***Why will the face outlive the body?***

Here are some convincing, in my opinion, answers:

– the face affirms the *subject’s stability and identity*. The human face is difficult to change and the change thereof is associated with identity change. Plastic surgery for face changing is difficult and risky, and often, subject to statutory regulations: it is permitted exclusively for cases of disfigurement resulting from an accident, which require the “construction” of a new face. The face is a personal fixation, an identity code, which in the normative world of social interactions is, to certain extent, independent from one’s embodiment. The face in itself is not vital “organ” of the body: it is not an organ of the body at all. That is why “face transplantation” is not a medical intervention, it does not help save a human life and could serve other, rather social-representative purposes. The “recipient” of a face obtains a new identity, a fresh start: the replacement of the face restarts the recipient’s social history (the personal nar-

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<sup>10</sup> For the utopia of the “bodiless body” of which Michel Foucault warns see [Koleva, 2014].

<sup>11</sup> For a more detailed account of the so-called “cybernetic immortality”, i.e. human survival as (mobile) information that changes its medium, see [Kolev, 2012]. The change of the “media” of human personality will result in an information singularity [Vernor, 1993].

rative) without treating his/her body. The face “donor” is actually deprived of identity – the “donor’s” body (commonly post-mortem donation) remains an anonymous biological organism. It is deindividuated (if it has not already been deindividuated by death). A body without a face is just a generically defined organism. Although we are speaking of the Face in singular, in fact its power comes from the diversity of human faces. If there was only one face, the Face would not have that significance and impact as it does. It would be just a standard, and hence, replaceable, part of the body. It would be an organ of the body, a crypto-thing embedded into the body, fit for donation and transplantation. It is precisely the uniqueness of every face that makes to inalienable, that effaces its corporeal and material character. The uniqueness dematerializes the face to a sign for identity. It recognizes the face as an exception in the body, one that has overcome its organicity. The difference of the face revives the subject in the organism. This revitalizing difference will be needed not only in the biological organism of the past and the present but also in the silicon machine of the future which will try to replace today’s concept of human body. Thus, in the future the subject will also look with and into faces resembling the faces of today;

– the face *creates proximity and suggests a capacity for mutual understanding*. The face of the Other is something we can tell apart. It is the guarantee of a possible togetherness. Evidently, “face-to-face” communication is only possible between faces. They may be different faces but they are not just an interface that can be improved by technology. They are “platforms” embedded into the biology of our subjectivity in order to ensure togetherness. The face of the Other is the wharf where my every desire to understand and reach the Other’s inner world will moor. All doubts, fears, but also hopes, expectations of shared communication pass through the faces. The faces looking at each other are like an orchestra that can produce music only by the interaction of instruments. Faces react to faces. They produce reciprocal feelings and are an inseparable condition for the existence of subjectivity as we know it;

– the face *represents the subject without any alternative*. Machines without faces are like bodies without faces: things made available to the subject not for dialogue but for self-service. They cannot be full-fledged members of a (human, and it is hard for me to believe, post-human) community. On the other hand, every thing with a face is spiritualized and personalized. As a rule, things have no faces. Mannequins are not humans even if they are “full” of equipment and computers. But you cannot “talk” to a machine if you do not address its “face” and even if it is an artificial product of your desire for communication. In order to imitate “partners,” robots should obtain faces. The future of robotics has a human face(s) even if it abandons human body. The functions of the face over the millions of years of biological evolution of the body could hardly be eliminated in one stroke by technologies. The face will continue, for a long time after the disappearance of the body (if we accept that this is possible at all – it would rather be a matter of different forms of concealment of the body), to be an icon of subjectivity. An icon that will always refer to the hidden human body and to its elusive dynamics that makes the human world unforeseeable and beautiful, different and cozy.

As an attempt at rationalization and arrangement of the body the face will continue to live in the rational world of post-corporeal mankind as well. The law would preserve the face even after the overcoming of the body, be it as an example for its rationalizing power, as a monument of its victory, even if ambiguous, over the body. Ambiguous because the face remains nevertheless “born” and existing in the body. If the body has a place in the Post-Body Era then that place (formally) would be occupied precisely by the face. But this will not be a victory over the body as the proponents of cybernetic immortality see it but an attempt to preserve the human which, even as a face, is being of a body.

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