

"MEN WITHOUT CHESTS": A SIDE EFFECT  
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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Today's man is so overwhelmingly controlled by the powers of science and technology that he has become, in the words of C. S. Lewis, a "man without chest." In fact, the conditioning power of present society has turned man into an automated being without any power of choice. This deprivation of human essence has made man a slave of himself and <sup>of</sup> other men, a walking skeleton, an empty being. *Spent*

The regimentation and dehumanization of man can be seen in every facet of life, in every branch of science, in every technological advancement in our society. From religion to politics, from the family life to the professional setting, man is constantly being bombarded by the conditioners of society who advise him, lead him, or even force him through the motions of his empty life.

In the family, man is controlled by the necessity to provide the financial means for sustaining the physical well-being of the family. Therefore, he relies on various types of consultants to help him achieve that goal: the medical doctor is in charge of the health aspect; the religious advisor gives the "prescriptions" for a good relationship with God, as well as the counseling that keeps the family in harmony (even if only superficially). Advertising tells him what to buy and where to go. Yet, this man thinks he is in absolute control of his destiny!

In the professional environment, man seeks to have control over everything and everyone through the use of sophisticated technology, namely the computer. In the name of efficiency

and accuracy, the computer has the "last word" on what is to be done and how. So, man, in his desire to control others, submits himself to the power of a machine. No longer does he control anything but, instead, he is subordinated to the machine.

In the political life he praises and admires the freedom of the system and his own power of choice. However, he does not reflect enough to realize that although he has the chance to vote, that vote is already conditioned by the subtle messages of the media and advertising. Furthermore, those whom he is "free" to elect are no more than powerful propagandists who send precisely those messages which they know that this man wants to hear. Frequent changes of mind from one place to another are good evidence of this. And, once again, this empty man who strongly affirms his freedom, is no more than a puppet being used to serve someone else's purposes.

Another very dangerous mold of man's life is religion. Although it could be man's best chance to liberate himself from the trap of scientific society, through reflection, religion all too often plays the opposite role. That is, rather than providing man with a chance to look inside himself and reflect, religion further diminishes man's power of choice by assuming direct control over his thoughts and actions.

Finally, science and technology themselves play the most important role in this domination and enslavement of man. Scientific discoveries associated with technological means, give man extraordinary power over his body, over nature, and even over life and death. Test tube babies as well as all the means to control birth, including abortion, clearly illustrate this tremendous

control.

The sad result of this abundance of things and availability of specialists (from health to finance; from conjugal harmony to religion) is that man is deprived of the power to make his own choice about anything. He has indeed become a robot, a dehumanized person, a "man without a chest."

*Frank Jones*  
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