

Ioan BUTEANU

The Role of Technology in Survival Movies

Abstract: This article describes the relationship that people have with technology in movies belonging to survival genre. The first part is theoretical, and it presents some religious, cultural and philosophical approaches to this topic (as stated by Dumitru Stăniloae, Martin Heidegger, Herbert Marcuse, Kim J. Vicente, Jacques Ellul, Lloyd J. Dumas, Jean Paul Russo, Ollivier Dyens and other authors). The second part presents technology as it appears in some movies in general, from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* to the contemporary movies as *Fahrenheit 451*, *1984*, *Equilibrium* and many others. All these movies can be "read" as survival movies. The paper tries to show in what movies and when technology appears as a source of safety, comfort and of new abilities for man and in which and when it is a source of discomfort and even of terror, a threat. There are cases in which technology stays outside of man as a reality clearly delimited from him and cases when it can be seen as an intrusion in people's body and soul.

Keywords: technology, survival movie, human-tech, dystopia.

1. What is technology?

Some cultural and philosophical approaches.

The term "technology" sets together two Greek words: *techne* (meaning "art" or "craft") and *logos* ("rational speech"), but "according to George Grant the bringing together of those words would have been unthinkable before the age of progress" (Koivukoski 60). For Ollivier Dyens: "technologies are both the materialization of intelligence and the seed that makes it grow and expand" (Dyens 7). He stresses the importance of intelligence in nowadays world to the extent that he states: "We can no longer speak of the human condition or even of the posthuman condition. We must now refer to the intelligent condition" (Dyens 8). Technology understood as materialized intelligence is also as "a way of reveal-

Ioan BUTEANU

Babes-Bolyai University
E-mail: ibuteanu@yahoo.com

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ing.” (Heidegger 12), but when modern technique wants to “unconceal” through constraint, “through the submission to an order/a demand or to an insistent request for delivery” (Oprea 3), this fact endangers the very essence of technology as a revelatory act, as an act of truth. This way of understanding technology is close to the words of Romanian orthodox theologian Father Dumitru Stăniloae who says: “God has given the world to the man not only as a gift of continuous fertility, but also as one of a great richness of alternatives possible to be actualized by man through freedom and work” (Stăniloae 233). So people need to preserve their freedom in order to benefit from the richness of this world as a gift from God. When people lose their freedom they cannot access this gift.

Intelligence manifested as technology is “a survival tool” and a “niche” “in which to expand” itself (Dyens 7), but there are also dangers that come along with this extraordinary human capacity. Too much trust in intelligence is not a very wise outlook; intelligence needs to be controlled by human intuition, love, feelings and morality. To define the relation between people and technology, Kim J. Vicente proposed the *Human-tech* concept. Among other explanations he says that:

“Human” comes first to remind us that we should start by identifying our human and societal needs, not by glorifying some fancy widget in isolation.

and

“Human” is capitalized, and thus more salient, to remind us that designs should be compatible with human nature; “tech” is in lower case because technical details, like the laws of physics, obviously have to be heeded (Vicente x).

Lloyd J. Dumas is warning us that computers cannot compensate “human imperfections” and fallibility because computers are fallible, too (Dumas 374-375). And, after all, imperfection is a mark of human nature, and we need to accept it, as Jurgen Habermas advises (Oprea 4).

To rely only on computers, to delegate our safety, our civilization in their “hands” is a questionable viewpoint. There are movies, cinematographic dystopias that warn us about the catastrophe that can happen when “machines” take over human civilization, when they enslave people. See for examples movies as: “Gog” from 1954, “Collosus: The Forbin Project” from 1970 or the nowadays “Matrix” series.

Jean Paul Russo underlines the idea that technological advance should be controlled in order not to permit technology to impose its own rhythm over humans. Otherwise humans will lose their identity, they “cease resembling” themselves (Russo 30). People should understand which are their own inner rhythm and moral/human values, they should preserve them, fight for them, they should even accept sacrifice in order to affirm them (see, for example, the old lady that chooses to burn together with her books in “Fahrenheit 451” or Mary O’Brian from “Equilibrium”).

For Jacques Ellul, as presented by Tiles and Oberdiek “the new technical milieu” is distinguished by six salient characteristics. Among these, we underline its artificiality, autonomy and the existence of its own progressive rhythm of accumulation apart from the human ends it should be designed (Ellul, 1983, p. 86) (qtd. Tiles and Oberdiek 16). If technology is so “autonomous with respect to values, ideas, and the state” it can be used against people and against human values (Tiles and Oberdiek 15). Jacques Ellul speaks about another more refined characteristic of the new relation between man and machine. The technique tends to become so adaptable, so pleasant to people, so “consumer oriented” that it develops a sort of mesmerizing capacity in such a degree that keeps humans prisoners to it (Ellul 413). In the same direction Herbert Marcuse defines the “one-dimensional man” build up to have no humanist culture, no ideals to fight for, no mastering of concepts and no logic training, and, thus, no reasons and no power to say “no” when he needs to do this (Marcuse 12-13). This type of man crushed by his lack of culture and ideals, lost in technology, willing to lose himself among a huge mob of other anonyms reminds me (to a certain extent and without the story behind him) of Woody Allen’s *Zelig*, the human chameleon.

As conclusion of this first part, we consider that technology is mainly a concept with positive connotations, because it is a manifestation of human intelligence (Dyens, Heidegger, Stăniloae), and it should be a “survival tool” for mankind. This can happen only if we take into consideration some possible dangers that come along with the technological evolution. One is that, living in contemporary comfort, people can become lazy, in deeds and in thinking. (Marcuse, Ellul). This sort of lazy and stupid future society is depicted by Mike Judge’s film “*Idiocracy*”. Another danger is to trust too much technology as a perfect, without failure reality and to place it in a position of decision superior to man (Dumas, Vicente, Habermas, Russo). People that are in control of technology may also represent a danger. They can use it to dominate others, as in George Orwell’s novel “*1984*” or in Ray Bradbury’s “*Fahrenheit 451*”. Down in the article we will analyze the two of the movies based on these books.

2. Technology as it appears in survival movies

Most of the movies that deal with the issue of technology can be understood and interpreted as survival movies, because the problem of technology represents in a way or another a problem connected with the survival of man in the modern and contemporary period. In almost all masterpieces of the survival genre this topic is present in the forefront or in a more remote plan, as a part of the big theme of human civilization or as a simple filmic motif.

In “*127 Hours*” (Boyle 2010) technology is represented especially by Aron’s personal camera that keeps him company when he has the arm blocked by the rock.

Besides this, we have here a man deprived by the advantages and the security offered by the civilization and technology. The lack of efficient instruments to move the rock, the lack of a sharp knife, makes the escape more difficult and painful. At the end of the movie his life is saved due to modern technology: he will be rescued by a helicopter and brought to a modern hospital.

"The Grey" (Carnahan 2011) shows people "betrayed" by technology; they survive a plane crash. There are people "fallen" in the middle of a wild nature, "out of their turf", out of the safety of civilization, without tools and modern weapons, human inventions that could offer the chance to "defeat" the wild nature, the wolves. The lack of comfort given by technology has surprising effects on some of the characters. Diaz finds for himself a lonely and quiet "place to die". He has a hurt leg, and he doesn't want to go further. Of course, he is exhausted, but, first of all, he has a revelation (*the clearest thought*, as he calls it): he has the premonition of his death as a moment of splendor near the river and watching the immense space represented by the mountains, the clouds and the sky. People become friendlier, more open to others before the "last farewell": Diaz presents himself to Hendrick as John, and Hendrick says his name is Pete.

During the limit-situation some people think about God. When John Ottway finds himself alone, he very firmly asks God to do something. He receives no explicit answer from Him. Thus, he decides to fight, he takes his knife and he uses some broken bottles as weapons. He improvises, and he is using his intelligence as "surviving tool". Anyway the strength that grows in his soul and in his sight before the presumed fight with the wolves may be a consequence of his wife remembrance, of the poem written by his father, and, through these, the requested answer from God.

The protagonist of "Into the Wild" (Penn 2007), Chris McCandless runs out of the existence full of lies and compromises offered by the contemporary world. He refuses the advantages offered by civilization and technology: he abandons his car in the middle of nowhere, he burns the money... When he understands that happiness is valuable when shared with others it is too late. The nature holds him prisoner, he dies there.

The "wild" Cheryl from "Wild" (Vallee 2014) needs to get rid of her bad habits, of the chaotic life she has in the middle of civilization, in a big city of Minneapolis. Going on the Pacific Crest Trail she escapes routine, the comfort offered by civilization and its technology, she flees because she feels a moral discomfort. She wants to resettle her life, to find a place for the pain caused by her mother death. She tries this walking and walking and walking, sleeping in tents, in cabins, defeating pains, fears, venturing, falling down and raising up, screaming and gathering in that scream all her wild will to live, to live her own life, to get control over her own life, to live in truth.

3. What kind of relations people have with technology in survival movies?

There are movies whose theme is exactly the relation between man and technology. Generally speaking, the topic of these movies could be the way man, mankind lives, survives in the conditions of the technologized society.

In the contemporary era the computer became one of the most salient "stars" of this technology. During the years, starting from the fifties, computers became also "movies stars" in films like: "Gog" (1954), "Tobor the Great" (1954), "Forbidden Planet" (1956), "The Invisible Boy" (1957) "Desk Set" (1957), "Hot Millions" (1968), "2001: a Space Odyssey" (1969), "The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes" (1969) "Collossus: the Forbin Project" (1969), "Red Alert" (1977), "Tron" (1982) "Deadly Impact"(1985), "Matrix" (1999) (Cortada 377).

This theme can be split in two, according to the disadvantages and advantages brought to man by technical inventions. Technology can be regarded as an enemy or as an ally to humans. Therefore the first subtheme is entitled:

3.A. Technology against man

The effects of the nowadays rapid technological development are difficult to control. There is an entire history of meditation about this theme. Some of these meditations and ideas were shown in the first chapter of this article. This sub-theme can be split also in two parts:

3.A.a. Technology outside man

In "Stalker" (Tarkovsky 1979) technology is present through its disastrous consequences, through the decaying atmosphere of the movie. The whole "Zone" bears the signs of a failure, of some unknown, mysterious accident. It is an abandoned area, a sort of a dangerous (shameful?) secret guarded by army. In its very center lies the Chamber, where the wishes became true, where the people can meet their true nature, their sensibility. It is a metaphor of our world as a decaying world, a metaphor of human soul, a mysterious (some) thing that every people should explore for oneself, beyond all fears and clichés.

In the "The Road" (Hillcoat 2009) an unknown catastrophic event brings cold on earth and the dissolution of human civilization, the breakdown of all the modern technological achievements. This lack social organization, the disappearance of technology, the famine causes a very deep distrust, suspicion, violence, and even cannibalism. In the center of the plot stays the relation between one child and his loving and protective father trying to survive through this apocalyptic world. The "road" cut by the father and the son leaves a trace of hope through this infernal world. The love between father and son represents an island of normality. This paternal love that goes up to sacrifice reminds us of Roberto Benigni's "La vita e bella".

The father from "The Road" dies, but the kid finds a family who "adopts" him. In this way he reaches another island of normality. Here the disappearance of technology means the end of the human world as we know, but perhaps, if such islands of normality like those mentioned above will connect and rejoin, a new society will be born, one that will regain its coherence, trust and humanity.

3.A.b. Technology as an intrusion in human being

With movies that depict totalitarian societies we enter a zone where technology may be/is used to dominate people and (even more) to modify, to intrude in their inner being. It seems to be also dangerous if (I repeat "if"), through technology, some people are able to create so called "artificial intelligence" or other "things" that should be able to enter in competition with man, to subjugate him, to take his place as the superior intelligence and, in many respects, the master of this world.

In "Fahrenheit 451" (Truffaut 1966) all the energy of the totalitarian society described there is directed toward finding the hidden books and toward burning them. It seems that books and people who read them hindered the development of that futuristic world. Here we do not have a very impressive technology. It is a world where firemen are in fact professional arsonists and a sort of anti-books policemen.

The movie "1984" (Michael Radford 1984) presents the way in which in a totalitarian society technology is used as a way of controlling people. They are watched every moment; they have no intimacy, no space or time for gathering up their minds, to think with their own minds. People are obliged to inform authorities about their peers. "Big Brother" is the master of technology, and, through propaganda and fear, he tries to be the master of all other people.

In „Equilibrium“, Kurt Wimmer's movie, the fight of the totalitarian power from the „city-state“ of Libria is against man's "ability to feel", to have sentiments. The "Big Brother" from "1984" is called here "The Father" ("The Father" is "Law"). People are obliged to take a "drug" called "Prozium" in order not to feel emotions of any kind. As in "Fahrenheit 451" the Libria rulers fight against books, poetry, painting, art of any kind. The main character of the movie, John Preston, belongs to a "law enforcement force" called "the Clerics". "Everything that defined us has disappeared", says Errol Partridge, the colleague of John Preston, before he was killed for reading poems of Yeats. John Preston accidentally ceases to take "Prozium", and he starts understanding the feelings human value. Finally he will fight and destroy this anti-human society. Here technology, manifested as medicine and propaganda, is used in order to change human nature.

These last three movies mentioned above represent the idea that the survival of humanity can be expressed in terms of cultural survival. These are cinematographic dystopias that warn us about how world may look when technology is used to domi-

nate people. The societies they depicted share some common features:

- a. They are imposing uniformity over all the people in the way they are dressed. In "1984" people are dressed in workers overall, in "Equilibrium" they wear grey or black suits. In "1984" only Charrington, the junk shop owner, wears a suit and not an overall, but this happens because he is an undercover agent of the regime. In Kurt Wimmer's movie only Mary O'Brian and people from the Resistance wear normal, diverse pieces of garment. Truffaut did not express uniformity in this way. For him, uniformity is conveyed through women interest for fashion or TV shows. It is a mental uniformity.
- b. The language, the history and the way of thinking of people is controlled and manipulated by the power. "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past", sounds a well-known citation from George Orwell. Winston Smith is taught/forced to accept that not all the times 2 plus 2 make 4. Mass media, television, of huge screens are used to build up stories, enemies, imaginary or real wars, to broadcast the official version of history in both Radford and Wimmer's movies. Books, poetry and antique objects are considered enemies because they preserve the real history and spirituality of man. Totalitarian societies are in conflict with the sensibility and all the normal desires of people. Winston Smith is called the "last man", the last of this "kind". Truffaut shows how people are re-educated sometimes "in a pleasant way", through fashion, fancy properties, interactive TV plays that create the illusion that they are less "anonymous". (Montag's wife, Linda, impatiently waits in front of the TV to utter some stupid answer in that sort of show.)
- c. Medical knowledge is also used to transform, to manipulate people. Everybody is obliged to take "Prozium" in order not to feel anything, to preserve the fake "equilibrium". Linda Montag takes "stimulants" and "sedatives". In "1984" there are some sorts of devices, that look somehow medical, and they are used to torture people.
- d. In the totalitarian societies, the political power invades human most intimate areas of people. In "Fahrenheit 451" the state enters the private properties and abusively searches for books, burns them, and sometimes (it is not clear in what conditions) arrests the owners. In "Equilibrium" the so-called "sense offenders" are hunted, arrested, killed. They have no right to possessed books or other object that belonged to the old world, to the old spirituality. These are destroyed.

In "1984" the terror is spread also by the idea that Big Brother can and should watch the individuals everywhere. That private room that Winston and Julia rented turns out to be a trap. The invasion of intimacy goes further to Winston's mind and beliefs. The torturer played in the movie by Richard Burton is not pleased by the fact that Smith is saying whatever he wants; he wants to destroy his victim, to make Smith love these lies for the sake of a presumed transindividual social "conscience".

- e. One of the main marks of a totalitarian society is the destruction of normal relations between people. "Divide et impera" is one main slogan of these political regimes. They aim to develop a lack of trust between men, to isolate them, one from another, to make one people the traitor or the torturer of another. In "1984", when he is tortured by O'Brian, Smith shouts "Do this to Julia, not to me! The authorities said that Julia also fully betrayed him. Authorities cannot be trusted, but this seems to have happened. Winston and Julia confess it at the end, one to another. They both look defeated, brain washed, more like robots, incapable of love and of any normal relation, fully manipulated by "the Party". The last replica they both say ("We must meet again.") bears in fact the opposite meaning that they cannot ever meet again. They look fully damaged, deeply destroyed as humans. Parsons, the neighbor, when he is taken from the cell, says, pointing at Smith: "Take him instead of me! He is the thought criminal! It's him you want!" After uttering such phrases about another person, the shame and isolation covers the character. He becomes disoriented, vulnerable and "open" to the highest degree to the ideas "taught" by the torturer (O'Brian). These scenes of torture and re-education of Winston Smith are very intense because of what the character experiences, because the space that is very narrow and because of the detailed shots of the human body and face in pain.

The "cleric" John Preston ("Equilibrium") doesn't defend his wife, while arrested as a "sense offender". He kills his colleague Errol Partridge and is, to a certain degree, responsible for the execution of Mary O'Brian, both "sense offenders". But this guilt and the fact he ceases taken "Prozium" wake up his conscience. (He needs also to hide his true feelings from his children that could be informants of the regime, like the children from "1984", and especially from Brandt, his new colleague, who closely follows his behavior and deeds. Unlike in "1984" the story has a happy end: he destroys the Father's regime in Libria, and he discovers that his kids haven't take "Prozium" since their mother's arrest. The atmosphere of this movie is less gloomy than that in "1984". John Preston is strong enough to fight back the oppressive regime and to defeat it. The martial arts (as in "Matrix") used to render this fight make the film more dynamic and choreographic. And more "external". The scenography uses wide spaces, wide rooms, impressive buildings that remind of Fritz Lang's "Metropolis".

In "Fahrenheit 451" we see also how people turns to informants against other people. There is a scene with an hesitating man who finally drops a denouncing letter in a sort of postal box of the regime. Linda Montag betrays his husband, and, when the arsonist firemen come to their house, she said to Montag at the front door: "I just couldn't bear it anymore!" A family is destroyed by fear. Love seems to be too easily defeated by conformism and fear.

- f. The survival of the culture means the survival of memory of mankind, in fact the survival of man as a free being with the right to have a true history and a true

memory. This memory serves mankind as a whole and man as individual to have/ to preserve a true image about themselves in order to develop on a normal fundament. Often, totalitarian societies want to rewrite history, to cut man out of his origins, all of these in order to present themselves as saviors of humanity, as establishers of "brand new worlds". In "Fahrenheit 451" books are attacked, in "1984" the whole history, press, the whole way of thinking, of speaking and of being is to be rewritten, in fact destroyed. "Equilibrium" means the eradication of man's "ability to feel", to destroy all the objects belonging to the old culture build up by human sensibility. The most catastrophic situation is presented in "1984" where people have no right to think, to feel, to keep diary, to have a private space neither in their rooms, nor in their minds and souls. The only thing they are manipulated to do is to "love" the ruler. Without culture, without freedom, without self esteem, without trust in others, without love man reaches chaos and hell. He is a something that cannot die, and cannot live.

Some societies try to replace culture and history, others, due to some technological opportunities, create, imagine, and try to replace man himself with other better (?), "perfect" beings. Even from the early ages of films, in Fritz Lang's "Metropolis" (1927) there is a character Rotwang, the inventor, who tries to replace Maria, the main feminine character with a human-like robot, The Machine Maria. This Machine Maria is an evil, extremely sensual character that tries to start the chaos. She is put in contrast with the sensible, kind and caring human Maria. In Fritz Lang's movie this robot with feminine aspect is destroyed.

A sort of contemporary replica of it is imagined by Alex Garland in his 2015 "Ex Machina". Now it bears the label of "artificial intelligence". It is a robot with feminine aspect, imagined as having initiative. It kills Nathan Bateman, its creator, and, leaves Caleb Smith prisoner in that remote complex in the mountains, after it manipulated him. After all these, the so-called "Ava", with fully human aspect, escapes in the world. It is, of course, a threat to humanity. We see here a very serious and complex threat, given by the combination of feminine sensual aspect with cold computer "mind". Even it is only an imitation; it is an attempted intrusion of technology in the human being.

Other way of intrusion into the intimacy of human being is the attempt of controlling bodies, "minds", death, as imagined by Michael Bay in his 2005 "The Island". The movie is constructing the idea of a fabric of clones, grown as a source for replacing organs. The idea of fully human clones used in the film opens a very risky topic. Man cannot invent "fully human" clones, clones with soul. The clones cannot be more sensible, more carrying than real humans.

"The Matrix" series can be interpreted as a survival movie. It deals with the survival of the humanity against machines that took over humans and grow them to be used a source of energy. These movies (especially the first two) set Matrix as space where man and computer programs meet and fight. Matrix is a program. It reminds

of "Tron" (1982) where also the battlefield between man and computers programs is software. So this idea is not new. Old or new it has the same drawback: it presumes that man (soul and mind) can be transferred through wires or decomposed/recomposed and that man is something similar to a computer program. This a very reductionist vision about man. It remains pure fantasy. Technology can threaten people, but not in this way.

In "Matrix" there is also a "good" technology, the one that obeys people, and helps them survive. It makes possible the existence of the underground Zion. The "bad" one keeps them slaves, and tries to destroy the free Zion and the free humans.

"Transcendence" (Pfister 2014) imagines the story of the computer scientist Will Caster who is fatally wounded by a poisoned bullet. He knows his death is coming, and his wife Evelyn and his friend Max Waters tried to "upload" Max into a computer. Here I consider there is and screenplay error: they transfer the information from his "brain". It is impossible to transfer the mind and soul transferring the "information" they contain (if we can speak so). The information is something distinct from its "support" (mind and soul). The information is something without life. The soul and the mind have life. Life cannot be given through a simple "transfer" of information. It is more than doubtful that such a transfer between something alive (man) and something without life (a machine) could be possible. A soul and a mind are not composed by the information they "contain", so they cannot be recomposed, they cannot be brought to life or kept alive by a simple transfer of information. And if that computer is not Will, what is it? And if that computer is not Will, whom we see at the end of the movie, who is dying at the end? Does the film suggest that a human soul and a human mind can survive inside a computer?

Brent Waters warned us about the dangers about imagining man only as intelligence, as "mind" and about the developing of the idea/illusion of "a posthuman future":

Since, as transhumanists claim, the essence of human identity resides in the mind, it is imperative that cognitive performance be enhanced, and the scope of experiential opportunities expanded in order to construct a posthuman future. (Waters 51)

What does "a posthuman future" means to humans anyway? The end of humanity, I am sure. In a remote center built for the "virtual Will" it manages to "transform" the matter, to heal people, but through this transformation people lose their real (human) identity. Evelyn decides to stop this "virtual Will" by transferring "him" a virus with which she accepted to be "infected".

Here I find another error of verisimilitude in the screenplay. I consider a virus cannot pass from a computer to a man, and then again to another computer. The term "virus" in biology and in computer science expresses different "realities". You cannot name a same referent through two different senses of a polysemic word.

Besides all the errors I find in the screenplay I think the movie raises a very important and subtle idea about the hopes man has related to technology. When people are dreaming to build an immortal, perfect world here and now on earth, they need to take into consideration unpredictable consequences, like losing identity and freedom. For example, here people "healed" by the "virtual Will" are not themselves; they are slaves to this monstrous power that tries to enslave the entire world. The end of the movie - with the image of the sunflowers and the transformed (?) drops of water - is rather fuzzy: is the "virtual Will" experiment, with all its consequences, considered a positive one?

B. Technology as a help for humans to survive

Movies as "Robinson Crusoe" (Bunuel 1954), "Robinson Crusoe on Mars" (Haskin 1964), "Robinson Crusoe" (Hardy and Miller 1997), "Cast Away" (Zemekis 2000) or "The Martian" (Scott 2015) present stranded lonely people forced to survive for a long period of time in a remote location. They survive using all their knowledge about the technology of their epoch.

One of the common motifs of these movies is the fact that their main character, in order to survive, picks up scraps, pieces from the shipwreck in order to make him tools and a shelter. He tries to reconstruct a fragment of the world he came from. He represents his culture and civilization. Chuck Noland is alone; "The Martian" manages to get in touch with his remote peers. With Robinson and Friday, we have a survival story in two. Technology and Christian faith give the strength of Robinson. Bunuel's Friday is interested by Christian faith, Hardy/Miller's Friday does not like Robinson's God. Is this change in the attitude of the hero an attempt of Ron Hardy and George Miller to please people of other beliefs or to construct political correct story?

For Mark Watney, the main character from "The Martian", the key for survival is the solving of the problems as they occur, with patience and hope, a problem after another. But also this key for survival is a good knowledge and mastering of technology that allows Mark to improvise. Another capital factor in survival are the "others", the friendship and love of other people who (like in Patricia Rigger's "The 33") are not accepting to lose one of their kind, even when the rescue means an important sacrifice for them. Solidarity and communion is the normal state of being of humans in moments of crisis. Here both people and technology work together in order to save lives. The same case we have in Eric Heisserer's "Hours" (2013). The life of Nolan Hayes' infant daughter is saved due to the love/determination of his father and to the modern medical devices from the hospital. The plot is set in a city hospital during the hurricane Kathrina. The power is cut because of by the hurricane, and the father needs to find solutions in order to maintain the functioning of the apparatus that keeps his new-born daughter alive.

In "The 33" (Rigger 2015) technology serves also to save people. If there were not modern instruments for drilling, those people trapped under ground would not be

saved. But, at the same time, we can say that if the mining of such depth didn't exist, they would not remain isolated there because they could not get there at all.

In *"Interstellar"* (Nolan 2014) is constructed the image of a dying Earth. It becomes a planet that cannot support life anymore. People are forced to find shelters on other planets, and technology is helping them. It is helping people to survive: the explorers use spaceships to search for proper planets. We meet here two very friendly and very useful robots: Tars and Case. Through mastering of technology people are imagined to build stations that orbit planet Saturn, and going further and further. The motif of the loving father occurs here, too. Cooper is determined to succeed because he loves his family. Technology gives him opportunities and the means to succeed, but his strength is given by love.

The presence of technology can be also seen sometime as a sign of a "civilized" society, with rules to be followed, a society that can guarantee the safety of the individuals. Of course, not technology itself guarantees for this safety, but the moral values respected by people. In Harry Hook's *"Lord of the Flies"* we see how, away from a society of "adults", some members a group of children stranded on an isolated island become "savages", able to kill other peers. Their drama ends when "adults" in military uniform in (at least) one military helicopter land on the island. The military pilots and the helicopter are here symbols of the positive use of technology in order to impose "good" authority. In other movies superior technology appears not to be enough neither to win nor to keep a man alive. It needs to appear a man, a "good" man, to help, a very determined man, a man ready to fight, to risk his life for a stranger in need. It is the case of Marcus Luttrell saved by Mohammad Gulab - *"Lone Survivor"* - (Berg 2013).

Conclusions

I treated both cultural/philosophical works and movies as meditations on the relation between man and technology. So, taking into consideration the works/movies presented above, I will try to pinpoint some ideas that could be a part of a "survival kit" of human race along with the technologies it invented in order to make its life easier and also to fulfill its intellectual and creative vocation:

- Technology represents a very human manifestation of human intelligence (Dyens, Heidegger and Stăniloae) and even a "niche" where human race exists and develops itself" (Dyens 7).
- Technology is a part of our civilization, it is a mark of it, it provides safety and the lack of it can be disastrous (*"Hours"*, *"The Grey"*). It assures the survival of humans in remote areas and in difficult conditions – *"Robinson Crusoe"* (Bunuel 1954), *"Robinson Crusoe on Mars"* (Haskin 1964), *"Robinson Crusoe"* (Hardy and Miller 1997) or *"The Martian"* (Scott 2015).
- It puts sometimes people in danger, in very difficult situations, but it also helps them to get out of these situations and to save their lives (*"The 33"*, *"Interstellar"*

"The Martian"). Technology is "knowledge" (Richter 7), it represents solutions to different problems, it create "artifacts" (Oswalt — qtd. Gibbs 46) that should serve humans, that should be adapted to human needs (*Human* comes first and *tech*, after. - Vicente). Do not let technology to impose its rhythm over the natural rhythm of the people (Russo).

- The so called "artificial intelligence" cannot compete with human intelligence (even there are movies that support this idea – "Ex-Machina", "Transcendence"). People should trust their intuition, their "good" intelligence, emotions, their moral sense ("Fahrenheit 451", "Idiocracy", "Equilibrium").
- Technology is not perfect and it cannot compensate human imperfection or fallibility (Dumas), and there is no need for this. Human imperfection can mean human perfectibility. Along with human interdependence and free will, there are some of our qualities (Habermas).

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