

# The Three Epochs of Humanity - h+ Media

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## What does the future look like?

In these rapidly changing times the visions of the future fluctuate between a dystopian scenario of a rapid rise in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the demise of humanity as we know it to a more utopian view of a happy marriage between developing Artificial Intelligence, human augmentation, nanotechnology and the human species.

An eerie quiet exists around the important discussions on the end-member theories with respect to the necessary changes in the societal framework of humanity. There appears to be a measure of naiveté or avoidance in this key discussion within the technology and Singularity circles. As we forge ahead with rapidly developing transforming technology it becomes increasingly important to discuss the far reaching consequences of envisaged developments on the human species.

The Transhuman-Posthuman Evolution diagram has been constructed to highlight and encourage discussion of some of the key issues facing society in the changes ahead. The figure is framed by the axes time/evolution and cognitive ability/life span and attempts to outline a possible scenario for Transhuman development in the future.

Evolution drives the biological imperative of species, namely, survival, proliferation and pro-creation within the environments they exist in. The human species is no different and in recent human history we have seen rapid species growth in both numbers and in geographical extent. We remain focused towards life extension and have seen this clearly expressed in average life spans over recent generations.

*Is the natural extension of this evolutionary imperative significant species life extension culminating in effective immortality?*

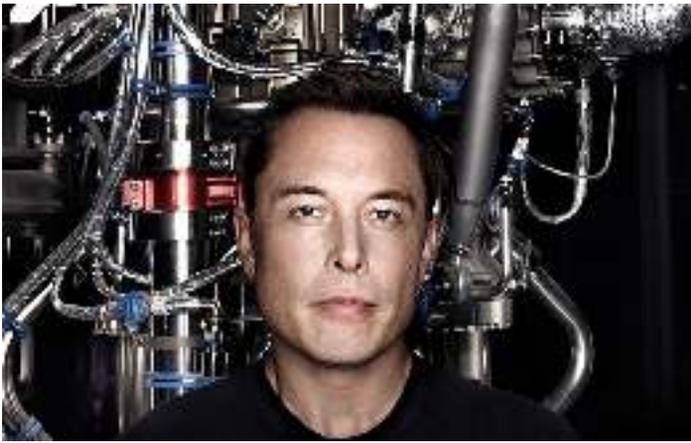
## Nomenclature



**BaseHumans** – the greater proportion of the human species falls within this category. The term is not denigrating per se but rather a reflection of the realities. The majority of this category is contained within or below the global averages in cognitive ability and education levels, at or below global averages in wealth levels and consists of approximately 6 billion people (crudely defined by developing nation population numbers versus developed nations). Statistics show that this population subset is growing at the fastest rate and has increased dramatically in the last 10 years.

*What will become of this human population set in the transitional stages of human and technological evolution? Are they expected to transcend their current basic existence with the assistance of technology developments and augmentation or will they become a bystander, even a victim of species progression. In the expected intelligence explosion expected from AI breakthroughs from AGI to ASI in machine intelligence is it reasonable to assume that all or even a portion of this human subgroup will*

*receive the benefits of augmented intellect and biological enhancements?*



**HighHumans** – the subset of humans with higher than average cognitive skills, generally with better than average wealth and education comparative to global averages. Whilst concentrated largely in developed countries they occur globally in differing proportions. These innovative humans are at the forefront of technological change and implementation. They are the immediate consumers of technological innovation and represent the progressive front of humanity – striving for species improvement, life extension and species exploration. Current population studies would suggest that this group is relatively flat from a population growth perspective totaling some one million people.

*Are these individuals the preferential recipients of human augmentation developments and the first TransHumans? Does this result in an increasing evolutionary gap between this group and BaseHumans?*



**TransHumans** – a future envisaged transitional species that adopts and embraces the biological, intellectual and life extending technologies available to humans. It is suggested that in large part this species subgroup will be initially drawn from HighHumans with unspecified numbers drawn laterally from the BaseHuman group.

*Will these initial TransHumans be sympathetic to the less developed BaseHumans or will an increasing divide be propagated between these groups? Is social unrest inevitable in the BaseHuman dominated populations as divisions grow? What tolerance level will TransHumans have of BaseHuman destructive behaviours (war, terrorism, social unrest, crimes against humanity or transhumanity)?*

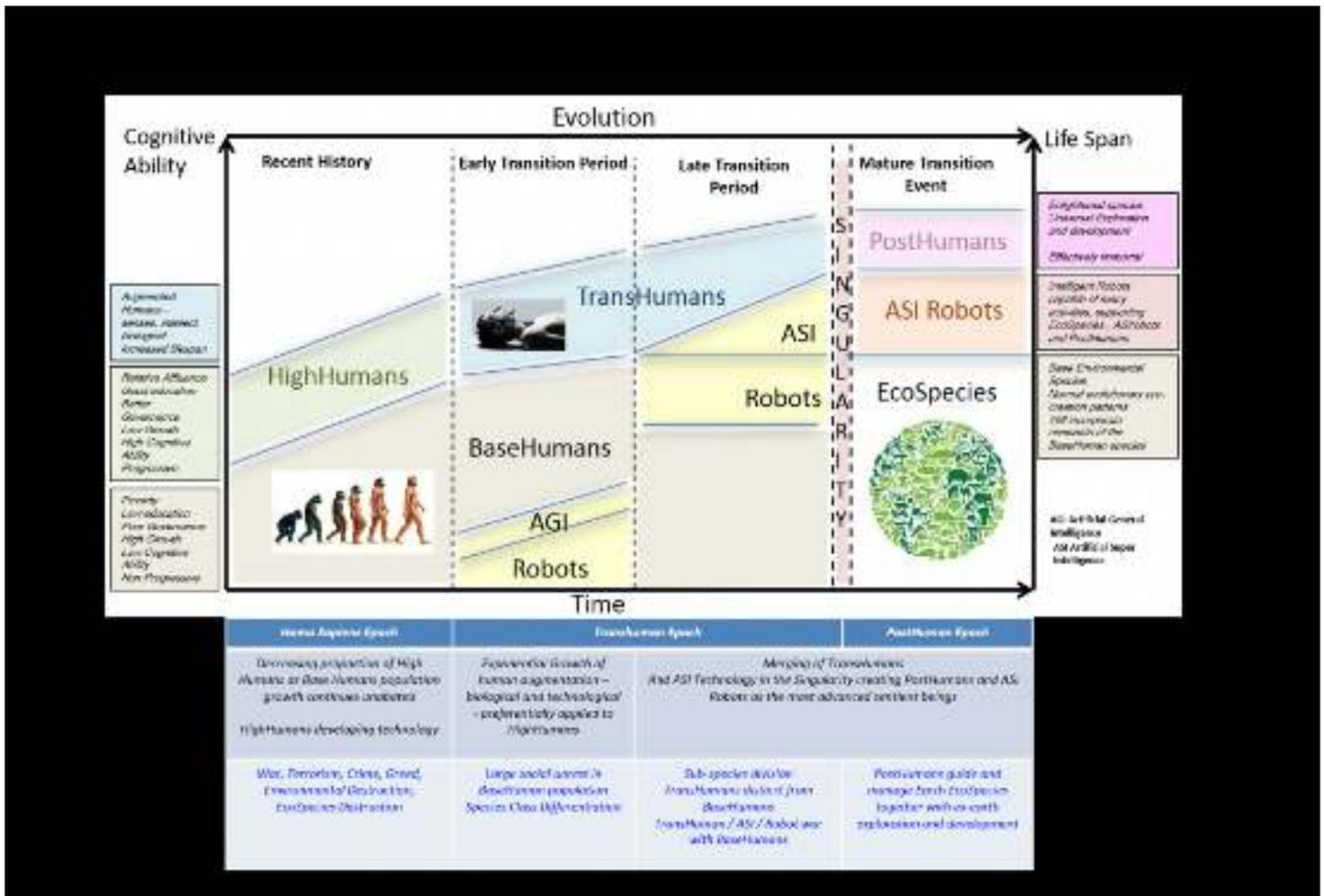


**PostHumans** – Very difficult to envisage is the PostHuman entity. It is a “being” that postdates the Singularity – defined as a rapid event that merges robotic,

machine superintelligence and Transhuman characteristics.

*What are these PostHuman entities? Machine, Biological, Fixed, Transient, Regenerative? What is their purpose, what drives them – exploration / inhabitation / understanding? Have they achieved the ultimate species evolution beyond pro-creation and death and become effectively immortal?*

## The Three Epochs



### Homo sapiens Epoch

This is a period that has been dominated by exploration and inhabitation of the Earth. Homo sapiens have shown remarkable tenacity in exploring and inhabiting our planet. Although many negatives can be laid at the feet of Homo sapiens there are still some remarkable achievements that can be attributed to the species – space travel and exploration, medical advances, extension of human lifespans and art, music and literature to name but a few.

Early humans left the “Cradle of Humankind” in Southern Africa some 60 000 years ago. In that early period these early human explorationists reached Northern Africa, Europe, Asia and Australasia. Unfortunately the modus operandi of human exploration was established early on in our history as a species. It was characterized by scant regard for our environment, our neighbors (early conflicts arose with our Neanderthal cousins culminating in the extinction of the Neanderthal sub- species) and other co-inhabitant species.

The “human pacman” machine began to play out – at least partly responsible for the destruction of late pre-historic species through hunting – Mastodon, Giant Sloths, Saber-toothed cats. Some sixty thousand years later the majority of Homo sapiens remain driven by the need to feed and clothe oneself and provide for the family they have pro-created often at the expense of our environment and the species around us resulting in a species that is dominated by poverty, over-population, increasing divides amongst the species, wars, terrorism, environmental destruction and EcoSpecies extinction.

*Has Homo sapiens had its chance? Is it natural for us to look towards a better species to lift us above*

*the behaviours that so detract from the current human species?*

### **TransHuman Epoch**

We are probably entering this period currently with the early developments in Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), robotics and human augmentation. It is likely to be a stormy period as technology is rolled out preferentially to HighHumans emphasizing the already large gap between BaseHumans and the early TransHumans. In this rapidly changing society it is difficult to imagine the bulk of humanity transforming or being able to transform. In this environment it would seem that humanity will revert to norms and social unrest will ensue. In the latter periods of the Transhuman Epoch there is a danger that serious conflict will arise between developing TransHumans and the BaseHumans. The outcome of any conflict would conclude in favour of the TransHumans considering their continuing development of and integration with Artificial Super Intelligence (ASI) and Robotics.

*What attitude will TransHumans take to problematic BaseHuman behaviour?*

### **PostHuman Epoch**

Following a rapid period of transition (Singularity) a new intelligent species emerges combining elements of TransHumans, ASI and Robotics. Considering their high intelligence and effective immortality it is expected they will be an enlightened "life" form. Robotics would extend into this period most likely with enhanced intelligence also and would partner PostHumans in the exploration, inhabitation and understanding of the universe. Ecospecies (normal evolving earth species) should thrive in this new period where planet environment protection is uppermost in PostHuman entity values. Any remnants of the BaseHuman species would be contained in the Ecospecies.

*PostHuman period a very different reality?*