

# Movie review on blade runner and the postindustrial era

[Environment](#), [Nature](#)



Considered plotless and visually unpleasant when first released, in 1982, the noir-esque sci-fi movie “ Blade Runner” gained hordes of admirers over the years as many of its prediction for the 21st century reality started to be confirmed. Of course, there is much less flying cars in the air today than it suggested, however most of the societal characteristics proposed by the director Ridley Scott are already clear nowadays. Metaphorically speaking. Take the replicants, for example. In the film they are the product of a cutting-edge technology: perfect images of the human race — in appearance and emotionally — but many times stronger and physically perfect. They were created specifically to do all the handwork while real people occupied themselves with management issues. The setting worked well for a while, but when the evolution of the replicants reached a certain level they started a rebellion against their condition. They were supposedly alike their creators, however could not share the same sense of belonging of those with a personal history and a foreseen future. The world for them was just a slice of something much bigger, a spectrum of life that they were not able to visualize due to their comparatively minuteness of time.

On account of all this, and comparing the movie to the real life, replicants may be consider the humanity while the aforementioned “ real people” take part as the nature. The analogy is simple: people were created (again, metaphorically speaking) to live in accordance to whatever was established before, doing solely their designated job — in this case eating what they could produce and dying because of unavoidable reasons, i. e. diseases and natural predators — and thus keeping the status quo. But nature never ceases to evolve, and every new “ version” of a man was released with a

new feature. They learnt how to create fire, hunt, tame wild dogs, delegate labour, etc. Eventually these improved skills combined strengthened the group to an extent that it felt superior to its creator and able to raise questions about their origins, motives and future, unbalancing the equation previously constituted. A creature able to defy its creator invariably leads to the extermination of the latter.

There is a scene in the movie that illustrates the image above. Two replicants, Roy and Pris, are talking to a human called J. F. Sebastian. The latter is a genetic designer who works for the company that created the androids, and is only still on Earth (as in not having been sent to an Off-World Colony, where richer people live away from the mundane hardships) because of his medical condition: he is the bearer of the Methuselah Syndrome, with which his body cells age much faster than they should, giving him at the age of only 25 the appearance of a 40-something. In response to that discovery the trio establish the following dialogue:

**Roy: “ We got a lot in common.”**

Sebastian: “ What do you mean?”

Pris: “ Accelerated decrepitude.”

They are all dying faster than those around them. The fact that Sebastian’s inquiry about their similarity gets a prompt and in a sense self-depreciating answer symbolizes the arrogance in which the human race relates to the nature. No matter how much men degradate it — their creator — but whenever nature strikes back they merely assume their mutual flaw and move on. Life is too short to lose time worrying about punctual actions. One must always move forward no matter what as the next threat, the next “

model” with newer features and most likely to survive, can be just around the corner.

Ever since the complete industrialization of the (first) world people’s lives started to accelerate dramatically. It was not necessary anymore to wait for a costume to be knitted in order to wear it; or for an ox to be slaughtered and cut to eat its meat; or even for a horse to be saddled to visit another village. It was all there, readily packed in the nearest store, supermarket or car dealer. More recently, and that refers to the epoch represented in “Blade Runner”, planes can cross oceans in matter of hours, all the information in the world fits on a handheld device connected to the internet and contacts are within a mere phone call of distance. All these enhancements have long transformed the perception of time: while in the past it took a whole year for a farmer to harvest his land, now, with the modern techniques and machinery, it can be done every three months. Progress allows people to produce more, which leads to more consume and ultimately more waste. That is the shortening of the natural cycle, therefore the abbreviation of life.

This vision is alluded by Giuliana Bruno in her article “Ramble City: Postmodernism and Blade Runner” (1987). When she writes that “the postindustrial decay is an effect of the acceleration of the internal time of process proper to postindustrialism” she is basically noting that every notion of relationship — be it with the earth, things or even interpersonal — is affected by the modern society. “The disconnected temporality of the replicants and the pastiche city are all an effect of a postmodern, postindustrial condition: wearing out, waste,” she says. Everything is

transitory, specially one's own presence in a secular environment.

Watching the 1982-film “ Blade Runner” nowadays is like attesting all the worst predictions thinkers from that time had for the future of humankind.

Director Ridley Scott left very clear with the aesthetic choices he made and the subliminal language displayed in the movie that the fear thence was that the technological development would cause profound changes in the way people relate to the place they live in. Considering the falling peace in the world now he was not much far away from the reality.