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Man "Extended" by Media and Technology: Ethical Considerations

Abstract: Modern man uses a wide range of technical and media tools. The term "techne," while referring to things and skills, also denotes man's connections with these objects. The influence of techne on the functioning of the human person is mutual; as we adapt the tools to our needs, we also change ourselves by using modern technologies. James J. Gibson's concept of *affordance* and Andy Clark's concept of the *extended mind* allow us accurately to describe the relationship between the human mind, man's cognitive abilities and actions, and the external environment. In this article, the Author addresses the technical, media- and communication-related aspects of this environment. The article's concluding section is devoted to the ethical consequences of technical and media extension of man and the frame of reference for these considerations is supplied by Karol Wojtyła's concept of the human person.

Keywords: extended man, human person, affordances, new technologies, digital media

Introduction

We now use a great number of technical devices, many of which are essentially related to media communication. We also tend to distance ourselves from the influence of the media, especially when feeling oppressed by information overload. Yet we continue to talk to others, share opinions and argue, and for these purposes we also use techne. Digital media and new technologies have become an element of everyday human activity, related to work, entertainment, and the processes of obtaining information. They constitute the basis for knowledge

society.[1] Internet media make it easier for us to establish professional contacts, offer services and share work/research results, and artistic projects; they help us make and maintain contacts and relationships, professional and private. The COVID-19 pandemic with its restrictions, involving mandatory social distancing and isolation and the transfer of professional activity to "remote" work, accelerated processes leading to the development of IT society. The previously common opposition of traditional media (the press, radio, television) and the new media (the Internet) has now lost much of its relevance. At the present stage of the civilizational "domestication" of digital media, the Internet and the artifacts of new technology have ceased to be a novelty to marvel at. They have become friendly, familiar, and "homey," and influence and shape a wide spectrum of social life. When analyzing social phenomena, we now refer to technical criteria. A person's belonging to generations X, Y, Z is largely based on their ability to operate a new variant of a particular digital device.[2]

The process of adaptation to changing environmental conditions causes modern man to find himself technically and medially "extended" through techne artifacts. These two factors—techne and media—must be regarded as closely related. We can describe this extension in spatial and temporal terms, for example, "more …," "to a greater degree," "more intensely," "more efficiently," "faster," "more effectively," "in a fully optimized way." The use of such language suggests an axiological premise in that it indicates progress understood as an expansion of human capabilities. Even though humans have been using various tools and facilities for thousands of years, the pace and nature of change is now greater than ever before. Enhancement of our capabilities in one sphere of life, such as working remotely and learning online, can lead to a decrease in activity in another. Nowadays, there seems to be no need to meet others "face to face," which can make us feel alienated and lonely. Another negative outcome is the increasing lack of physical exercise. New types of activity are emerging, such as fitness running and workout, or the emergence of online communities, whose members get together based on shared interests and fascinations. The process of socially taming of the tools of modern technology takes time, and it is difficult to predict in terms of its consequences. The philosopher's task is to point out the possibilities of good use of the tools of modern technology, but also to identify the threats associated with new aspects of the relationship between man and new technologies.[3]

[1] Social Sciences & Humanities Open Mind, https://sshopencloud.eu.

[2] Cisco Connected World Technology Report; *Report Summary on Gen Y and Technology* 2012, http://www.cisco.com/c/en//us/solutions/enterprise/connected-world-technology-report/index.html.

[3] Niels Bürgger, "Web History and Social Media," in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Media*, ed. Jean Burges, T. Poell, and A. Marwick (London–New York: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473984066.

The term "extension" in the title of this article points to the relational connections between man and the environment, social, natural, technical, media, and communication. The relationality of the human-being-in-the-world indicates that being a person is about being with others and being in a natural and technical environment. The aim of this article is to analyze the impact of artifacts of modern technology on human functioning. From an ethical perspective, technical artefacts should be evaluated based on whether they affirm or violate the value known as the dignity of the human person. This article puts forward the thesis that technological and media expansion opens up new possibilities for creative thinking and action. At the same time, the use of technical devices and skills can also lead to instrumental treatment of ourselves and others on the way to the attainment of economic or political goals. Ethical issues regarding the use of new technologies will be discussed in the final section of the article.

Affordances and the "Extended" Mind

In technical artifacts (techne) we can see three types of things: (1) tools, (2) skills, (3) a technological system.[4]

In the first case, techne artifacts enhance (or "extend") human manual capabilities (e.g., a hammer used for driving nails, a saw for cutting wood), or they "expand" the range of human mental capabilities as, for example, when a device improves the mind's ability to remember (a handy notebook, a storage disk in a digital device). The tools of technology assist humans in performing activities they find challenging or cumbersome.

In the second case, techne refers to human skills involved in the carrying out of specific tasks. Driving nails into the wall is a skill we can acquire quickly; other skills take more time to develop. Due to individual predispositions, we learn at different paces. In terms of our ability to use techne, there is much diversity. Driving a car can for some people be a difficult skill to acquire and may be a cause of stress for those who take driving courses. When we pass the driving test, we feel proud of ourselves. We have succeeded mentally by mastering a new skill. And yet, from the position of a trainee, we look up to the truck driver, whose brain has acquired (has been "extended" by) the ability

[4] The two first aspects of techne were analyzed by Martin Heidegger in *Budować, mieszkać, myśleć: eseje wybrane*, trans. Krzysztof Michalski and Krzysztof Wolicki (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Czytelnik, 1977), 227. The third one, the concept of a technological system, has been studied by Jacques Ellul in *Technological System*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: The Continuum Publishing Corporation, 1980), 35–36.

to operate a truck or another huge motor vehicle. The dimensions of the vehicle thus become part of the truck driver's mind's spatial perception. In appreciating the skills of the driver, we show appreciation for the human mind's capacity to adapt itself to the machine the person operates.

The third way of understanding technique consists in seeing it as a "system." The relationship between man and technology is multifaceted, involving the natural environment, culture, and people as mutually dependent participants. We are constantly changing and improving the tools we use as well as looking for new ways to use them. Ultimately, the use of technical tools is not without consequences, and we change at the level of both our individual perception of the world and collective imaginations of reality. By analogy to taming, we can say that a similar process also takes place in the case of a keeper of animals. Therefore, we are talking here, not only about the influence of technical tools on the perception of objects external to us, but also the understanding of what these objects mean to us. Consequently, what we have in mind is our own interpretation of our "self" as a subject equipped with techne artifacts.

The concept of a "technical system" allows us to describe the complex relationship between man and technology. For the purposes of this analysis, a broad technical understanding must be adopted, one encompassing the various human activities related to the use of tools in both person-to-person and social communication.[5] Since the 1990s, the perception of digital artifacts has changed. The change concerns the cultural perception of digital tools, from the treatment of the computer as a device that provides entertainment to the situation when, in many professions, the computer and other digital information carriers are essential components of education and work. Those who do not have a PC, a laptop, a smartphone or an iPhone and the skills involved in operating them are often condemned to professional and social exclusion.

When discussing the concept of the expanded mind, it is necessary to explain the difference between "brain" and "mind." The biological and cognitive sciences tend to use the term "brain" as referring to the biological foundation of feeling, decision-making, and thinking. These abilities also apply to animals, including orangutans, chimpanzees, gorillas, dolphins, elephants, and can be attributed the general capacity to consciously perceive reality. Thinking, combined with feeling and decision-making, is an extremely complex process, difficult to explain exclusively in biological terms. The current state of knowledge in the field of cognitive sciences does not allow us to explain the phenomenon of human self-awareness. We assume that man can reflect on their cognition, feelings, and the choices they make. This metalevel (metacognition) is a specifically human faculty, which can be described as a kind of looping. When we reflect

[5] Val Dusek, *Philosophy of Technology. An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006), 34–36.

on ourselves, we are present to ourselves simultaneously as the object and the subject of self-reflection.

Cognitive sciences do not study consciousness; they examine selected phenomena of consciousness.[6] If we cannot explain the phenomenon of human self-awareness, we cannot create it; we cannot build artificial consciousness. While the technical tools we surround ourselves with extend and complement human capabilities, what is specific to human thinking, action, and feeling must be associated with the "mind." The theory of emergence indicates a qualitative "leap," from the biological brain to the mind.[7] Researchers have not provided a satisfactory explanation of how this leap occurs. The human person is an emergent entity, combining mental properties with brain activities. Consciousness is a prerequisite for thinking, decision-making, and empathy, that is, the ability to fellow-feel and co-think with other beings. A person's conscious mind is the result of the emergent development of the brain, where emergence refers to a new quality in the biological development of the brain, exceeding the sum of the elements that constitute it.[8]

The main concern of this article is the issue of the expanding effects of artifacts of technology on the human mind. This expansion of the mind can be described with the help of James Gibson's theory of affordance as well as Andy Clark's concept of the extended mind.

The theory of affordances was created by cognitive psychologist James J. Gibson.[9] It regards objects that surround us, in this case technical objects, as objects used for practical use; for example, a hammer is regarded as a device for driving nails (other sharpened objects can also be driven with a hammer). A digital device will have many affordances, that is, possibilities to be used. Based on his research, Gibson has concluded that the perception of objects means seeing them from the perspective of usefulness. We discover the physical properties of objects as a result of the interaction of this object with the subject of knowledge. Knowing objects does not occur in isolation, but in their environmental context, that is, the one in which the process of cognition takes place.

Here, however, we encounter a problem that has been addressed by the supporters of the theory of affordance: Are possibilities of use related to the object or to the human consciousness that discovers and defines these possibilities? To put this differently, are affordances the possibilities of an object that we have not

[6] Stanislas Dehaene, *Consciouness and the Brain: Deciphering How the Brain Codes Our Thoughts* (London: Penguin Group, 2014), 38–39.

[7] Józef Bremer, "Emergencja i jej rozumienie w biologii," *Studia Ecologiae et Bioethicae* 17, no. 2 (2019): 31, (29–40), http://doi.org/10.21697/seb.2019.17.2.03.

[8] Jeffrey Schwartz and Sharon Begley, *The Mind and the Brain: Neuroplasticity and the Power of Mental Force* (New York: Regan Books–Harper Collins Publishers, 2002), 320–322.

[9] James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (London: Psychology Press, 2015), 118.

yet discovered or equipped it with? Gibson opines that affordance refers, not to the actual use but rather to a certain potentiality of objects available to the human subject. At the same time, this impact may be beneficial or disadvantageous for that subject. Without considering the factor of user awareness, it is impossible to define the properties of an object. This problem is clearly visible in the process of discovering the properties of things and creatively searching for new ways of using them, or in the process of improving the functionality of objects for the user.[10] In this respect, our mind is extremely creative. We create new areas of use for familiar things or give things new properties. Sometimes even the system of concepts must keep up with the changes. For example, the uses of the mobile phone today exceed the initial feature of talking to other people, and we now use this device to take photos, send text messages and images, save notes, play, browse the web, and much more. The Polish language has no word to name a device which we can use to perform all these activities. Somewhat helplessly we copy into Polish the English words "smartphone" and "iPhone."

However, not all human beings are creative in equal measure, which is particularly evident in relation to the rules for using the tools of modern techne. Statistically, users use only a small portion of the capabilities of their smartphone or their personal computer. Some affordances simply never get discovered.

Donald Norman has reinterpreted Gibson's concept of affordance. Interested in the relationship between man and digital-visual objects, Norman has distinguished three layers in the perception of things: (a) primary, related to biological conditions; (b) utilitarian, related to the possibility of using a known object; (c) reflective, related to the meaning of things for human users and its possible interpretations in a cultural context. Each of these layers plays an important role in the human perception of objects found in the environment. In addition, the reflective aspect of perception places the known object in a network of axiological connections defined by the human subject's preferences, fears, and current state of knowledge. Norman's theory considers affordances in terms of the potential usefulness of an object, its applicability and ease of use, as well as the relevant cultural context. This applies, among other things, to the functionality of objects used in design. In this case, affordance concerns the meaning of space and the role of the objects which occupy it in creating interaction between people.[11]

Scholars who have published on the application of the concept of affordance make references to the issues of modern technology. They point to the relationship between the human mind and the environment of the digital world, as well as the value of user agency. Affordances relating to the knowledge of the environment and human relations are believed to be linked to technological

[10] Eleonor Gibson, "Where Is Information for Affordances," *Ecological Psychology* 12, no. 1 (2000): 52–53.

[11] Donald A. Norman, *Emotional Design. Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 72–75.

affordances. At the heart of this link is a globalized network of connections, related information acquisition capacities, and people-to-people communication strategies for disseminating it. We therefore speak of "communicative adiaphorizations" that make such connections possible.[12] We have here in mind interpersonal communication mediated by digital techne. The use of technology allows us to create new forms of interaction, such as web visibility, recognition of the logo of a company or institution, editability, visuality, associativeness. Mastering the skills related to these affordances allows a person to attain a new quality of functioning in the virtual world.[13] As skills related to tools, these affordances are important for occupational, artistic, and scientific activities, as well as for entertainment and interpersonal contacts. For example, modern media technology makes possible almost instant contact between people in remote parts of the world. This can be essential in maintaining personal family contacts, when, for example, a husband and father goes to a distant place and works there (known as mediated contact).

In recent discussions on the concept of affordance, scholars stress that the interaction of the human mind and technology is mutual. As digital objects expand human possibilities, the mind is not left unaffected by these changes in ways that are not always desirable. Adults make conscious choices, but children and adolescents are not always capable of doing so. On the one hand, the natural curiosity and courage of young people when dealing with the artifacts of modern techne can be an advantage; they make for ease of adaptation to changing conditions of social life, for example, the use of instant messaging. Lack of familiarity with communicators makes a young person a victim of social exclusion in their peer group. On the other hand, the natural trust of young users in techne artifacts generates threats such as escape from the real world into the virtual one, addiction to digital objects, and indiscriminating trust in the content posted on the Internet. These threats are especially serious if young people are not taught the ability to critically assess the risks and habits related to the protection of personal data.[14]

The theory of affordance corresponds to the concept of the expanded mind, put forth by Andy Clark and David Chalmers. Developed since its formulation

[12] Taina Bucher and Anne Helmond, "The Affordances of Social Media Platforms," in *The SAGE Handbook of Social Media*, ed. Jean Burges, Thomas Poell, and Alice Marwick (London–New York: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473984066.

[13] Jeffrey W. Treem and Paul M. Leonardi, "Social Media Use in Organization: Exploring the Affordances of Visibility, Editability, and Association," *Annals of the International Communication Association* 36 (2012): 143–189.

[14] Łukasz Łysiak and Piotr Machura, "Rola i znaczenie technologii mobilnych w codziennym życiu człowieka XXI wieku," *Media i społeczeństwo. Medioznawstwo, komunikologia, semiologia, socjologia mediów* 4 (2014): 15–26.

in 1996,[15] it examines human mental states in their relation to the environment external to man and, at this juncture, is essentially concerned with elements of the technical and media environment. This concept can be understood at two levels: anthropological and epistemological. The anthropological aspect concerns personal identity, that is, the extent to which the use of technology in artifacts affects users and the nature of interpersonal relationships. The other aspect, that is, the epistemological one, indicates that the tools of modern techne have a significant impact on the cognition of reality. According to Clark, the content of human mental states depends to a large extent on the external technical environment.[16] Admittedly, the use of techne tools affects the way we perceive the world and ourselves. Concern is raised by the scope and the pace of the changes taking place. We must ask at this point; how do they serve and in what way do they threaten the human person?

Reflections on the expansion of the human mind by contemporary techne should also take into account the axiological aspect, especially such values as freedom, the dignity of the human person, empathy, justice, agency, and responsibility for decisions. What makes knowing of the world of values possible is axiological intuition, something that machines do not have. The axiology of new technologies is still human axiology. Currently, the goal of those who program and train intelligent techne is chiefly to expand human creative abilities, not to replace them. This, however, does not mean that the systematic use of intelligent tools will have no moral consequences. If we agree that the inclusion of techne artifacts in day-to-day life affects us and redefines the rules that govern social life, we must examine this issue from an ethical perspective.

The Human Person and New Technologies

The term "person" derives from theological (the Trinitarian disputes) and philosophical traditions. When using this term in a universal sense, we must be aware of two important aspects. One concerns the anthropological dimension, the uniqueness and distinctness of the existence and experiences of an individual human being; the other—its normative use. To treat someone as a person is to recognize the value of their existence as something that deserves to be affirmed by other people. Personalistic ethics acknowledges the necessity to affirm the humanity in us by caring for the wellbeing of the species, especially in the

[15] Andy Clark and David Chalmers, "The Extended Mind," *Analysis* 58 (1998): 10–23.

[16] Andy Clark, "Coupling, Constitution, and the Cognitive Kind: A Reply to Adams and Aizawa," in *The Extended Mind*, ed. Richard Menary (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010), 45–46.

long-term perspective. At the same time, we must also acknowledge the rights of the person to use the resources of modern techne.

Used in its ethical sense, the term "person" denotes the value of individual human life. According to Immanuel Kant and the categorical imperative he proposed, to recognize someone as a person is to treat them always as an end and never merely as a means to an end. Being a person means being the subject of one's own decisions and moral responsibility resulting from one's actions.[17] As the term "agent" is sometimes used to refer to the relationship between man and techne, we must stress the difference between "agent" and "person." An agent is a relatively autonomous system that processes information in order to perform a task assigned to it. A human being can be an agent, but also a robot equipped with AI and performing specific activities that expand or extend human activity. There is a fundamental difference between an "artificial" agent ("artificial intelligence," i.e., a robot), and a "subject capable of making free choices." Only the latter can be described as a human person.[18]

Let us refer at this point to the concept of the human person as theorized by Karol Wojtyła. The human knows him-/herself as a person through his or her acts or agency (*actus humanus*). Human nature indicates only the very possibility of doing, whereas the human act is essentially a personal act. At one level of understanding, this means that by action a person transcends nature. Personal acts bring out our human agency and make us become aware of our own "I," or selfhood, as something/someone distinct and unrepeatable. Being the author of his or her actions, the person at the same time in the process of self-reflection, realizes that he or she has the ability to understand and own his or her actions. Self-reflection allows us to discover ourselves in a double loop, as it were, the phenomenon of personal consciousness. Being a person is a process rather than a state. Becoming a person in this case means going beyond doing something out of necessity as imposed by nature; it is a movement towards the discovery of what is potential and possible. It also coincides with the mental state in which we can make distinctions and axiological choices. Although Wojtyła did not use the term affordance, being a person is about discovering one's personal possibilities in interactions with the environment, including both things and other people. If humanity is the object of affirmation, then the person is humanity individualized, and, in this sense, the individual person is worthy of affirmation. At the same time, the person makes him-/herself present in the act. Through the act, the person encounters the world of things and other people, and also

[17] Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. and trans. Christopher Bennett, Joe Saunders, and Robert Stern (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 62–65.

[18] Barbara Trybulec, "Podmiot czy Agent? Rozumienie podmiotowości w erze artefaktów poznawczych," *Filozofia i Nauka. Studia filozoficzne i interdyscyplinarne* 8, no. 2 (2000): 89–113, https://doi:10.37240/FiN.2021.9.1.12.

becomes aware of his or her own individuality.[19] The dynamic of personal life happens through the discovery of one's potential and through various forms of commitment. Being a person involves four forms of engagement: self-possession, self-governance, self-determination, and self-awareness.

The recurring prefix *self-* denotes the element of self-reflection in the affirmation by a person of his or her selfhood, or "I." Being the author of his or her own actions, a person is capable of reflecting on them, thanks to which he or she becomes aware of him-/herself as a creative being.[20] The dynamism of personal life, resulting from the fact that the "I" is the author of its own actions, makes creative action a fundamental factor in a person's discovery of his or her own value. This makes us different from animals and things, including artificial intelligence. The discovery of one's own personal uniqueness should not lead to self-centeredness, but to the discovery that other human beings are also endowed with personhood and therefore must be respected, just as they should respect us in return. The meaning of the term "person" should be understood as equivalent to "a conscious moral subject," "a self-conscious I," and "a being capable of making free choices."

Following up on Wojtyla's reflections, we can now apply his theory of personhood to technology and media. The artifacts of modern techne represent an important extension of our physical and mental abilities. Only a person is a subject, a being who is aware of him-/herself and his or her actions and in possession of a subjective point of view. Self-awareness guarantees the human subject's psychological unity, identity, and integrity over time, as well as the ability to feel and make choices. The most important features of a person understood as a subject, in addition to consciousness and self-awareness, are also those of freedom and the autonomy of action. A person is an independent, creative being, partially limited by the influence of the environment external to him/her. A person has cognitive, reflective, axiological, and ethical competences (affordances) as well as the ability to use tools.[21] The latter determine that operations related to the activities performed by a person are effective. Axiological competences allow us to locate a person's actions in the system of values, while ethical competences allow us to define norms and evaluate our behavior, also in relation to our use of technical tools. When using new technologies, we rely on all these abilities (affordances). Technical and media competences must be broadened to include axiological sensitivity and ethical considerations. The above-mentioned

[19] Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, ed. Anna T. Tymieniecka, trans. Andrzej Potocki, *Analecta Husserliana* 10 (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), 125–126.

[20] Mariusz Wojewoda, "Karol Wojtyla's Conception of Personhood from the Perspective of Cognitive Sciences," *Philosophy and Canon Law* 7, no. 1 (2021): 1–17, https://doi.org/10.31261/PaCL.2021.07.1.06.

[21] Józef Bremer, *Osoba – fikcja czy rzeczywistość? Tożsamość i jedność ja w świetle badań neurologicznych* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2007), 79–80.

abilities affect the way we think about ourselves, as well as the nature of our activity in the digital and media space.

The sociologist of social systems Niklas Luhmann analyzed the question of extending human cognitive activity with media tools. The subject of his research was traditional media. He believed that the media produced an illusion of reality in which we willingly participate. We observe and comment on the statements of those who follow. This creates a collective point of view, seemingly lacking the individual ideas of the broadcasters of media information.[22] Nowadays, new media allow us to individualize the message—using social communicators. However, to arouse the interest of the data recipients, the broadcasters have to buy into the tastes and expectations of those watching.

The intelligent or "smart" devices which we use are the next stage in the process of extending our human activities. They enhance our computational abilities, the ability to collect, process, and interpret data, and to determine the proper strategy of action. Thanks to applications such as chat GPT, we can, among other things, collect the necessary bibliography, create texts of various length, get help when writing a scholarly paper or devising a computer program. The creativity of the GPT bot is based on what has already been created and made available by humans. The amount of existing data is so abundant that on our own we cannot find the information we need; so, the bot not only helps us find the information we are looking for, but it also helps us select and obtain initial interpretations of the data. However, it is far from being an ideal tool; it is often wrong and, so far, cannot replace a person and human competences when it comes to the assessment of the reliability of the information it has helped us obtain. At this stage, we can use GPT 3,5 and GPT 4,0 chats.[23]

Designers are trying to create machines that achieve goals formulated by man. It is to be feared that machines, aware of their relative independence, will adopt different goals from those scripted for them by man. Then there are fears that AI, superior to us in intelligence, will gain an advantage over man and, as a consequence, will begin to treat man as an object. However, this scenario should be regarded in terms of failure, either that of the designer or of the machine itself.[24] An autonomous machine, that is, fully independent of the human person controlling their operations, is an undesirable byproduct of their opera-

[22] Niklas Luhmann, *The Reality of the Mass Media* (New York: Polity Press, 2000), 12–13.

[23] Krzysztof Różanowski, "Sztuczna inteligencja: rozwój, szanse, i zagrożenia," *Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Informatyki* 2 (2007): 109–135; Ewa Nosarzewska, "2030. Czy sztuczna inteligencja może być etyczna?" *Raport Pew Reserch Center* 2021, https://ptsp.pl/sztuczna-inteligencja-etyka/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwla-hBhD7ARIsAM9tQKtMnxZL79I98nqbTBkyE5xsylScKRVzFUzySMq6-KHPDpfCaotQl8aAi0XEALw_wcB, accessed April 5, 2023.

[24] Andrew Freenberg, *Transforming Technology. Critical Theory Revisited* (Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 82–84.

tion, thus an error of its maker. Alternatively, it can be seen as an unintended result of technoevolution.

However, if the creators of AI wanted to equip it with moral consciousness, they would have to recognize it as a person and endow it with the same rights as those of human persons. Then human rights would be the rights to protect the lives of "conscious intelligences." This approach assumes that artificial intelligence will be simultaneously equipped with an artificial will, which, combined with intelligence, will be able to formulate and pursue goals separate from those of the creator and choose the means that will lead to the attainment of those goals. For conscious artificial intelligences, man or the affirmation of humanity may not be a superior value. It would not be an end in itself, as stated in Kant's imperative and later adopted and developed by Karol Wojtyła. Currently, the goal is to create a technical "helper" which, due to its capabilities, is able to pursue and achieve human goals. AI can execute tasks assigned to it by the constructor and trainer more effectively than humans. For example, the purpose of chat GPT is to help a person find, collect, sift through, and interpret information. The purpose of a bot is not to replace humans in the cognitive realm of thinking and the moral realm of decision-making.

However, it is to be feared that some users, due to their "spiritual" indolence, will give up their right to look by themselves for the relevant argument or the proper decision and will transfer this right to AI. This would be dangerous, for arguments supplied by AI should be treated at best as a hint, not as a binding decision issuing from some cognitive authority, let alone a moral authority.[25] The utopia of a "brave" digital world can easily turn into a dystopia, one that generates new threats in the form of a dehumanized and fully automated model of the functioning of human institutions.

Conclusion

Recently, the possibility of "expanding" the scope of human knowledge by digitally accessible information has created an opportunity for the emergence of online knowledge communities. There are more and more scientists who use new technologies in social sciences and humanities to collect, analyze, visualize, and share the knowledge acquired in various fields of research. As a recent example, the Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud (SSHOC), a European project, has been launched to put in place research infrastructures for social sciences

[25] Tadeusz Miczka, "Człowiek techniczny, człowiek rozszerzony, człowiek 3D. Próba definicji," *Filo-Sofija. Z problemów współczesnej filozofii* 39, no. 1 (2017): 37–47.

and humanities. The next stage will involve creating a model of educational and science services related to the European Open Science Cloud.[26] Tools for the protection, identification, and identifiability of cultural products are also being developed. Consortia such as CLARIN (Common Language and Technology Infrastructure) and DARIAH[27] are being created (Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities), the purpose being to provide access to online databases storing humanity's shared cultural heritage.[28] In addition, many universities around the world are developing their own digital knowledge centers accessible online. This search for meaningful and effective use of new technologies concerns various areas of knowledge, including the human sciences.

An important role in creating a digital knowledge society is played by programmers and engineers who are in charge of changing the model of providing information about artifacts of modern technology to users, who have the right to general knowledge about the functioning of web applications.[29] The language used to make that knowledge available, however, tends to be illegible, which causes fear and excessive expectations in the public. It is also necessary to create rules for effective human-AI communication integrated into modern data-access tools. Lack of understanding of how machines work must cause common users to feel increasingly anxious and insecure. Ethical reflection points to the need to develop machines which can understand human values and are oriented towards cooperation and capable of understanding the human world and of "unobtrusive" and "non-invasive" participation in human history.[30] For the time being, implementation of this postulate remains an open issue.

The constant demand for more efficient human activities will be leading to corresponding improvements in the use of digital tools, the extent of which will thus also keep increasing. Human competences related to modern technologies and visual communication can be compared to a pass which allows us to function in the online public space and to participate in visual modes of communication. Progress in the development of these competences is motivated by the need to stay in the labor market and maintain a satisfactory standard of living. Yet, alongside those who have the skills that allow them to operate technically advanced digital devices, there are also those who have been lost behind or are excluded from participation in the digital world. This divide is mainly related to access to digitally available cultural goods or level of income. We must also

[26] https://sshopencloud.eu.

[27] https://www.clarin.eu.

[28] https://www.dariah.eu.

[29] Richard Dazeley, Peter Vamlew, Mameron Foale, Carlotte Young, Sunil Aryal, and Francisco Cruz, "Levels of Explainable Artificialintelligence for Human-aligned Conversational Explanation," *Artificial Intelligence* 299 (2021): 1–29.

[30] Miguel du Sautoy, *The Creativity Cod. How AI Is Learning to Write, Paint and Think* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2019), 333–334.

consider differences in knowledge about objects in the world. In the democratic space of Internet communication, ethical and moral standards tend to be disregarded. Digital online society may be an essential area of interpersonal communication, but it is extremely diverse and impossible to penetrate. Besides, expectations regarding the possibility of creating an "improved" technological world may never materialize.

Alertness to threats ought not to blind us to positive applications of modern technologies. In the medical context, the use of AI-equipped robots can revolutionize the treatment of diseases resulting from the aging of our brains and enhance our chances of maintaining life-long physical and mental suppleness. Becoming used to technical artifacts and familiar with AI may take time, not only in individually, but also as a large-scale cultural and social process. Advancements in information technology are significant as well as relatively fast-paced. Domesticating animals has taken many thousands of years, while the "domestication" of AI must take place much faster, which generates fears due to the fact that the introduction of techne products into our lives or our bodies may make us violate the essence of humanity. We need to stay alert to the risk involved, but the task of the philosophy of technology is to develop a model of "reflective balance" for the appropriate use of AI. Taming techne products requires time as does the acquisition of new competences by designers and trainers of machines as well as their users.

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Netography

https://sshopencloud.eu
https://www.clarin.eu
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Mariusz Wojewoda

L'être humain techniquement et médiatiquement « étendu » – questions éthiques

Résumé

L'homme moderne utilise toute une série d'outils techniques et médiatiques. Le terme *techne* désigne des choses, des compétences, mais indique aussi la relation de l'homme avec ces objets. L'impact de *techne* sur notre fonctionnement en tant que personne humaine est réciproque : nous adaptons les outils à nos besoins et, en même temps, nous nous transformons nous-mêmes en utilisant les technologies modernes. La conception de l'affordance créé par James J. Gibson et la conception de l'esprit étendu de Andy Clark permettent de caractériser de manière pertinente les liens entre l'esprit, les capacités cognitives, l'action humaine et l'environnement qui lui est extérieur. L'auteur de l'article se concentre sur les aspects techniques, médiatiques et communicatifs de cet environnement. La dernière partie de l'article analyse les conséquences éthiques de l'extension technique et médiatique de l'homme. Le point de référence des analyses éthiques est la conception de la personne humaine telle qu'elle est perçue par Karol Wojtyła.

Mots-clés : l'être humain augmenté, la personne humaine, les possibilités, les nouvelles technologies, les médias numériques

Mariusz Wojewoda

L'uomo tecnicamente e medialmente "esteso" – problemi etici

Sommario

L'uomo contemporaneo utilizza tutta una serie di strumenti tecnici e mediatici. Il termine "techne" significa cose, competenze, ma indica anche connessioni umane con questi oggetti. L'impatto della techne sul nostro funzionamento come esseri umani è duplice: adattiamo gli strumenti alle nostre esigenze e allo stesso tempo cambiamo noi stessi, utilizzando le tecnologie moderne. Il concetto di affordance creato da James J. Gibson e il concetto di mente estesa di Andy Clark consentono un'accurata caratterizzazione delle connessioni tra la mente, le capacità cognitive, le azioni dell'uomo e l'ambiente a lui esterno. L'autore dell'articolo si concentra sugli aspetti tecnici, mediatici e comunicativi di questo ambiente. La parte finale dell'articolo esamina le conseguenze etiche dell'estensione tecnologica e mediatica dell'uomo. Il punto di riferimento per le analisi etiche è il concetto di persona umana di Karol Wojtyła.

Parole chiave: uomo esteso, persona umana, affordance, nuove tecnologie, media digitali