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THE MAN IN TECHNOSPHERE

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Revising Anthropocentrism of Technics in the Light of the 21st Century New Anthropological Models

Purpose. To substantiate the definition of technics as the attributive characteristics of a human being and the necessity of its orientation towards human flourishing in the context of new anthropological models of the 21st century. **Theoretical basis.** Correlation between technics, technology and the human essence is examined. The role of technics is traced at different historical stages of human development. Negative and positive effects of digital technology development upon a contemporary human being is analysed in the light of new anthropological models: homo technologicus, homo digitalis and homo eudaimonicus. The content of a new worldview-value paradigm of defining goals of technology is outlined. **Originality.** Transformation of the role of technics correlates with value and worldview shifts in person's understanding of his/her purpose in both natural and social worlds. Nowadays, philosophical analysis of anthropological dimension of technics and technology opens a horizon for seeking effective solutions in the face of the contemporary challenges and anti-utopian threats by means of focusing on the fact that, indeed, technological development is subordinate to the humanist goal that is flourishing, wellbeing and comprehensive development of a human being. **Conclusions.** The essence of technology reveals not through its functional but anthropogenic definitions in a sense of a source of institutionalization and in a sense of a source of realization of a human way of self-identification and self-objectification of human subjectivity. Technics/technology is the attributive characteristics of human essence and being: a human being is as much human as much he/she is a creator of technics. The purpose of technics is not to master the nature and to transform the world; technics is, above all, a tool of human self-improvement and self-creation through broadening the horizon of human capacities. The analysis of new modern anthropological models shows that it is the orientation of technology/technology towards human flourishing that is, on the one hand, a response to the existential demands of modern man, and on the other hand, a way of preventing future threats related to technological development.

Keywords: human essence; technology; technics; homo technologicus; homo digitalis; homo eudaimonicus; values; autonomy; human flourishing

Introduction

In the contemporary world, technologies are developing rapidly and have a transformative impact upon not only production, but also medicine, transportation, politics, communication, education, entertainment and many other domains. Creativity and innovative thinking has become crucial as never before. Informatization and digitalization keep modifying the ways of social interaction and cultural activity. On the one hand, technology improves our life and makes it much easier by widening our possibilities; though, on the other hand, technology is used for limiting human freedom in a new way: post-truth politics, bot farms, shifting from a real life towards the ideal "life" in virtual reality, consumerism etc. Hence, nowadays, "dialectics of Enlightenment" is deploying more vividly than ever before in the past: science and technics are supposed to emancipate a human being but at the same time they become a means

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for a new kind of enslavement. Technologies keep "invading" human body more and more, so the questions arise: where the boundary of this invasion can be drawn? Is technology external and hostile towards a human being or is it inherent to the human nature itself? Is technology value-laden? Is technology good or evil in its nature? To what extend is it autonomous? How does technology correlate with society? To answer these questions in a way contributing to an adequate response to the contemporary challenges and an effective solution of current problems, we need to rethink critically the essence of technics and technology as well as to dig deeper in analyzing their anthropological dimension in the light of the new 21st century anthropological models.

Purpose

To substantiate the definition of technics as the attributive characteristic of a human being and the necessity of its orientation towards human flourishing in the context of new anthropological models of the 21st century.

Statement of basic materials

Technics as the attributive characteristics of human essence

The idea that technics is a modern phenomenon and "just a language in which a man of Modernity was communicating with the world" (Voronin, 2004, p. 38) is widely criticized in the contemporary philosophy of technology. History of technics is traced since the emergence of a human being. Technics and the human being have been developing together. Heidegger, for example, by comparing the Ancient Greek and Modern technics, defined creativity as a distinctive feature of the former and power – of the latter. However, Ropolyi (2019, p. 30) claims that both creativity and power are universal characteristics of technics in any historical period, the distinction is, rather, in their proportion.

> …our age is passing from the primeval state of man, marked by his invention of tools and weapons for the purpose of achieving mastery over the forces of nature, to a radically different condition, in which he will not only have conquered nature but detached himself completely from the organic habitat. (Mumford, 1972, p. 77)

We should agree with Mumford that the distinction between technics of different historical periods is caused by worldview transformation: shifts in human attitude to nature and understanding of his/her own place and purpose in nature. The break of man-nature unity was made due to technics clearly back in the age of mythological worldview, when a human being started gradually conquering nature, initially nature in himself/herself. The allegory of this process can be found in a story about Odysseus' meeting with sirens. Odysseus ordered all of his sailors to plug their ears with beeswax and to tie him to the mast; in this way, due to technics, he managed to gain control over nature by facing it: he managed to subdue the external nature (to elim-

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inate the siren's influence on sailors) and nature in himself (to curb his own urges triggered by sirens' singing) (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 27). This is exactly what Ropolyi (2019) calls "technological situation" – that is, a human capacity to restrict the impact of natural circumstances, to control the course of events and to direct them towards attaining specific (human) goals (pp. 19-20). Obviously, cosmocentrism set particular limits to such dominance over nature. Massive innovative development of technics was driven by Renaissance anthropocentrism inspiring faith in human unlimited capacities as creator whose goal is to conquer and to improve the world: both natural and social (Melnyk, 2010, p. 50). Renaissance anthropocentrism originated from "disenchantment" of nature that, in its turn, was triggered by monotheism where God became transcendent, nature lost its sacredness and a human being – a crown of God's creation – was placed at the top of the natural beings' hierarchy.

So the analysis of twists and turns in a long history of technics' transformation leads us to a conclusion that technics is the attributive characteristics of a human being; technics is a human inherent way of interaction with the world; technics is one of dimensions of the human essence.

Obviously, we must not reduce the human essence to the capacity of making tools; and here we agree with Mumford that the human purpose consists not in mastering nature and its perpetual transformation, but in a constant "self-creation" and "self-overcoming" within the process of expedient activity, in a capacity of the world symbolization, creation of the cultural environment as a system of symbols.

However, in order to be capable for that, a human being, above all, needed to transcend the world of animals – and the invention of technology was a way of this transcending. As the Italian philosopher Maurizio Ferraris explicates, it was technology that crucially contributed to the development of language: the hand operating a tool frees the mouth, the teeth and the tongue, and thus, makes them available for developing speech skills. By arguing an inner connection between technology and the human nature, Ferraris appeals to the riddle of the sphinx:

> What animal has only one voice (i.e. one essence, which consists in being endowed with language) but walks in three different ways: in the morning on four legs, at noon on two, and in the evening on three? That animal is the human being, but the answer suggests that being endowed with language and *hands* is not enough… The technical prosthesis (the stick) thus falls within the very definition of the human animal, something that does not apply to other animals. (Ferraris, 2021, p. 13)

So "Oedipus' Stick" is a symbol of the inner link between technology and the human nature: a stick is the necessary complement of a human being, it is what makes a human being human (Ferraris, 2021). The stick represents an infinite number of technical devices (glasses, shoes, backpacks, mobile phones, books, the Internet, etc.), and it is our dependence on technics/technology that is a distinctive feature of the human species.

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Of course, some species also use from time to time certain currently available objects to protect themselves or to get food. But only a human being manufactures technical means purposefully and develops techniques and technologies for self-improvement and for achievement of some control over the circumstances of his/her life (in particular, for preventing threats and overcoming the limitations imposed by his/her biological determinants). An ancient manifestation of this purely human quality was the ability of homo habilis about 2.4 million years ago to select and procure raw materials for manufacturing tools, as evidenced by the fact that all tools were made of quartz, which did not occur in the habitat of these ancient people.

As we have mentioned above, Ropolyi outlines it with a term "technological situation". The Hungarian philosopher defines technology as

> …a specific form of human agency that yields to (an imperfect) realization of human control over a technological situation – that is, a situation the course and the outcome of which are no longer governed to an end by natural constrains but by specific human aims. […] In our approach, all human praxis can be considered to be technological; more precisely, every human activity has a technological aspect or dimension. (Ropolyi, 2019, p. 19)

Without the intention to gain control over the situation of his/her life and without a success in it a human being ceases to be a human being, since in such a case he/she will take part in natural situations as a natural being (animal). Technology is the only way of human self-creating practice (economic, legal, psychic, social, cultural, material, mechanical, etc. technologies).

In this case, we consider as highly significant Mumford's remark that technics has very deep roots and initially a human being was using technics towards his/her own body and only later on – towards the external world:

> Early man's original development was based upon what André Varagnac happily called "the technology of the body": the utilization of his highly plastic bodily capacities for the expression of his still unformed and uninformed mind, before that mind had yet achieved, through the development of symbols and images, its own more appropriate etherealized technical instruments. (Mumford, 1972, p. 80)

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The Ukrainian philosopher Mykhailo Boichenko (2021) makes a similar conclusion: "Since the beginning of the person's evolution, technology was a part of his/her body and mind, or rather, the body and mind were internally technological. Over time, humans began to direct their technologies not on themselves, but outward. Technologies have always changed a human" (p. 17).

Homo technologicus: the problem of technologies "merging" with a human being

It's amazing to notice how, eventually, in the 21st century, a human being redirects technics towards him/herself, as evidenced by reborn practices of self-tracking or tracking the self, "merging" technologies and, consequently, the emergence of a new anthropological model that at the same time is considered to be a new evolutionary stage of human development – homo technologicus.

Before moving to a closer examination of these three just mentioned phenomena, we would like to explain what we mean here by "technology" in the context of this subchapter, since a term has multiple definitions. We agree with the contemporary Italian philosopher of technology Adriano Fabris (2021) who defines technology as a system of many techniques connected and coordinated among themselves to achieve the same goal, therefore technology is a complex technical system (p. 33). Both technique and technology are aimed at widening possibilities of human action, but technology implies self-regulation of devices. Fabris gives an example of technical systems: mechanical clock (made of interconnected levers, gears, wheels, and springs), factory (based on the principle of the assembly line in which different machines are coordinated with each other) and the Google Car (the car that can follow the road without a driver and reaches the predetermined destination). There is a crucial nuance here: technics as a technical means (a tool) appeared along with the human being itself and depends on a human being (the stick requires a hand that can hold it, the mechanical watch needs someone to wind it), whereas technology as a contemporary phenomenon keeps emancipating from a human being and minimizing the need of human *input* (machines at a factory not only work automatically, and are linked to each other, but also substitute power of the workers; the Google Car is able to interact autonomously with its surroundings, observing traffic rules and calculating the shortest route). Technological devices are self-sustainable, capable even to "learn" using the data about the past interactions with the environment and to interact independently with other agents for the purposes they are programmed for, hence, they do not require a constant human control (Fabris, 2018, pp. 3-4). This increasing autonomy has, obviously, advantages, but also provokes ethical problems.

So let us get back to the practice of tracking the self: this practice it is not new, people have been using it for self-improvement since the ancient times. The difference is that in the past people used diaries for self-analysis, self-observation and self-reflection by writing down their thoughts, emotions, health condition and plans. Benjamin Franklin, for instance, wrote down daily the virtues he practiced to trace his progress towards moral perfection. In the 21st century, on the one hand, technologies are making this process much easier to people: different devices, gadgets, mobile applications are tracking daily quantity of steps, daily physical activity, calories, emotions, glucose level, heartbeat and other indices of our health and quality of life. A person receives control over his/her life, reaches a deeper self-understanding and, based on comprehended patterns derived due to objective numerical data, is able to change his/her life, and therefore, to impact his/her future. A person is not merely a consumer of a product any more, but the one who cares about himself/herself, cognizes and improves himself/herself by means of technologies (Malivskyi & Khmil, 2019). Although, on the other hand, a person lacks competence to

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interpret these data. So a person needs to pay a price for a free access to these data; the price is power over interpretation of these data that is transmitted to specialized companies which conduct this interpretation (Grewe-Salfeld, 2021, pp. 198-202).

The phenomenon of "merging" or "disappearing" technology implies that nowadays, as never before, new inventions keep disrupting the presumed boundaries of a human being, technology keeps merging with us more and more, it becomes an inherent part of us. Medical technologies (laboratory-grown organ tissue, neuro-implants, nanobots), smart devices (self-driving cars, Internet of Things etc.) – these are the examples of "disappearing" technology. A contemporary Belgian researcher Yoni Van Den Eede (2019), by referring to Gregory Bateson, asserts that "technology is ontologically interwined with humanity" (p. 104) and human beings cannot but be technological. Van Den Eede indicates that in order to understand what technics and technology are indeed, we need to transcend the Cartesian framework within which an autonomous subject is positioned over and against free-standing objects. Interpretation of "technology as a thing", as an object independent of us that we – autonomous subjects – use as a tool, distorts our understanding especially nowadays when technology becomes "disappearing" (Eede, 2019).

Homo technologicus is a result of such human-technology mergence. Within the framework of interpretation of technics as the attributive characteristic of human essence described above, it occurs that homo technologicus is not absolutely new phenomenon; the point is that technological achievements reach a peak in the 21st century and, therefore, broaden unprecedentedly the horizon of human capacities and rise a human ability to self-improvement to a qualitatively new level. The ancient man with a stick in his hand was also a kind of cyborg of his historical (or rather prehistorical) period. Neither human striving to self-improvement, nor the role of technics in this process have not changed since then, but the scales and results have increased.

Yet, technological development is moving in the direction of transforming not only human body, but also human consciousness by connecting computer to the human brain or nervous system (for therapeutic purposes, research is being conducted on deep brain stimulation in case of diseases such as depression and Parkinson’s disease, as well as using BCIs (brain-computer interfaces) in cases of paralysis in order to reproduce speech or to control a robot due to decoding electrical impulses of the brain). Warwick (2016) indicates that the ethical problem will arise when, in the near future, people without any medical reason choose to connect their brains to a computer network in this way – and thus, they get rid of their autonomy and individuality by turning their consciousness into one of the nodes of the network. By the way, this case is included in the plot of science fiction mini-series "Years and Years" (BBC, HBO, 2019).

This dilemma along with other ethical problems related to the development of homo technologicus, definitely, needs further detailed analysis. In this paper we will make just a remark. In the process of further technological development, a human being will keep necessarily facing ethical problems (it has been the case throughout all history of technics, for instance, even autopsy went a long way from ethical problem to a daily practice), but instead of focusing on antiutopian scenarios, it is necessary to seek solutions to these problems within the framework of a fundamental worldview-value attitude: technics/technology is neither external, nor alien to a human being, but essential inherent feature of a human being and specifically human way of interaction with the world. In order to prevent numerous negative effects of technological progress and to create optimistic scenarios of the future, we need to restore the inherent vector of technics/technology, that is, its orientedness towards human flourishing (and thus, the life of the whole ecosystem).

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Now let us refer to Ferraris' technodicy that he deploys to refute a biased accusation of technology in being independent, external, imposed on a human being and contrary to the human nature: "it is cold (which is paradoxical, if you consider that the use of fire is a form of technology), it is alienating (if only it were the case! Unfortunately it reveals human nature for what it is), we would be better off without it (which is obviously false: we would die at twenty, if we're lucky)" (Ferraris, 2021, p. 18). The most widespread misperception is that technics / technology is a modern phenomenon, as old as stainless steel or even plastic. By referring to "Oedipus' Stick", Ferraris concludes that the emergence of technology – and, we should add, *technique skill* as a skill to use material objects as tools – is simultaneous with the emergence of the human, and hence, technology is an inherent inseparable component of the human nature. So, indeed, "it is worth asserting not about the techno-centric essence of a person, but about the anthropocentric nature of technologies" (Boichenko, 2021, p. 19).

New anthropological models of Digital Age

Technological progress has advantages and disadvantages, obviously. On the one hand, technologies and technological devices are supposed to emancipate a human being, to extend the human freedom, although, on the other hand, new challenges arise: in particular, a legal problem of personal data protection, a threat of misuse of collected personal data, an ethical question on the allowed limits of the "initiative" autonomously taken by robots. Digital technologies trigger anthropological transformations: a human being is devalorized and reduced to his/her one dimension – a role of consumer (Eede, 2019, pp. 107-108). A new anthropological model – homo digitalis – deriving from these changes is described by V. H. Kremen and V. V. Ilin (2021). This is a type of a person who uses digital technologies daily not for his/her own benefit but for deepening his/her passiveness (Kremen & Ilin, 2021, p. 10). Homo digitalis – the one who is endlessly scrolling the News Feed, searching for a new entertainment and exacerbating his/her narcissism by desperately striving to create an ideal virtual picture of his/her life. Digital technologies are used for widening the reach of post-truth politics: the universal criteria of truth are disappearing, the boundaries between facts, disinformation, personal opinions and biases are vanishing; the audience, eventually, is much less interested in facts and rational arguments and much more attracted with scandals, personal judgements and bright pictures.

Back in the 60-s, Mumford anticipated the appearance of this type of a primitivized human being striving to live carelessly and to satisfy all his/her needs for free. He argued that mechanization and automation – as well as digitalization as we can add from the 21st century perspective – contributed to the situation when a contemporary person created a fantasy about effortless affluence and started to dream about emancipation from work itself by considering work as a burden and even a curse (Mumford, 1972, pp. 81-82).

However, everything is not so bad as it may seem: along with negative tendencies, the positive ones appear. Digital technologies are being accused in causing alienation between a human being and reality, whereas the fact that, indeed, they provide a human being with much more effective ways of connecting to reality, to the human world, remains undervalued. In particular, digital technologies have allowed us to adapt effectively to a new life and work conditions during COVID-19 pandemic. Digital technologies broaden human horizon of self-cognition and self-fulfillment: people have opportunity to communicate with each other by staying in different parts of the world, immense opportunities of career growth and an easy access to educational programs and cultural products from around the globe. Due to social networks, people are capa-

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ble of establishing more effective ways of communication, uniting their efforts to achieve common goals. Hence, digital technologies contribute to the civil society development and social mobility acceleration. So, in the contemporary world, along with homo digitalis, one more anthropological model has appeared – homo eudaimonicus (Lushch-Purii, 2021, pp. 68-71): a self-creating person who achieves happiness by self-improving, cooperating with others, leading a meaningful and purposeful life, engaging in attaining socially useful goals which transcend his/her narrow egocentric interests. Homo eudaimonicus is a person who uses technologies for creating connection with others in order to find common interests, to implement social and cultural initiatives together, to shape conditions of flourishing not exclusively for him-/herself but for others as well, for community in general.

Although Mumford did not use a term "homo eudaimonicus", but in this case as well he anticipated its appearance. Mumford emphasizes that in order to avoid the negative consequences of automation – main of which is job loss leading to boredom, degradation, depression and a direct threat to physical survival because of the loss of material means – it is important to prepare a value and worldview foundation for a new type of a human being (which as we see has already appeared in the 21st century, even though economic and social problems caused by automation and digitalization are still acute and threats of negative future scenarios are still not eliminated):

> Instead of liberation *from* work… I would suggest that liberation *for* work, for more educative, mind-forming, self-rewarding work, on a voluntary basis, may become the most salutary contribution of a life-centered technology. […] the whole world of biotechnics would then once more become open to man… Automation is indeed the proper end of a purely mechanical system; and, once in its place, subordinate to other human purposes, these cunning mechanisms will serve the human community no less effectively than the reflexes, the hormones, and the autonomic nervous system… serve the human body. (Mumford, 1972, p. 85)

These human goals are autonomy, self-direction, authenticity, self-fulfillment, happiness, and hence, comprehensive development and flourishing of a person. So it is important, finally, to move forward and once and for all leave aside the Modern definition of the purpose of technics as human domination over nature. It is not a self-sufficient goal and, eventually, results in alienation between a human being and nature, and consequently in devalorization of both. Human flourishing, happy life and well-being defined as a real purpose of technology will contribute to reestablishing harmony between a human being and his/her natural habitat as well as to finding efficient ways to deal with current problems.

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Furthermore, technics plays a crucial constitutive role in the historical becoming of a human being: by cognizing technics/technology we use, we cognize ourselves (Khmel, 2021). Ferraris argues that in order to understand a human being, one needs to start from the society he/she lives in; and to understand the society he/she lives in, one needs to understand technology that is used there. So not the knowledge of human essence, in Ferraris' view, leads to understanding of society and technology, but the knowledge of technology that is used in a particular historical period leads to understanding of society where this technology is used and of people who use it. The contemporary age of the Internet is the most favorable for self-cognition since, on the one hand, the Internet has brought great social changes, and on the other hand, it provides storage of and access to a huge amount of data about our sociocultural world. Analysis of these data is a way to human self-cognition which has become possible today in a much fuller scale than ever before in history (Ferraris, 2021, pp. 23-24).

Hence, these examples allow us to see how different is the impact of technological development over different people. Evidently, values are the reason for this; but these values are not inherent in technologies themselves – these values are chosen by a person as guidelines in her relationship with the world: the world of nature and the world of culture.

Originality

It is substantiated that technics is the attributive characteristic of a human being, an inherent component of human practice and social life. Technics/technology is not an external and alien to a human being. Transformation of the role of technics correlates with value and worldview shifts in person's understanding of his/her purpose in both natural and social worlds. Nowadays, philosophical analysis of anthropological dimension of technics and technology opens a horizon for seeking effective solutions in the face of the contemporary challenges and anti-utopian threats by means of focusing on the fact that, indeed, technological development is subordinate to the humanist goal which is flourishing, wellbeing and comprehensive development of a human being.

Conclusions

Technics as a social phenomenon implies itself being a tool of man-nature interaction for gaining a socially important (expedient) effect. The essence of technics/technology reveals not through its functional but anthropogenic definitions in a sense of a source of institutionalization and in a sense of a source of realization of a human way of self-identification and self-objectification of human subjectivity. Technics/technology is the attributive characteristics of human essence and being: a human being is as much human as much he/she is a creator of technics. Technological (a-natural) activity tears a human being out of a given natural habitat and constitutes a person with her inherent social way of being. The purpose of technics is not to master the nature and to transform the world; technics is, above all, a tool of human self-improvement and self-creation through broadening the horizon of human capacities. The analysis of new modern anthropological models shows that it is the orientation of technology/technology towards human flourishing that is, on the one hand, a response to the existential demands of modern man, and, on the other hand, a way of preventing future threats related to technological development.

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Переосмислення антропоцентричності техніки у світлі нових антропологічних моделей XXI століття

Мета. Обґрунтувати визначення техніки як атрибутивної характеристики людської сутності та необхідність її орієнтованості на процвітання людини в контексті нових антропологічних моделей XXI ст. **Теоретичний базис.** Розглянуто кореляцію техніки і технології з сутністю людини. Простежено трансформацію ролі техніки на різних історичних етапах розвитку людини. Проаналізовано негативні та позитивні наслідки розвитку цифрових технологій для сучасної людини у світлі нових антропологічних моделей: homo technologicus, homo digitalis та homo eudaimonicus. Окреслено зміст нової світоглядно-ціннісної парадигми у трактуванні цілей технології. **Наукова новизна.** Трансформація ролі техніки відповідає ціннісно-світоглядним поворотам у розумінні людини свого призначення у світі: природному та соціальному. У сьогоденні філософське осмислення антропологічного виміру техніки / технології відкриває горизонт для пошуку ефективних рішень перед лицем сучасних викликів та антиутопічних загроз шляхом акцентування на факті, що насправді, технологічний розвиток підпорядковується гуманістичній меті – процвітанню, добробуту та всебічному розвитку людської особистості. **Висновки.** Сутність техніки виявляється не через її функціональні, а через антропогенні визначеності й у сенсі джерела інституалізації, й у сенсі реалізації, власне, людського способу самоідентифікації та самоопредметнення своєї суб'єктивності. Техніка – атрибутивна сутності та буттю людини: людина настільки є людиною, наскільки вона – технотворець. Головною метою техніки не є панування над природою та перетворювання світу. Вона є передусім засобом самовдосконалення та самотворення самої людини через розширення горизонту людських спроможностей. Аналіз нових сучасних антропологічних моделей свідчить, що саме орієнтованість техніки / технології на процвітання людини є, з одного боку,

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відповіддю на екзистенційні запити сучасної людини, а з іншого – способом попередження пов'язаних з технологічним розвитком майбутніх загроз.

Ключові слова: людська сутність; технологія; техніка; homo technologicus; homo digitalis; homo eudaimonicus; цінності; автономність; процвітання людини

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