RESEARCH ARTICLE

TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURE AND HUMAN SUBJECTIVITY: ETHICAL ISSUES

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	This article intends to explore the ethical issues on the technological and cultural life of human society. It is our contention that ethical values are essential components of a technological and cultural system which has bonding force that responds to the specific needs, aspirations and ideals of humankind. Cultural values can transform human society by applying acquired knowledge into practice. Technology is a part of human culture and different cultures could treat technological values in different ways with different cultural groups attaching different symbolic values to the same kind of technology. The main emphasis is centred on the ethical which is an issue that highlights the good life. The major concern is the applicability of traditional ethical philosophy that has sought to replicate on the relationship of ethics, culture and technology in the present society.

INTRODUCTION

Philosophy of technology symbolizes diverse philosophical endeavors that reflect on technology. The European Enlightenment of the 18th century insisted that all customs and institutions justify themselves as useful for humanity. Under the impact of this command, science and technology became the new basis for any belief system. They reshaped the culture progressively to be what we claim to think as "*rational*." Sooner or later, technology becomes omnipresent in our everyday life and technical modes of thought predominate over all other ways of existence. In a full-grown modern society such as Japan, technology was taken for granted as the customs and myths of the earlier traditional society. One might say that scientific-technical rationality has become a new culture in many parts of the world. We can arbiter it as more or less worthy, ethically justified and fulfilling. Modernity authorizes and demands such a conclusion. This is how it came into *being*. It teaches us to reflect on what we take for granted, specifically rational aspect of modernity. The importance of this perspective cannot be over-estimated. In principle, philosophy of technology is concerned with fundamental questions concerning the proper understanding of technology, so to say, as to how it affects human existence and

reciprocally how human existence affects the technology (Irrgang 2008). Technology has affected society and its surroundings in a number of ways. Various accomplishments of technology induce the values of a society and new technology often raises new ethical questions. Technology can be viewed as an activity that forms or changes culture. The area of culture is neither limited to a set of objects in the sense of physical artifacts nor in the sense of social structures, or classical values conceived with traditional meanings, arts and human sciences; It also covers the values of the natural and technical sciences as well as the whole set of principles implied by technique and technology.

The 21st century and the present millennium are marked by the variety and swiftness of changes which are coupled with unprecedented complexity of social, technological, and cultural phenomena. Exploring the impact of new technologies and the ethical implications that have brought forth is to be understood from the background of necessary element of the processes of social change and adaptation of such culture (Robinson 1981). Old principles of fairness and honesty, respect for others rights, reverence for the environment, and admiration for life and its quality do apply to new technologies; but experience and honest intellectual discussion are needed to clarify the complex issues raised by technological advances (Cordeiro 1997).

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Cultural values and Technological Aspects

The relation between human development and values is very close, because human development as a process implies choice and creativity. An option means the choice among many alternatives and emphasizes the values guiding and motivating human behavior by setting goals and taking the means for reaching them. Usually, the developmental level of the productive social force is taken as the decisive factor and condition of social progress. Many people are disturbed and anxious at the divorce of knowledge from values and power without insight. In such a situation, what kind of a development are we talking about? These are grave topics which demand our attention and care (Aiftinca 2001).

Another approach to the unity of culture is based on its functions in contemporary society. Despite their amazing diversity, cultures operate in the same way in all societies. Howsoever, the similarity of functions does not necessarily imply a similarity of cultures. Each culture distinguishes itself by its specific functions: the function of knowledge aiming to understand and explain man, nature, society, and man's connections to the world (Cordeiro 1997). Culture includes the creation and the materialization of knowledge and human experience in cultural works as substantiation and authentication of man's creative abilities; at the same time, it is a condition for the progressive development of culture in human history. Culture also comprises the accumulation of knowledge and information generated by experience and human creativity (Cordeiro 1997). However, not all accumulations are cultural acts but only that which has social relevance or meaning and importance for a group, community, people or humankind. Culture includes, as well, communication: the transmission of the acquisitions from one group, generation, society or time to another. Through this function, culture ensures its own continuity and survival. Culture then encompasses the preservation of worthy traditions and their transmission to present and future generations. Through all these functions, culture can transform human society by applying acquired knowledge to culture and thereby transform human society by applying acquired knowledge to culture in practice.

Unity of culture is therefore provided by the unity and identity of its functions, both socially and individually. Through its values, institutions, norms, traditions and mentalities, culture is able to codify and re-codify social and individual behaviors, attitudes and norms. Through this creative act, it contributes to society's cohesion whenever behaviors, attitudes and mentalities converge toward general aims and ideals, and to similar creative modes of their achievements (Aiftinca 2001). If one looks at technology as a mechanism and the principle of work the response will be positive; but if one looks at the minute details of human activities which take place in line with the use of technology, the answer will be negative. Technology appears as a part of life and not something separate from it. Arnold Pacey in his book entitled *Culture of Technology* has considered three different aspects for technology (Pacey 1983).

- The organizational aspect, consisting of the activity of designers, engineers, consumers and labour unions.

- The technical aspect which is limited to the concept of technology, that is to say, knowledge, skill and *know-how* of machines.
- The cultural aspect which is purported to the goals, values and moral rules and belief in progress, affecting the creativity of designers.

According to Pacey (1983), when technology is presented in a more limited way, the cultural values and the organizational factors related to it assume the shape of an alien factor. In this case, technology is known in its complete technical aspects; but in its broad conception it should be considered equal to practicality. In this way it is not impartial and has direct and indirect impacts on values, traditions and environment. Such a line of thinking indicates that cultural values are a determining factor in the choice and impact of technology and the latter actually transforms cultural values and provides answers to the question as to how technology and culture as an independent system can be coordinated.

Therefore, technology must be modeled on certain culturally shaped ideals of security, so to say, an ideal of the user or environment (Pacey 1983). Technology is a part of human culture, and different cultures may treat technology in different ways with different cultural groups attaching different symbolic values to the same kind of technology (Borgmann 1999). Don Ihde (2004) and Bernhard Irrgang (2001) in their work on philosophy of technology argue to the effect that technology should be rightly viewed from a phenomenological perspective as an essential aspect of human nature which is socio-historically situated. It is basically cultural articulation of man and not an external adjunct. Ihde then proposes a theory of technology transfer which affects a sort of culture transfer. Materiality of technological culture does not negate its cultural or human underpinnings. Therefore, whenever some form of technology, agricultural or metallurgical is transferred by way of import for export, it carries with it a whole set of human relationships. Transfer of technology (Patra 2014) is to be understood as a sort of intercultural encounter and gradual accommodation, and not as confrontation. Differences of culture promote and provide mutual learning which does not necessarily entailing clash and conflicts. (Ihde 2004). But, in many cultures, different components of technology are controlled by different sectors of the society. It is apparent that cultural relations and power still decide what is acceptable to adopt and what is to be rejected (Borgmann 1999). As such, much evidence indicates the *pragmatism* of the people with reasonable care; cultural sensitivies can be addressed when introducing new technologies. The intention is to find ways to enable the various cultures in the world to develop in ways that they consider appropriate without losing their cultural honor.

In the current era with rapid advancement of technology in its multi-dimensional phases, our cultural identity formation also has taken a different form. Technology becomes the carrier of those systems and ideologies within which it has been nurtured. Hence, a monoculture is fast emerging. When we say "mono-culture" it means the undermining of economic, cultural and ecological diversity and acceptance of a technological culture developed by West and the adoption of its inherent values (Prasad and Mishra 2004). These technologies have significantly altered the matrix within which

our identity is formed and they have reframed the "generalized other" which bestow upon us our collective identity. The question facing us in the emerging post-modern period, then, is this: How can the Western technological culture and its product of a technological self be reinterpreted as defining merely one particularistic cultural way of appropriating a self among others or accept this appropriation of self as the manifestation of a 'technological self' which is valid only for citizens of a particular group? In fact, this article is attempted to outline one possible strategy towards this question. So, when it comes to importing new technology such as in the case of eating and drinking which are often transferable easily. In some instances, technologies that a particular culture finds useful cannot be transferred at all; here, differences in background conditions tend to be at the root of the discrepancy. For example, as Hubert Dreyfus notes, it would be difficult to imagine, given the way material culture embodies and shapes cultural identity, a traditional Japanese tea ceremony occurring around Styrofoam cups; "the tea cup does not preserve temperature as well as its plastic replacement, and it has to be washed and protected; but it is preserved from generation to generation for its beauty and social meaning" (Dreyfus 1990). When it comes to understanding and assessing technology transfer, categories such as "cultural specificity" are likely to be more relevant than what often turns out to be primarily ergonomic matters of "simplicity" and "complexity." Since a transferable technology can be adopted only once its components are instantiated into cultural practices through "integration" as well as "translation," new agendas and novel usages can always turn a given artifact, machine, and even system into a different "*being*" (Dreyfus 1990).

In the human history, there were travelers who have encountered with other cultures received gifts from those countries and returned to their homes with memories of their encounters. Eventually, the gifts that they have received and collected from other countries and cultures became tokens of those societies in the form of artifacts. One would say that these have been the means whereby cultures have exchanged ideas and objects and are often assimilated aspects of one another. However, these artifacts did not have the social impact that modern production and communications technologies have had (Feenberg 1992). It also entails the fact that the cultural products transplanted in the past were generally looked upon as curiosities or were adopted into the culture as it was. Succinctly put, these technologies did not dictate the future progression of the society (Borgmann 1984). Nature of technology has been an issue around with a great deal of scholarship in philosophy of technology has focused. The question as to whether technology itself is determined by or ambivalent to society's structure that has become a major point of contention among social theorists. Arguing about the status of our autonomous tools and productive ensembles, this will not resolve the problem of the relation between people and their circumstances. Population increase, resource depletion and environmental degradation are human problems that can only be addressed by a visualization aiming at transforming the human agent whose relation to its activity within the world. Yet, given the intimate connection between technology and the human subject, as addressed above, we must carefully consider both the individual effects of using technology as well as the cultural impacts of technological

transplantation (Borgmann 1984). The utmost influence and impact of technology in our everyday lives have generated not only a cultural change but also our conceptions about values. As a result, the human subject has formed unwillingly certain technological life worlds because technology has become our learning tool and has caused us to shift away from expressing our self-identities. Thus, the modern human come to see his/her identities as those he would like to have or that he/she wants people to see rather than who he really is. The point that we are driving at here is that somehow, technology has created a kind of narcissism which not only encourages just self-absorption, but more accurately, self-consumption. In other words, technology has made us to become creators and consumers of our own brand. We become enamored by a particular kind of self, a pseudo-self that is controlled and conditioned by the corporate brands, so to say, a corporate self. We endlessly refine, create and consume a digital projection that we want others to see. The way in which technology is embedded in society is thoroughly discussed in Andrew Feenberg's Critical Theory of Technology, where he claims that any given technology is ambivalent to the impact of its social uses until it is incorporated into the "technological code" of culture (Feenberg 1992). In other words, technological innovation can actually threaten technological hegemony until it can be encoded. The thrust of his argument is that any sort of technological rationality as a totalitarian force determining society cannot be said to be technological in nature (Watzlawick 1984).

Cultural lag and Technology: Ethical Issues

In today's employment scenario, workforce is expected to know about their job and its intricacies more than ever before. Ogburn (1966) has coined a term "cultural lag" in order to capture a trend that has taken place in the first half of the twentieth century and now appears to have greatly accelerated. By cultural lag, what Ogburn meant is the material culture that moves ahead more rapidly than non-material culture. Physical equipment and the procedures for producing and using it are part of material culture. Religion, ethics, philosophy, belief systems, values and law are examples of non material culture (Ogburn 1966).

Ogburn (1966) points out four general processes underlying social change: they are invention, accumulation, diffusion, and adjustment. Inventions represent new cultural traits and new combinations or syntheses of old cultural traits. Once developed, inventions are socially and geographically diffused throughout the society. In the process of accumulation, invention is absorbed into the cultural base and the cultural systems adapt in varying degree, through modification to the new conditions imposed by such inventions. Within non-material culture Ogburn distinguished the adaptive culture as comprised of intangible cultural factors such as folkways and definitions of reality that regulate to the new material conditions and in doing so, it acclimatize the growth of social usage. Through adjustments in the adaptive culture, inventions are socially defined and the methods which govern their use are specified. Cultural lag is the time period between invention and diffusion of material culture traits and the adjustments in adaptive cultures (Ogburn 1966). During the present era, one can experience a gap between technology and ethics. There are several reasons that ethical systems lag behind technology

development which contribute to the lag from a social perspective. New technologies promise the possibility of great economic returns in a highly competitive environment. Technology developers race to patent and get products to markets first. Being first on the market is not a guarantee of market dominance; certainly, it can be a competitive advantage. Material culture and technology development seeks the discovery and application of natural laws of the physical world. These can be studied and engineered in controlled ways. In contrast to the material culture and development process, improvement of ethical systems to govern material culture and its applications are slower due to several reasons. First, the development of ethical guidelines does not take place in a focused and controlled environment. Second, there is no competitive market structure that financially rewards the introduction of a dominant ethical standpoint. Third, the social forces that an ethical system would seek to influence are not as controllable and manageable as physical aspects of the world. Moreover, the process of developing broad social consensus around ethical guidelines in general must await the introduction and diffusion of a new technology (Borgmann 1984). While forward looking ethicists may project new technological trends and may raise questions regarding ethical applications of anticipated future technologies, broad social attention is seldom given until a technology has achieved a critical level of social diffusion, which is sufficient to engender popular controversy.

From a humanitarian perspective, such conflicts would hinder further progress that might relieve human suffering and enhance the quality of life. From a business development perspective, such conflicts would add financial uncertainty to the investment required for development and market diffusion. The ethical challenges in these examples are not created by the inventors of the technologies. These are the results of a natural technology development, diffusion and acceptance process that can best be understood from Ogburn's (1966) cultural lag perspective (Ogburn 1966). The development and widespread acceptance of ethical guidelines for the usage of a technology may be expected to lag behind advances in technologies grounded in material culture. Until socially sanctioned ethical guidelines are developed which can legitimate the conditions and methods for using a new technology and socially define and condemn its misuse, social conflict may be expected. This situation creates a moral and financial atmosphere of risk for the business person who wishes to contribute to the development and diffusion of new technologies (Norcia 1994).

A key challenge for cultural lag, then, is a key challenge presented by new technologies today. It is not just that a condition of cultural lag exists. Cultural lag is a natural part of social change. However, the gap between development of technologies and the development of corresponding ethical guidelines for their use may be widening, as the speed of technology development picks up the pace without corresponding acceleration in the mechanisms for developing social consensus. The impact of cultural lag may be most acutely felt in developing nations into which today's technologies may be infused rapidly for development of an infrastructure of control (Tarantino 1997). On practical grounds, the task is to stimulate reasoned public dialogue toward the development of social consensus regarding appropriate use and governance of new technologies. There are so many areas of ethical concerns regarding new technologies

that any listing of issues would be somewhat arbitrary which illustrate cultural adaptation issues raised by today's advanced technologies (Irrgang 2001). Further, various technological applications, from medicine to engineering, involve considerable *risks and uncertainties*, especially in relation to unintended consequences. For example, exposure to toxic pollutants and the incidence of cancer does exhibit a strong correlation. Issues of informed consent are not limited to human subjects of biomedical research, but occur in the citing of chemical plants, the construction of major transportation facilities such as airports or highways, and consumption of technologically modified foods (Frechette 1991). At a slightly more general level is the question concerning technology and *the idea of good life*. Besides various individual concepts, there is a deeper problem in applying traditional ethics in technological culture.

It has to do with the distinction between making and doing. Aristotle, for instance, thus classified the human activities into three types. The first type, productive actions, making, or *poiesis*, is considered morally neutral. The second type, doing or *praxis* is perceived as the medium of moral questions. The third type, theoretical and scientific action, *theoria*, is again outside moral concerns (Aristotle 1947, 1139a 26–b9). In the modern situation these distinctions appear less viable. Modern culture, communicates disparities between contemporary doing and making, and also between ethics and technology. A crucial problem for thinking about ethics in technology is the notion that manufacture in itself morally. But if the ethical issues are connected to technology, then the questions of distribution, risk, good life, etc. are correct, but then we cannot preserve the distinction of moral *praxis* and amoral *poiesis*. There have to be some means to morally evaluate the technological development in all its phases, from planning and designing to finished products and structures. Further, through their application technological devices affect forms of life, and even create new ones. For instance, cellular phones and the Internet have considerable impact on the social life in our advanced societies.

However, societies cannot control how such forms of life that evolve within them. Though, this relationship of technologies and forms of life are interesting, since technological development is usually perceived as involving some kind of freedom or choice i.e., institutions that work on technologies can choose from different paths, goals, and ways of allocating time and resources. This could then means that policy makers on technology should ask as to what kinds of forms of life they are about to create through resource allocation (Borgman 1992). The value neutral notion of *theoria* is in fact questionable. Very often, in political discourse technology is legitimated on the grounds of its being based on science. Since science is said to be objective description of reality, the argument suggests that technology is based on scientific research and there cannot be many value questions concerning design and production of technologies. Artificial breeding of bacteria, the cloning of animals, DNA mapping and manipulation, or the generation of body parts and bio genetic advances are envisaged to be the defining technological characteristics of 21st Century. These technologies may offer today's greatest challenges to the ethicist for several reasons. First, many of these play very close to the creation and definition of life and to the identity and dignity of human

beings. Controversies over these issues are not new (Williams 1973), from 1973 to present, there are lots of contributors who have discussed on ethical issues arising out of technology from cloning, to animal experimentations. Advances in this field are rapidly coming to challenge our notions about life and the criteria that are regarded for a member of our social community with the full set of rights and protections which the membership in the group endows. Cloning of animals has already advanced to such a level that many in our society feel uncomfortable. There is a pressing need to define the new situation and to prepare ourselves for the technological capability to clone human beings. There do not seem to be insurmountable physical obstacles to human cloning. We must determine now whether and which human cloning experiments should be allowed, and, if the experiments are successful, how do we ethically define the results. Will we accept the lives of those human beings as our neighbors that result from human cloning, and if so what will be their ethical and legal status, rights and obligations (Irrgang, 2002). Second, the potential for improving the quality of life through bionics and medical treatment begs questions of equity in access and applicability. Third, the development of biogenetic technologies requires experimentation with animals and humans. While debate and efforts regarding governance of medical- technological advances have been active for many years, (Williams 1973) much of the debate in the past was speculative and futuristic. Today, technologies have advanced to the point whose concerns are real and immediate. There are pressing needs for guidelines in order to avoid social conflict over biogenetic experimentation, development and usage.

Human Subjectivity and Ethics

From the preceding discussion, it should be clear that we require a technology which is based on culture and ethical values in a given society. As Irrgang (2001) argues, there is an urgent need to understand the global imperative of modernization and idiom of globalization in today's world of technology. The process of globalization is emerging into a cultural, historical and ecological phenomenon. At the same time, this change is adding an ethical dimension to the development of technology, which has an orientation to the understanding of techniques, technology and science (Irrgang 2014). Later, system-theory analysis (employing cybernetics to control technology) has given us a model of social anthropology of technological and cultural development in technological practice. As such, our lifeworld is shaped by physical and symbolic tools and mediating apparatus. A common denominator in the design of many "innovative" learning environments is the insightful and careful application of computer based measurement technology as a mediating tool. Tools are a means of controlling and steering the interconnections between things and a device for coordinating shared human activities. Tool and utensil and every improvement in technique makes certain difference in what is used and enjoyed; we may also note that the inquiries that arise with reference to use and enjoyment have both significance and meaning (Irrgang, 2013). Most contemporary philosophers of technology such as Don Ihde, Hubert Dreyfus, Andrew Feenberg, and Bernhard Irrgang, tend not only to concern themselves with certain artifact or technology as such, but also interested to address that these artifacts or technologies seem necessary or evident in the first place.

According to them, these particular technologies 'frame' and reveal our world, as we draw on them. They would claim that it is this ongoing co-constitution that we should focus on if we are to understand the social and ethical implications of media (Verbeek 2008). One might describe the *phenomenological* approach as a process of *ontological disclosure* in which a world (relevant social practices or involvement of the whole) and technology (nexus of relevant technologies) are taken as mutually constitutive in their own interpretive contexts in which the one renders the other intelligible—i.e., grounds it as a 'seemingly' meaningful way to exist. In this process there is a progressive uncovering of the constitutive conditions that are necessary for particular ways of seeing or doing in the world or in particular social practices to make sense and be meaningful in the way they are taken to be (Ihde 2002). For example, Heidegger's analysis of modern technology identifies the emergence of calculative thinking as a necessary condition to see the world as resources available for our purposes.

The work of Stiegler, Heidegger, Dreyfus, Borgmann and Don Ihde aims to open up a horizon for social and ethical reflection on information technology. Nevertheless, there seems to be at least one information technology theme that has attracted *phenomenologists* so to say, the phenomenon of virtualization or virtuality. The term 'virtuality' is used here to refer to the mediation of interaction through an electronic medium between humans as well as humans and machines. The Internet (or Cyberspace as it is known in cultural discourse) is the most evident example of the virtualization of interaction. The development of Internet and the subsequent extension of computer networks into all domains of everyday life have prompted much speculation about the way in which information technology will change human existence, especially on our notion of sociality and community. Much of this speculation suggests that the virtualization of human interaction has led to a multitude of new possibilities for humans—such as cyber communities, virtual education, virtual friendships, virtual organizations, virtual politics, and so forth (Dreyfus, 2001). Virtual communities might be real communities, they might be pseudo communities, or they might be something entirely new in the realm of social contracts. For example, Cyberspace makes possible the construction of an identity that is so fluid and multiple that it strains the very limits of the notion of authenticity. People become masters of self-presentation and self-creation (Turkle 1996). Those who treat the internet as an artifact may suggest that we look at the impact of mediation (or virtualization) on communication and relations of power. As for example, the fact that certain social prejudices are circumvented because the individual responding to 'my' online application for a particular service is not confronted with 'my' physical appearance. We look at the way virtualization makes the presentation of self and identity more plastic and encourage us to think through the consequences for ongoing social interaction (Turkle 1996). Further, we may take another example, the implicit assumptions about the nature of communication when considering e-mail applications— for instance, the fact that most e-mail applications assume and emulate the structure of a physical letter. We need to trace how the people interpret this 'letter' structure to communicate and share objects (such as files and pictures) with others, as well as the sorts of communication such as the structure that excludes. Similarly, embodied engagement can be no commitment and

no risk. In such an environment moral engagement is limited and human relations become trivialized (Dreyfus 2001). Virtual bodies are thin and never attain the thickness of flesh. The fantasy that says we can simultaneously have the powers and capabilities of the technologizing medium without its ambiguous limitations is a fantasy of desire (Ihde 2002). Keeping in view of these certain practical questions in philosophy of technologies, philosopher such as Bernhard Irrgang have been developing a *hermeneutic* understanding of both technology and ethics (Ihde 2004). The structures of technological practice, professional activity, and everyday life, together with the background of an *implicit* technological knowledge are the basis of collective technological action in a cultural context (Irrgang 2008).

A technological science is required to determine the relation of these various disciplinary formations and to search for unity within the technological sciences; it also entails certain other interrelated questions that pose the relation between disciplinary, interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary techno-scientific knowledge. Such as the development of Internet and the subsequent extension of computer networks into all domains of everyday life have prompted much speculation about the way in which information technology will change human existence, especially on our notion of sociality and community. Much of this speculation suggests that the virtualization of human interaction has led to a multitude of new possibilities for humans—such as cyber communities, virtual education, virtual friendships, virtual organizations, virtual politics, and so forth (Dreyfus 2001).

Clearly, such claims about the transformation of the social domain have important implications for our understanding of ethics. One might suggest that most of our current thinking about ethics implies a certain sense of community based on reciprocal moral obligations that are largely secured through situated, embodied practices and institutions that are often overlapping and mutually inclusive. If these practices and institutions become virtualized then it would seem that we need to reconsider some of our most fundamental human categories (Ihde 1999). In the mediated world, we become inundated with the solicitations of the multitude of others that increasingly appear on our screens. How ought we to respond? We cannot allow the world, reconstituted through the new media, to turn into mere images, pixels on the screen. We must recognize: "that I have as much responsibility for the stranger, that other who is either, physically or metaphysically, far from me, as I do for my neighbor" (Silverstone 2002).

Therefore, following the path of Silverstone, the ambiguity of a world of 'closeness' and simultaneous 'distance' of the other that the new media constitutes is an altogether different way of being with others that requires a new ethic of 'proper distance' where the possibility of facing the other, as *Other*, is not lost in the ethereality of our clicks (Silverstone 2003). It is clear from these examples that the ethical question for phenomenology is by and large an ontological question—that is, what sort of world or way of being are we becoming, as opposed to the sort of world we value and want? These fundamental choices may only become visible if we approach new media (and the ethics they imply) from the point of view of experience and its descriptions.

Concluding Remarks

Human beings shape their internal identity as a person and a group and on this basis construct meaning with the external objects among which they live in. It is also true to suggest that we live through a rare state of rapid instability prompted by revolutionary technological change that affects our Identity. Technology is seen to act in a dialectical relationship with social order shaping and being shaped by historical, cultural, political and social circumstances as opposed to any deterministic relationship. With these developments, people have multiple cultural identities. Increasingly, one goes through life picking up identities. In this sense, one's identity is never finished. Identity formation involves construction and reconstruction throughout the life course of individuals and groups and through their different faces, roles and circumstances. Identity has indeed become more complex in our increasingly interdependent world as people increasingly interact with individuals from other cultural groups who influence their behavior and values. In view of this, it becomes more important to look closely on technology as a practice of everyday life. Far from being a marginal component of culture, technology has interacted internally with philosophical fields such as *epistemology, ontology, value theory*, and *ethics*. Today's ethicists have difficult challenges. New technologies have not only changed our world views, but our social interaction patterns and our relationships to one another also. Whether the challenge comes from computer and communication electronics or from biogenetic engineering, one should accept that technological advances enhance our capabilities as human beings.

As a result, present-day's accelerating pace of technological changes jeopardizes an ever widening gap between new technologies and accepted ethical guidelines. While social consensus is not a requirement for an ethical perspective, social consensus must be developed if an ethical perspective is to have broad practical impact in the social world. Hence, the ethical issues that we are facing today are hovering around developing more effective adaptive mechanisms to stimulate public awareness, reasoned dialogue and social consensus regarding new technological achievements, which will create, influence and control this new technology of consensus building. We may appreciate Ogburn's (1966) cultural lag thesis which provides a useful perspective from which we scrutinize today's technological advances.

Indeed, man needs contemplative moments to reflect about him and others even when he is in the midst of technological progress; but the pathos of technological self seems to kill this silence. This issue is related to Heidegger who understands the question concerning technology as essentially linked to the question of being. Technology, he argues, constitutes our ontology, our way of being-in-the-world. Technology increasingly creates the shape of our lives and thereby controls us. Consuming technology does not mean merely using it; one has to question it and teach others to question it. Heidegger uses the term "fallenness" by which he means the typical way in which we are occupied by everyday tasks and the way in which this involvement enables us to avoid confronting some other basic issues. Thus, Heidegger argues that meditative thinking can help us. "Through it we can live in an attitude toward technology which says both Yes and No to calculative

thinking and its product, technology. The most frightening thing in today's world is that our thinking has become instrumental. Such instrumental rationality is often seen as a specific form of rationality focusing on the most efficient means to achieve a specific end, but not in itself reflecting on the value of that end. It refers to the thoughtless way in which we live our lives" (Heidegger, 1962). The important point is that we have lost our genuineness in our thinking; as a result, most of us have become incapable of seeing our existence beyond the paradigm of technology. The issue, therefore, is centred on the irony of the modern age that man is warned to rediscover and relocate this naturalness. Whereas Borgmann's philosophy generates interesting answers to the question of technology and the good life, which sheds light on the problem of applicability of traditional ethical thinking. To sum up, let us heed attention to some of contemporary philosophers, who have sought to reflect on the relationship of ethics and technology in a contemporary culture and have introduced the ideas and arguments of ethical questions in our technological culture in two different forms. First, technological advance that can be seen as posing new *challenges* to ethics, but in the form of isolated issues which however can be adequately dealt with the piecemeal- such as in the fields of bioethics or computer ethics. Second, technology can be radically argued as transforming the human condition enormously to increase the human power that demands a kind of ethical thinking with a related questioning of *adequacy* of traditional ethics.

Thus, the central conclusion that can be drawn from the above analysis is that ethics is not a solely human affair, but a matter of association between human subject and technologies. This implies that the ethics of technology cannot depart from a division between human and technology, which characterizes so many ethical approaches. Technologies play a fundamentally mediating role in human practices and experiences, and for this reason it can be argued that ethical association is disseminated over both humans and technological artifacts. Such a technologically mediated character of ethical concern deserves a central place in the ethics of technology. One of the most important ways to do this is by analyzing the ethical role of artifacts and by addressing the role of technology where human beings are constituted as ethical subjects. This can be done by enabling designers to actively foresee the relevance of ethical role of technology. But it can also be done by developing a specific attitude to technology in which the technological constitution of moral subjectivity is explicitly reflected upon and actively reshaped.

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