DIGITALIZATION OF LIFE AS A GLOBAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

We live in the uncertain, unruled and risky world, where new economic, environmental, geopolitical and intercultural problems arise over and over again. However, there is one problem that has been considered rather minor until lately, since it was supposed to be not in the list of essential human values or the most important life goals, but just one of technical means to achieve them. This refers to modern information technologies implemented through Artificial Intelligence devices. Meanwhile, it's clear today that developments in the field of Artificial intelligence allowing to convey and process information in a digital form (what's called digitalization of economy, security systems, domestic life) are really not just auxiliary means to address various kinds of problems, but a key driver of economic and social development in the current context. They are tied with the present-day technological revolution in the economy. Those who have managed to jump in a dashing train of this revolution can win the global economic and political race. There is a good reason that such a great attention is paid to digitalization of life and developments in the field of Artificial Intelligence in the USA, China and our country on the national level.

However, it's getting clear that digitalization and Artificial Intelligence are not just a new technological paradigm. They are a challenge to some essential cultural values. A while back H. Kissinger, a famous American statesman, wrote a text claiming that the age of Artificial Intelligence meant the end of the European project of Enlightenment. I would go far beyond that point in my assessment of potential consequences of using Artificial Intelligence. From my point of view, use of modern information technologies based on Artificial Intelligence, digitalization of all spheres of life represent a challenge to fundamental life conditions in general no matter what culture a person belongs to. It's about human fate, about whether

people will turn into some other creatures or simply die. Culture of the West, where the sources of scientific development and new technologies, including information ones, were located for centuries, is considered more ready to address these problems than any other culture. In fact, there are no ready answers, so it's a challenge for all currently existing cultures.

First, on new and enormous opportunities for people.

Traditional culture is tied to the times when it once emerged. People live in a certain environment. With the Internet one can go beyond space and time, set up network interest communities. It's a new type of social intercourse, when members of a certain community go beyond the scope of what was customary before, so a person becomes much freer. And the dream about expanding the space of freedom has always been a driving force of human development.

No one knows who you are in social networks. You can write whatever you want. Everyone could be an author and not just a reader of texts.

Existing democratic systems have serious flaws. Nowadays, the idea of democracy's more perfect form – digital one – emerges. Any political issue could be discussed on the Internet, there's no censorship there. Political actions can be arranged through social networks. For example, to encourage advocates of some political idea to take action in public and voice their demands. And electronic democracy seems to have shown itself in the best light; usually the Arab Spring – uprisings of young people in Egypt – is an example to refer to.

Development of a whole series of new technologies is ensured by information technologies and researches in the field of Artificial Intelligence. Sometimes they are called NBIC technologies. They are nano-, bio-, information and cognitive technologies. Supposedly, currently these technologies are going to be used in the most civilized countries to help do things that have never been possible before. For example, it will be possible to make nanorobots able to clean

blood vessels, so that technically they could prolong human life endlessly. The dream about living as long as possible or, perhaps, without even dying in the end has always engrossed human minds. Today, there are a lot of people (including quite serious outstanding scientists and philosophers) who think that the idea of immortality can be implemented with information technologies based on Artificial Intelligence. It is assumed that currently there are two options to implement the idea of immortality. Option one: nanorobots will regularly "repair" human organisms. Option two: some device makes an information copy of actions, emotions and thoughts of a certain person over and over again, records everything that happened to this individual during his/her life. Then this information is transferred to another medium – biological or digital, which is even better, i.e. the mental life of a person will be saved, but the individual will go on living in another body, not their own, and this body will exist forever, since it can be constantly repaired. However, it will be a posthuman. According to some scientists and philosophers, the purpose of the humankind existence is to create a posthuman.

Within this context there emerges an idea of possible management of the evolution process. This process will stop being natural to become artificial. People will administrate it themselves; they will create what nature couldn't, or will be able to repeat what have already been created by nature with NBIC technologies.

A few specialists think that in future it will be possible to read another person's thoughts deciphering neurodynamic codes of brain information records.

And here are challenges to fundamental life conditions inevitably following these new information technologies based on developments in the field of Artificial Intelligence.

On opportunity to create network communities on the Internet, where there's no censorship and everyone is given a free hand. The point is people are responsible for their actions. Human beings have a free will, which philosophers

have been writing about for a thousand years. Today, these disputes are fierce again, because some brain researchers have come to the conclusion that allegedly free will doesn't exist. In fact, free will does exist, and people can't live without it, since they are responsible for their actions. As for the Internet, it really provides some new emerging opportunities for "authoring". But if everything posted on the Internet is considered a valuable publication, it will mean the end of culture. Any idea suggests that there are ways to assess whether it's good or bad. Peer-reviewed journals differ from unreviewed ones, because publications there are assessed in an absolutely different way. Also, we assess a literary text in accordance with its quality. The democracy, when criteria for text assessment disappear, is worse than no democracy at all. You can find anything on the Internet. But since Internet publications are not regulated, criteria of distinguishing between the good and the bad are lost, and any responsibility for what a person does disappears.

On the problem of electronic democracy. Sure, people can be encouraged to take action in public via social networks. But people do it for some results, some desired changes. And they should have a program of these changes. Such a program can't be established with the help of a chat on the Internet; it requires specialists who are aware of the economic and political situation, so they know what should and what should not be done. The crowd can smash something, but can't do anything positive without those in the know. That's why the Arab Spring in Egypt didn't have an effect young protesters had expected. The modern society is not a society of electronic democracy, but rather a society of "expertocracy". Therefore problems arise, since experts can be different, they can have their own interests, but it's clear that you can never manage without professionals.

On NBIC technologies. At first sight it's fine that implanted nanorobots will indicate that something's wrong with a person, since they know this person better than he/she knows himself/herself. And a "smart house" will say: "Buy this, buy that." It will also order everything you need in the shop to be delivered. So, people

don't even have to do anything, machines will do it instead. But then a human being will be just an appendage to the machine, a smart device based on artificial intelligence, which will make all decisions for a person, from getting the house in order to taking care of human health.

As for overcoming death, let's perform the following imaginary experiment. Imagine that people are immortal. I don't think it's possible, but let's assume it's been accomplished. What does it mean? First, people will not be born anymore. After all, what's the use of new people in this case? People will live forever. A large part of our relations with other people is played by the fact that we understand them, hold affection for them, love them and feel ready to sacrifice something for them, sometimes even our own lives. But in the context of immortality such qualities as selflessness, self-sacrifice and compassion are useless. It's impossible to sacrifice one's life, because every person will live forever. Fundamental human traits which life is based on and people live for will be useless.

On freedom of movement. Everyone will have a card with a record of where you've gone to, what you've bought and where you've stayed. And since the modern world is a dangerous place full of risks and possible terrorist attacks, you will be interested in a central entity to monitor your movements and give advices: "come here", "don't go there", "do this", so all your actions will be under control. Therefore, it's not a new level of freedom, but a new level of serfdom, since you will be at the mercy of mechanisms that seem smarter than you, know everything about you and allegedly do it in your interests. But who knows in whose interests they really act? Perhaps, not in yours, but in the interests of those in power in this society.

On reading thoughts. Fortunately, I don't think it's possible. If two people see one and the same thing, they will have different associations and slightly different meanings related to this thing. It's a well-known and still discussed

philosophical problem of differences between referents and meanings: one and the same referent (thing) can imply different meanings for different people, since every life is unique, and every person is different, so thoughts different people have about one and the same thing will be different as well. So, even knowing what sections of your cerebral cortex correspond to a certain referent, I will not be able to understand what you think of. Besides, thoughts of testees will be different every time, and it's impossible to guess even the simplest thoughts of another person with brain researches, since everyone has their own life, and fortunately, all people are different. People are autonomous, they take decisions themselves. And if it were possible to read thoughts, as some cognitive scientists suggest, it would be possible to do anything with people – to manipulate, to direct them somewhere, to instill ideas in order to turn them into puppets in someone else's hands eventually. So, it is not possible. But even if it were, it would better not be done. Not everything that can be done should be done.

Nowadays, ideas of human enhancement are discussed. Many scientists and philosophers share these ideas. But how can human beings be enhanced? And where are the borders of enhancement? Some answer this question like that: people need to think better and faster, to be more emotional, to run faster, to eat less and to sleep less as well. Then a question arises: where are criteria of what "better" means? Or, perhaps, it's not better but worse for a person? For example, what does it mean – to think better? Thinking can be different. One can play chess brilliantly and be if not an idiot, but certainly a bit strange, heavy-minded creature in all other areas of life. There are also cases when a genius mathematician is also a schizophrenic. And what does it mean – "to feel better"? For example, sensitivity is understood differently in the Chinese culture, than in European, and emotions have a different meaning. The Chinese think that one shouldn't behave as the Europeans do, that it's not good and even improper to express emotions openly. So what does "better" mean in this case? Which point of view is considered? It turns

out that someone just decides which way is better and considers it to be so obvious that suggests introducing this vision of "human enhancement". There are projects to exert influence on the human genetic system – "gene map editing". Every person has his/her genetic system that can be improved somehow. If there are any diseases, they definitely need to be cured. But then there is a big question: when it is allowed to interfere into the genetic system and when it is not. And it's high time to recall an old principle that has always been applied to doctors – "do no harm". No harm should be done: while something can be cured or enhanced, there's always a chance to aggravate something else at the same time. Now, the humankind has come to the stage when it can do what was not possible before. People interfere into the life of nature, the life of human body and human brain functions. The question is how to do that. How to do it for the benefit of humans, not in their detriment. And there's only one way out. In these cases decisions are not to be taken by certain people or politicians; it's required to consider opinions of people that understand what a human being is, what their opportunities are and how their strengths and weaknesses are interrelated. A philosophic and humanitarian expert evaluation is required for such projects. You can try to reinforce some human qualities, but eventually you'll deprive a person of those specific features that make them human, turning him/her into an unhuman being (and a posthuman is definitely unhuman).

This matter is not some fiction or distant future; we are already crawling into this new situation, we are crawling stealthily, but year after year we are getting farther and farther. Here's a comparison. A man has been walking down a pathway. Now, he's come to the end and sees a chasm. There are two options, if he doesn't want to go back: either looking for a way to fly (let's say he'll grow some wings), or to fall into the chasm. All people who care about the future of modern civilization should not allow falling into the chasm. According to H. Kissinger, whom I mentioned in the beginning of the text, today it's essential to understand

problems connected with opportunities and threats of AI-based digitalization of life from the philosophic and humanitarian perspective. And one has to agree with that.