introduction

Yuk Hui’s *The Question Concerning Technology in China. An Essay on Cosmotechnics* is a rare yet timely attempt in these days of narrow-minded empirically oriented and case-study saturated philosophy of technology to re-consider the question of technology as a truly philosophical question in the most profound and urgent manner, such as it was first posed by Martin Heidegger in 1949 in his notorious Bremen lecture on *The Question Concerning Technology*, where he famously asked about the *essence* of technology, which he deemed to be nothing techno-logical, as is well known, but ontological or onto-historical – as having to do with what his own philosophical questioning had been after from the very beginning and that was: Being – and, later, the *history* of Being.¹

Hui’s project of cosmotechnics seems to a large extent inspired by Heidegger’s ontological or onto-historical understanding of technology as an unfolding essence or *Wesung* overdetermining all concrete technological invention and innovation, replacing it though with a plurality of culture-specific cosmological or cosmotechnical trajectories that allow for the thinking of a profound technodiversity which has no place within Heidegger’s thought of a singular essence of technology. Yet it is also decisively informed by Bernard Stiegler’s critique of Heidegger’s neglect of the constitutive nature of technology in its concrete factuality for any ontological framework.

In this article I will present Hui’s cosmotechnical understanding of technology as a kind of “critical synthesis” of Heidegger’s and Stiegler’s views on technology,² showing that, on the one hand, it acknowledges Stiegler’s insight into the constitutive technicity – universally valid – of human existence and what Heidegger called “world-formation” [*Weltbildung*], while on the other it pays tribute to Heidegger’s thesis that all technical evolution is always already conditioned by a non-technical factor, albeit for Hui not a singular *ontological* factor but a plurality of always particular *cosmological* factors.

---

¹ This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2020.1790831
other turnings

That is to say: Hui’s cosmetechnics professes both the technicity of the cosmic (understood as the world) and the “cosmicity” of technics. Employing a distinction made by Peter Sloterdijk, I will try to demonstrate how it thus combines Stiegler’s emphasis on the “horizontal” dimension of technology as technical exteriorization with Heidegger’s claim about the “vertical,” in the sense of “spiritual” or “cultural,” determination of technology, pluralizing both these dimensions. In doing so, it opens up these fundamental philosophies of technology to the debate, increasingly urgent in our dire time of the Anthropocene, with contemporary anthropology’s so-called “ontological turn.”

the planetary reign of western technology

Heidegger questioned technology, i.e., its essence, not for the sake of finding a right definition or a correct representation of it but to prepare a free relationship to it (Technology 3. And this free relationship would be attained only when humans stopped focusing – “ontically” – on technical objects and systems or even taking a (critical, evaluative, moralizing, etc.) stance toward them and would instead open themselves to technologic’s essence; and this first of all meant to recognize that this essence resided in nothing less than humanity’s overall relation to beings as rooted in a specific understanding of Being – an understanding of Being that they principally inherited, he argued, from the ancient Greeks and that ruled with ever more insistence and exclusivity as a “destiny” [Geschick] over all their encounters with beings or “nature” generally.

Yet opening up to the essence of technology and becoming aware of being destined by it in their own essence – in their very way of being – could “awaken” in humans a “remembrance” of their true, ontological essence of belonging to Being or being open to Being and thereby grant them the possibility of entering into – what Heidegger considered to be – a more original relation to Being and thus to experience a more inceptual truth of Being (Technology 28), one that was first “revealed” to them at the Greek inception but almost immediately “forgotten.” This renewed experience of the truth of Being would reconnect humans with their original openness to Being or what I would like to call their ontological freedom here. It is indeed this free relationship to the essence of technology as Being which Heidegger’s thinking attempted to liberate, and only this freeing oneself to the freedom of Being – as a “re-engagement” of humans with their original ontological freedom granted by Being – would allow in his view a genuine “overcoming” or “turning” of the dominance of modern technology over our lives.

Heidegger’s questioning of technology in the Bremen lectures was first of all meant as an attempt to render our ingrained and self-evident technical (as well as scientifical) relation to beings “worthy of questioning” [fragwürdig] in a radical way – by “dignifying” [würdigen] its essence as being of the highest importance for philosophical thinking and human existence more generally (Insight 57). It is worth repeating here that this essence, for Heidegger, was itself not techno-logical but ontological or even more precisely: aletheio-logical, i.e., a mode of revealing of beings – aletheuein in Greek – in accordance with a certain unconcealment or truth of Being. The question concerning technology for Heidegger was ultimately the question concerning Being or rather the truth of Being and this made it eo ipso the philosophical question par excellence.

It is clear that when Heidegger spoke about the human in his technology essay he first of all had “Western man” in mind and that his analysis of technology concerned Western technology, in particular modern Western technology, but already in the 1930s he emphasized that this modern Western technology had become a “planetary” phenomenon (Mindfulness 13; Geschichte 74) and was adopted by practically all non-Western, i.e., all non-European cultures as well. And in his “Time and Being” lecture from 1962 the late Heidegger enigmatically stated, putatively anticipating the contemporary notion of the “techsphere” (Haff), that:

[now] that modern technology has arranged its expansion and rule over the whole earth, it is not just the sputniks and their by-
products that are circling around our planet; it is rather Being as presencing in the sense of calculable material that claims all the inhabitants of the earth in a uniform manner without the inhabitants of the non-European continents explicitly knowing this or even being able or wanting to know of the origin of this determination of Being. (Heidegger, On Time 7)

The whole planet had now been seized uniformly by the reign of enframing [Gestell], an imperious, extractive and calculative relation to beings of European provenance increasingly overruling all other “cultural” origins, without these other cultures explicitly being aware of this provenance. And also, we may assume, through the suppression of these other origins, resulting in the techno-cultural uniformization or homogenization of the planet. What the late Heidegger feared yet considered to be inescapable is what he referred to – in his conversation from 1954 with the Japanese scholar Tomio Tezuka – as “the complete Europeanization of the earth and of man” (Language 15), unfolding as the planetarization of modern technology.

It is this concern that also motivates Hui’s cosmotechnics project, which aims to re-open the question concerning technology, first of all in regard to the Chinese situation, in light of the danger of modern technology attaining complete planetary dominance and absorbing all cultural spheres – i.e., the whole ethnosphere to speak with the American anthropologist Wade Davis (2) – within its “homogeneous becoming” (Hui, Cosmotechnics 12), thereby effectively annihilating all cultural difference through a nihilist process of technological indifferentiation. Yet, while Hui fully subscribes to Heidegger’s diagnosis of the planetarization of modern technology and profoundly shares his concern about the danger of this development – this danger having been intensified to an extreme currently in the context of the Anthropocene – he challenges Heidegger’s assumption that there is, ultimately, only one kind of technology and argues that there are other kinds as well.

And with his notion of technology he seems to have something similar in mind, in my opinion, as what Heidegger called the essence of technology, although it is also quite different considering the fact that he proposes to talk about cosmotechnics instead of some “essence” of technology, and indeed of a plurality of cosmotechnics instead of the unitary, monolithic essence of technology identified by Heidegger, although the latter distinguished Greek techne from die moderne Technik of course, thereby acknowledging a radical cesura within the historical unfolding of technology yet considering this cesura within the continuity of the history of Being as the history of a decline from the inceptive techne toward its conclusive manifestation in die moderne Technik, understood as a progressive and cumulative “decline from the inception” or “perversion of the inception” (Being 9) – and this is precisely what his talk of the danger as the gathering [Ge-] “entrapping” [fahr; being derived from fara, translated as Nachstellen] by the forgetting of Being refers to (Insight 50).

singular or plural technics?

As Heidegger puts it in the most straightforward manner at the beginning of his 1943 lecture course on Heraclitus: “There is only an Occidental technology. It is the consequence of ‘Philosophy’ and nothing else” (Heraclitus 3). Philosophy for Heidegger is the ground, the only ground, out of which technology has arisen and philosophy is an exclusively Western affair (3). Nonetheless, this Western technology, together with “the sciences,” which for Heidegger share the same essence, has now come to dominate the whole planet and become “international,” as he writes in an entry in one of his Black Notebooks that is also quoted by Hui (Heidegger, Anmerkungen 59–60; Hui, Cosmotechnics 4–5). This implies, and who could deny this given its global dominance, that Western technology “is something detachable from its cultural source” (Hui, Cosmotechnics 5).

However, because of its international presence and penetration into practically all cultures around the globe nowadays the erroneous idea has come to prevail that technology is a universal phenomenon and thus independent of any
other turnings

particular culture – indeed transcultural. Heidegger instead emphasized its unique European origin insofar as it issued from Western philosophical thinking, as can be gathered very clearly for instance from this remark at the end of his first Freiburg lecture on the “Basic Principles of Thinking” from 1957:

[...] if we call upon the fact that in our age everywhere upon the earth a uniform manner of thinking achieves world-historical dominance, then we must just as decisively hold in view that this uniform thinking is only the form, leveled down and rendered useful, of that historical formation of thought that we name the Western-European, the dispensational singularity of which we scarcely even experience and seldom enough acknowledge. (Insight 89–90)

It is indeed true that Heidegger never recognized any other technology besides that of the West, which originated in Greek techne, then evolved into modern technology in the seventeenth century and finally culminated in our age in the single, homogeneous and uniform, planetarized “gigantic force” – as Hui often refers to it (Cosmotechnics 239, 243, 297) – of enframing, or with an earlier term: machination [Machenschaft], turning the whole of the planet into a standing reserve [Bestand] (Hui, “Cosmopolitics” 4). Again, we should emphasize that technology for Heidegger here refers to the ontological–aletheiological essence of technology, i.e., to a mode of revealing of beings. Whether this is true for Hui or not (and we will address this question later), he understands what Heidegger called enframing as only one kind of cosmotechnics, that of today’s global capitalism (Hui, Cosmotechnics 299).

Hui in fact never explicitly talks about the essence of technology in relation to his notion of cosmotechnics, yet when he indicates that his attempt to re-open the question concerning technology in terms of a plural cosmotechnics is intended as a dialogue with “Heidegger’s concept of technics” (Cosmotechnics 7), he writes that what he has in mind is “the philosophical concept of technics” and then characterizes this philosophical concept as an “ontological category,” arguing that it comes to the fore with the birth of philosophy (10). So although it seems that the essence of all technics for Hui is cosmological (or cosmotechnical), it also signifies something ontological (and we will have to examine what the difference exactly amounts to). And it is also plural given the plurality of cosmological origins of different technics, in contrast to the singular, Greek origin of technics proposed by Heidegger. Hui explicitly hypothesizes fundamentally different kinds of technics, and that is to say different not simply in a functional and aesthetic sense, but ontologically and cosmologically different (xiii). And instead of the singular “turning” envisioned by Heidegger, he entertains the possibility of a pluralistic “bifurcation” or rather “fragmentation” (Recursivity 34, 257, 261–64) toward different technological futures ensuing from different, yet to be imagined future cosmotechnics (“Cosmopolitics” 7), all the while acknowledging the current hegemony of Western – sometimes also referred to as “Promethean” (Cosmotechnics 12–14, 29, 33, 37, 196, 229) – cosmotechnics.

So like Heidegger, Hui argues that technology as we know it is not universal but indeed originates with the emergence of philosophy in ancient Greece, the birthplace of the West. It is thus specific to Western culture and does not exist in China since the latter never developed a philosophical thinking like that of the Greeks (Hui, Cosmotechnics 16). Nonetheless, again, this Western concept of technics is in the process of totally overpowering Chinese culture at the moment (as well as practically all other cultures on the planet of course), to the point of completely obliterating its own cultural origins. To counter this process, Hui argues, the Chinese should not and cannot simply follow the Heideggerian trajectory of “returning” to the Greek origin of technics, since there never “was” such an origin in China. They should instead “re-connect” – in a sense not dissimilar to Heidegger’s “anamnesis” of the Greek inception – with their own techno-cultural origin, which has been very different from that of the West and which he aims to uncover precisely in terms of a (Chinese) cosmotechnics.
In the first part of his cosmotechnics book, then, Hui attempts to distill something like the philosophical–ontological concept of technology sensu Heidegger, albeit an implicit one, for the Chinese cultural sphere, from an in-depth reading of the Chinese tradition of thinking starting from its Daoist and Confucianist beginnings, focusing on the basic concepts of Qi (氣, utensil, to be distinguished from 氣, literally gas, energy) and Dao. And he does so in the form of a cosmotechnics, suggesting on a few occasions in the book that this may also be what Heidegger was after in his search for the original essence of technology as techne in ancient Greece (Hui, Cosmotechnics 77, 79, 116, 191). This is because technology as an ontological category, he contends, “must be interrogated in relation to a larger configuration, a ‘cosmology’ proper to the culture from which it emerged” (10).

The question that immediately comes up here is what the difference might be exactly between an ontological–aletheiological concept of technology sensu Heidegger and the cosmological concept Hui seems to propose, understood as the larger cosmological configuration from which he claims that ontological concepts of technics spring? Why is the cosmological more encompassing than the ontological, and what is the difference actually between an understanding of Being and an understanding of the cosmos insofar as these are taken to overdetermine and/or condition conceptions of technics and concrete technical development? And what exactly is the difference between a cosmology and a cosmotechnics? And even more basically: what does Hui understand by a cosmology in the first place? What is a cosmic order? And how does he think the relation between cosmology and ontology? Or between cosmotechnics and ontology? And what does he mean when he talks, with a word also used frequently by Heidegger in relation to the essence of technology, about the spirit of the ancient Greek – or Chinese – cosmotechnics (Hui, Cosmotechnics 79, 164, 168). And most importantly for what will follow: how does he conceive of the relation between ontology and technology from his cosmotechnical perspective?

lemmens

In this article I simply want to explore these questions, especially the last one, against the backdrop of, first, Heidegger’s ontological or rather onto-historical understanding of technology as I’ve briefly laid it out here above and, second, Stiegler’s “onticized” and “anthropologized” – or we might say “onto-anthropological” (Sloterdijk, Not Saved 98) – organological understanding of technology, which has quite some affinities, as I will show, with Peter Sloterdijk’s onto-anthropological understanding, which is also developed as a critical response to Heidegger’s views. It seems to me that Hui’s notion of cosmotechnics also represents an effort, at least implicitly, to “synthesize” these two opposing or in any case conflicting yet also deeply related conceptions of technology, and also an attempt to pluralize them both. The project of cosmotechnics proposed by Hui also seems to address the shortcomings of both the Heideggerian and the Stieglerian understanding of technology, the former for its lack of thinking technics concretely, the latter for lacking a (multi)cultural and/or (pluri-)ontological perspective on technical development, and both for being too “Eurocentric” or “Western-centric” (in this critique he also invokes Gilbert Simondon’s views on technology but I cannot go into that in this article).

being, cosmos and technology in heidegger, stiegler and hui

Describing the difference between Heidegger’s and Stiegler’s understanding of technology in the most simplifying way we could say that whilst Heidegger asserts the ontological essence and origin of technology, Stiegler on the contrary claims the technological essence and origin of all ontology. Hui for his part seems to assume something of a middle position as I hope to show in this article. Since Heidegger and Stiegler have a different understanding of technology, they also have a different understanding of the danger of technology. For Heidegger, as we’ve seen, this danger consists ultimately in the forgetting of Being and an exclusive focus on beings, which is what metaphysics amounts to
in his view. Enframing as the essence of modern technology is then the completion of metaphysics, instituting the supreme danger of a total forgetfulness of Being and a complete loss of the ontological freedom of Dasein, which then comes to understand even itself solely in terms of a standing reserve (Heidegger, Technology 27), to be optimized technologically for functioning within its technical environments, as today’s so-called transhumanists aspire to. For Stiegler, on the contrary, we could say that the danger of technology consists in the fact that it itself is constantly forgotten, not in its ontological essence but in the ontic sense of concrete technical artefacts as they constitute, as he contends, every understanding of Being that Dasein might be capable of, and condition all of its possibilities. For Stiegler, metaphysical thinking consists precisely in the forgetting of technology in the sense of a forgetting or neglecting by the human of being conditioned—originally—by the technical artefact, and that is to say by a process of technical exteriorization or what he has come to call exosomatization recently, adopting a term from the Polish-American biologist Alfred Lotka. I will come back to this in more detail below.

It appears to me that one can recognize this contrast between the Heideggerian and the Stieglerian view of technology in the “antinomy” presented by Hui regarding the universality of technology. Whilst his cosmotechnics project definitely questions this universality, it nonetheless does acknowledge the existence of an anthropologically universal aspect of technology. With the French paleoanthropologist André Leroi-Gourhan, who has theorized human evolution as proceeding from a process of technical exteriorization and the extension of organs into technical artefacts, he distinguishes between a transcultural and thus anthropologically universal technical tendency and the particular ways in which this tendency sediments in different cultures into a variety of technical facts. Whilst Leroi-Gourhan—and implicitly also Stiegler, we may add—explains this particularization and diversification of the universal technical tendency into various technical facticities or specificities through the influence of the factual circumstances of the local milieu in which the technical tendency operates, Hui contends that this cannot be the whole story and suggests that another, non-universal but particular explanatory factor needs to be taken into account and this is precisely the cosmological understanding or cosmological setting characteristic of the culture in question, which is why he claims that technics is always cosmotechnics (Cosmotechnics 19).

Although Hui frames these alternative views in the form of a Kantian antinomy as contradictory theses concerning the true nature of technology, one could also simply distinguish two dimensions of technology: a universal one rooted in the “nature” of the human species and a non-universal one rooted in an always local cosmology, which is in fact also how he rephrases it in his most recent book Recursivity and Contingency (255–66). Now it is obvious that the universal dimension of technology as technical exteriorization also characterizes Stiegler’s anthropological understanding of technology, who follows Leroi-Gourhan here, but adds to it that this process also explains the coming into being, at a very particular stage of its unfolding, of Dasein as an ek-sistent being open to Being, capable of understanding the Being of beings and of forming worlds, i.e., of shaping a cosmos. As Stiegler writes: “we access the cosmos as cosmos on the basis of hypomnesic tertiary retentions [= technical artefacts; P.L.] in all their forms, from the shaman’s instruments to Herschel’s telescope” (Nanjing 42). As for the ontological capacity of humans, for Stiegler it is “the technico-historic fact of writing,” i.e., the emergence of alphabetic writing technology—as “orthographics” allowing for the exact recording of temporal experience—that grants humanity the ontological freedom which Heidegger considers as a pure gift of Being, and that inaugurates the history of Being at the Greek inception (Disorientation 34, cf. 12).

The non-universal, particular dimension that Hui determines as cosmological or rather cosmo-technical and also identifies as culture-specific and characterized by a certain “spirit,” seems to me close to what Heidegger aimed at, albeit only focused on the West, when he tried
to think *techne* as the essence and also the “essential genealogy” destining the history of Being as an insistent “claim” [*Anspruch*] originating from the Greek inception and culminating in the claim of enframing that today reigns at the planetary level (*Insight* 63). It is this, for Heidegger irredicibly ontological or rather onto-historical “essential provenance” [*Wesen-scherkunft*] of our technological civilization – as the “veiled inceptual essence of being” (63) – that Hui tries to rethink, or so it seems, and also to pluralize, for cultural origins different from the West (i.e., Greece), in terms of primal cosmologies or cosmotecnhics. The latter goes “beyond cosmologies” (Hui, *Cosmo-tecnics* 309), he writes, in that it acknowledges (and this is again Stieglerian we can say) the role of techics and not just of language and cultural practices we may assume, in the constitution of a cosmos (24), but most importantly for Hui is that all “techics is both driven by and constrained by cosmological *thinking*” (217; my emphasis).

Similarly for Heidegger all concrete technological innovation is always already driven – destined that is – by a technological understanding or revealing of beings, i.e., a kind of *thinking*, that has its root in the inceptual revelation, *increasingly forgotten*, of the truth of Being – *aletheia* – in ancient Greece and that will continue to exercise its grip on Dasein until, and this is crucial for understanding the difference between Heidegger and Hui, it overcomes this forgetting and remembers its *originary* “innermost indestructible belongingness to being” (Heidegger, *Technology* 32), which re-turns it to its originary ontological freedom and grants it access to the openness of Being. This “turning” would inaugurate what Heidegger called the other inception [*andere Anfang*], i.e., a new beginning, beyond metaphysics as the history of the forgetting of Being as it has culminated in the planetary reign of enframing, and toward the “event of appropriation” [*Ereignis*] (*Insight* 117), the event that “appropriates man and Being to their essential togetherness” (*Discourse* 38) and through which Dasein would truly assume – for the very first time – its more originary essence as

“the founder and the preserver of the truth of being” (*Questions* 181) and become what Heidegger called the “shepherd of Being” [*Hirt des Seienden*] in the letter “On Humanism” (*Writings* 234), instead of continuing to pursue – in total blindness to Being – the path of technological domination and exploitation of the Earth as the alleged “lord of beings” [*Herr des Seienden*] (245).

We have to emphasize here that this turning into the event of appropriation, “in which man and Being are delivered over to each other” (Heidegger, *Discourse* 36), entails nothing less, for Heidegger, than a complete “transformation of humanity itself” (*Questions* 181), a radical change in the very essence of the human resulting from a “change in being” (*Insight* 63). This change is characterized in the letter “On Humanism” as that of the transition from the homo *animalis* to the homo *humanus* (Heidegger, *Writings* 254), where the former refers to the *animal rationale* of metaphysics, which thinks the humanity of the human from its animalistic origin, i.e., as living organism endowed with an additional capacity such as reason, spirit or soul able to determine and categorize beings (227), while the latter thinks the humanity of the human “from nearness to Being,” i.e., from “its provenance from the truth of Being,” which Heidegger deems more originary (245).

We will see below that Stiegler contests this originary status of Being, assigning the origin not to rational animality though, as metaphysics does, but to technicized animality, attempting to rethink existential ontology and the history of being organologically and that is to say in terms of techno-organicity. From a Heideggerian viewpoint though Stiegler’s thinking nonetheless appears to remain locked within the horizon of *animalitas* and indeed he understands the human with Georges Canguilhem as a “technical form of life” (*Automatic* 12, 223) or indeed an “exosomatic form of life” (*Neganthropocene* 249), “naturalizing” or “de-transcendentalizing” the rationality of the *animal rationale* as it were through techics.5 Hui for his part thinks that the sheer process of technical exteriorization and the becoming organological of the human animal sensu Stiegler and
other turnings

Leroi-Gourhan is not enough to account for the way in which technology evolves and suggests as an additional determinant the influence of a cosmological a priori.

The change in being from enframing to the event of appropriation and the consequent change of the essence of humanity intended by Heidegger cannot be enforced by humans since humanity is not the “master of being” (Writings 245). For Heidegger human action by itself is impotent regarding the essence of technology holding sway over its being. The only possibility of “overcoming” its reign or rather of “converging” [verwinden] it into its hidden essence as the event of appropriation is to open oneself to it, to “become attentive” to it (Heidegger, Insight 66), to hear its call, to experience its imperative, to make it worthy of questioning and then try to think it. Focusing, however critically, on concrete technological developments and their effects on human life and society is of no use whatsoever according to Heidegger; indeed, this only further consolidates our implication in enframing. It is from this resolutely non-ontic understanding of technology and consequently “anti-activist” (but equally “anti-passivist”) stance toward technology, that Heidegger’s well-known dictum that “only a god can save us” as well as his later discourse on releasement and non-willing should in my view be understood.

the “verticality” of technology as being in heidegger

What is most important though, and this is something that Stiegler emphatically resists but Hui seems willing to account for in some sense, is that for Heidegger Being as the essence of technology and as that “[w]hat essences of danger” (Insight 59) is more originary and more “real” in fact than any concrete technology and principally beyond the realm of the ontic as such. And for Heidegger this also means that it is only in Being, as wholly different from beings, that the “saving power” resides, never in beings (simply because the claim of technology issues from Being and not from beings). This is something that cannot be emphasized strong enough in my view. When Heidegger talks about the turning, the new beginning or the other inception, he always insists that this event, which does not “happen” in the world but with the world, is something that can only happen “suddenly,” i.e., in a flash and “without mediation” (Technology 44). Being as the omnipresent essence of (the danger of) technology has nothing equal to it, he writes, thus it cannot be brought about by any being whatsoever and neither does it bring about any being itself (44). Being therefore does not belong at all to the realm of causality, i.e., to “effectiveness” [Wirk- samkeit], despite the fact that it “determines” the presencing of beings as such – i.e., as effectiveness – in its modality of enframing (Heidegger, Insight 39). When the turning “happens,” it does so “abrupt” and “steep,” “out of its own essence of concealedness” (Heidegger, Technology 44). It can only come to pass as the sudden self-lightning of being, in which “the truth of Being flashes” and thereby “the essence of Being clears and lights itself up” (44). And it “presences” [west] only as a “favor” [Gunst] within the danger, a favor thoroughly immune to any enforcing, for which humans can therefore only prepare and try to become receptive in their very Being.

This “steepness” or what I would like to call the “verticality” – and in a proper sense also the “divine” nature – of the turning and the event of appropriation, and the absolute receptivity of Dasein it presupposes, is absolutely key to understanding Heidegger’s view and evaluation of technology’s onto-dynamic essence and how it fundamentally differs from any anthropological understanding of technology such as that from Stiegler, which assigns primacy to the “horizontal” process of technical exteriorization and considers any relation to Being as conditioned by it. This verticality is also emphasized by Peter Sloterdijk in a very interesting essay on what he calls the “kinetic features” of Heidegger’s existential and onto-historical thinking. According to Sloterdijk one can distinguish three universal and fundamental kinetic features or motions in the movement of being within which human existence is caught: first the fallenness,
thrownness or plungedness of existence (from an originary inception) into the drift of everyday preoccupations, then experience as the exploratory, experimental, discovering and inventive, horizontal and cumulative movement of “coming-to-the-world” [Zur-Welt-kommen], and finally reversal or the revolutionary turning of Being into a renewed (and more originary “appropriated”) originarity, or a new, yet more inceptual inception (Not Saved 13–15).

In Heidegger’s ontokinetics, though, the second movement of experience hardly plays a role and is in fact totally downplayed in favor of an almost exclusive focus on the first and third movements. In fact, the horizontal plane of experience — to be identified here with technical invention and scientific research or in Stiegler’s terminology: technical exteriorization — has no constitutive role at all and is fully determined and characterized in advance by the movement of falling from the inceptive revelation of being. One sometimes has the impression that concrete technologies for Heidegger simply emerge as a result from Dasein’s insistence in the forgetting of being and obedience to the imperative of enframing, as nothing but “continuations of the plunge in the horizontal” (Sloterdijk, Not Saved 27). What happens in the experiential, empirical or ontical domain — again, for Stiegler, the realm of technical exteriorization — is but the steady unfolding of what is essentially determined from the outset at the inception and nothing within this domain can fundamentally change the trajectory. Only “the vertical blow of the immense” [Vertikaleinschlag des Ungeheuren] (Sloterdijk, Not Saved 22), meaning a turning of/in Being in the sense of “an upheaval of the total sense of Being” as it induces “an integral turn in the drift” or a “change in direction in the pull of […] Dasein as a whole” (35) can overcome the danger of technology and inaugurate something entirely new.

As Michel Haar also observes quite perceptively regarding Heidegger’s view of the history of Being:

What controls all History […] is the exigency of the inaugural, the Anfang: the first Gewesen, the first essential-having-been, the first grasp of being — such is the force of the Greek aletheia […] History is not only what is already there, but it is what is already accomplished in the destiny of the Commencement [i.e., the Greek inception; P.L.] […] Geschick, the destiny of Being, “contains” in advance the totality of History’s possibilities […] The commencement persists throughout the entire History of Being… [abiding] unalterable, unchanged in all the sequences arising from it. (69–70)

Sloterdijk for his part talks about this implaceable holding power of the inceptual aletheia as “the fuse of truth” which runs irrevocably from Ionia to Los Alamos (Not Saved 186), from the Artemision to the atom bomb we could say.

For Sloterdijk, Heidegger shows himself here to be a heir of Plato and Augustine in that he perceives human existence and becoming in the empirical sense as a movement of falling, of being caught in a false, inauthentic movement, of a perversion of the truth, whilst the salvation out of this situation consists of a “gathering back in that which is authentic” (Sloterdijk, Not Saved 34) understood in terms of what Plato called metanoia or periagógé, a reversal of the soul (35) or what Augustine referred to as a conversion toward the truth, i.e., toward the true Christian religion (39). And this reversal is thought of as something that can only be induced vertically: Heidegger’s turning into the event of appropriation as a reversal of the soul (to wit: from the homo animalis to the homo humanus) is therefore much closer to Augustine than to Plato – much more “catholic” as Sloterdijk phrases it — in that he also believes humans are incapable by themselves of accomplishing this conversion, since it can only be “granted” and “effectuated” by God (Augustine) resp. Being (Heidegger). Heidegger’s talk about the “favor” that resides in the danger – “favor” being a word that for Heidegger translates Heraclitus’ notion of philia (Heraclitus 98) — is associated by Sloterdijk with the Christian term “grace,” which he sees returning in Heidegger in his discourse on releasement (Not Saved 39–40). And just as Augustine announced the
true, i.e., Christian religion through the redemptive conversion of the fallen human being – the heathen of Antiquity – to the new Christian “God-Man” (37–38), Heidegger for his part announces according to Sloterdijk a more profound, ontological–aletheiological “religion of the clearing” (Sloterdijk and Heinrichs 113) in which the human is to be transfigured, “elevated,” from the fallen, forgetful animal rationale to Da-sein – to being the attentive and caring “Da” of the clearing. For Heidegger this clearing, the “clearing of being” [Lichtung des Seins], is thought of as an original openness that is prior to and independent of any technology, and that is only more and more occluded and forgotten with the progression of technology, or what Stiegler calls technical exteriorization.

the “horizontality” of technology as exosomatization in stiegler

Stiegler precisely criticizes Heidegger’s neglect of the “horizontal” in Sloterdijk’s sense in what he calls his “transcendental discourse” on Being and Dasein (Disorientation 5) and accuses him of completely neglecting, like all metaphysics before him, the horizontal process of technical exteriorization or exosomatization that is actually behind the opening of the clearing and sustains this openness, although it can also occlude or even close it off, given its pharmacological nature. What most originally characterizes Dasein for Stiegler is its exosomatic condition and that is to say its technical condition, rather than being endowed – through an allegedly irreducible, and frankly miraculous, moment of revelation (the Greek inception) – with an originally pristine and full-blown openness granting it authentic access to the ontological difference. It is its exosomatic condition that is irreducible, i.e., the fact of its being constituted and conditioned by technical artefacts, and the history of being for Stiegler is therefore first of all the history of exosomatization (Neganthropocene 249) – technical artefacts in their constantly changing inter-relationships forming the “exosomatic soil” of the history of being (Nanjing 293). And any “clarification of the clearing” (Sloterdijk, Not Saved 89), any understanding and questioning of being by Dasein, as Stiegler lays out most elaborately in What Makes Life Worth Living, is always preceded by a technological – i.e., pharmacological – mutation or upheaval, resulting from the process of exosomatization, an upheaval that first of all puts Dasein itself in question before it can question the Being of beings (107–09).

Criticizing Heidegger with Marx and Engels, who were the first (in The German Ideology) to perceive the importance of the process of exosomatization, Stiegler in fact reproaches Heidegger for adhering to an essentially “idealistic” understanding of technics, situating its origin in “spirit” – a term frequently used by Heidegger in relation to the essence of technology and also used by Hui as we have seen above – instead of recognizing, as Marx and Engels did, that “spirit” originates from technics and that is to say from the process of exosomatization, thought by the latter in terms of transformations in the means of production (Stiegler, Neganthropocene 246). Stiegler thus proposes a materialist reading of the whole Heideggerian edifice and insists that the clearing or unconcealment exists only under the condition of exosomatization, from which Dasein cannot be cured since this would entail its disappearance as the “placeholder” of the ontological difference, i.e., the closure of its ontological openness and freedom (249). For Stiegler as for Sloterdijk the ontological difference, which Heidegger thinks transcendentally (“spiritually”?) and purely “evental” [ereignishaft] in complete independence of all causality and all “effectiveness” [Wirksamkeit], is the result of work, of invention, of technical production: “Truth, altheia, is set into work [mise en œuvre], is Werk, that is, work, machining, fabrication” (264). And this, of course, is anathema to Heidegger, who time and again insists, and abundantly so in the Black Notebooks, that “beyng could never be explained on the basis of beings” and that it is indeed “[u]nexplainable and ineffective” (Ponderings VII–IX 227) or that “Being as transcending all beings can
never be founded on it and be explained from it” (Vigiliae 114). And inceptions, also the other inception that is the turning into the event of appropriation, “never need effectivity” (Ponderings VII–IX 296). They simply “are; without effecting, their being compels a beginning again” (296).

Accordingly, as Stiegler emphasizes, Heidegger says nothing about the relation between the Greek inception and the adoption by the Greeks of alphabetic writing technology, which had revolutionary noetic effects on the originally oral Greek psychic and collective life. These became thereby literalized, opening up the very possibility of philosophy as the questioning of “the being of beings” and thus inaugurating the history of the West as the history of Being sensu Heidegger, becoming the history of metaphysics and culminating in our days in the reign of enframing. This literalization – which Stiegler also refers to as literal “grammatization” or the “becoming-letter of sound and word” (Symbolic Misery 54) – is the crucial case of technical exteriorization that allowed for the birth of the scientific and technological culture of the West – and more generally of the Western process of “psychic and collective individuation” (50). It is this (mnemo)technological rupture that caused the “Greek miracle” which Heidegger evokes so brilliantly in all its splendor yet forgetful of its technological condition of possibility in the Introduction to Metaphysics, as the “great inception” and that is to say as the decisive “inceptive opening up of the essence of Being-human,” understood as the gathering and apprehending of the Being of beings (186).

This “Being-human” – as Dasein – is for Stiegler decisively grounded in the technical facticity of being “within literality” (Nanjing 142). And though this initially defines only Greek “Being-human,” it later on becomes – via the Roman alphabet – the basis of Western “Being-human.” Still later, with the process of colonization and closely accompanied by what Derrida has called “globalatinization” (Stiegler, Symbolic Misery 55), it attains global dominance through the imposition of this “intellectual technology” on non-Western psyches or

“spirits.” These psyches are thereby alphabetically “grammatized” and as such alienated (57) and controlled “through the control of their symbols” (55), insofar as these are supported by this intellectual technology that is the alphabet, which has given rise in our time to digital network technologies, which for Stiegler represent the concretion of enframing (and which Heidegger designated as “cybernetics”). As he explains this process to Chinese students in one of his recently published Nanjing Lectures:

you are Chinese, and not Greek. And yet, throughout this process of grammatization that unfolded in Greece, then in Western Europe, passing through the mathesis universalis, which for Leibniz was partly inspired by Chinese writing, then in capitalism, which is, today, advancing more rapidly in China than anywhere else – throughout all of this, Greece has become our history, in you, who are Chinese, as in myself, a Frenchman. (142)

hui’s allegiance to heidegger.

reviving the spirit of cosmotechnics

So the Greek inception rules supreme, on a global scale now, but not because the Chinese and other nations are “urged” by Westerners in some inexplicable way – that is to say within the Heideggerian perspective – “into the realm of hearing of that claim of Being which speaks from the innermost core of modern technology,” as Heidegger could have argued (On Time 7). Or is this claim – the imperative of enframing – precisely inculcated through the imposition of Western intellectual technology, thereby overruling the Chinese cultural heritage which Hui, re-interpreting it in terms of a cosmotechnics, aims to “resurrect” and renew? And are the Chinese, as well as other nations, as a result of this imposition “entrapped” just as Westerners in the danger of being closed off from their own “originary” clearing? Probably so, and this would amount to an annexation of Chinese culture through the imposition of an “intellectual technology” originating from a Western process of exosomatization, or as Hui puts it: through an
enforced “adaptation to the technological condition” of the West, seemingly rendering any return to a “proper,” “authentic” origin impossible (Cosmotechnics 152). Now what I would like to ask here, and this will conclude my modest attempt to understand Hui’s project of cosmotechnics as wavering between Heidegger’s and Stiegler’s view of the relation between technology, ontology and the world (or the cosmos), but also developing something new of course, is how Hui views the relation between technology and ontology, and how he conceives of the local cosmotechnical “bifurcations” or “fragmentations” that he imagines not only for China but in their own manner for other non-Western cultures as well, as against the global “bifurcation” of the “technosphere” proposed by Stiegler as well as the singular “turning” of enframing envisaged by the late Heidegger.

Although he also conceives of cosmotechnics “as the possibility of un concealment,” more or less identifying the cosmos with the un concealment and stating that “un concealment happens in technical activities” (Hui, Cosmotechnics 16) – thereby supposing, I assume, that it emerges as a result of technical exteriorization – what I find remarkable is that every time he clarifies what he actually means with his concept of cos motechnics, Hui uses notions such as “thinking” or “thought” (Cosmotechnics 7, 33, 43, 65, 101, 191, 197, 201, 217, 309; “Cosmopolitics” 8, 9; “Renewed Relation” 8, 14–16, 20; Recursivity 25, 39, 263, 269, 274, 276–78; “Cosmotechnical Event” 18), “spirit” (Cosmotechnics 79, 85, 164, 168; Recursivity 31, 232), “culture” (Cosmotechnics 6, 10, 14, 19, 217–18, 221, 242; “Cosmopolitics” 7–9; “Renewed Relation” 3, 17, 19; Recursivity 27, 30–31, 39, 223, 272; “Cosmotechnical Event” 15), “episteme” and “epistemology” (Cosmotechnics 31, 280, 296, 301, 307, 308, 310; “Cosmopolitics” 9; “Renewed Relation” 17; Recursivity 223, 226, 263, 265, 268, 275–78), “metaphysics” (Cosmotechnics 9, 29, 30–31, 34, 218, 296, 307), “form of life” (Cosmotechnics 31, 309; “Cosmotechnical Event” 16), “meaning” (Cosmotechnics 217) and recently also “sensitivity,” “sensibility” and the “sense of existence” (“Renewed Relation” 18–19; Recursivity 263, 267–68, 276), sometimes also “ontology” (Cosmotechnics 280).

All these notions are terms for what we could call in the most general way noesis or the “noetic,” i.e., thinking or knowing. This means that cosmotechnics for Hui is definitely related to thought and knowledge, and to a sensibility or sense of living, and apparently insofar as these cannot be fully reduced to the process of technical exteriorization and the effects thereof, or his antinomy or rather distinction between the universal dimension of technical exteriorization and the particular dimension of cosmotechnics would make not much sense. Indeed, this thinking and sensibility is specified as cosmological, but also as philosophical and sometimes mythological (Hui, Cosmotechnics 10–12, 14–17, 29) and we are assured that this thinking of the cosmos is itself always conditioned by technics, but when he concretely analyzes Chinese cosmo technics he does so through an interpretation of fundamental concepts such as Dao and Qi, similar to how Heidegger re-interprets notions such as physis, logos, techne and idea as fundamental concepts of the Greek inception, a crucial difference being that Heidegger’s focus is ontological whilst that of Hui is cosmological.10 And while Hui considers cosmology to be the “larger configuration” from which the ontological should be interrogated (10), for Heidegger “cosmos” [Greek: kósmos] is just one “originary determination of being” (Heraclitus 134), next to others such as physis, logos and aletheia, referring to “world” or “worlding” as “originary adornment” in the sense of “the jointure of the conjoining of beings” (124). And whilst for Heidegger it is Being that represents the ultimate ground and genetic driver of technology, for Hui it is a particular cosmology (Recursivity 223) and an always local “cosmic reality” (39) that both enables and constrains the process of technical exteriorization, the latter being unthought in Heidegger.

The idea that kósmos in this ontological sense of world or worlding and cosmology as an understanding of it might be the product of technics is unthinkable for Heidegger, while it forms one of the presuppositions of Hui’s idea of
cosmotechnics. The notion of cosmotechnics seems to suggest more of a reciprocal conditioning of cosmology and technics, also in the sense of a co-evolution. But when he talks about cosmotechnics as an “Urtechnik” (Hui, *Recursivity* 271) – reminiscent of Heidegger’s notion of *techne* but then one that is different depending on its cultural origin – Hui seems to have, not unlike Heidegger, something “spiritual” in mind, despite the fact that he is fully aware that the organological approach to technics that he shares with Stiegler precludes opposing technics and spirit. Yet, “[t]echnology is a product of the spirit,” Hui explicitly asserts (*Recursivity* 31) and what cosmotechnics professes is a unification of technological instrumentality “with the spirit” (232). And it is this *spirit* that is in danger of being overwhelmed by Western technology, in danger because increasingly obstructed to “exercise its freedom” (30), not unlike the disempowered spirit of Europe notoriously evoked in 1935 by Heidegger in the *Introduction to Metaphysics* we may suggest (47), though from an entirely different point of departure and with an entirely different concern in mind.

This “exercise of freedom” by the Chinese “spirit” may be related to Heidegger’s idea of acquiring a “free” relationship to technology (*Technology* 3), which would be the diametrical opposite or so it seems of the “becoming ‘free’” for technology of the Chinese people under communism, which Heidegger predicted in one of his *Black Notebooks* from the 1940s (*Anmerkungen* 441) and which Hui interprets as their surrender to enframing and their falling prey to the same blindness and obedience to technology as Westerners (*Cosmotechnics* 6). This free relationship for Heidegger entailed a renewed experience of the openness of Being and a “retrieval” by *Dasein* of its ontological freedom, thereby also inaugurating a new “question-worthiness” [*Fragwürdigkeit*] of Being as the origin and inception of their technological modus vivendi. Coming from a different origin though, the Chinese cannot and should not await or prepare for a turning senus Heidegger but instead re-appropriate and re-imagine their own cultural–cosmological sources – *re-thought as cosmotechnics* now that the organological condition has become irrefutable and inescapable – so as to transform their implication in enframing and bifurcate or fragment toward a different future in their own way. And the same goes for all other non-Western cultures, such as that of the Amerindian, the African and the Australian indigenous peoples, but for those in an altogether different way to be sure, if only because of their history of intense colonization and their largely oral traditions.

I contend though, and this may be thought of as a kind of “Heideggerian correction” to the onto-anthropological and Western-centric understanding of technology developed by Stiegler and Sloterdijk, that the idea of “technodiversity” (Hui, *Recursivity* 27) that Hui puts forward in the sense of a multiple cosmotechnics is first of all a *noodiversity*, and not so much understood with Stiegler as a project of differential adoption of the global “digital condition” (although this forms part of it as well), but as a culture-specific plurality of “dormant” or forgotten overall noetic dispositions or general forms of thought (be they cosmological, metaphysical or mythological) and *that is to say* in the sense of an *ethnodiversity* to be reclaimed and revived as *local grounds* from which this differential adoption may occur, thereby opening the possibility of a plural fragmentation or fractalization of world-history (265), or may we say: a plurality of “events of appropriation” not necessarily held to “Being” (but to other inceptual figures such as *sunya*ta (nothingness), *mana* or *atman/brahman*). The Earth’s technosphere as well as its noosphere, Hui seems to be pointing out, is still also an ethnosphere, despite the alarming loss of ethnodiversity it has experienced already (Davis 3–4), and it is precisely *there* that he situates the *local seeds* of a more pluralist future technosphere and noosphere or rather a techno-noosphere.

It is this frankly “ethno-ontological” approach to technology, imagining different, culture-specific “essences” of technology as cosmotechnics – in a sense combining Heidegger’s postulate of an ontological (in Hui’s case: cosmological) a priori driving the empirical development of technics with Stiegler’s insight into the organological condition – that allows him to bring the philosophy of technology in dialogue with contemporary anthropology’s
ontological turn (Holbraad and Pedersen). It allows for instance to add a cosmotechnical perspective to the quadruple “geography of being” (Skafish) proposed by Philippe Descola in his Beyond Nature and Culture and imagine different cosmotechnical dispositions possibly present within the naturalist, animist, totemist and analogist ontologies that the latter distinguishes in this book (122). Or to confront the anthropologies behind Stiegler and Sloterdijk as well as the existential ontology of Heidegger with the Amerindian-inspired “counter-anthropology” – which can be understood as an entirely new, other-oriented kind of philosophical anthropology – crafted by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (Relative Native), in which a “human” enters the scene that is totally different – and most probably also technologically – from the anthropos that took the stage as to denotation and later the zoon logon echaon in ancient Greece and imposed its technological destiny on all the other peoples of the planet.

However that may be, what Hui’s project of cosmotechnics as the imagining of multiple technological turnings proceeding from multiple cosmo-ontological returnings suggests, is that non-Western cultural spheres should inquire into their own cultural archives and so recuperate their own cosmotechnical resources, in order to effectively confront their own danger of being engulfed and anesthetized by enframing, instead of relying exclusively on the Western archive. They should “remember” and actively revitalize their own ontological, cosmological and mythological origins and reclaim what Viveiros de Castro has so boldly called their “ontological self-determination” (Cannibal 43) so as to regain a chance of “technological self-determination,” however problematic such an expression may appear to the average Heideggerian. Then, possibly, they might find out, as Sloterdijk suggests at the very end of his provocative 1999 lecture on the “Rules for the Human Park,” that “even the archival cellars” may once again “become the clearing” (Not Saved 216) or contribute to its always local re-opening.

disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

notes

1 I capitalize when I mean Being in the Heideggerian sense of the being (verbal) of beings.

2 Restricting myself to this interpretation here doesn’t mean of course that I do not recognize the many other innovative and fertile features of his project.

3 I won’t go into the moral dimension of cosmotechnics, which is crucial for Hui, considering its being defined as “the unification between the cosmic order and the moral order through technical activities” (Cosmotechnics 19).

4 It is this so-called “high altitude” understanding of “Technology with a capital T” that is emphatically dismissed by today’s empirically oriented philosophers of technology (Ihde; Verbeek; see for a critique of this dismissal: Lemmens, “Thinking Technology”).

5 Cf.

Technics – […] – is the pursuit of life by means other than life. And this is also the opening of what Heidegger believed should still be called the “question of being” as the advent of Dasein, that is, of the “being who questions.” (Stiegler, Nanjing 45)

6 Indeed, as presencing itself, Being is nothing actual yet forms the “concealed basic trait of the actuality of everything now actual” (Heidegger, Insight 58).

7 In the onto-historical treatises such as Contributions to Philosophy and Mindfulness, but especially in the Black Notebooks, Heidegger characterizes the other inception as the event of appropriation in terms of a “divine intervention” or in his own words as an “encounter [Ent-gegnung] of gods and humans [with the strife of earth and world]” (Ponderings XII–XV 16), writing that:

If the god necessitates beyng, and if the human being as Da-sein disclosively grounds the truth of beyng, and if a world arises out
of the abyss and the earth opens itself to bearing – the hour of a beginning has then arrived. (46)

Similar passages can be found all over the place, for instance on pages 83 and 94 or also in Ponderings VII–IX 110, 143, 149, 237.

8 As Stiegler writes in the first volume of Technics and Time, technology in the concrete sense “will never have had in Heidegger’s thinking any dynamic specificity. It will have done nothing but follow the logic of the temporal fall into the historical forgetting of being […] It will never have had the least properly unconcealing quality” (244).

9 Like Stiegler, Sloterdijk maintains that every clearing is a technical clearing and indeed that the clearing, i.e., unconcealment or aletheia, “is not to be thought without its technical provenance” (Not Saved 142). Criticizing Heidegger and his insistence on the originary “purity” of the openness of Being, he states that technology stands at the origin of unconcealment and therefore that the “human being does not stand in the clearing with empty hands – not like some destitute alert shepherd with his flock, as Heidegger’s pastoral metaphors suggest”; instead, “the human being disposes over stones and the successors of stones, over tools and weapons” (159). Sloterdijk argues that the clearing is originally “a work of stones” (Not Saved 116; my emphasis), which implies “that it should be thought from below” and that is to say: ontically, although in view of its ontological “height” (106). This amounts to a “dignification” of the question concerning technology in an ontico-ontological sense not unlike what we find in Stiegler (Lemmens, “From Ontology”). In a way that is strongly reminiscent of Stiegler’s technological and technogenetic reinterpretation of Heidegger’s existential ontology and history of Being in the Technics and Time series, though inspired by German philosophical anthropology (mainly Gehlen but also Alsborg and Claessens) rather than the paleoanthropology of Leroi-Gourhan, Sloterdijk anthropologizes and historicizes the clearing and attempts to show that its emergence within the human being results from a long process of self-domestication through basically four kinds of evolutionary, anthropogenetic mechanisms – which are at the same time “aletheiogenetic” mechanisms since they produce “the human capacity for truth” in the process (Not Saved 104) – which are described in considerable detail in the essay “The Domestication of Being” in his 2001 book on Heidegger (Not Saved 89–148). It is through this technogenetic process of anthropogenesis that the human species is gradually drifting out of its “truth-less” and closed animalistic “enviroring world” [Umwelt] and attains the open and “truth-relevant” world in the Heideggerian sense of the clearing. In this sense the world, or what may also be called the cosmos here, comes into being for Sloterdijk through technics, although he lays less emphasis than Stiegler on the technical artefact as such and focuses more on the technically mediated mechanisms of domestication and immunization, for instance through “anthropotechnics.” These also form a crucial element of the “radically historical” onto-anthropological theory of “sphero-poiesis” and “sphero-immunology” laid out in the Spheres trilogy, and it can be argued that the “spherology” and the “general immunology” developed therein resonate with Hui’s idea of cosmotechnics (Sloterdijk, Sphären).

10 As Hui writes: “I have also aimed to open up the concept of technics as multi-cosmotechnics, consisting of different irreducible metaphysical categories” (Cosmotechnics 307), where I take “irreducible” to mean not just irreducible to each other (e.g., Chinese to Greek) but irreducible to technology as technical exteriorization as well.

bibliography


Pieter Lemmens
Radboud University Nijmegen
Faculty of Science
Institute for Science in Society, HG05.532
Heyendaalseweg 135
6525 AJ Nijmegen
The Netherlands
E-mail: p.lemmens@science.ru.nl