



Changes

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In this first and final editorial of 2022, I would like to share with you information on a variety of changes and news concerning our journal as well as some reflections on them and on developments in the world.

This December issue is our final traditional issue because *NanoEthics: Studies of New and Emerging Technologies* is transitioning to full open access (OA). This means that as of January 2023, all new content that appears in the journal will be published under an OA licence, making it freely available to readers worldwide.

In November, we stopped accepting non-OA articles. In the future, article processing charges (APCs) are to be paid by authors' institutions or funders when articles are accepted for publication. However, Springer Nature offers APC waivers and discounts for papers published in fully OA journals whose corresponding authors are based in the world's lowest income countries as defined by the World Bank. Waivers are offered for papers whose corresponding authors are based in countries classified by the World Bank as low-income economies as of July 2022. Papers whose corresponding authors are based in countries with lower-middle-income economies and a 2021 gross domestic product (GDP) of less than 200 billion US dollars are eligible for a 50% discount. The discount for papers whose corresponding authors are based in Ukraine temporarily increased to 100% following the invasion from Russia. Requests from other authors

for APC waivers and discounts will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and may be granted in cases of financial need. All applications for discretionary APC waivers should be made at the point of manuscript submission; requests made during the review process or after acceptance are unable to be considered.

There is also a new submission site: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/naet/default2.aspx>. However, manuscripts previously submitted will be handled in the old system.

Future issues of NanoEthics will be compiled automatically. This Continuous Article Publishing (CAP) is the immediate assignment of articles to issues upon online publication of each article. This means no OnlineFirst publication anymore, and in CAP, the citation line contains the ArticleCitationID (which starts with 1 in each volume) instead of page numbers. We will thus also no longer have special sections or special issues and consequently no guest editors for them.

However, we are much looking forward to creating topical collections, and plan to often have guest editors for them. Topics for such collections may include 'Biotechnologies and Life Sciences', 'Nanotechnologies and Converging Technologies', 'Quantum Technologies in Society', 'Neurotechnologies and Technology-Corporeality', 'Art-Science-Technology Interfaces', 'Information and Communication Technologies', 'Emancipatory Science and Technology Studies', and 'Science and Technologies for Space'. This will offer great opportunities to provide articles in a fitting and inspiring online context and to further sharpen the diverse thematic profile of our journal. And I will continue to publish editorials, not so much about new

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issues but rather about developments in the journal, new topical collections and other subjects of potential interest to you.

I am very happy that the final traditional issue of NanoEthics will be a real highlight in the journal's history, which already applies to the first article in particular: a wonderful interview (and the first ever in NanoEthics), conducted by *Yin Wenjuan and Carl Mitcham* with the eminent Chinese philosopher of technology *Yuan Deyu*. I have no intention to summarise or quote from it here, as I would not wish to anticipate your reading experience; however, I am certain you will find it to be not only highly informative concerning the history of the philosophy of technology and science in China, but also an impressive look far back into the twentieth century, and testament to the profoundly international character of the human intellectual realm. I am deeply thankful to Yuan Deyu, Yin Wenjuan and Mitcham that our journal could publish this interview.

The second article for this issue is co-authored by *Alexei Grinbaum*, a long-time contributor to NanoEthics, and his colleague *Laurynas Adomaitis*. Analysing and discussing moral equivalence in the metaverse and the question of whether digital subjects in virtual reality can be morally equivalent to human subjects, the authors take us on an intellectual journey that is sometimes frightening, often enlightening and always fascinating, combining meticulous analysis of our current cyberworld – to use the old term – with deep and wide-ranging cultural and philosophical reflection.

It is testimony to the great intellectual, disciplinary and thematic diversity of NanoEthics and its authors that the next contribution to the December issue is the first work of its kind to deal with quantum technologies, insofar as the authors, *Thomas Scheidsteger, Robin Haunschild and Christoph Ettl*, use the Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy (RPYS) method to identify the historical roots and seminal papers of this emerging technology field, which is also poised to become a major topic in our journal. I am delighted that such an important contribution to quantitative research on the history of this field is appearing in NanoEthics.

The next two papers both relate to the broad field of biotechnologies, genetics and the life sciences, an area of science, technology and innovation that has long been among our main topics. *Özlem Özkan,*

Melike Şahinol, Arsev Umur Aydinoglu and Yesim Aydin Son provide us with an insightful analysis of Turkish data protection regulations, based also on the results of focus group expert discussions in which the topic of genetic data was central. *David Lorenzo, Montse Esquerda, Francesc Palau, Francisco J. Cambra and the Grup Investigació en Bioètica* present an overview and systematically discuss ethical aspects of genomic editing with the Crispr-Cas9 technique. Their fine analysis encompasses the sub-topics of efficacy and security, the types of cells that can be targeted by the technique, the goal of the therapy, and accessibility and justice.

Continuing a NanoEthics tradition and strengthening an important element of the journal's thematic scope, *Nikita Lin* has contributed an article of the 'art-science interaction' category to this issue. Again, I have no wish to pre-empt, let alone spoil your reading experience. I would just like to let you know that her article is not only a wonderful piece of fictional writing, but also a profound reflection on pressing issues in science, technology and medicine, as well as on our fields that deal with them, and on the relationship between art and science. Please refer to her own abstract for a much better description of this remarkable text.

Last but in no way least, this very special edition of NanoEthics also features a *special section, guest-edited by Carl Mitcham*, whom I would like to deeply thank for this and his other contributions to making this issue such a highlight in the history of our journal. We are thus celebrating this final traditional issue with four invited contributions that together form a symposium on the political-philosophical questioning of engineering and technology.

The special section evolved as a result of the Bernard Stiegler Memorial Lecture, organised by Yuk Hui at the Research Network for Philosophy and Technology (RNPT), which is associated with the School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong. The RNPT was established by Yuk Hui in 2014 in order to promote the rethinking of relationships between philosophy and technology from global and historical perspectives. The RNPT defines itself first of all as an attempt to address the varieties of technological thought, in comparison with and also beyond the dominant Promethean discourses. It also wants to elaborate on and develop further the relevance between non-modern thought and modern

technologies. The RNPT believes that certain questions are often undermined and ignored in the established academic disciplines on technology and philosophy; and thus hopes to bring together different points of views and new thinking, based on solid historical research, philosophical speculations and experiments.

The Stiegler Lecture was delivered online by *Carl Mitcham* on 5 August 2022 and is presented here as the first contribution to the special section. Prior to the lecture, Gao Shiming, President of the China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, reviewed the creativity and special influence of Stiegler during his visits to Hangzhou. In homage to Stiegler's breaking of boundaries in thinking technology, and in accord with the RNPT aim to go beyond Promethean discourse to explore non-modern thinking, Mitcham sought to draw on both Leo Strauss and Pierre Manent to plead for a thinking directed towards a 'Tractatus Politico-Technologicus'. In the initial response, *Yuk Hui* argued that Stiegler challenges followers of Strauss to engage with a political world that is becoming transformed by digital media and ever more fraught technological power. The two talks were followed by an extended Question and Answer session in which David Burty from the University of Western Ontario noted that work by the Canadian philosopher George Grant would also be relevant to such a project. René von Schomberg of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg Aachen "Cultures of Research", a guest professor at the Technical University of Darmstadt and a pioneer in thinking about responsible research and innovation (RRI), provided a Habermasian perspective on the topics of discussion.

Stimulated by their readings of Mitcham's contribution, *Paul Jordan Diduch*, who directs the Herbst Program of Engineering, Ethics & Society at the University of Colorado-Boulder, and *Glen Miller*, who teaches engineering ethics at Texas A&M University, responded in writing to Mitcham; both of these responses are published in this special section, together with Mitcham's talk and the initial response by Yuk Hui. In his article, Diduch calls attention to a number of other efforts by Straussian scholars to address political questions of technology, while Miller argues that Strauss can be a stimulus for breaking out of limited approaches to political philosophy and technology.

As Mitcham pointed out in personal communication, which also forms the basis for this brief

summary of the event, he hopes this special section in NanoEthics may serve to honour Stiegler's legacy and that the questions from Stiegler posed by Yuk Hui in his response can serve also as a challenge to the Straussian legacy to take into account the anthropogenic and digital transformations of the political world. I myself am also particularly pleased that Stiegler, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at a conference in 2010, is being remembered in our journal.

However, since my last editorial, published last winter, another major change for the worse has occurred in our increasingly embattled world. It also forces us to reflect on the role of academia in a grave global situation. In the face of strong and growing tendencies to divide the planet into new political and military blocs, towards a new 'Cold War' and increasingly dangerous "hot" wars, not to mention a frightening resurgence of the twin scourges of imperialism and nationalism, we as an academic community must ask ourselves not only what we can do to help counter these tendencies, but also how we can defend our own community and practices. Since decisions such as the various sanctions against the Belarusian and Russian science systems may soon have – and in some respects are already having – an impact on scientific publishing too, I would like to offer some reflections on and explanations of the way I conceive of these challenges that have been unprecedented since the mid-twentieth century.

It is my conviction that we as an academic community would be well advised to remember the models of the past, such as the Republic of Letters, that have been crucial in constituting our practice and our self-understanding as a community. Since science, philosophy and humanistic thought, much like art, should be seen as a premonition or glimpse of a better future, at least if there is to be any hope for humanity, we cannot submit to the interests of any of the rulers of this world. This does not mean that scientists should uphold the ideology of value-free research.

We may accept sanctions against our colleagues if they are working in a system like Nazi Germany, and would be well advised to critically question our involvements with any military apparatus. If we were to advocate sanctions against all our colleagues in Russia or even Belarus, however, we would not only be trivialising the atrocities of Nazi Germany; we would also have to ask ourselves why, for example,

US, British and other universities were not excluded from the academic community during the Iraq War and subsequent occupation.

In current media discourse, which is increasingly distorted by pro-imperialist or nationalist fanaticism, such references to the Iraq war in relation to the war in Ukraine are often dismissed as so-called ‘whataboutism’ or as ‘bothsidesism’. While arguments intended to distract from issues under discussion are indeed problematic, as are equations that over-generalise, the furore over any comparisons with other recent wars, illegal occupations or systematic terror is not only self-righteous – especially when expressed by members of the elites of major imperialist powers that have openly subjugated most of the world for decades – but also serves to suppress scholarly and scientific efforts to analyse and better understand the current, dangerous situation. The inflationary use of ‘whataboutism’ and other terms as cheap accusations increasingly torpedoed any possibility of comparison. And in our case, which involves sanctions against members of the academic community, it makes no sense at all. Like our Russian and Belarusian colleagues, many of us work for research institutions that are part of the military-industrial complex of their respective states. Since it is unfortunately very unlikely that wars like those in Iraq or Ukraine will never happen again in the future, we should not set standards that, if complied with, would destroy the global academic community in a matter of decades, not to say years.

What this war and the other wars or large-scale hostilities in other post-Soviet or otherwise post-Socialist countries illustrate is that the part of the world that during the old Cold War was sometimes termed the ‘Second World’ is currently experiencing an even deeper crisis than other regions in our crisis-ridden world. This is not to belittle the suffering and crimes elsewhere or to ignore the rise of fascist and other ultra-rightwing forces in many countries, including for example in Austria, Brazil, Israel, Italy, Poland and the US, where they even have or had influence within government. Nevertheless, there are specific problems in the former ‘Second World’, quite a few of which are related to science and technology issues from both the past and the present.

Given also the considerable potential for global catastrophe that the post-Soviet wars and the general crisis in the aforementioned world region have,

I therefore wholeheartedly invite authors from all post-socialist countries, including Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, to submit articles to our journal so that through their perspectives we are all better able to understand what is happening in this region and on our planet as a whole. Naturally, many of our colleagues in Belarus and Russia, and certainly all colleagues in Ukraine, have very different concerns at the moment than publishing in foreign journals. Nevertheless, in addition to the Springer Nature exception for authors in Ukraine mentioned above, I will of course do everything I can to support submissions from this tormented region of the world.

Following these reflections on such a sombre topic, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Jennyca Parcon, who with her team has been in charge of producing NanoEthics at Springer Nature for more than half a decade. Although I am much looking forward to working with the new production team after the transition of our journal to OA, I will always fondly remember our excellent collaboration, especially during the very difficult period since the beginning of the pandemic.

For the coming year, I can already promise you that the new ‘era’ of NanoEthics will begin with a number of excellent articles, including one co-authored by our founding editor John Weckert. So stay with us and let us hope again for a better year – which I wish you all!

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