

## **Monotechnics and Polytechnics in the Digital Context**

The influential historian and philosopher of technology Lewis Mumford made the distinction between monotechnics and polytechnics giving his preference to the latter. The former means concentrating on the traditional narrow understanding based on the applications of technology that often becomes the target of human activity in its own right. Monotechnical approach does not help humans but rather tends to oppress them. Polytechnics, however, means taking up a more flexible approach, involving the biological complexity of humans and the social structures providing a complex framework for solving human problems. My argument is that the terminological framework suggested by Mumford helps us to take the best decisions concerning the contemporary digital technology. According to Mumford, concentrating on monotechnics is a faulty way leading to constructing useless megamachines, definite types of social systems that do not contribute to human development in the right way and may even be harmful. In the current digital age it seems very easy to fall victim of a new powerful monotechnic trap that tends to make digitalisation an aim in itself forgetting about the real needs humans have in their everyday and social-cultural lives. Thus, the main task of human-technology interaction today is keeping the human being with her needs at the foreground and treating digital technology as a flexible and powerful facilitator capable of creating the basis for the polytechnic approach and leading human civilisation away from the desire of constructing new megamachines.

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