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Reiner Mühlhoff,
The Ethics of AI – Power, Critique, Responsibility,
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The author introduces the concept of “power-aware” ethics of artificial intelligence, emphasizing that the ethical issues of AI are not only technological but primarily concern structures of power. He notes that AI does not operate in a vacuum – it is embedded in institutions, social processes, and economic systems that themselves generate inequalities. The introduction also provides a methodological justification for a critical philosophical approach, drawing on the traditions of thinkers such as Marx, Nietzsche, and poststructuralist theorists. The author invites readers to engage in a shared reflection on how AI ethics can contribute to systemic change, rather than merely addressing symptoms of the problem. The book is structured into three parts.

The first part, titled *The Power of Artificial Intelligence*, defines what is meant by “artificial intelligence”, showing that it is not a uniform category. The author analyzes the historical and technological roots of AI, including aspects of machine learning and predictive systems. He also discusses the concept of “Human-Aided AI”, emphasizing its hybrid character and the collaboration between humans and machines. He illustrates how interfaces and design influence users’ decisions and their relationships with technology. He then considers how AI system designers hold real power through their design decisions – not only technological, but also ethical and political. He introduces the concept of the “digital counter-Enlightenment”, which represents a shift from the idea of rational user autonomy toward more manipulative and designed interactions. The last subsection of this part shows that AI systems not only analyze data but also shape users’ ways of being, desires, and decisions, which the author terms “technological subjectivation”.

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The second part, *The Power of Prediction*, comprises three subsections: AI Systems as Predictive Machines, Predictive Privacy, and The Culture of Prediction – Ethics and Epistemology. The first subsection analyzes AI as a predictive tool, designed to forecast human behaviors, needs, and risks. The author emphasizes that prediction is not neutral – it is shaped by algorithms, data, and social context, giving predictions a form of power. The second subsection focuses on predictive privacy – not only data collection but also potential predictions about an individual’s future behavior. Mühlhoff highlights risks arising from algorithmic predictions in economic, insurance, or law enforcement contexts. The third subsection examines the “culture of prediction”, where society increasingly trusts algorithmic forecasts as a basis for decisions and knowledge. The author analyzes what epistemic values are promoted by this culture and the ethical consequences of submitting to predictive machines.

The third part, *The Power of Control*, focuses on the cybernetic roots of AI and the concepts of self-regulation, feedback, and control in modern systems. Mühlhoff examines the lack of transparency (“opacity”) in machine learning and predictive data analysis, noting that the complexity of models and “black boxes” limits accountability and complicates oversight. He analyzes biases in AI systems, which often reflect structural social inequalities, such as racial, class, or gender disparities. The author stresses that responsibility for AI should be collective and systemic, including institutions, regulations, policies, and communities as accountable actors.

In the conclusion, Mühlhoff presents his manifesto for power-aware AI ethics, advocating deep reforms in both technology design and regulatory institutions. The goal is for AI to serve justice, equality, and the common good.

The Ethics of AI – Power, Critique, Responsibility is highly recommended for anyone seeking to understand how artificial intelligence influences society, governance, and ethics, as well as the ethical challenges and responsibilities it entails.