Technologies and social customs and ethics assignment

Art & Culture

There is no denying that we are living in an era of technology. Due to the contribution of technological advancements, the world has evidenced dramatic changes in various fields, including social customs and ethics. So it is reasonable to say that technologies influence social customs and ethics, but in my opinion, the speaker's claim that technologies determine the two aspects goes too far and could not stand close scrutiny. Admittedly, the effect of technology has penetrated into every aspect of the society. Customs and ethics, as parts of the characters of a society, certainly cannot escape from the trend.

On one hand, it's obvious that technologies have changed our living conditions and habits, as well as our customs, which evolve to keep pace with the development of technologies. Consider some rituals our ancestor used to celebrating on some special occasions, like offering sacrifice to god before war, or praying for a good harvest and so on. Those activities with superstitious thoughts gradually step out of the history as we can better make use of the environment around us and have better control of ourselves with the achievements in technologies.

On the other hand, some ethics have been changed as well. For example, mercy killing was once thought to be go against people's moral outlook, but more and more people have accepted it because people's understanding of humanitarianism has broadened thanks to the development of technologies. However, it is somehow hasty to claim that technologies have the function of determining social customs and ethics. Technologies are the outward play of human wisdom, while customs and ethics are rooted deeply in a society's

culture which came into being thousands of years ago and evolved through the long history.

So both technology and social customs and ethics come from the complicated inner world of human heart and minds. Technologies tend to show our intellectual wisdom, while social customs and ethics are the fruits of human values, ideals, the way they perceive and interpret the world. They actually come from the same source. What's more, we human beings have a basic psychological need to gain a sense of existence and social identity from the society we belong to. And the approach is to obey social customs and pass them down from generation to generation.

Hence technologies may be able to alter the extrinsic form of customs, the inner core values of these customs will stay the same. Just like the way of celebrating Spring Festival in China, people seldom post spring festival scrolls on their door in many big modern cities, but the blessing and good wishes we want to express to each other will never change. It is the same with ethics. Social ethics come from our everlasting pursuit for freedom, equity, justice, honesty and so many other virtues. Although technologies made many things possible, if it is against the ethics, society would not allow this kind of thing.

For example, transplanting human organ is possible with the advancement in medicine and surgery. But if the organs are deprived from those who are not willing to donate, even if the transplantation of organs becomes successful and prolongs or saves someone's life, it is not accepted and would be condemned by the whole society. In sum, technologies do change social

customs and ethics on some aspects. But they are all creation of human, especially the latter is deep rooted in human nature, which would not be determined by technologies.