

Miriam J. S. Leis

Robots – Our Future Partners ?!

A Sociologist's View from a German and Japanese Perspective

Robots are already leaving the factory halls and are quite literally setting foot onto public places, offices and even our homes. Great efforts are being put into the research about making human-robot interaction easier and in equipping robots with some human traits that even include emotions. Where will humans place those artificial beings? Will they be granted a place in human society? Will humans welcome them? What might be behind Japan's "Robot Kingdom" and what may the human-robot future hold for us? This book traces the history of human-made artificial entities, life-imitating automata and robots, as they are described in Eastern and Western mythology and literature, and were finally put to "life" through mechanics and engineering. It will also try to explain Japan's playful enthusiasm and Germany's pragmatic approaches when it comes to developing and promoting robot technology. What might be behind Japan's "Robot Kingdom" and what may the human-robot future hold for us? Sociology and robotics represent complementary sciences, where both can learn from each other: why do today's robots still have problems with tasks that seem so simple to humans. Maybe it is the aspect of socio-cultural embeddedness that is of major importance for helping a human person in structuring ones environment and making sense of the world. Artificial Intelligence is still a mind without history. But what if a simulation would be indistinguishable from its genuine counterparts, can it be argued that both are the same – at least for all practical purposes?

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Rezensionen:

„Die Untersuchung von Miriam Leis steckt [...] voller spannender Beobachtungen, Hypothesen und relativierender Erläuterungen, die des Nachdenkens wert sind.“

Quelle: Catarina Caetano da Rosa in Technikgeschichte, 1/2007