
ABSTRACTS

ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE DIGITAL WORLD

SÁNDOR FAZAKAS

Original or Copyright?

Church, Society and Theology in the World of Digitalization

This preliminary study seeks to present the social and cultural framework conditions that have changed as a result of digitalization and which radically determine the conditions of the Church's life, communication, social presence, and theological scholarship today. These changes require theological reflection. Three representative aspects are identified for this purpose. (1) The "revolution in communication" caused by digitization confronts the Church and theology, with a situation similar to that faced by the printing press in the century of the Reformation. Taking the similarities and differences into account also provides an opportunity to evaluate well-known events in church and theological history with the benefit of today's knowledge of communication theory, and at the same time to define aspects (e.g., "concentrated normativity") that ensure the adequate communication of theological messages without simplification. (2) The transformation of social public life through digitalization and the changes in the way in which media content is accessed and transmitted do not leave the development of a democratic culture of social coexistence untouched. In this process, theological ethics considers it necessary to develop an ethos of responsible media consumption – beyond the necessary regulations. (3) Taking into account the differences between theological and digital anthropology, we are reminded that although digital technology expands our perception of reality, the (Christologically based) biblical-Christian teaching about human beings shows radical differences from the nature of the human image proclaimed and considered ideal by digitalization and artificial intelligence. Finally, the paper concludes with a list of topics and tasks for theological scholarship and references to new research perspectives.

DOROTTYA MOLNÁR-KOVÁCS

Authenticity and pastoral communication in the digital age
Church and innovation

The study is divided into three main sections, addressing the issue of authenticity in pastoral communication in the digital age. First, it lists the components of authenticity and applies them specifically to pastors. Among other things, an authentic communicator is an expert in what they say, open to discussion, and has proven their integrity and reliability. It then presents the characteristic features, errors, and pitfalls of sermons based on a small sample of seventy respondents and an analysis of Reformed sermons available online. These include archaic language, the accumulation of synonyms, and overly abstract speech that illustrates abstract messages with few examples. Finally, the article turns to the communication and church-related expectations of church members in the digital age, as well as the church's target audience, and the opportunities available to the church in this changed communication environment to continue proclaiming the gospel authentically while reaching its target audience.

ZSUZSANNA FARKAS

Yes? No? Or?

Christian responsibility in our decisions at the beginning of the age of artificial intelligence

The study examines the question of Christian responsibility in the age of artificial intelligence (AI), with a particular focus on ethical decisions, while also demonstrating how the digital world and algorithms influence human decision-making, citing examples such as heuristics and distorting mechanisms such as anchoring and availability bias. The study also analyzes the current state of AI, its operating principles, and its moral limitations. Furthermore, the study points out that intuition and inner voice can still be deeply

influential in ethical issues, and highlights the need to preserve human autonomy and responsibility alongside the use of intelligent algorithms, linking this to the fundamental principle of the Reformation that the individual is in direct relationship with God. Finally, this paper warns of the dangers of the digital world, but also presents opportunities for preserving and applying Christian values in a world shaped by AI.

SFET INGRID

Ethical approaches to the use of artificial intelligence in education

This article showcases the ethical approaches to artificial intelligence (AI) in the educational field, mainly focusing on the administrative, instructional, and educational processes, offering transformative benefits. However, ethical challenges arise, including GDPR compliance, personal data security, and diminished emotional interaction. By mapping positive impacts and ethical concerns, this article opens debate for better AI integration in the educational system through bibliographical research and analysis of emerging AI policies.

TAMÁS KODÁCSY

Artificial intelligence as *imago hominis*

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly mirrors human cognitive patterns, but can it truly achieve human consciousness? This study examines the historical evolution of AI, the rise of neural networks and deep learning, with a focus on the Turing test and the philosophical and theological debates surrounding AI consciousness. Through the concepts of *imago Dei* and *imago hominis*, the author explores how human-created intelligence reflects the essence of human existence. John Searle's "Chinese Room"

thought experiment further highlights the fundamental differences between AI and human intelligence. The study concludes that while AI can generate human-like responses and develop adaptive systems, it lacks true self-awareness and subjective experience.

MÁTYÁS KOÓS

The challenge of the future: being human in the age of artificial intelligence

The rise of artificial intelligence in recent years has taken an incredibly rapid and steep upward trajectory. As a result, it has brought about profound social, cultural, and economic changes that fundamentally shape contemporary humanity's self-perception and relationship to reality. Moreover, it also significantly affects social relationships and societal roles. However, alongside all the positive aspects of this explosive innovation, there are negative implications as well, prompting us to engage in theological reflections. According to the vision of achieving technological singularity, artificial intelligence could potentially surpass and overthrow human intelligence. Furthermore, such significant technological advancement might enable much longer lifespans or even the physical body's immortality. This study aims to respond precisely to these phenomena by presenting a biblical worldview and concept of humanity that emphasizes the uniqueness of the created universe and human life, while also acknowledging their inherent limitations. Consequently, the Christian faith's response to concerns related to technological advancement—or to the excessive optimism associated with it—lies in Jesus Christ, who, through His incarnation and resurrection, demonstrated the value and uniqueness of human life. Commitment through following Christ represents true progress, offering a theological alternative to transhumanism.

BORÓKA BEKE

The use of digital tools in church practice

For centuries, church communication has been characterized by an authoritarian stance and a one-way approach, and static, one-way communication solutions such as newsletters and informative websites have been favored in the use of digital tools. However, with the rise of social media, online spaces have also become increasingly important for personal communication. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated this process, forcing congregations and church ministers to digitize without a transition or learning process. This study uses the example of video sermons posted on Facebook by two Reformed congregations in Transylvania to illustrate this form of digital ministry, which began during the pandemic and has continued since then, as well as the learning process, results, difficulties, and lessons learned. Digital tools no longer merely complement the ministry of the church, but have become an indispensable and defining part of it.

GERGŐ BALÁZS

Postmodern church requirements and artificial intelligence

Thanks to today's rapid technological development, the ethical issues related to artificial intelligence (AI) are also emerging in the field of ecclesiastical life and theological reflection. The main aim of this paper is to explore the place and role of artificial intelligence in Church influenced by the postmodern spirit. The first part of the paper will explore the concept of postmodernism, its emergence and its impact on the arts and literature. It also highlights the social consequences of the phenomenon. As is true of social processes in general, postmodernism has also had an impact on the Church. The second part of the thesis examines how this impact can be understood and what specific demands it makes on church members. Finally, it will focus on the definition of AI and its presence in the church. The paper reflects on the advantages and disadvantages of this presence and raises some theological and ethical questions to stimulate further reflection in the reader.

Digitalization and the Good Life: The Metaverse

The study explores the metaverse's impact on social and religious life, focusing on theological challenges. Originating from Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash* (1992), and partly realized through online platforms like Minecraft, the metaverse enables digital identities, social interactions, and economies, increasingly blurring the line between physical and virtual reality. Matthew Ball defines the metaverse as a persistent, interoperable, real-time, 3D virtual world where users maintain unique identities. Key technologies include augmented reality, immersive experiences, and life-logging. However, beyond its technological aspects, the metaverse presents profound social and theological dilemmas. Can virtual spaces become a primary reality? How do online identities influence personality and relationships? From a religious perspective, questions arise about virtual sacraments, digital congregations, and the legitimacy of religious experiences in cyberspace. Examples like The Robloxian Christians and VRChurch demonstrate that religious communities are already engaging with the metaverse. Yet, concerns remain regarding their authenticity and the impact of virtual presence on faith practices. Ultimately, the metaverse's expanding role raises critical ethical and theological issues. The church must actively engage with this evolving space, reflecting on human dignity, faith, and community in a reality where the digital and physical worlds are increasingly merging.

Artificial Intelligence and Ecology

In recent years, artificial intelligence (AI) has played an increasingly significant role in addressing the ecological crisis. This study aims to explore the potential and limitations of AI in solving ecological crises and examines its responsible use from eco-theological and ethical perspectives. One of the greatest challenges of the ecological crisis

is its complexity and rapid changes, which human intelligence alone is no longer sufficient to analyze and manage effectively. At the same time, several challenges arise regarding the application of AI. The operation of the technology involves significant energy consumption, and inaccurate data analysis, vulnerabilities in system security, and the transformation of the labor market pose additional problems. The study emphasises that humanity bears responsibility for preserving the created world and that AI should not replace human decision-making. Proper regulation and global cooperation are crucial to ensuring that AI becomes a tool for managing the ecological crisis rather than a source of further environmental problems.

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