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## **Rethinking Technology in a Hyperconnected World: Beyond the Hype of Interconnectivity**

Modern technologies, especially information and communication (ICT) technologies, are inhabiting all areas of life. They make it possible to collect and manage vast amounts of data. They provide opportunities to obtain and exchange data in a manner unlimited by time and space. The development of global ICT networks has made it possible to transfer a significant part of social activity to the virtual sphere (e.g., e-banking, e-government, e-commerce, online education, e-voting), making us greatly dependent on technology for our everyday functioning. Changes in the surrounding world determine social development, which is inextricably linked to the development of science and technology.

Until recently, communication seemed to be the domain of mankind. Although, in essence, the operation of a network is based on the exchange of data within the network, in the public perception such exchanges have not been treated as communications that, in particular,

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have consequences directly affecting humans—including legal consequences.

The emergence of smart devices communicating directly with each other without human intervention as part of the Internet of Things (IoT) has for the first time made society aware of the need to guarantee control over the exchange of information and to guarantee individual rights in the digital world. Used in everyday life, smart devices can make life easier, but they can also serve as devices that enable the violation of individual rights, including, above all, the right to privacy (e.g., surveillance through smart devices). The operation of smart devices is based on the processing (mainly collection and analysis) of data acquired on a continuous basis, such as the habits of household members (e.g., their daily schedule), their activities, favorite companies, TV series, books (e.g., by ordering eBooks), music, including data that may relate to the recording of images or sound (e.g., alarm, surveillance, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

The problem of the relationship between technical and social development is nowadays the subject of interdisciplinary discussions, conditioned by social transformations of a previously unknown scale.<sup>2</sup> It is an intrinsically diverse problem, both in the context of sociological and legal analyses. The development of science and technology is recognized as an important factor in social change.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Adnan Ali, Rehan Khan, “IoT-Based Technologies for Addressing the Unique Healthcare Needs of the Elderly Population,” *International Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning* 1, no. 4 (2024): 94–121; Pouyan Asgharian, et. al., “A Review on the Use of Mobile Service Robots in Elderly Care,” *Robotics* no. 11 (2022): 127.

<sup>2</sup> See Alina Betlej, *Spoleczeństwo sieciowe – potencjały zmian i ambiwalentne efekty* [Network society—potentials for change and ambivalent effects] (Lublin: KUL Publishing House, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> See Felix Stalder, *Manuel Castells: The Theory of the Network Society* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2006).

Technological revolutions have always had a significant impact on social norms, making it necessary to adapt them to changing realities. This is particularly true of legal regulations, which aim to stabilize the social order. The task of legal norms is, on the one hand, to shape certain social behaviors by reinforcing desirable behaviors and eliminating undesirable ones and, on the other hand, to give impetus to change. The primary function of the law, however, is to define and safeguard values that should be protected in a special way. These unquestionably include individual freedom and security.

Contemporary discoveries of science and technology seem to be creating new contexts for the relationship between man and the world around him. *Techne* is not axiologically neutral. The universalization of value relativism has a significant impact on social *praxis*. We are becoming witnesses to the theoretical commodification of technology. This peculiar ideological superstructure is becoming the breeding ground for new social engineering. Claims that artificial intelligence and technological consciousness will become facts in the near future, thanks to thinking machines, are becoming commonplace. A kind of semantic transformation of the social meanings given to technology is evident in the process of the universalization of new values and the replacement of social rules with their technological substrates. The symbolic depriving of typically human values from human beings, the deprivation of their individuality (character, personality, emotionality, knowledge) and the enrichment of technology with subjective causal powers seem to arouse less and less controversy. The legal, institutional, and social contexts of these transformations do not only reflect certain trends in contemporary social thought. They relate to the future and the question of the position of human beings in a technologized environment. The dispute over the primacy of specific values in high-tech societies takes place in many fields. Modelling the future of humanity through anti-human means can stir up unexpected “waves of the future.” These problems deserve careful consideration and the

identification of certain axiological contradictions on the grounds of the letter of the law and the so-called social question.

## Social contexts

Relational technologies are ubiquitous in everyday life.<sup>4</sup> We see them in social spaces, industries, and institutions. They blend perfectly into the socio-cultural landscape. We live in an age of peaceful coexistence between humans and machines, or more generally, technological creations. The contemporary forms and functions of technology are radically different from those known in the past.<sup>5</sup> We recognize this as one of the reasons for the need to redefine *techne* itself and analyze the meanings given to it socially. The development of networked, or networking, technologies has changed the very way in which the relationship between the individual and society is described.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the mediating factor in this relationship becomes hyperconnected technology.<sup>7</sup>

We see hyperconnectivity as a global trend, both in the area of typically human activities and in the way new technical tools function.<sup>8</sup> All objects that can or should communicate through a network will sustain this form of relationality (person-to-person; person-to-machine; person-to-machine; machine-to-machine; machine-to-

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<sup>4</sup> Sherry Turkle, *Reclaiming conversation: the power of talk in a digital age* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Janusz Golinowski, "Społeczeństwa sieci w warunkach erozji dotychczasowego ładu politycznego i gospodarczego [Network societies in an erosion of the existing political and economic order]," *Transformacje* 96–97, no. 1–2 (2018): 68–88.

<sup>6</sup> Alina Betlej, "Power Relations in Network Society. A Sociological Approach," *Studia Gilsoniana* 11, no. 3 (July–September 2022): 425–443.

<sup>7</sup> Adrian David Cheok, *Hyperconnectivity* (London: Springer, 2016), 15–36.

<sup>8</sup> Rogers Brubaker, "Digital hyperconnectivity and the self," *Theor Soc*, no. 49 (2020): 771–801.

machine; machine-to-human and so on). The effect of this trend is the increasing demand for new transmission bands and changes in the field of communication due to the growing complexity, diversity, and widespread integration of mobile devices using the web. The effect of the universalization of the phenomenon of networking is the globally increasing dependence of social systems on technical systems in the field of digital interaction.<sup>9</sup> Throughout the history of scientific and technological civilization, humans have sought to maintain total control over *techne* and its creations. Human will and human activity have been seen as the most essential elements in the process of defining the goals of social development.<sup>10</sup> Nowadays, we see increasingly bold attempts to theoretically legitimize an extension of the notion of “agency” that goes well beyond the domain of the biological human.<sup>11</sup> Human intelligence is taking the form of a semantic vessel that we are filling with new and surprising content. Hyperconnective technologies affect intellectual and social processes.<sup>12</sup> Cognition, human thinking, collecting, processing and producing information, organizing, and exercising control become functions of new technologies. Digital devices also mediate the management processes of key business areas. Technology has long since ceased to function as a classically conceived prosthesis of the mind, becoming perfectly fused with the

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<sup>9</sup> See Manuel Castells, *The Rise of Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture Volume I*: 7. (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Luciano Floridi, *The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality* (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Jan van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jill Walker Rettberg, *Seeing Ourselves Through Technology: How We Use Selfies, Blogs and Wearable Devices to See and Shape Ourselves* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

<sup>12</sup> Jan Kazmierczak, et. al., “Impact of Technical Innovations on Society: A Study of Educational Needs in Polish Universities,” IEEE World Engineering Education Conference (EDUNINE), Guatemala (2024): 1–6.

human being as part of a somewhat artificially generated system.<sup>13</sup> It is difficult for us to deny the claim that “thinking technologies” affect knowledge objectification processes globally.

The effects of techno-social transformation raise many questions, for the dominant axiology is losing its humanistic orientation. The social concepts of networkedness, of ethically oriented sustainable development, of a legal system that protects individual freedom, are anchored in the cultural context of countries that recognize democratic values. Considered as a source of networking, the Internet was initially defined as a tool for the dissemination of universal human values.<sup>14</sup> The guiding principle behind its development was the “epidemic of cooperation.” Technology was supposed to counteract social divisions, class and status differences, unequal access to education, information, knowledge, and the labor market. The democratic hopes associated with the network transformation are not lost.<sup>15</sup> However, we are beginning to see the ambivalent effects of hyper-collectivization, which touch the core of the recognized social order, that is, values.

Classically understood values such as anonymity, freedom, autonomy, and privacy are beginning to resemble the counter-values characteristic of former subcultures opposed to the domination of the system over the individual. The transformation of the axio-normative order can be seen in the expansion of technological rules taking the forms of traditionally understood values. Ubiquity, communicability, immediacy, efficiency, potentiality, technologicality, accessibility, and visibility dominate the mainstream discourse. Technologies totalize social

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<sup>13</sup> Celia Lury, Sophie Day, “Algorithmic personalization as a mode of individuation,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 2, no. 36 (2019): 17–37.

<sup>14</sup> Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> Jim McGuigan, “The Neoliberal Self. Culture Unbound,” *Journal of Current Cultural Research* 1, no. 6 (2014): 223–240.

practices and affect processes of identity and subjectivity construction.<sup>16</sup> New models of social relationality are generated through incomprehensible algorithms online.<sup>17</sup> Averaged patterns of social behavior are “produced” on a mass scale.<sup>18</sup> The transformative potential of digital gadgets, artificial intelligence, robots and so on stems from the systemic nature of technology. Classical divisions between the natural and the artificial become obsolete in spaces dominated by “natural technologies.” Like socially created nature, technology becomes an indispensable part of networked spaces. Algorithmic and generative techniques for supporting and even generating diverse forms of human activity face serious polemics. In the context of these discussions, technology can be considered in terms of a carrier of ideologies defining handy sets of information, knowledge, and finally complex narratives about the essence of social life and values. In our understanding of ideology, we go beyond the sociological tradition here. We see it as a set of beliefs, convictions, ideas, norms, and recommendations concerning both the understanding of reality and its formation.<sup>19</sup> Interpreted in this way, ideology is persuasive, utopian, taking the form of a far-reaching and unfinished vision of reality. It is identical to the views of the circles in which it is created and through which it is disseminated. In this context, hyper-conventional *techne* thus becomes a source of truth about the nature of social phenomena. Participants in

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<sup>16</sup> Jerry Z. Muller, *The Tyranny of Metrics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

<sup>17</sup> John Cheney-Lippold, *We are Data: Algorithms and the Making of Our Digital Selves* (New York: New York University Press, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> Deborah Lupton, *The Quantified Self* (Malden: Polity, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> Lech W. Zacher, “Refleksje o ideologii cyfrowego świata [Reflections on the ideology of the digital world].” in *Nasza cyfrowa przyszłość. Nadzieje, ryzyka, znaki zapytania* [Our digital future. Hopes, risks, question marks], ed. L. W. Zacher (Warsaw: Committee for Forecasts ‘Poland 2000 +’ at the Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences, 2012), 107.

the “project of society” seem to be increasingly asserting their independence and agency, while on the other hand, many people are unaware of the violations of their rights and security risks in a technicized environment. Crossing the line between machine and subject will lead to significant changes in the law. As a civilization, we seem to expect this. We still have not crossed the boundary of technological system autonomy. Should we therefore look anxiously to the next turning points in the development of artificial intelligence, hyperconductivity, intelligent machines, and social robots? The social belief in the power of democratic institutions, of social responsibility as those that will never allow a symbolic end to an anthropologically-oriented future, is fading in theoretical discussions. Hyper-conservatism is, after all, based on processes of information gathering about human behavior, biocontrol, techno-surveillance, manipulation of social phenomena, technical interference in the spiritual world, lack of anonymity, visibility, relationship marketing, algorithms and so on. The concept of surveillance capitalism fits into this narrative. Shoshana Zuboff characterizes the issues presented as follows:

It appears that surveillance is not intended to undermine privacy rights, but rather to redistribute them. Instead of many people having some privacy rights, we see them concentrated within the surveillance regime. Surveillance capitalists have extensive privacy rights and therefore many opportunities to hide secrets. They are increasingly being used to deprive populations of the choice of secrets related to their lives. This concentration of rights takes place in two ways. In the case of Google, Facebook, and other examples of surveillance capitalism, many of their rights appear to be acquired by taking away from others without asking - following the Street View model. Surveillance capitalists have skilfully exploited the lag in social evolution and are rapidly perfecting the ability to research for profit, going beyond social understandings of the ultimate laws of development and regulation they create. As a result,



privacy rights, accumulated and asserted, are then invoked to legitimise questionable surveillance operations.<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, the idea of the ubiquity of new technologies and their hyperconnected properties seems to be undermined and even trivialized. The socio-legal perspective, however, allows us to see new social phenomena emerging in the fields of techno-social transformation. We are talking about alternative network spaces (Internet Shadow), digital gaps, new techno-social actors (avatars, cyborgs, androids, hybrids and so on), networked fugitives, etc. All areas of social activity that are “outside the pattern of openness” are among the most interesting fields of these explorations. Are we really forced to acknowledge that humans have long since been deprived of their power over the contingencies on which they depend and have become indecisive when confronted with advanced hyperconnected technologies? Are societies dependent on technological achievements still capable of participating in the process of valuing technology by relying on the solid pillars of humanistic ethical foundations? This state of peculiar interpretative limbo seems rather paradoxical, and the concepts describing the effects of techno-social transformations contain a number of contradictory meanings. In the context of these considerations, can we put forward the thesis that law is a mirror reflecting the technological complexity of our civilization? If we refer to the concepts of social order, axionormative order, sustainability of social systems, and ethically oriented development, this theoretical path seems the most natural, although often overlooked by sociologists.

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<sup>20</sup> Shoshanna Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism. The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (New York: Public Affairs (The Hatchett Group), 2019), 83.

## Legal context

The spread of global ICT networks and the emergence of new channels for exchanging information and the development of the information society are defining a new reality, based on information and communication technologies. This term encompasses all technologies that enable the processing and transmission of information. The conceptual scope of ICT includes all communication media (Internet, wireless networks, *Bluetooth* networks, fixed, mobile, satellite telephony, sound and image communication technologies, radio, television, etc.) and information storage media (memory sticks, hard disks, CD/DVD disks, tapes, etc.) as well as information processing equipment (personal computers, servers, clusters, computer networks, etc.). In addition, ICT also encompasses a whole range of IT applications and complex IT systems enabling the implementation of data processing and transmission at a higher level of abstraction than the hardware level.

ICT therefore provides a real possibility for everyone to contact everyone—a kind of hyperconnectivity. This term, coined by Anabel Quan-Haase and Barry Wellman, refers to the use of multiple means of communication made available through ICT (e.g. email, instant messaging, social media).<sup>21</sup> In today's world, hyperconnectivity is recognized as a pervasive and growing market condition, underpinning the business strategy of a growing number of companies.

The information society, that is, one in which information is the basic commodity, requires the adaptation of legal norms and regulations. The technical possibilities of communication and data transmis-

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. Barry Wellman, "Physical Place and Cyberplace: The Rise of Personalized Networking," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 2, no. 25 (2001): 227–252.

sion have given rise to the need for legal regulation of the sphere to which they relate, such as securing electronic trading, securing the rights and defining the obligations of the parties to electronic transactions, or securing and establishing the evidentiary value of digital documents.

The technological revolution has given man a powerful tool, providing access to information that is unlimited in time and space. The transfer of human activity to the virtual sphere, combined with the relatively low awareness of the risks associated with information processing in ICT networks, has resulted in people disclosing information about themselves, their views, interests and passions, property status, etc., online, on a huge scale. And this makes network users vulnerable to a degree also not seen before. Unfortunately, the information disclosed online often affects not only the person disclosing it, but also other people connected to him or her in various ways (friends, acquaintances, and family members). Information is collected on a massive scale by all network services, including web browsers, email services, social media, and shopping sites, among others.

At the same time, cyberspace provides a false sense of freedom, which, combined with the belief that users are anonymous, can lead to the infringement of the freedom of others. The non-infringement of an individual's freedom due to the actions of another should be guaranteed by law. John Stuart Mill emphasized that the only reason for the legitimate use of power against an individual in a civilized society, against that individual's will, is to prevent harm to other people.<sup>22</sup>

Thomas Hobbes, on the other hand, considered man to be an egoist whose only aim is his own good, and any thing that serves his ends is

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<sup>22</sup> "The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others," John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Longman, 1998), 68.

good - even if it is bad for another individual whose interests conflict with his. It was from reason and fear of harm that Hobbes derived the creation of the state.<sup>23</sup> The state created the law, and the law defined the limitations on freedom. The limitation on an individual's freedom imposed by law is determined by the measure of another's freedom.

Individual freedom is therefore an overriding value, but it ends where it infringes on the freedom of another. The role of the law is to safeguard the rights and interests of the individual: it is therefore necessary to define rules for the restriction of freedom. It becomes fundamental to balance the freedom of one and the security of another: an old challenge in a new reality. Lawmaking in the age of the technological revolution only underlines the validity of the view of Leon Petrażycki, who, in pointing out the necessity of creating a policy of law, indicated that it cannot be a science detached from the findings of other sciences. The need to guarantee the rights of the individual, in particular freedom and the right to privacy, therefore arises.

By definition, the subject of the law can only be a person, natural or legal. The basis of liability imposed by legal norms is the will of the person, determining his or her action. Awareness of the unlawfulness of an act or omission is a necessary characteristic of a breach of the law.

In the era of digital technologies and the hyperconnectivity they provide, information society tools and services are becoming increasingly refined and useful. The creation, testing, and implementation of new algorithms, including above all artificial intelligence systems, is costly, hence it is usually managed by rich corporations, not by states, whose budgets are usually limited in various ways. States therefore withdraw from many tasks. This is where soft law comes in, the result

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<sup>23</sup> Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii* [History of philosophy], vol. 2 (Warsaw: Scientific Publishers PWN, 2001), 68.

of the creation of new non-state regulations by corporations and international organizations.

Law becomes “porous”—in the gaps extra-legal regulations of increasing social importance are planted. States, privatising tasks, imperceptibly for citizens “blur their contours.” There is a dispersion of power, a dispersion of supervision and control between public and private actors in a way that makes the relations of power, subordination, and responsibility increasingly opaque for the individual. This is a phenomenon from the sphere of political and legal consciousness, with a direct impact on the actions and decisions of individuals and legal entities, on perceptions of the law and of the state’s power to act.<sup>24</sup>

The advent of artificial intelligence confronts the law with the difficult task of determining whether an algorithm can be a subject of law, or whether an algorithm can acquire legal personality.

In the case of artificial intelligence, it is difficult to speak of free will, as its decisions are always derived from the algorithm that has defined its way of learning and acting. So, who should be responsible for any damage caused by the algorithm (e.g., an accident caused by an autonomous car or damage caused by an autonomous decision-making system)? The creator of the algorithm, the programmer, the company producing and implementing the artificial intelligence systems, or the person who allowed the artificial intelligence to be used autonomously? From a legal point of view, it is always a person, but the answer to this question in the future may be different. Not necessarily better, and certainly less safe and obvious.

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<sup>24</sup> Jolanta Jabłońska-Bonca, “Problemy ze spójnością prawa i regulacjami pozaprawnymi a siła sprawcza państwa – zarys tematu [Problems with legal coherence and extra-legal regulation and state power—an overview of the topic],” *Krytyka prawa*, no. 1 (2015): 159.

The essence of the law is, on the one hand, to ensure the rights of the individual and, on the other hand, to guarantee the stable functioning of the social and economic order. The eminent legal theorist Leon Petrażycki pointed to the motivational and educational impact of the law. The motivational impact focuses on stimulating or inhibiting the inclination towards certain actions or omissions. The educative impact involves the development and consolidation of certain character traits.<sup>25</sup>

Such functions of law can, not necessarily directly, be applied to learning algorithms (AI). The relevant input data underpinning the learning of an algorithm can quite effectively enforce certain algorithmic decisions. However, this does not change the fact that such considerations only make sense if the algorithm does not contain any errors or gaps. And this is not only no longer obvious, but also statistically improbable.

Allowing artificial intelligence into legal decision-making, without human oversight (e.g., automatic administrative decision-making, or rulings in simpler court cases) could have far-reaching and unpredictable consequences.

The aforementioned Leon Petrażycki pointed out the relevance of emotions in the discussion of law. Cognition, feeling and will, which, according to the Kantian approach, determine types of mental phenomena, are not, according to Petrażycki, sufficient to determine human behavior. Emotions are elementary experiences whose appearance determines certain actions. Emotions play a decisive role in evaluations, generating experiences leading to positive evaluations (apul-

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Marcin Kik, “Leon Petrażyckiego filozofia prawa [Leon Petrażycki’s philosophy of law],” *Czasopismo filozoficzne*, no. 1 (2006): 50–62; Jerzy Oniszczyk, *Teoria i filozofia prawa* [Theory and philosophy of law] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo C.H. Beck, 2008), 567–568.

sions) or negative evaluations (repulsions). Evaluations, therefore, are intrinsic, but relativized to emotions.<sup>26</sup>

When assessing human behavior, especially that which is related to violations of the law, it is almost impossible to separate human behavior from the emotions that drive it. Often irrational and impossible to comprehend behavior becomes understandable, although not always explainable, when viewed through the prism of emotions.

Recognition of the influence of emotion on action or inaction is therefore unavoidable, and thus making only algorithmically defined decisions may not be correct because, all else being equal, given the same input and boundary conditions, the emotional context may alter the output. The ability to feel empathy, which is essential for reading emotions, therefore seems to be necessary for the correct application of the law. Of course, it is possible to try to program cognitive empathy learning by an algorithm, like for people on the autism spectrum, but the lack of an AI's ability to feel emotions should preclude the ability to make definitive decisions that produce legal consequences. Algorithmic decisions in any situation should be subject to human judgment.

Granting artificial intelligence decision-making power may nullify the Aristotelian thesis that in democracies “where the law reigns, there are no conditions for the demagogue to appear (...), but where laws do not reign, there demagogues appear.”<sup>27</sup> Algorithmicizing of the law, without human oversight of its application, can lead to a situation where the unemotional application of the law puts artificial intelligence in the position of a demagogue.

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<sup>26</sup> Leon Petrażycki, *O pobudkach postępowania i o istocie moralności i prawa* [On the motives of conduct and the nature of morality and law] (Warsaw: K. Wojnar & Co. Bookshop, 2002), 45; cf. also Jan Woleński, “O teorii i filozofii prawa Leona Petrażyckiego [On the theory and philosophy of law by Leon Petrażycki],” *Studia Historiae Scientiarum*, vol. 17 (2018): 380–383.

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle, *Politics* (London: Welbeck Publishing Group Limited, 2022), 114.

## **Conclusions**

Even the most well-thought-out strategy of influencing social systems through regulation can be interrupted by an unexpected phenomenon, such as the emergence of a technical innovation, an invention, a scientific discovery or, finally, the social transformations we have invoked in the discussion. The disintegration of long-lived structures, which we see as the result of recognizing the social legitimacy of a hyperconnected world, can be a serious threat to the social order. As a civilization, we are navigating a shared imagined technological future, yet our contemporary legal orders are not developing in a parallel and complementary way (e.g., the AI Act). The world's legal systems do not consider the same assumptions relating to the relationship between technological and social development. We recognize the dissimilarity of cultural, historical, political, and economic conditions for the spread of hyper-technologies around the world, forgetting the importance of philosophical underpinnings. The technical solutions we cite also have strong normative foundations. We see hyper-connective technologies as bonding tools. But can we conclude that they are equally democratic?

Beyond the hype of interconnectivity, new digital gaps, fields of social exclusion, and spaces “above the law” are being structured. These phenomena resemble the process of the separation of philosophy and science described by Thomas Aquinas. The recognition of the human as an “ordinary” product of nature, treated on a par with commodified technology, will lead to social experiments on a previously unknown scale. Hypercollectivization is arguably not a sustainable and definitive direction for social development. However, we will not deny that the invasion of networked technologies is having a contemporary impact on the transformation of the axionormative order. Models of social relationality are changing. The emergence of artificial sociality



is under discussion. We would still like to see human rights as the most important determinants of progress. The idea of a “perfect law” seems increasingly illusory in such a rapidly and radically transforming environment. On the other hand, however, we are seeing a very rapid process of adapting law to techno-social change and redefining technology. The paradox, however, is that socio-legal studies will increasingly encompass the reality “in-between” of total surveillance and social dispersal of control. This area may appear “axiologically neutral.” Beyond the hype, however, interconnectivity may lead us to a point where we see real consequences and social problems that require up-to-date philosophical reflection. For the tasks facing the law will increasingly include attempts to answer the question of to what extent technology and the mass dissemination of hyperconnectivity will serve society and culture, or civilization more broadly, and to what extent it will become a threat and a trap with no way out.<sup>28</sup>



### Rethinking Technology in a Hyperconnected World: Beyond the Hype of Interconnectivity

#### SUMMARY

This paper focuses on the sociological and legal analysis of the effects of the development of rapid technological advancements. The focus is on the need to rethink new technologies and the process of hyperconnectivity. The theoretical discussion is embedded in the framework of the chosen philosophical and social approaches. It starts with the attempt to understand the essence of the

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<sup>28</sup> See Étienne Gilson, Henry Gouhier, *Mass Society and Its Culture, and Three Essays concerning Etienne Gilson on Bergson, Christian Philosophy, and Art* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2023).

discussed changes and poses several questions to be answered. The authors analyze several mediating notions such as social values, axionormative order, legal regulations, the human position towards technological advancements, etc. Further analysis leads to a discussion of the legal context of these problems. The authors search for answers to many fundamental questions to open avenues for building coherent legal pillars of social order based on human values. To achieve these goals, they use a sociological and legal approach that is based mainly on criticism of writing and the analytical and synthetic methods.

**Keywords:** new technologies, social values, law regulations, axionormative order

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