"Anthropological Considerations for Evaluating the
Impact of Technology on the Human Condition"

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Abstract

In the postmodern world, ethical analysis concerning technology experiences great difficulty in keeping up with the rapid pace of developments. An adequate evaluation of the impact of technology on the individual human condition will address the foundational anthropological question of *what is man* – understood as comprising both male and female – in a manner that respects his inherent personal dignity from the moments of natural conception to natural death, having been brought into being in the image and likeness of the Creator. At the level of community – understood across multivalent levels of relationship such as marriage, siblinghood, family, friendship, culture, citizenship, and society – an adequate ethical anlysis of the impact of technology on the human condition will consider the foundational question of *what is good for man and for his common good*? Analyses that do not include in-depth review of these crucial questions, foundational to a Christian anthropology of the human person, risk failing to address what is beneficial for man and his human condition – in the short, medium and long-term – and instead stand to commit injustices at the individual, relational, and sociocultural levels as violations of personal and collective human dignity. This paper presents the root anthropological considerations necessary for making a proper evaluation of the impact of technology on the human condition, as well as a review of certain ethical approaches that could make more positive or negative contributions to the genuine progress of man and his human condition.

The analysis to be presented will include a brief review of the dialogue between faith and reason as understood in the context of a Christian approach in encounter with a secular world view, with argumentation as to how the anthropological approach is relevant to the entire global context for arriving at best solutions to the ethical questions at hand. The possibility of intellectual unity in the conversation between faith and science also will be explored. Anthropological approaches will address the problematic challenges found within the framework of the physical and natural sciences, technology and the "Fourth Industrial Revolution" of the 21st century, as termed by K. Schwab. Particular attention will be given to technological advances and trends in digitization, including across social media, as they impact the understanding of human identity and personal development; relational interactions both within and beyond family, community, national and global contexts; and threats of personal and community manipulation that are counterproductive to what is good for man and his common social good. The role of artificial intelligence, as well as issues in personal and community security and privacy, also will be examined in light of their current and anticipated ethical impacts.

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