NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND THE DISCOURSES OF HUMAN RIGHTS, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY

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Modern societies are associated with the constant flow and acceptance of information and communication technologies at home, in the workplace, in the process of education, even in recreational activities. The development of new technologies has not only challenged human rights, but also politics and society in general. Even more importantly, this new technological level has also empowered transnational corporations operating in the digital environment as hosting providers to perform quasi-public functions in the transnational context. New technologies have the potential to make significant positive contributions to the prevention, promotion, and protection of human rights and democratization, decentralization, and digitalization of politics and the advancement of society as a whole.

Simultaneously, fast advancements in new technologies generate substantial concerns about potential detrimental human rights consequences as well as the future of politics and society. The expansion of new technologies raises serious concerns about whether current political, legal, and societal structures are adequate to alleviate the human rights risks that might arise, many of which are still unknown. Furthermore, the role of corporations in both creating and utilizing new technologies is important. States, on the other hand, must focus on their responsibilities and consider how to guarantee that corporations perform properly, and to develop legal regimes that provide for such effective, responsible, and rights-respecting deployment (or non-deployment) of new technologies if technology is to be utilized for good.

So, what can we learn about technology and human rights from these seemingly contradicting narratives? Are new technologies beneficial or detrimental to human rights, politics, and society? Of course, the answer might be both.

The UN's work in the sphere of new technologies and human rights strives to address the risks while also focusing on the potential afforded by new (digital) technologies, just as it does in reality. As a result, the relationship between technology and human rights is a major subject in 'UN Human Rights Management Plan 2018-2021'. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, stressed the importance of "to address the human rights challenges raised by digital technology, as it transforms almost all sectors of every economy and society" (41st session of the Human Rights Council 2019).

At its 41st session in June 2019, the UN Human Rights Council adopted resolution 41/11 'New and Emerging Digital Technologies and Human Rights', in which it asked the Advisory Committee to provide a report on the potential implications, possibilities, and difficulties of new and developing digital technologies on the prevention, promotion, and protection of human rights, particularly "mapping of relevant existing initiatives by the UN and recommendations on how human rights opportunities, challenges, and gaps arising from new and new digital technologies" (New and Emerging Digital Technologies and Human Rights 2021). As a result, the UN will strive to map the human rights implications of ongoing and upcoming (new) technologies, and then build a human rights-based approach to help states in regulating their deployment.

Considering the topic's provocativeness, dynamism, and unpredictability, we decided to launch this thematic issue in response to author Shoshana Zuboff's (2019) question in her book 'The Age of Surveillance Capitalism': Can the digital future be our home? To answer that question, we chose the title 'New Technologies and the Discourses of Human Rights, Politics, and Society', to develop scientific knowledge that can be used as a set of findings, parameters, and guidelines for evaluating the performance, benefits, and challenges of new technologies in the context of human rights, politics, and society.

83 (eighty-three) authors from all around the world expressed their interest in contributing to this thematic issue. We were able to pick only 9 (nine) articles for publication in this thematic issue after a rigorous selection and assessment of the received articles, taking into account the geographical diversity of the authors and the quality of their works.

Regarding the publication of this thematic issue, we must express our deep gratitude to the reviewers for their trust and confidentiality, as well as their dedication and responsibility in the process of evaluating and selecting articles for publication.

Finally, we invite readers to consider this thematic issue and use it as a reference point or source of inspiration for their future research.

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