Examining Luciano Floridi's 'Infraethics' and the Moral Status of Information

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Abstract

Information is invariably related to human existence. Therefore, it is essential to understand its current significance and role. The Philosophy of Information examines the impact of information on reality and knowledge. Philosopher Luciano Floridi offers new ways of understanding information in the digital age. His ideas go beyond technology requiring a reconsideration of major philosophical questions. Floridi provides new insights into what it means to exist in a world full of technology. He argues that this represents a philosophical shift in our understanding of what is real. By introducing the concepts of the 'infosphere' and the 'onlife' condition, he argues that our digital world fundamentally shifts human identity and social interaction. Identity is no longer solely tied to physical presence. It is seen that traditional ethical systems, intended largely to address physical human interactions, are no longer adequate. This necessitates new ethical and ontological considerations. Hence arises the need for a re-evaluation of social norms, privacy, and personal responsibility. This article explores Floridi's concept of 'Infraethics' as an alternative enquiry into the moral implications of the digital age. It examines his ethical ideas, seeking to understand how they form a worldview for addressing the moral issues of our time. This perspective suggests that philosophical inquiry should evolve from simply understanding the world to actively building the ethical systems necessary for the digital age.

Keywords: Informational Ontology, Informational Structural Realism, Infosphere, Re-ontologizing, Inforgs, Onlife, Infraethical Equation

Introduction

Digital technologies have become a fundamental part of modern life,yet their widespread presence also brings up ethical questions.There is the need to seriously think about the new problems these technologies create, from how our privacy is handled to who controls

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information. There is the need toalso ensure that they are being used in ways that benefit everyone fairly and safely.Luciano Floridi, a prominent philosopher known for his foundational work in the Philosophy of Informationobserves that it implies not just a technological step forward, but a philosophical shift in our understanding of what is real.He states that technology's deep integration fundamentally changes our reality and system of values.

The way we usually think about ethics is generally focussed on the individual person or group, that is an agent-centric approach. It enquires about the moral quality of a specific individual's thoughts or actions. This approach is very effective for addressing isolated ethical problems. However, technology like the internet and computers creates a range of ethical problems that were hitherto overlooked. These issues are not just about individuals, but are part of the system and its structure. They are built into the whole digital system. Such ethical problems happen because of how the digital world is built and organized. As a result, an individual-focussed methodology is insufficient to properly identify and resolve these systemic problems. Contemporary ethics has not yet made the necessary change in this regard. It still analyses what individuals do, but it also needs to examine digital structures and how they permanently impact society. Hence the need to address the foundational structures that help moral behaviour in a society dominated by technology. Floridi's arguments gain relevance in this context. Through his concept of Infraethics he argues that all societies need basic rules to ensure their systems and infrastructures work effectively. He stresses that designing and maintaining these essential foundations is one of the biggest tasks for the world today.This article explores this notion of Floridi's 'Infraethics'as the essential foundation for ethical existence in the age of computers and the internet.This article also demonstrates how this approach differs from traditional ethical and social methodologies used to solve complex digital problems.

The methodology used in this article is a descriptive and expository analysis. The article aims to examine Floridi's key principles leading to his concept of Infraethics.It is based on a close reading of Floridi's foundational textsincluding *The Philosophy of Information, The Ethics of Information,* and *The Fourth Revolution*.It is attempted to synthesize the philosophical contributions of Luciano Floridi, most specifically his development of Information Ethics into the concept of Infraethics. This article identifies his important ideas such as Informational ontology, the Infosphere, Re-ontologization, and the Onlife human condition showing how all these ideas lead to the need for Infraethics. The article uses critical conceptual methods also, by looking at the main comparisons and analogies used by Floridi. The article also compares Infraethics with other seemingly similar ideas to help define exactly what Infraethics is and what it is not.

The Informational Turn

The Philosophy of Information is a sub-discipline of philosophy, intricately related to the

philosophy of logic and mathematics. The Philosophy of Information focuses on the investigation of the subject at the most general level: data, well-formed data, environmental data, etc. (Driaans). It is an interdisciplinary field that explores both the fundamental nature of information and computation, as well as their practical applications to philosophical inquiries.This is evident in Floridi's definition: "PI is defined as the philosophical field concerned with the critical investigation of the conceptual nature and basic principles of information, including its dynamics, utilisation, and sciences, and the elaboration and application of information-theoretic and computational methodologies to philosophical problems" (*The Philosophy of Information* 1). Floridi's conception of the philosophy of information is distinct from traditional views. The field is not limited to the technical study of information. Instead, it uses an information-based approach to scrutinize the main principles of philosophy, with the goal of redefining philosophical inquiry itself.

To make this new perspective clear, Floridi uses an analogy. Just as we can describe the universe in purely chemical terms (seeing everything as chemical reactions), this new informational perspective describes everything as data.From this view, every entity, including a person, is an informational object. This object is a self-contained package that holds data defining its nature, identity, and attributes, and contains a set of rules that dictate how it acts or reacts to messages and changes. At this level of analysis, informational systems and not just living beings are considered the agents and subjects of actions. All environmental processes, changes, and interactions are also described in terms of information (Floridi, *A Very Short Introduction* 111).

Floridi highlights the need for contemporary advanced information societies to engage with the urgent task of formulating a coherent philosophy of information. He states that experts like the EGE (European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies) and UNESCO have underscored the importance of technology in shaping our world and ourselves. They have made the creation, management, and use of information, communication, and computational resources crucial to our understanding of the world, our interactions with it, and even our sense of self. In essence, ICTs have ushered in a 'fourth revolution' (Floridi, The Fourth Revolution 86). Floridi perceives a metaphysical revolution. The change is not merely technological, but rather a deep philosophical shift. Consequently, this new informational reality must be understood, and a need for new methods must be developed to deal with it responsibly.

Informational Ontology and Information Structural Realism

Floridi's central idea is that reality is fundamentally informational. Thisidea forms the core of his "informational ontology," which conceives that the universe, at its most basic level, can be understood in terms of information. Floridi states that "reality is the totality of information" (Floridi, *Philosophy of Information* xiii). He proposes that the ultimate nature of reality is structural, with information being the fundamental stuff of the

physical universe (316).This view contrasts with other ontologies that might prioritize matter, energy, or consciousness as primary. The transition from a human-centred view of reality to one where humans are just one part of a vast network of information fundamentally changes the nature of existence. This ontological shift means that reality itself is increasingly understood through informational structures.

Floridi advocates an informational ontologyto which he refers as Informational Structural Realism(339).Informational structural realism is a form of realism in the basic sensethat it is committed to the existence of a mind-independent reality. Moreimportant, it also defends the view that reality has structural properties andstructural objects, and the objects are characterized in informational terms(Allo 125). This means he believes in a real and objective physical world, but that its constituent structures can be known and understood in terms of information. He distinguishes this from "digital ontology," which he views as an uncritical pre-Kantian approach that sees the ultimate nature of reality as digital (like a computer). For Floridi, the universe is not a giant digital computer, but its underlying reality is informational(*The Philosophy of Information* 316).Floridi explains that information is not merely a neutral representation of reality but an integral part of the world itself, with its own properties and effects.

Floridi philosophically explores the evolving worldview shaped by information and communication technologies: "I will, instead, stick to what philosophers do better, conceptual design, and seek to synthesize the silent Weltanschauung that might be dawning on us. By 'conceptual design' I mean to refer to a constructionist (not a constructivist) philosophy that can explain (better: account for) our semantic artefacts and design or re-purpose those needed by our new infosphere (Floridi, *The Ethics of Information* 2). Floridi presents a philosophical perspective that shifts from merely observing individual understanding to actively participating in the development and structuring of information. This aims to enhance our capacity to manage and influence a world increasingly defined by information.

Infosphere and the Re-ontologization of Reality

Floridi offers two key concepts to consider regarding the future of information and communication technologies and the new ethical problems they might create. They are i) *Infosphere* and ii) *Re-ontologizing*

Infosphere is a neologism coined by Floridi. It is based on 'biosphere', a term referring to that limited region on our planet that supports life. It is also a concept that is evolving. The difference between the two readings is a function of our understanding of information, as something that has only semantic properties (e.g. web open source) or also ontic properties (information as data patterns, e.g. the magnetic structure of a digital support) (Floridi, *The Ethics of Information* 6).Floridi introduces the concept of the 'infosphere' to describe this informational reality. He explains that "Minimally, infosphere denotes thewhole informational environment constituted by all

informationalentities, their properties, interactions, processes, and mutual relations.It is an environment comparable to, but different from, cyberspace,which is only one of its sub-regions, as it were, since the infosphererealso includes offline and analogue spaces of information. Maximally,infosphere is a concept that can also be used as synonymous withreality, once we interpret the latter informationally. In this case, thesuggestion is that what is real is informational and what is informationalis real" (Floridi, *The Fourth Revolution*41).Information and communication technologies are changing society, making information a central part of our reality rather than just a tool to describe it. He believes the change isnot just altering how individuals perceive themselves, it is transforming how people exist and interact with one another.The infosphere is a complex and dynamic space where information is constantly created, shared, and transformed

Floridi explains: "Re-ontologizing is another neologism that I have recently introduced inorder to refer to a very radical form of re-engineering, one that not onlydesigns, constructs or structures a system (e.g. a company, a machine orsome artefact) anew, but one that also fundamentally transforms its intrinsicnature, that is, its ontology or essence. In this sense, for example, nanotechnologiesand biotechnologies are not merely re-engineering but actuallyre-ontologizing our world"(Floridi, *Cambridge Handbook*, 6). He clarifies: "This radical re-ontologization of the infosphere islargely due to the fundamental convergence between digital resources and digital tools.The ontology of the information technologies available (e.g. software, algorithms,databases, communication channels, and protocols, etc.) is now the same as (and hencefully compatible with) the ontology of their objects, the raw data being manipulated" (Floridi, *The Ethics of Information* 7). In the digital world, everything is equal. There is no real difference between a person, a program, or a piece of data. He observes that this makes everything in the digital world work together smoothly, removing the frictionthat used to exist when different types of things had to interact.

Floridi understands that the equivalence of these concepts will drive significant technological advancements and bring about new implications for humanity.The concepts of the infosphere and re-ontologization show that information and communication technologies are changing the infosphere itself. This transformation is the source of new problems societies will encounter with technology. When we increasingly live and interact within the infosphere, questions about privacy, identity, and the moral status of artificial agents become essential.

Inforgs and Onlife - The Human Condition

Humans are seen as 'inforgs'or informational organisms who interact within this infosphere, sharing a reality made of information with other informational agents including artificial ones(14). The idea that we are inforgs isnot based on physical changes to our bodies. Instead, this understanding comes from thechanges to the informational environment we live in and the new types of agents we now interact with(Floridi, *The*

Fourth Revolution 96). Floridi suggests we are no longer simply 'online' or 'offline,' but 'onlife'which is a blended reality where digital and physical worlds are intertwined. Ethical inquiry must therefore address this hybrid existence. The infosphere encompasses physical, social, and cultural contexts, and how information is produced, used, and communicated within them. Floridi's argument that humanity lives "onlife" within an "infosphere" represents a claim about the fundamental nature of reality in the digital age. He explains that because reality is becoming more informational and humans are inforgs within this environment, traditional ethical systemswhich focus on physical interactions and individual agentshave become insufficient.The onlife condition creates new ethical dilemmas that traditional ethics are ill-equipped to handle.Information technologies have had such a profound impact on the human condition that a new approach to ethics is necessary (97).

Moral Domain of Information Ethics

Information Ethics is presently understood in many ways by researchers across various fields like computer ethics, medical ethics, and computer science. The emergence of the information society has further expanded the scope of Information Ethics.As people have become more accustomed to living and working within informational environments, it has become easier to unveil new ethical issues involving informational realities(Floridi, *The Ethics of Information*24). He affirms: "In information ethics, the ethical discourse concerns any entity, understood informationally, that is, not only all persons, their cultivation, wellbeing, and social interactions, not only animals, plants, and their proper natural life, but also anything that exists, from paintings and books to stars and stones; anything that may or will exist, like future generations; and anything that was but is no more, like our ancestors or old civilizations. Information ethics is impartial and universal because it brings to ultimate completion the process of enlargement of the concept of what may count as a centre of a (no matter how minimal) moral claim, which now includes every instance of being understood informationally, no matter whether physically implemented or not"(Floridi, *A Very Short Introduction* 113).

Floridi likens our fast-growing technology to a tree with huge branches but weak roots. Our technological progress is far ahead of our ethical and cultural development.This imbalance leads to difficulties in society. Just like a tree with weak roots cannot grow properly, our digital society's future is at risk if we do not strengthen our ethical foundations. Organizations like UNESCO are actively working to establish ethical guidelines and declarations for information ethics. This aims to ensure that as new technologies emerge, the necessary understanding to use them responsibly and for the benefit of all is also developed.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) force us to fundamentally re-evaluate the ethical principles and methods we use to make moral judgments.Floridi explains: "Moral life is a highlyinformation-intensive game, so any technology that

radicallymodifies the 'life of information' is bound to have profound moralimplications for any moral player. Recall that we are talking aboutan ontological revolution, not just a change in communication technologies. ICTs, by radically transforming the context inwhich moral issues arise, not only add interesting new dimensionsto old problems, but lead us to rethink, methodologically, thevery grounds on which our ethical positions are based" (103).

Traditionally, ethics has largely focused on human agents and their moral decisions.It is seen that 'agency' which is the capacity to act and make choicesis confinedexclusively to human beings. This limitation can lead to an underestimation of the moral significance of actions performed by artificial agents. Consequently, there is a risk of overlooking the fact that non-human systems can also be the source of actions with ethical implications.Floridisuggests that our information ethics (the ethical principles guiding the use of information and technology) should broaden to include examining how artificial agents are designed and how they behave. This is important for understanding new ethical issues in technology.

Addressing Ethical Dilemmas

Floridi proceeds to investigate the ethical impact of Information and Communication Technologies on human life and society. He views that a clear sign of our times is when politicians discuss infrastructure, they are often talking about information and communication technologies (ICTs). The success of businesses and the security of nations in the present age is increasingly dependent on digital data, not physical goods. A society's ability to thrive is tied to its digital infrastructure. These technologies are also a weak point for society, making it vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Although the vulnerability to cyber-attacks is evident, it is more philosophically significant that ICTs have given importance to both 'infraethics' and a fundamental 'equation'(The *Green and the Blue* 85). Modern societies are increasingly reliant on digital information bits rather than physical goods to operate, a shift that affects everything from commerce to international conflicts. Technology has changed things, but a deeper change that has happened is that computers and the internet have introduced a new set of rules for thinking about what is right and wrong (Floridi, *The Fourth Revolution* 190). He explicates "Thus, ICTs place our informationalrelations and interactions at the centre of our lives in a meaningful way. In sodoing, they reveal an aspect of our lives that has always been present but wasmuch less visible in the past: the fact that moral behaviour is also a matter of"ethical infrastructure," or what I have termed infraethics"(*The Green and the Blue* 85).

Floridi suggests we look at the ethical implications of the underlying infrastructure of our digital lives, rather than focusing solely on the individual choices made within it.An important aspect of our morallives has escaped much of our attention. Many concepts and relatedphenomena have been mistakenly treated as if they were only ethical,when in fact they are probably mostly infraethical(*The Fourth Revolution* 190-191). Floridi's

conception of 'Infraethics' suggests a new perspective on how we think about ethics in our increasingly digital world. Infraethics proposes that we need to expand our ethical focus beyond just human actions and their direct impact, to also consider the conditions that aid technologies to exist and function.

Conceptualising Infraethics

Luciano Floridi contributed extensively to the development of the philosophy of information and the conceptualization of Infraethics. His book, *The Ethics of Information,* offers ethical guidelines to help solve problems arising with information technology. While Information Ethics deals with the moral questions of our digital world, Infraethics is a specific branch that examines the basic structures required for ethical behaviour to even be possible. The idea of Infraethics is that the structure of our information environment is an ethical issue. It is not just about what we do online, but about how the online world is built in the first place.Infraethics argues that this infosphere itself has a moral value, and we have a responsibility to maintain its well-being.

Floridi observes that contemporary society is placing ever greateremphasis on a number of concepts, including but not limited to: "trust, privacy,transparency, freedom of expression, openness, intellectual property right, loyalty,respect, reliability, reputation, and so forth".These conceptscan be interpreted and work in practice as infrastructures that are meant to facilitateor make more difficult the agents' moral or immoral behaviours and their evaluation(Durante 176).Floridiaffirms: "These are probably better understood in terms of an infrastructure that is there tofacilitate or hinder (reflection upon) the mi/moral behaviour of the agents involved.Thus, by placing our informational interactions at the centre of our lives, ICTs seemto have uncovered something that, of course, has always been there, but less visiblyso: the fact that the moral behaviour of a society of agents is also a matter of 'ethicalinfrastructure' or simply infraethics" (Floridi, *Protection of Information* 112). These concepts function as an infrastructure that influences people's behaviour. While they do not possess an intrinsic moral value, their moral relevance lies in their ability to either facilitate or hinder ethical and unethical actions. This is the core of Floridi's concept of infraethics.

Pro-ethical Design

Floridi states that our current technology driven age is pushing us to create environments that help us make good ethical decisions. This is not quite the same as 'ethics by design, it is more like 'pro-ethical design.' He states: "Part of the ethical efforts engendered by the fourth revolution concerns the design of environments that can facilitate ethical choices, actions, or process. This is not the same as ethics by design. It is rather pro-ethical design" (*Fourth Revolution* 190). Both approaches are about giving people freedom. Ethics by design aims to simplify the process of selecting what are considered the right choices or actions. Pro-ethical design takes a different approach. Instead of gently pushing

individuals toward what is considered the correct choice, it aims to make them pause and truly think about their decisions. A pro-ethical system, as explained by Floridi, would require an individual to state their preference about being an organ donor as a condition for obtaining a license. The system necessitates a choice, but it does not suggest a specific option. This process forces the individual to reflect and make their own decision. Environments that facilitate ethical choices and processes will be termed ethical infrastructure, or infraethics. The central problem for Floridi is how to properly design such an infrastructure. A system designed to encourage ethical behaviour, called a liberal infraethics, should not be too controlling. Floridi argues that while some level of guidance is necessary for the system to work, it should be as non-paternalistic as possible (190).

The Infraethical Equation

Information and communication technologies have revealed a new kind of ethical issue. To clarify this, Floridi explains that infraethics is a lot like infrastructure. He notes that while the concept isnot complicated, it can be easily confused with similar ideas, and offers an 'equation' to help make it clearer. "In thesame sense in which, in an economically mature society, a business, finance,or management system requires ever-better physical infrastructures (transports,communications, services, etc.) to succeed; likewise, in a matureinformation society, human interactions increasingly require good infraethicsto flourish. Economic affairs are to infrastructure what ethical affairs are toinfraethics. This is the simple "equation" I mentioned above: [economy: infrastructure = ethics: infraethics]" (Floridi, *The Green and the Blue* 86). The key point is that just as infrastructure supports the economy, infraethics supports ethics.

Floridi elaborates further that the 'equation' is more than a simple analogy between infrastructure andinfraethics. He believes that the idea of an infraethics is simple, but can be misleading. Floridi explains the idea of an 'ethical infrastructure' by drawing an analogy to the concept of a 'failed state'. A failed state is defined by more than just a government's inability to perform basic duties like border control, tax collection, administering justice or providing education. It also represents the collapse of the social and political structures that enable a functional society.This breakdown includes the erosion of the rule of law, the loss of reliable financial systems, and a failure to protect human rights. Likewise, the sense of a shared political identity deteriorates, and the ability for different groups to engage in respectful dialogue disappears. Communication channels for peacefully resolving ethnic, religious, linguistic, or cultural tensions cease to function effectively.These expectations, attitudes, and practices - this 'socio-behavioural infrastructure' which are often taken for grantedare necessary for the success of any complex society(86).Floridi explains that Infraethics has afundamental role in human interactions, comparable to that we commonlyattribute to good physical infrastructures with respect to a thriving economy.It plays a crucial role in human interactions, comparable to the one that weare now accustomed to attributing to physical

infrastructures in economics(*Protection of Information* 113).

Just as physical infrastructure like roads and communication networks is critical for economic activity, this socio-behavioural infrastructure is crucial for socio-political stability.Floridistates: "By analogy, it seemstime to acknowledge that the morally good behaviour of a whole population of agentsis also a matter of 'ethical infrastructure' or infraethics. This is to be understood not as akind of second-order ethical discourse or metaethics, but as a first-order framework ofimplicit expectations, attitudes, and practices that can facilitate and promote morallygood decisions and actions.Examples include trust, respect, reliability, privacy, transparency,freedom of expression, openness, fair competition, and so forth(*The Ethics of Information* 272).

Certain concepts and phenomena are often incorrectly considered to be purely ethical. However, they are more accurately described as infraethical, meaning they have a dual-use nature. This implies that they can be used to facilitate both morally good and morally evil outcomes. Floridi explains: "The new equation indicates that, in the same way that, in an economically mature society, business and administration systems increasingly require infrastructures (transport, communication, services etc.) to prosper, so too, in an informationally mature society, multiagent systems' moral interactions increasingly require an infraethics to flourish" (*Protection of Information* 112). A new ethical principle suggests that as societies become more advanced in information technology, the moral interactions within these complex systems increasingly require an infraethics to function properly. Floridi explains that the idea of an infraethics is simple, but can be misleading(*The Fourth Revolution* 191). Infraethics has a dual-use nature, meaning it can both facilitate and hinder good and evil actions to varying degrees. A helpful analogy is to think of infraethics as the lubrication that enables a moral mechanism to function. However, its dual-use nature is not always balanced.

It is most effective when it has a bias toward good, meaning it is more likely to facilitate good actions than bad ones.To clarify this concept, consider the dual-use nature of an infraethics not as a state of perfect balance, like a fair coin with equal chances of landing on heads or tails. Instead, it is better understood as a biased coin, where one outcome is more probable than the other. When an infraethics has a 'biased dual-use' nature, it is easyto mistake the infraethical for the ethical, since whatever helps goodness to flourishor evil to take root partakes of their nature(Floridi,*Protection of Information* 113). A 'biased dual-use'infraethics is so strongly oriented toward one outcome (good or bad) that it is easy to confuse it with a purely ethical concept. This happens because anything that fosters goodness or evil seems to partake in that very nature.

Implicit Risks

Every successful society, whether secular or religious, depends on an implicit infraethics. Floridi believes this presents a risk as the increasing reliance on infraethics can lead to the justification of an ethical system based on the perceived 'value' of its underlying

infraethics. This is a problem because the supportive role of infraethics can be mistaken for its foundation, even aspiring to legitimize it. Floridi asserts "Supporting is mistaken for grounding, and may even aspire to the role of legitimizing, leading to what the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard criticized as mere 'performativity' of the system, independently of the actual values cherished and pursued" (*The Fourth Revolution* 192). This leads to a system focused on performativity, or the mere functioning of procedures, rather than on the actual values the system is meant to uphold. Sometimes, a bureaucratic procedure meant to help people act ethically becomes the main point. The rule itself, not the good behaviour it was supposed to create, becomes what is considered right. Over time, the procedure itself can become the value, giving ethical weight to the behaviour it was originally meant to simply support. Infraethics is the vital syntax of a society, but it is not its semantics, to re-use a distinction we encountered when discussing artificial intelligence. It is about the structural form, not the meaningful contents. In this way, infraethics acts as the vital syntax of a society—the structural form—but not its semantics, which are the meaningful contents (Floridi, *Protection of Information* the right to privacy, 113).

Coherence of Values

Infraethics is thus a set of expectations, attitudes and practices that encourage good decisions and actions.Infraethics is not a complex philosophical discussion, but a fundamental, first-order system.These elements form the foundation for a society to function properly.Floridi believes this ethical infrastructure isnot inherently good or bad. Any successful society, regardless of its moral character, relies on this framework. Even in a society of perfectly moral individuals, rules for collaboration and cooperation would still be necessary for it to operate effectively(*The Ethics of Information* 272-273). A society's success requires both a strong 'infraethics' and a foundation of morally good values.A well-functioning society needs more than just a successful infraethics. It also requires a combination of that infraethics with strong moral values, like civil and political rights.Floridiillustrates this by imagining a society where the underlying social structuressuch as trust, reliability, and transparencyare highly effective. However, if these structures are used to promote harmful values, like those of a Nazi society, the result is still morally corrupt. The system works well, but it is working toward a bad outcome.Conversely, a society with strong moral values, like civil rights, will fail if its infraethics is weak. If the systems for collaboration and cooperation are broken, even good intentions will be ineffective. To explain this pointFloridiuses an analogy of water and pipes. The pipes represent the infraethics. they can be excellent and improve the flow of water. The water represents the moral values. Good pipes will not make bad water good, and the best water is wasted if the pipes are old and rusty. For a society to truly be successful, both the infraethics and the moral values must be strong and work together

(Floridi, *The Fourth Revolution*193).Floridi points out, that for decades, experts in social science and law have extensively studied key factors like education, healthcare, and property rights that help a society function, particularly in developing nations. Yet, research has largely overlooked the concept of 'infraethics', the fundamental framework of trust and respect that facilitates ethical behaviour. Therefore he suggests it is now time to address this gap in research.

Distinguishing Ethics and Infraethics

Infraethics should also not be confused with Marxist theory's structure and superstructure model. The two ideas are fundamentally different.Marxist theory deals with the relationship between economic systems and societal norms, but infraethics is about something else entirely. It refers to the fundamental ethical rules that make actions, both moral and immoral, possible. Put simply, the elements are distinct: one theory concerns the foundation of society, while the other concerns the ethical prerequisites for actions to even take place.The former concerns the distinction between moral actions and the underlying facilitators of those actions. The latter is an economic and social theory(192).

Similarly, infraethics is not meant tobe understood conceptually, that is, it is not a meta-ethical theory or a conceptual ethical system.Infraethics should not be confused with metaethics, which is a philosophical discourse on the nature of values. It is the pre-ethical framework of implicit expectations and practices that can enable or encourage moral decisions.Floridi says that although infraethics is pre-ethical, it is not morally neutral- "Instead, infraethics is a not-yet-ethical but ethically-relevantframework that can facilitate or hinder evaluations, decisions, actionsand situations, which then qualify as ethical or unethical"(*The Green and the Blue* 86-87). Infraethics is not a set of rules. It is a way of thinking that influences how we make ethical choices and act on them.

While infraethics has a dual value (ethical vs. unethical), it is not morally neutral. Floridi analogises it to a taut rope with two people pulling on it from opposite ends. The rope is not moving, but it is under high tension, and the equilibrium is fragile. Similarly, infraethics is always oriented toward either ethical or unethical behaviour. It is not a neutral, unmoving rope; it is an active force that influences outcomes, making the idea of it having no moral influence unrealistic.In the philosophy of technology, it is now commonly accepted that design, in any context, including a societal one, is never ethically neutral. Rather, it always implicitly embodies some values. However,this does not mean that an infraethics simply has a dual value or use, as if itcould both facilitate and hinder moral or immoral behaviour in equal measure,depending on other external factors(*The Green and the Blue* 87). Floridi explains that a bayonet is theoretically capable of performing dual functions, such as cutting bread, but its primary design and purpose are to kill. In the same way, any infraethics can be seen as having a dual purpose in theory. However, if it is a good infraethics, its true nature is to facilitate ethical behaviour.

Therefore, infraethics functions like an oil, ensuring that ethical mechanisms operate smoothly and correctly.Floridi describes it as the 'ensemble of moral enablers' or the 'grease that lubricates the moral mechanism'.Infraethics consists of the structures, protocols, designs, and environments that shape our interactions(88).

Infraethics differs from ethics in that ethics indicates, in the ontocentric perspective, what the moral value consists of and which state of affairs is hence morallypreferable. While ethics governs the axiological evaluation of a situation,infraethics is a set of conditions that facilitate or hinder the accomplishment of amorally qualified situation. In more analytical terms, according to Floridi,infraethics is not an ethics of agents, actions or states, but a set of conditionsthat facilitate or hinder the agents and their choices, the actions and their consequences, the states of affairs and their developments, all of which are morallygood or bad(Durante, 177). Contrary to popular belief, transparency is not an inherent moral good. Instead, it is an infraethical condition that can influence moral outcomes. Transparency can be beneficial when it promotes efficient public resource management. However, it can also be detrimental in an authoritarian regime.

Philip Brey critically points to the lack of justification for universal intrinsic value. Brey questions why Floridi gives everything intrinsic value just for being an information object. He argues Floridi does not offer strong reasons to support theclaim that everything that exists has basic moral worth. He views that the mistake Floridi makes is mixing up the notions of "deserving respect" and "having intrinsic value," wrongly suggesting that we must value objects like sculptures for their own sake. Instead, Brey points out we respect these things because of their extrinsic value, which means their value comes from how useful they are to us or their meaning for humanity(Brey 110–13). Brey suggests that Floridi's attempt to create an ethics of existence lacks the necessary philosophical mechanism to explain how existing suddenly creates a moral obligation. Therefore, Brey concludes that we should treat non-living entities with proper respect, not because they have intrinsic value, but because they are important to us and our lives. He argues that our moral duties toward information objects arise from their relational value to human beings.

Conclusion

This paper examines the key principles of Luciano Floridi. His arguments provide a philosophy for thinking about our modern, information-driven world. In his works, the digital revolution is not treated as a mere technological development. Instead, it is described as a fundamental change to our perception of reality, our sense of self, and the ethical questions we need to ask. This paper attempts to determine how Floridi's key principlesincluding informational ontology, information ethics,the infosphere and the onlife condition contribute to the development of the central concept of Infraethics.This new infraethical conception suggests that our ethical actions are influenced by an underlying 'ethical infrastructure.' While this infrastructure is separate from our personal

moral values, the two are deeply interconnected and depend on each other.Through this Floridi illuminates that a society cannot flourish with strong values alone. It also requires a solid and well-designed ethical infrastructure to implement these values effectively. This calls for a proactive approach, emphasizing pro-ethical design and adaptable legislation that can evolve with our digital reality.

Floridi's concept of Infraethics suggests that ethical thinking in the digital age must expand. It needs to include the fundamental structures of our digital existence.This approach helps us understand our ethical responsibilities too. These duties relate to the design and maintenance of our information environment. Infraethicsencourages us to take a more active role in managing moral issues.Although its abstract nature presents practical challenges, the central idea is essential in the present technological world.This idea is that ethics must consider the foundational conditions of our 'onlife' world. The informational world demands a new ethical imperative. Hence our duty lies not only in how we use technology, but in the cautious design of the ethical foundations that will guide future development.It is insufficient to merely develop technology. The need is to focus on creating the rules and systems (infraethics) needed to make sure everyone can use it in a fair and responsible way.This means giving attention not only to the technical product but also to designing the environment and rules that facilitate moral conduct.

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