Mythos and Postdigital Theology: Beyond the Limits of Digitalization

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Abstract

The effect of digital technologies on religion generally and Christian theology more particular is a topic attracting increasing interest. This article argues that the role of theology is to provide a counter to the tendencies of digitization. Digitization is understood as the division of knowledge into discrete units and valuing this division over models of knowledge that seek to connect and integrate human experiences. The article argues for the need for a postdigital theology that seeks to encounter transcendence in the spaces where human experience exceeds the limits of digitization. Methodologically, the article draws on the interdisciplinary field of postdigital theory. It finds that theology is a work of defracturing or reconnecting forms of human knowledge in weaving together a coherent narrative of human experience that provides hope for relationality in the midst of the destructive tendencies at play in the world. Such defracturing opens a space for an encounter with transcendence, understood in a broad sense that includes encountering the vastness of existence as well as the realm of potentiality from whence liberative hope is fostered. The openness to transcendence that comes from exceeding digitization allows for a theological interpretation of an encounter with the divine within that transcendence. The article then lays a potential framework for such a theological endeavor. This methodological framework is an approach to overcoming the divide between logos and mythos, holding scientific and artistic approaches as equally valid contributions to understanding reality in the production of a religious or theological narrative.

Keywords: Digital theology; digitization; postdigital religion; postdigital theology; transcendence; Walter Ong

Abstrak

Pengaruh teknologi digital pada agama secara umum dan teologi Kristen secara lebih khusus adalah topik yang semakin menarik minat para ahli. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa peran teologi adalah untuk memberikan *counter* terhadap kecenderungan digitalisasi. Digitalisasi dipahami sebagai pembagian pengetahuan menjadi unit-unit diskrit (terpisah-pisah) dan menilai pembagian ini atas model-model pengetahuan yang berusaha menghubungkan dan mengintegrasikan pengalaman manusia. Artikel ini mengemukakan perlunya teologi postdigital yang berusaha menemukan transendensi di ruang-ruang yang di mana pengalaman manusia melampaui batas-batas digitalisasi. Secara metodologis, artikel ini mengacu pada bidang interdisipliner teori postdigital. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa teologi adalah sebuah karya defraktur atau rekoneksi bentuk-bentuk pengetahuan manusia dalam menenun bersama-sama narasi koheren pengalaman manusia yang memberikan harapan akan relasionalitas di tengah kecenderungan destruktif yang bermain di dunia. Defrakturisasi semacam itu membuka ruang untuk perjumpaan dengan transendensi, yang dipahami dalam arti luas yang mencakup perjumpaan dengan luasnya eksistensi serta ranah potensi dari mana harapan liberatif dipupuk. Keterbukaan terhadap transendensi yang berasal dari melampaui digitalisasi memungkinkan interpretasi teologis dari perjumpaan dengan yang ilahi di dalam transendensi itu. Artikel ini mengatasi kesenjangan antara logos dan mitos, memegang pendekatan ilmiah dan artistik sebagai kontribusi yang sama-sama valid untuk memahami realitas dalam produksi narasi agama atau teologis.

Kata Kunci: Teologi digital; digitalisasi; agama pascadigital; teologi pascadigital; transendensi; Walter Ong.

INTRODUCTION

A significant question faced by religion in the age of Internet connection is whether this technology changes the content of religious insight. Moreover, can the Internet technologies themselves be a site of religious encounters? In response, there is a growing field of Digital Religion, led by, among others, the work of Heidi Campbell (2013). This movement has been helpfully surveyed by Cheong (2012). Within my own tradition of Christianity, there is a more recent outgrowth of this movement, Digital Theology. These fields examine how religion generally, in the case of Digital Religion, or within the domain of a specific religious tradition, in the case of Digital Theology, function and adapt in digital circumstances.

While I appreciate the insights of these two academic conversations, I wish to point to some limitations of thinking of religion within a framework of "digitalism." My aim in this article is to identify the contribution that can be made by a postdigital consideration of the religious generally, and for my work as a specifically Christian theologian the role of a postdigital theology. Postdigital theology is a newly emerging field. It draws on current framings of postdigital theory. In particular, my understanding of postdigitalism is informed by the definitions proffered by Peters and Besley (2019), Lewis (2020), and Cramer and Jandrić (2020). All identify "postdigital" as a loosely rather than tightly defined term and postdigital theory as a field that draws from a variety of academic disciplines and methodologies rather than following traditional academic practices of separating disciplines and methods into discrete and completely separated silos of understanding. The "Post-" in postdigital does not, following Sinclair and Hayes (2019), indicate that postdigital theory has moved beyond digitalism, but rather is a movement beyond drawing a sharp binary division between the digital and the non-digital or analog.

A few works of specifically postdigital theology have begun to appear. McLaren (2020, 2021) has written about the divine or the religious in more general terms rather than specifically theologically. Reader (2017, 2021), meanwhile, has explored the relevance of philosophical movements such as New Materialism for a postdigital theology. Perhaps most importantly, Savin-Baden and Reader have edited a collection of approaches to postdigital theological topics from practical and theoretical viewpoints (Reader & Savin-Baden, 2022). Yet clear approaches to methodological frameworks for postdigital theology remain nascent.

This article will contribute to the development of a postdigital theological methodology. More specifically, it is concerned with philosophical contributions to the relationship between digitization and religious understanding. It challenges the primacy of data in the academic hierarchy of knowledge, arguing that while data is the subdividing of knowledge into ever-smaller bits of siloed information, the theological task is one of connecting different types of data into a coherent larger worldview. To make this case, the article will draw on Walter Ong's (2017) understanding of what "digitalization" means in a broader context than simply electronic digitalization, and the limitations of using digitalism as a model for knowledge. From there, I will turn to the ways that postdigital thought can draw on digitalism while also incorporating other forms of knowledge. This postdigital approach opens a space for the religious and a framework for speaking of a postdigital theology.

To frame my thesis more clearly: the digital, by its nature, is unable on its own to carry an encounter with transcendence. Postdigital thought, on the other hand, is able to move through digitalism to be able to speak of transcendence in a variety of forms, including religious experiences that can be mediated through digital technologies. More specifically, the digital is tied closely to *logos,* a logical approach to dividing and ordering information. The task of religion, along with a variety of other fields, is to integrate experience and speak to how it engages understanding that exceeds discrete units of information. In this sense, it is aligned with the Greek concept of *mythos.* A postdigital theology attempts to weave a cohesive

narrative of the relationships and connections inherent in any experience that could constitute a human perception of reality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Religion and Digital Theology

The field of Digital Religion has emerged to survey and analyze how religion engages with electronic digital technologies (H. A. Campbell, 2017), including new religions engendered online as well as older religious traditions that have begun to engage online dimensions (H. Campbell, 2004, 2005; Helland, 2010). Surveying the concerns of this field is helpful in showing how attempts to understand digital technologies are often approached intellectually, particularly from a humanities perspective. At the same time, it reveals limitations to that approach that I contend produce the need for a postdigital framework for an additional engagement with religion in regard to digitization.

Campbell (2013) holds that the term digital religion "describes the technological and cultural space that is evoked when we talk about how online and offline religious spheres have become blended or integrated. We can think of digital religion as a bridge that connects and extends online religious practices and spaces into offline religious contexts, and vice versa." (H. A. Campbell, 2013, pp. 3–4). Campbell thus sees digital religion as moving beyond only online practices but includes how online capabilities interact with religious understandings and practices, whether online or offline. Another important contribution to the study of digital religion is Christopher Helland's distinction between "online religion" and "religion online" (Helland, 2012, 2013). Online religion is religious activity that occurs in an online environment, while religion online refers to the employment of online technologies as a means to engage in offline religious activities. From this basis in digital religion, he identifies four waves of digital study of religion. The first wave describes online activities, while the second develops categories to describe online religious engagement. The third wave is a theoretical level where the relationship of digital culture to religion or theology is considered. The fourth wave considers how the previous ones converge (H. A. Campbell, 2013, pp. 8–10).

While the study of digital religion engages religion generally, specific religions may have more particular engagements with electronic digitization. The Christian theological movement of Digital Theology is one example. Peter Phillips, Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero and Jonas Kurlberg (2019) have given a helpful overview of the digital theology movement. Digital theology, they note, comes out of the study of digital religion, and thus holds to Helland's (2012, 2013) distinction between online religion and religion online. They propose considering four waves of digital theology in echoing Helland's waves and recognizing the specificity of Christian theology. In the first wave, digital technologies are used to teach the traditional academic discipline of theology. Digital considerations do not reach the level of theological consideration in this wave. The second wave incorporates digital technologies into research methodology. Online tools such as data analysis and visualizations become incorporated into methods for theological analysis that can lead to theological consideration. The third wave is an engagement with digital culture. At this level, they explain:

> Digital Theology is about bringing digital culture and theology together at high speed with colleagues from different disciplines (theologians, scientists, artists, coders, computer scientists, sociologists, entrepreneurs, digital humanists, designers) to see what happens, like a theological large hadron collider. Digital Theology is about interrogating classical religious doctrines and determining how they apply within or are changed by contemporary digital culture (Phillips et al., 2019, p. 39).

It is only at this level that theologizing begins to be shaped by digital realities and to constructively reflect on the theological import of the digital reality. The fourth wave is a consideration of digitality in light of theological ethics. This marks a prophetic engagement with the impact of digital movement and technologies, drawing from the theological tradition and theological ethics. The authors note that this is the least developed area of digital theology, although there are some notable works laying foundations for further consideration.

A key assumption behind Digital Religion and Digital Theology is that the advent of electronic digital technologies represents a significant change in human relationality and understanding of the world. Both are also primarily focused on how the use of the electronic digital technologies can be incorporated into the study and teaching of religion, with less emphasis on how those technologies affect religious content and perspectives. By and large they tend to focus either on the onscreen content or the interaction of online and offline content. There is still, however, a divide between online and offline and less emphasis on the embeddedness of electronic digital technologies or digitized thinking into the broader systems of the world.

While I find these approaches of Digital Religion and Digital Theology to be helpful for their aims, I wish to point to a broader need. Digitization, I suggest, needs to be seen in its historical scope more clearly in order to see both continuities and differences coming from electronic digital technologies. This broader scope can reveal the ways that digitization has long shaped human thought, and how religious thought has engaged that digitization in different ways in different periods of human history. A postdigital theology that integrates a wider range of experience is needed. In this sense, postdigital theology is not seeking to replace digital theology, but rather to set the digital within a context that exceeds the digital. My understanding of postdigital will be expanded on in more detail below. At this point, the key point is that in religion, as in many other fields, "digital" too easily refers only to electronic computer-based digitization.

Digitization and its Limits

Ong has produced a helpful meditation to think more broadly about digitization and its implication, both in its historical sweep and its limitations in contemporary discussion. Ong holds that digitization is the division of knowledge into discreet units (Ong, 2017, p. 70). He describes, "Digitization means reduction to separate, numerable, forms, to digits. Knowledge thought of as so reduced we commonly designate as 'information' or 'data' (that is, what is 'given')" (Ong, 2017, pp. 70–71). While digitization is often associated with computers, such division is actually an ancient process. Digitization is a mental movement of making the vastness of perception manageable through concretized symbols to represent the abstraction of numbers. This can be done through computer chips or with one's body parts (Ong, 2017, p. 72).

Indeed, in his brief historical outline of the process of digitization, Ong traces it back to the advent of counting on fingers, or digits. In this move, the abstract ideas of amounts were able to be reduced discrete units of fingers, with the fingers functioning as organic embodied representations of numbers. In this move, the abstract sense of quantity is divided and reduced to a set of more memorable distinct units or digits. Ong sees this move to the hands as the first major stage of digitization (Ong, 2017, p. 74).

Ong (2017) then postulates three major stages of digitization. While one might debate whether this is a sufficient number of major stages or how precisely to describe different stages, his three are on the whole helpful to recognizing what digitization is, how it functions, and what its limitations are. After the move to fingers, Ong identifies writing as the second major stage. The third, meanwhile, is the move to electronic digitization via the computer (Ong, 2017, p. 79). Each of these developments altered human

ways of conceptualizing knowledge and practice. In each step communication was improved. Clarity and specificity of the intended message to be communicated was able to increase. Beyond this, each allowed for social and economic and intellectual changes. Each stage, then, has brought about considerable disruption to the previous social and economic orders through altering capacities for communication. Ong holds that this is not inherently good or bad, but rather a pattern of times of significant change that loses some ways of relating and gains others (Ong, 2017, p. 74).

Key to Ong's concept of digitization is his linking it to the Greek philosophical discussion of *logos.* Ong traces the development of the Greek word *logos,* but the key point for the considerations of this article is that it came to signify the ordering potential of the spoken word. (Ong, 2017, p. 68). Even more notably, it also took on the connotation of computation or accounting. In other words, it was related to digitization in that *logos* was a concept of rational thought that ordered, counted, and divided into discrete units (Ong, 2017, p. 68). This type of speech can be distinguished from the Greek word *mythos,* which referred to rhetoric, poetry, storytelling, and other more artistic rather than rational forms of thought. Philosophically, Plato's *Gorgias* places *logos* as superior to *mythos* (Ong, 2017, p. 69; Plato, 1979). Ong thus places Plato as the intellectual catalyst in the Western tradition for amplifying the importance of digitization by inspiring an emphasis on *logos* over *mythos.* In essence, what might today be termed "scientific" knowledge was elevated to being of greater importance than types of speech and knowledge with a non-rational element. Ong then traces growth of this division in Western thought and practice (Ong, 2017, p. 76).

The dominance of *logos* or logical/rational thought over *mythos*-thinking such as poetics, narrative, ritual, or religion connects directly to digitization. Digitization is primarily the practice of treating things and knowledge as discrete units that can be best understood by breaking them down into the smallest possible parts (Ong, 2017, p. 70). As such, digitization is an enactment of the elevation of *logos* over *mythos* as a type of knowledge.

Digitization certainly has some clear values as an approach to increasing knowledge. Breaking phenomena into ever finer distinctions enables new insights into those phenomena. The scientific method itself may be the best illustration of the ways that digitization empowers new ways of thinking and making sense of the world around us. The value of the understandings brought about by digitization in this broadest sense cannot even begin to be listed or comprehended in their volume. Computers, meanwhile, have allowed digitization to move to previously unfathomable levels. Computers allow for tracking more and more variables and ever finer distinctions, yielding new understandings of patterns with seemingly infinite potential for greater detail. As electronic digital technologies such as computers become more omnipresent globally, it brings with it a push towards global prioritization of *logos* over *mythos,* as those technologies are inherently *logos*-focused.

Despite these advantages, digitization also has limitations in producing knowledge and making sense of the world. Most fundamentally, according to Ong, is that when knowledge is reduced to discrete units of given information – that is, "data" – then knowledge becomes something to be manipulated and controlled (Ong, 2017, p. 71). Such domestication of knowledge centers the human intellect as master of a calculable world. This approach to engaging the world falls short on two levels. The first is that true understanding exceeds breaking the matter at hand into discrete parts and organizing them. Understanding also involves delving into the connectivities and relationalities of the world (Ong, 2017, p. 73). This leads to the second way that reducing knowledge to data falls short. It does not allow for what I would term "transcendence." I include religious experience within this category but other aspects as well. Within transcendence I would ascribe a sense of the massive matrix of relationships, connections, mutual shaping, and co-becoming that constitutes a person's experience of reality. Data can speak to some of the

elements of this matrix, but not the matrix as a whole, nor can data ever capture it as a totality in its massiveness and ever-shifting nature.

Beyond this, transcendence speaks into the realm of potentiality, which data cannot do in that it is information about what is given or already present. Data, in other words, is the result of digitization as an approach to information and knowledge. Ong suggests that it is a logos approach because data and digitization works to order and organize data. *Logos* as logic can only attend to what has already been thought or done (Ong, 2017, p. 84). It may be able to predict from what was what is likely to happen, but it has no capacity to imagine what might be. It cannot entertain a sense of the world otherwise than it has been. In this way it falls short of attending to the human history of revolutionary inventiveness. It also lacks liberating visions of life that come through social activism and artistic vision. *Logos* thus fails to give space for a sense of the divine as possibility, which I will suggest below is a key task of postdigital theology. A significant challenge presented by the growing digitization of the world is the potential for an increased devaluation of *mythos*-oriented types of understanding. These forms of knowledge are fundamental to human culture, meaning creation, and creativity for imagining new and better ways of relating to one another and caring for the needs of the planet.

To return to Ong, considering the limitations of digitization, he argues: "The totality of intellectual and verbal processes escapes computerization insofar as the totality is more than merely rational, beyond even the fuzziest 'fuzzy logic'" (Ong, 2017, p. 82). His argument here is not the rejection of *logos* and data driven approaches to knowledge, but rather to recognize the limitations of that approach. His call is to consider *mythos* as being of equal importance to *Logos.* Art, religion, language study, philosophy, and storytelling are not lesser inquires into understanding the world, as a pejorative use of "soft" and "subjective" as descriptions of these fields imply, but rather are vital contributions that address the limits of digital modes of thinking.

Working in the field of hermeneutics, Ong argues that while digitization is a breaking apart of the world, hermeneutics works to defracture by merging together strands of truth uncovered in various human endeavors (Ong, 2017, p. 83). As a theologian and philosopher of religion, I would suggest that the role of religion and theology is similar. It seeks to make sense of an interconnected would that has been fractured into pieces of information. The theological task is to weave these strands together into a coherent narrative tapestry. It is a work of *mythos* that draws on the insights uncovered through digitization and contributes from it to the conversations springing from the various defracturing disciplines working within *mythos* thought. The move into an electronic stage of digitization simply opens a new framework for weaving that narrative conversation.

The Postdigital

Drawing on Ong's understanding of digitalization and the need to complement it with disciplines of defracturing, it opens the path to my understanding of the role of a postdigital thought. Postdigital in this sense does not mean to move past digitalization, but rather attempts to see the value of digitalization while also seeking to exceed its limitation by incorporating *mythos*-based insights. Indeed, the effects of digital technologies are deeply embedded in every aspect, not only of human lives but also all aspects of the world. At the same time, digital technologies cannot be considered apart from the infrastructures that support them, ranging from the production of materials, the labor that maintains the continuing operation of the technologies, the energy production that powers it, the effect on emotional well-being and affect produced in engagement with digital technologies, and the nature of relationships enabled by digital technologies all must be included. Such considerations require intellectual frameworks that are infused with *mythos*-based

thought. Beyond this, questions of meaning and possibility – the realm of art and religion – are raised by these questions. A postdigital approach is required to weave the complex narrative of the emerging world with its embedded digitization. Postdigital religion allows for a metaphorical re-enchantment of the world (Reader et al., 2021).

Another aspect specific to the term "postdigital" that I find to be important is its political dimension. Petar Jandrić adopted the term from its setting within the arts to combine critical pedagogy with a concern for technology. The term finds inspiration in Nicholas Negroponte's claim, "Face it—the digital revolution is over," in his article "Beyond Digital" in *Wired* magazine (Negroponte, 1998). One frequently cited earlier attempt to describe the term that he co-authored was:

> The postdigital is hard to define; messy; unpredictable; digital and analog; technological and non-technological; biological and informational. The postdigital is both a rupture in our existing theories and their continuation. However, such messiness seems to be inherent to the contemporary human condition… The postdigital challenge posts significant epistemic questions; these are particularly visible in the field of big data and algorithm studies, and the associated perspective of networked learning, which have only begun to assess the individual and social consequences of the mashup of human and non-human activity and the ability to clearly distinguish between the two (Jandrić et al., 2018).

The same article points to a rise in the importance of biology and bio-informational capitalism, algorithms and big data, as well as old and new forms of media. More recently, Jandrić has come to view the multidisciplinary task of postdigital conversation as including not just pedagogy, philosophy, art, and science, but also the religious. He writes,

> Postdigital theory rightfully emphasizes that the digital revolution is over; that biology has become more important than physics; that the digital cannot be thought of without the analog; that contemporary meaning of what it means to be human needs to involve some sort of sociomaterialist correspondence between human and nonhuman actors; that the age of the Anthropocene now requires us to think and work at a planetary level; that processes driving all these phenomena are dialectically intertwined with contemporary capitalism; that we need to approach these questions far beyond traditional boundaries; and much more (Jandrić, 2020, p. 255).

He then adds that within this critical need to work at a planetary level, religion plays a critical role. In other words, the full range of *mythos* thought is needed for a political postdigital theory.

It is this political role of engaging the current situation where planetary life depends upon providing an alternate vision to Anthropocene capitalism that I see the need and role for specifically postdigital theology. Essential to postdigital theology is a multidisciplinary prophetic call to an urgent liberative call for healing that cannot be confined to the human, but rather must speak into the interconnections of life. Postdigital theology is not about online content, but rather planetary interconnections.

Towards a Postdigital Theology

Now that the limitation of digitization as addressing *logos* thought rather than incorporating *mythos* are apparent, it is possible to begin to give shape to an approach to postdigital theology. A central concern is the ability to speak of digital technologies in a manner that builds from a *mythos*-based weaving of understanding out of the *logos* of digitized knowledge. In particular, *mythos* is able to engage concepts of transcendence as they appear in a world of digital technologies.

Some potential elements of a postdigital theology can already be discerned from the preceding discussions of this article. For instance, looking to Ong's theorem of three stages of digitization, some opportunities for theological reflection appear. For Ong, each of the stages of digitization brings new

opportunities to experience human life and connection in new ways through new insights as well as new metaphors to make sense of those insights. This would include new religious and theological understandings. Leaving aside the question of how many stages can be identified, the stages he highlights can be mapped onto religious articulations of encountering the divine.

Framing this from my own Christian theological viewpoint, not in an attempt to make a universal claim but rather to speak from my area of expertise, the first stage of moving from a general sense of amount to the concrete and embodied number representations of the fingers can find an analogous movement in the Christian doctrine of the incarnation. In a broad sense, incarnation refers to a movement of the divine encountered as invisible and mysterious to a concrete and embodied manifestation in the material world. Depending on the form of Christian theology, this manifestation is understood as either exclusively, such as in a Barthian scheme (Barth, 2010) or paradigmatically in, for instance, Tillich's theology (Tillich, 1957) or Process Theology (Cobb & Griffin, 1976), encountered in Jesus of Nazareth. Taken from the viewpoint of digitization, however, the *mythos* thought encountered here is to express the abstraction of divinity in the concrete manifestation of a human. It functions in a parallel manner to the first stage of digitization.

The second stage of digitization in Ong's scheme is from fingers to writing. In Christian theology, the writings of scripture mediate the encounter with the divine. Through the movement of the Holy Spirit, the writings of scripture are capable of become the divine *Logos* in which Jesus Christ is seen as the image of the invisible God (Barth, 2010). Thus, the writings of scripture are holy because they take the indescribable encounter with the transcendence of the divine through words that lead to the concreteness of the incarnation that makes the infinity of the divine comprehendible at least to a degree. In this sense it follows a similar pattern to Ong's stages of digitization. It is particularly interesting and worthy of deeper reflection than is possible here on the implications of the Christian scriptures' identification of Jesus Christ as the incarnated divine *Logos.*

The implication of the parallels of digitization and these doctrines of Christian theology indicated that the new stage of electronic digitization enables a new metaphorical capacity to describe its witness to divine involvement in the world. It is specifically here that postdigital theology is needed. A particularly important aspect of such speaking is the use of *mythos* to address transcendence in its broadest meanings. For example, the ability to speak of the divine in terms of possibility is essential to addressing the political and ecological needs facing the world that cannot be disconnected from the implications of widespread use digital technologies in the service of capitalist interests and repressive tendencies of state control (Trozzo, 2019). Richard Kearney's work on God as possibility may prove to be a helpful tool here (Kearney, 2001). At the same time, even as new metaphors and insights into the divine emerge, the older insights remain and inform those newly emerging understandings. This religious insight follows the same path as digitization, as counting on fingers and using writing remain in effect even as digital electronics alter counting patterns and communication.

CONCLUSION

In concluding, I offer some guidelines for the development of a postdigital theology. I suspect they may be of use to others working on *mythos*-related thinking in postdigital contexts, but at the least they function as methodological guidelines for my own academic theological work. Because postdigital theory is multi-disciplinary and draws from multiple methodologies, my methodology cannot be taken as a definitive methodology but rather a in this sense it is a limited methodology rather than a universal one.

Moreover, the interdisciplinary nature of postdigital theory means that postdigital theology is never singular but always plural. There are always multiple theologies in a postdigital perspective as it addressed a variety of contests and intellectual frameworks. Because of this, my methodology is one approach for creating a narrative integrative framework that is rooted in the Christian tradition but also speaks beyond it. It can be useful for others also seeking to incorporate *mythos* thought into academic theological thought rooted in the Christian tradition, especially in engagement with technological advances, ecological issues, and social/political concerns.

The four elements that I find to be key to framing a postdigital theology are: Postdigital theology employs *mythos* thinking as being of equal value to *logos* thought in producing connective knowledge and highlighting planetary interconnections. Second: postdigital theology is a materialist approach addressing issues of the nexus between the electronic digital revolution, climate change, and the social effects of hypercapitalism. It attempts to weave a cohesive narrative of the relationships and connections inherent in any experience that could constitute a human perception of reality, seeking to foster hope by attending to possibilities that exceed the limitations of the logic of digitization. Third: postdigital theologies are always multiple in that they speak into and out of a multi-subject matrix. A postdigital theology is always understood to be but one perspective. Fourth: postdigital theology addresses transcendence in its broadest sense. Postdigital theology draws on earlier theological traditions but also seeks to articulate an encounter with the divine through new forms of knowledge-empowered by electronic digitization that produce vast amounts of data about the world to be processed.

Through these four elements, it becomes possible for postdigital theology to address the question of whether the content of religious experience is changed by electronic digital technologies and the digital revolution. Postdigital theology is also enabled to engage with broader academic discussions aimed at addressing issues brought about during this age of the digital revolution, contributing to a liberative discourse that imagines new possibilities. Postdigital theology is enabled to provide an inter-woven context for considering the effect of the digital on religion generally and Christian theology specifically.

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