

Keywords: *moral mediators, technology, knowledge as duty, commodification, globalization.*

Abstract: This paper aims at presenting a concise treatment of some key themes of my recent book *Morality in a Technological World. Knowledge as Duty* (Cambridge: Cambridge UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2007). In recent times, non-human beings, objects, and structures – for example computational tools and devices – have acquired new moral worth and intrinsic values. Kantian tradition in ethics teaches that human beings do not have to be treated solely as “means”, or as “things”, that is in a merely instrumental way, but also have to be treated as “ends”. I contend that human beings can be treated as “things” in the sense that they have to be “respected” as things are sometimes. People have to reclaim instrumental and moral values already dedicated to external things and objects. To the aim of reconfiguring human dignity in our technological world I introduce the concept of *moral mediator*, which takes advantage of some suggestions deriving from my previous research on epistemic mediators and on manipulative abduction. I also contend that through technology people can simplify and solve moral tasks when they are in presence of incomplete information and possess a diminished capacity to act morally. Moreover, many external things, usually inert from the moral point of view, can be transformed into what we call moral mediators. Hence, not all of the moral tools are inside the head, many of them are shared and distributed in “external” objects and structures which function as ethical devices. For example we can use external “tools”, like computer or biotechnology, to reconfigure previously given social orders morally unsatisfactory.