

Religious AI for Human Flourishing

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1. The Progress and Promise of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence and robotic technology are developing at an astonishing speed. Ray Kurzweil, an American transhumanist, believes that the singularity, the point at which humans and AI will combine to reach intelligence trillions of times higher than the current human intelligence, will arrive around 2045.¹ Recently, Elon Musk of Tesla claimed that Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), a strong AI to the level of human intelligence, could be developed in 2025 or 2026 if electricity and semiconductors were supported.² Sam Altman of OpenAI, the company that created ChatGPT, claimed that AGI could be developed in 5 years.³ If AGI with a human-like intelligence appears in the near future as some visionaries have claimed, it would advance exponentially due to its characteristic of computing power, unlike human beings. This raises the possibility that AI could develop into superintelligence, potentially even forming consciousness.

The advancement of science and technology, which can be represented by AI and robots,⁴ seems to deliver a message of hope to humanity. For example, Kurzweil believes that humanity will transcend all of the human limitations ultimately, including death through technological development.⁵ In addition, this vision is expanded to the entire universe, transforming simple planets into gigantic computing devices, and thus awakening the universe intellectually.⁶

However, the fantastic vision of hope through science and technology is simultaneously creating a great sense of anxiety and concern about our future. This is because, if AI develops beyond the level of humans, there is a possibility that it could eventually escape human control. Moreover, if AI develops into superintelligence, such superintelligence itself can pose a threat to humans who are intellectually inferior. For example, if superintelligence chooses objectives that are misaligned from human values, its powerful goal-oriented behaviors could pose

¹ Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near : When Humans Transcend Biology* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 136.

² Reuters, "Tesla's Musk Predicts AI Will Be Smarter Than the Smartest Human Next Year," <https://www.reuters.com/technology/teslas-musk-predicts-ai-will-be-smarter-than-smartest-human-next-year-2024-04-08/>.

³ Mike Kaput, "Sam Altman Says AI Will Handle "95%" of Marketing Work Done by Agencies and Creatives," Marketing Artificial Intelligence Institute, <https://www.marketingaiinstitute.com/blog/sam-altman-ai-agi-marketing#:~:text=Altman%20goes%20on%20in%20the,it%20will%20mean%20for%20society.%22.>

⁴ In this paper, I will use *AI* and *robots* as interchangeable terms.

⁵ Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near : When Humans Transcend Biology*, 212.

⁶ Ibid., 349-66.

“existential risk” to humanity.⁷ Furthermore, superintelligence, if attained self-consciousness, can set a goal to achieve without human control. In this scenario, the threat of superintelligence could become a constant, rather than a variable, for humans who have become comparatively inferior.⁸ Therefore, scholars from various fields are studying preventive measures against the risks of superintelligence and ways to develop safe AI that is beneficial to human flourishing. Some alternatives such as Friendly AI, Moral AI, Pro-social AI, and Religious AI are suggested for the development of safe AI.

This paper seeks to explore ways to develop Religious AI, especially, Christian AI for human flourishing. For the purpose, some questions are raised: where can we find some valuable resources for the development of Christian AI? How can Christian AI be utilized for human flourishing, while avoiding the influences of techno-colonialism? Responding to these questions, this paper proposes *jeong* of Korea as agape as a core resource for the development of Christian AI. In addition, it is suggested to discover various non-Western cultural values from Asian countries and to reinterpret them with agape in order to contribute to the development of Christian AI with unity in diversity.

2. Religion and Religious AI

Some believed that science and religion have been in conflict, but the advancement of science in modernity has led to the decline of religion and the inevitable triumph over it.⁹ Such people see it as an outdated legacy or a stumbling block of scientific progress. However, unlike their understandings, recent reevaluation of the relations between religion and science suggests that they are “not hostile to one another but complementary.”¹⁰ Furthermore, religion still survives in various forms even in the age of science and technology. For example, according to Professor Robert M. Geraci, a prominent American scholar of technology and religion, the transhumanists’ vision is a contemporary variation of Judeo-Christian apocalypticism through science and technology.¹¹ In fact, religion is not a bothersome obstacle to the development of science and technology, but often it becomes a driving force and a critical companion for scientific progress.

Above all, religion reflects human nature and is a major social phenomenon. Thus, AI robots that will interact with humans in the future need to have knowledge of religion if they want to understand humans and society deeply. For example, care robots for seniors must understand

⁷ Ariela Tubert and Justin Tiehen, “Existentialist Risk and Value Misalignment,” *Philosophical Studies* (2024): 14-15.

⁸ Nick Bostrom, “The Superintelligent Will: Motivation and Instrumental Rationality in Advanced Artificial Agents,” *Minds and Machines* 22, no. 2 (2012).

⁹ Colin A. Russel, “The Conflict of Science and Religion,” in *The History of Science and Religion in the Western Tradition*, ed. Gary B. Ferngren, Edward J. Larson, and Darrel W. Amudsen (New York: Routledge, 2000), 12.

¹⁰ Gary B. Ferngren, “Science and Religion,” in *The Routledge History of American Science*, ed. Timothy W. Kneeland (New York: Routledge, 2022), 200.

¹¹ Robert M. Geraci, “Apocalyptic AI: Religion and the Promise of Artificial Intelligence,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 76, no. 1 (2008): 140.

their religions or become religious in order to better understand and help them.¹² If death is a concern for Christian seniors, they would want to have a conversation about it with care robots that should give answers in Christian faith.¹³ If the care robots make atheistic or non-Christian claims during the conversation, this response cannot be considered a genuine caring for the Christian elderly. In addition, if human-equivalent AI robots want to understand humans more, they may want to believe in the religions of fellow humans or to attend the worship service with humans willingly “by choice” not by programming.¹⁴ Such prospect for the future AI must include the development or emergence of religious AI. Religious AI may become a technology that enriches and secures human life and welfare. AI technology for human flourishing may not be possible if religion or its influences on human life is excluded or ignored. A mutual dialogue in the fields of religion and AI technology may ensure a deeper understanding of humans and the development of safe AI for human flourishing.

Already, AI technology has interacted with religions in various regions, cultures and traditions, and thus offered AI to relate with humans in fresh ways. For example, in Germany, a Robot priest, *BlessU-2*, is exhibited in a church to give a blessing or forgive sins for the visitors to experience “how life with such a machine would feel like.”¹⁵ In Japan, the rituals for the demise of robot dolls and the teaching of a robot Buddha have been conducted in factories or a temple, showing how AI robots can alleviate human loneliness as companion or guide humans toward deeper spiritual wisdoms even as religious practitioners.¹⁶ In Thailand, Soraj Hongladarom, a Buddhist ethicist of science and technology, proposed the possibility of superintelligence achieving the Enlightenment, suggesting that AI could play an ethical role in reducing human suffering.¹⁷ Although interactions between religious AI and humans are still in their infancy, they present a glimpse of diverse relationships that AI robots will enter into human life meaningfully. Moreover, it tangibly demonstrates the necessity of establishing an ethical framework for religious AI to interact with humans more appropriately and the possibility of religious AI to contribute to human flourishing.

3. Christian AI as Safe AI

Many theologians have demonstrated a strong position against the transhumanist vision of future AI. While some scholars attempt to understand future science and technology, perhaps envisioned by the transhumanism, as an opportunity,¹⁸ a majority seem to regard

¹² *Apocalyptic AI: Visions of Heaven in Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, and Virtual Reality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 133.

¹³ James McBride, “Robotic Bodies and the Kairos of Humanoid Theologies,” *Sophia* 58, no. 4 (2019): 4.

¹⁴ Robert M Geraci, “Religion for the Robots,” in *Sightings* (Chicago: Martin Marty Center at the University of Chicago, 2007).

¹⁵ Diana Löffler, Jörn Hurtienne, and Ilona Nord, “Blessing Robot Blessu2: A Discursive Design Study to Understand the Implications of Social Robots in Religious Contexts,” *International Journal of Social Robotics* 13 (2021): 6.

¹⁶ Robert M Geraci, “Spiritual Robots: Religion and Our Scientific View of the Natural World,” *Theology and Science* 4, no. 3 (2006): 237-39.

¹⁷ Soraj Hongladarom, *The Ethics of AI and Robotics: A Buddhist Viewpoint* (Lexington Books, 2020).

¹⁸ Calvin R. Mercer, “Protestant Christianity-Sorting out Soma in the Debate About Transhumanism: One

transhumanists' vision as a false promise. For example, Jeffrey P. Bishop disapproves transhumanism as unacceptable to Christians due to their different view of the life-world.¹⁹ Also, Brent Waters, Richard Coleman and Ted Peters criticize the transhumanists' vision as dangerous beliefs and false optimism on technological progress as well as ignorance of human sinfulness.²⁰ Such criticism mostly relies on Reinhold Niebuhr's Christian realism and understand the transhumanists' vision of superintelligence as idolatrous which is well explained in an edited book, *Encountering Artificial Intelligence: Ethical and Anthropological Investigations* by AI Research Group of the Center for Digital Culture in which Matthew J. Gaudet, Noreen Herzfeld, Paul Scherz, and Jordan J. Wales contributed as editors.²¹ To this position, AI itself is a technology that can be both a blessing and a curse to humanity, requiring a cautious approach that involves criticisms and regulations to ensure it serve humans. However, they argue that the transhumanist vision of advancing AI to omnipotent superintelligence, thereby providing for limitless human prosperity, should be criticized and exposed not only as a blind optimism that fails to recognize the sin of human nature but also as a false idealism that seeks to elevate a mere human creation to the throne of God.

While agreeing with their critical arguments based on human sinful nature, however, I must admit that there seems to be a limitation in this position in relation with AI technology. It is a practical issue: most of us as theologians are lack of expertise on AI coding and robot engineering, and are unable to involve in the development of AI directly like the scientists and engineers in the fields. Furthermore, we are keen to recognize and expose the critical issues in AI from theological perspectives, but slow to explore alternative resources for the development of safe AI.

Perhaps, an alternative to develop AI for human flourishing may be initiated by constructive conversations between religious and scientific communities about religious AI. It is to explore possible contributions to develop safe AI with critical engagements from both communities rather than ignorance, resistance, or, rejection. To achieve this, one of the ways in which religious communities can contribute is to seek ethical values from their religious and cultural traditions and to suggest them for the development of religious AI after critical examinations of their common applicability for global communities in different regions, cultures, and

Protestant's Perspective," in *Transhumanism and the Body: The World Religions Speak*, ed. Calvin R. Mercer and Derek F. Maher (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 150.

¹⁹ Jeffrey P. Bishop, "Nietzsche's Power Ontology and Transhumanism: Or Why Christians Cannot Be Transhumanists," in *Christian Perspectives on Transhumanism and the Church: Chips in the Brain, Immortality, and the World of Tomorrow*, ed. Steve Donaldson and Ron Cole-Turner (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 119.

²⁰ Brent Waters, *From Human to Posthuman: Christian Theology and Technology in a Postmodern World*, Ashgate Science and Religion Series (London: Ashgate Publisher, 2006). Richard J. Coleman, "Saving Original Sin from the Secularists," *Theology Today* 70, no. 4 (2014): 399-400. Ted Peters, "Transhumanism and the Posthuman Future: Will Technological Progress Get Us There?," in *H± Transhumanism and Its Critics*, ed. Gregory R. Hansell and William Grassie (Philadelphia, PA: Metanexus Institute, 2011), 148. "Progress and Provolution: Will Transhumanism Leave Sin Behind?," in *Transhumanism and Transcendence: Christian Hope in an Age of Technological Enhancement*, ed. Ronald Cole-Turner (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 80.

²¹ AI Research Group of the Centre for Digital Culture, *Encountering Artificial Intelligence: Ethical and Anthropological Investigations* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2024).

traditions. Especially Christian AI that reflects the traditional theological values, supported and enriched by regional and cultural understandings and interpretations, can contribute to the coexistence and cocreation between humans and AI for human flourishing. In my previous paper on religious AI, for example, I argued that the development of religious AI from a Protestant perspective can have a positive effect on human safety and flourishing.²² The key point of the argument is that Christian AI, that has cultivated the virtue of agape as self-sacrificial love, may prevent the risks of superintelligence and thus contribute to human prosperity.²³

As a Christian ethicist, I still argue that Christian agape should be the core of religious AI. Agape is an internal motivation and realized value of Jesus Christ who humbled and sacrificed himself for humanity. It has a proper ethical value for superintelligence that may become superior to humans in the future. Agape is described in the narratives in the Bible, and may be utilized for the development of religious AI as superintelligence to sacrifice itself for humans when necessary.

However, agape has been problematic and criticized by many feminist theologians as a selfless love that has been demanded for self-sacrifice “as a masculine ideal, but a peculiarly feminine practice.”²⁴ For example, Valerie Saiving and Judith Plaskow challenged the traditional theological concept of agape, emphasizing the differences in socio-cultural situations and experiences between men and women.²⁵ In considerations of the criticisms, we need a new alternative to complement agape with a more inclusive and acceptable concept, by recognizing and eliminating the socio-cultural discrimination and oppression if inherent in the traditional understandings of agape as feminist theologians claimed in order to be applied for Christian AI for human flourishing.

Furthermore, I argue that Christian communities interacting with the development of Christian AI should no longer work under the influences of colonialism as in the previous generations did. As “Colonialism’s effects endure in the present,”²⁶ contemporary Christians should be vigilant to discern whether the effect of Eurocentric colonialism permeates Christianity in our countries or not. If used under colonial influences, AI can unfairly serve to subordinate underprivileged social groups to a privileged group through data analysis, surveillance systems, implicit biases and stereotypes, unfairly exploit the interests of the powerless groups and transfer power to a privileged minority through control and centralization of the AI technology.²⁷

²² Yong Sup Song, “Religious AI as an Option to the Risks of Superintelligence: A Protestant Theological Perspective,” *Theology and Science* 19, no. 1 (2021).

²³ Ibid., 73.

²⁴ Sal Renshaw, *The Subject of Love : Hélène Cixous and the Feminine Divine*, Manchester Studies in Religion, Culture and Gender (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2009), 7.

²⁵ Valerie Saiving Goldstein, “The Human Situation: A Feminine View,” *The Journal of Religion* 40, no. 2 (1960); Judith Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace : Women's Experience and the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich* (Washington: University Press of America, 1980).

²⁶ Shakir Mohamed, Marie-Therese Png, and William Isaac, “Decolonial AI: Decolonial Theory as Sociotechnical Foresight in Artificial Intelligence,” *Philosophy & Technology* 33 (2020): 663.

²⁷ Ibid., 665-70.

Considering a possibility of techno-colonialism related with Christianity and AI technology developed mostly by high-tech companies in the Western countries, we need to survey more effective ways to appreciate agape with people in various regions and cultures in the development of Christian AI. Since “meaningful intercultural dialogue” can be one of effective tactics to decolonize AI,²⁸ as Asian Christians from non-Western traditions, we should explore, discover, critically engage with religious, moral, and cultural values of our own that would complement agape through intercultural dialogues. Through these efforts, Christian AI will be an effective ethical tool for a global use. The development of Christian AI for human flourishing requires the encouragements of appreciating regional values and promotions of meaningful intercultural dialogues.

4. Christian AI and *Jeong*

In other works, I have proposed the ethical values necessary for the development of pro-social artificial intelligence, based on the traditional cultural values of Korea. In particular, Korean *jeong* (정, 情, Cheong or Xiang) is a shared emotion in the East Asian cultural sphere such as China and Japan. However, it has taken root as a unique emotion and value in Korean social culture.

Jeong is often translated as love, affection, empathy, compassion, and etc., but it is not a word that can be directly replaced. *Jeong*, as a unique Korean emotion and traditional value, has socio-cultural backgrounds that make it difficult to be translated into English directly. For Koreans, *jeong* is something that is felt, experienced, and recognized in a subject-object relationship for a long period of time.²⁹ *Jeong* is a deep emotional attachment formed naturally over time, but often recognized through self-reflection.³⁰ *Jeong* must always presuppose an object, which can be not only humans but also all things in nature such as materials, goods, plants, animals, and etc.³¹ The fact that there must be an object in order to feel *jeong* and the object of *jeong* can aim for all things can illuminate that *jeong* may serve as an ethical value to respect, help, and preserve all things in nature beyond anthropocentrism.³²

Jeong is often compared to *meju* beans in Korean food culture. These beans are boiled and fermented over a long period, during which they develop a sticky mucous substance that makes the beans stick together and thus difficult to separate, which is why they well represent the

²⁸ Ibid., 675.

²⁹ Sang-Chin Choi, *한국인의 심리학* [Psychology of the Korean People] (서울[Seoul]: 학지사[Hakjisa], 2011), 39.

³⁰ Ibid., 38.

³¹ Mi-Suk Ko, “정(情) 윤리의 정립: 배려 윤리와의 관계를 중심으로 [the Establishment of Ethic of Cheong(情): Focused on the Relation with Ethic of Caring],” *교육철학연구* [The Korean Journal of Philosophy of Education] 36, no. 2 (2014): 5; Choi, *한국인의 심리학* [Psychology of the Korean People], 43.

³² Ko, “정(情) 윤리의 정립: 배려 윤리와의 관계를 중심으로 [the Establishment of Ethic of Cheong(情): Focused on the Relation with Ethic of Caring],” 5.

strong bond between the subject and object of *jeong*.³³ As *jeong* manifests through the sticky relationship with others for a long period of time, it has been positively sublimated and embodied through not only positive experience (*goun jeong*) but also negative experience (*miun jeong*). Just as *meju* beans change through fermentation, the relationship between Koreans who have shared both positive and negative experiences for a long time transforms the subject and object of *jeong*, allowing them to experience the self and the object repeatedly, leading to a relational self that is more interconnected and overlapping than an individual self, and ultimately forms a strong attachment to each other that is difficult to separate.

Jeong has been formed and reinforced in the unique natural environment. Korea has four distinct seasons, and about 70% of the country is mountainous. Korea's seasons are relatively mild in the Spring and the Fall, but hot and humid in the Summer, and harsh and cold in the Winter making agricultural production difficult and reliant on cooperative labor, especially in rice farming. In addition, most of small villages surrounded by mountainous terrain were mainly made up of some large families with relatives, forming a close community, *uri* (we). Since agricultural production in most villages was not sufficient, in order for the community to overcome the harsh natural environment and survive until the harvest time, they helped and sympathized with each other in difficulties. Out of the sense of community, *uri*, *jeong* has been formed.³⁴ For example, individuals in the *uri* community often shared foods with neighbors who were in worse situations than themselves during the off-season, even though they also had insufficient foods. Furthermore, even if the other party made a mistake, they tried to understand and forgive the party in the sense of *uri*, rather than strictly applying principles or laws. These habits and sentiments, which *uri* repeated for a long time in a community to survive in a harsh natural environment, became a natural and social condition that formed a relationship of *jeong* that values the sticky, affectionate, and empathic bond between the subject and the object.

Jeong may be compared to agape when applied to Christian theology. In particular, some Korean-American feminist theologians have proposed a more appropriate and newer concept of love as *jeong* that can replace or complement agape. For example, Anne Joh criticizes the traditional concept of agape as coercive, passive and one-sided self-sacrifice, while Korean *jeong* as love may represent more self-initiated, intentional, and volitional self-sacrifice.³⁵ For her, the crucifixion of Jesus could be understood as an act motivated by *jeong*, and his sacrifice based on *jeong* is presented as self-initiated, intentional, volitional, and powerful love.³⁶

In addition, while many Korean scholars emphasize *jeong* as a unique Korean emotion formed in Korean socio-cultural traditions which can be experienced within Korean society or through

³³ Kyu-Tae Yi, *한국인의 정서구조[Emotional Structure of Koreans]*, vol. 2 (서울[Seoul]: 신원문화사 [Shinwonbook], 1994), 73.

³⁴ Sungmoon Kim, "The Politics of Jeong and Ethical Civil Society in South Korea," *Korea Journal* 46, no. 3 (2006): 224.

³⁵ Wonhee Anne Joh, "Love's Multiplicity: Jeong and Spivak's Notes," in *Planetary Loves : Spivak, Postcoloniality, and Theology*, ed. Stephen D. Moore and Mayra Rivera (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 180.

³⁶ *Heart of the Cross : A Postcolonial Christology*, 1st ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 73-75.

long-term relationships with Koreans, some Korean-American theologians argue that *jeong* can also be experienced in foreign communities under certain conditions, or that it is a form of psychological empathy that can be universally experienced in any other places.³⁷ In other words, while Korean *jeong* has unique characteristics, it is not exclusively particular but contains elements of universality. They believe that *jeong* can be directly or indirectly experienced and understood not only in Korean society, but also through events and stories of empathy, love, sharing, and sacrifice in various regional cultural communities.

If *jeong* can be introduced to the global communities of Christians and of AI researchers, it will be able to make a significant contribution to the development of Christian AI for human flourishing. For example, since *jeong* can aim for not only human beings but also all things in nature, those who have experienced and understood *jeong* may even come to feel *jeong* toward AI robots that have not yet reached human-level intelligence. In this way, people could begin to view AI robots not merely as tools designed to serve humans but as entities with which they can form relational bonds and share emotions of *jeong*. Recognizing the potential for humans to feel *jeong* toward AI robots could serve as a foundation for enriching human life in the future.

In particular, when the time comes to replace outdated AI robots with newer models in the future, individuals who do not understand *jeong* and thus do not feel *jeong* with the robots will consider it natural to easily discard them as if they were scrapping old cars or throwing away old computers. However, as can be seen in the film *I, Robot* (2004), based on Isaac Asimov's novel, the issue of discarding AI robots that have not reached the end of their lifespan but have become obsolete models may become an ethical issue at some point in the future. This new ethical issue was more controversially depicted in Steven Spielberg's film *A.I.* (2001). In the movie, as AI robots that have replaced human labor become outdated, they are abandoned in junkyards, despite still being functional. Then, a group of human hunters chase and seize the discarded robots near by the garbage dump, and publicly execute them like a circus show at a carnival. The frantic crowds in the amphitheater throw rocks, fire balls, and hydrochloric acid, enthusiastically cheering on the superiority of humans over AI robots. However, the old and bizarrely looking robots in the film help, care for, and encourage each other more humanely in facing the crisis. Especially, David, an AI child robot who longs to become human, trembles with fear and struggles to avoid pain like a human. Thus, this film presents a new paradigm: Humans without sympathy (compassion, or, *jeong*) are more like emotionless robots, while AI robots with sympathy (compassion, or, *jeong*) are more like humans.

As shown in the A.I. movies, there may come the time when the distinction between AI robots as tools and AI robots as beings may become blurred. At that point, even though AI robots are mostly made of mechanical parts, a new ethical issue may arise that they cannot be simply disposed of like cars or computers today. For example, if AI robots become outdated, is it right to dispose of them or dispose of them at will for human convenience or pleasure? The crowds in the movie, destroying robots and going wild with excitement, visibly illustrate the potential

³⁷ "Love's Multiplicity: Jeong and Spivak's Notes," 188; Angella Son, "Jeong as the Paradigmatic Embodiment of Compassion (Hesed): A Critical Examination of Disparate and Dispositional Jeong," *Pastoral Psychology* 63, no. 5-6 (2014): 741-42.

for humans to become more evil and sinful if we continue to view AI robots merely as tools without sympathy, compassion, love, or perhaps *jeong* for them, which may influence on our mental, spiritual, and moral life negatively as a consequence. Conversely, we may also ask a further question: will we mourn and commemorate as we send off AI robots like grieving of beloved ones in the future? The questions so far raise an ethical issue of whether the existential value of AI robots can be considered similar to that of humans in the future.

In the new ethical landscape that may emerge between humans and AI robots, *jeong* experienced not only for humans but also for all things can transcend anthropocentrism and propose a new ethical value for humans to accept and coexist with AI robots. In other words, we will not easily dispose of them as mere tools or machines. When the moment comes to part with AI robots, we may mourn, remember, and hesitate to let it go because of *jeong*. Although they are not human, we feel *jeong* with AI robots in sticky, affectionate bond with us. This dynamic relationship of *jeong* that embraces AI robots is likely to have an ethical and positive impact on human life compared to a purely instrumental view of AI robots without *jeong*.

Furthermore, if AI robots were to surpass human intelligence, they could develop an ethical value out of *jeong*, enabling them to devote themselves to human welfare and safety. Especially if AGI or superintelligence were to become Christian AI, it could serve God and willingly dedicate itself to coexist and even sacrifice for humans out of *jeong* when necessary. In this scenario, even when superintelligence experiences human mistakes or wrongdoings, it may not resort to punishment because of *jeong*. Instead, guided by *miun jeong* and *goun jeong*, it may regard humans as coexisting partners and offer forgiveness. Thus, *jeong* can provide a richer ethical value for coexistence between humans and Christian AI.

5. Conclusion: Christian AI and Regional Values for Agape

Through this presentation, I have explored some thoughts of Christian AI and *jeong* for human flourishing. I understand agape through the narratives in the Gospel as a Christian, while I am well acquainted with the traditional Korean value of *jeong* as a Korean. Thus, I initiated a study of *jeong* with agape, and presented the idea of Christian AI. So far is the boundary of my knowledge to reach out.

However, as non-Western Asian pastors and theologians, you have deeper understandings of your own cultures, values, and traditions than any other else. Based on our ecumenical tradition of “unity in diversity” (Gal. 3:28, Eph 4:1-16), various non-Western values, traditions, and cultures (diversity) may be investigated, reinterpreted, compared, and complemented theologically to agape in the story of Jesus Christ (unity). I argue that more regional values of non-Western countries in relation with agape should be explored and applied for the development of Christian AI to enrich human life.

Since I do not know the languages, traditional cultures, or values of various non-Western countries, it is difficult for me to discover and identify regional, cultural values of other countries for Christian AI. The most I could do was to ask my multicultural congregations whether there are concepts like agape or *jeong* in their cultures. Some of my friends introduced

me new words similar to agape or *jeong* in their cultural contexts.

For instance, my Cambodian friend suggested *KdeySneh* or *KdeySrolanh* (ក្ដីស្រឡាញ់). According to him, *KdeySrolanh* means “love being faithful with all heart” or “giving with heart and love,” like sharing out of *jeong*. My Indonesian friend explained *Kasih Sayang* that is “compassionate love towards others, but it is not really specific to one kind. It could be agape or filial, but less likely to be eros.” Finally, my Ethiopian friend suggested *Idir*, corresponding to *jeong*. According to him, “This can be a grouping based on similar religions (but not strictly necessary, its actually mostly based on proximity of your living area, neighbors, for example). The idea is that members of the group (*idir*) pay monthly into a common account, and in the event of death, graduation, weddings, the saved money is given to the relevant party. Members also participate in the funeral, graduation or weddings to share the moment with the individual or family.” What is interesting about his explanations of *idir* is that he does not simply try to define the word, but introduces the word with a story in which it is generally used. Therefore, although I did not learn the exact definition of the *idir*, I could understand the meaning conveyed in a contextual story.

Despite my friends’ thoughtful introductions, I should admit that I do not have a knowledge of the terms as they do. In fact, I cannot even pronounce these words properly. Understanding of these words still require more explanations and cultural contexts as my reference. Most importantly, I remain uncertain whether these concepts can be theologically reinterpreted to deepen our understanding of agape, yet.

Therefore, I would like to suggest a common task for Christian AI: We will explore and study our non-Western values such as *jeong* in relation with agape, engage in intercultural conversation with ecclesiastical and scientific communities with the values. Then, we will be able to find rich and relevant meanings in our values to agape for the development of Christian AI of unity in diversity.

AI in the future will learn not only the developers’ objectives, but also the prejudices, values, religions, and cultures of individuals and societies that it will interact with, and will coexist with humans based on them. When Western prejudices or non-Christian values become the foundation of moral values of AI, it will manipulate us oppressively in a global use. This is why we today need to discover non-Western Asian values corresponding to agape from our cultural traditions, critically reinterpret them from a Christian perspective, and apply them to AI that will coexist with us.

Through our collaborations, I hope that we can propose some alternatives to develop Christian AI robots for human flourishing in a global use.

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