

Philosophical Discourse on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Divine Creation and Human Stewardship

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Abstract

The overwhelming challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI) grow exponentially faster with its adaption into modern life. Growing philosophical, religious and ethical questions arise as people ponder about the role and stewardship over creation as the divine touches of humanity. The core focus in this article attempts to answer the most pertinent question regarding the issue: 'Is developing AI considered faithful beholding the humanity cooperation with divinity or bringing in the risk of disordering pivotal moral and spiritual values enshrined in Religions'? It tries to understand the deep inquiries by exploring the God-given human endowments comprising stewardship of the, society based on liberal equity and ecological justice, dignity, and sustainability. The development brings forth the instance of human dignity by concentrating ecology and balance above all else, or does unconditionally rely endangering them instead? The focus pointedly attempts to address a contradiction juxtaposed between boundless creative capabilities of humans separated from the commons ethical mechanical rule. In exploring this sensitive emphasis, the paper offers an intricate combination of philosophical, religious and ecological frameworks toward the urgent appeal of redefined responsibility and collaboration to operate dignifiedly rational moral frameworks AI calls for beyond notions aligned solely to human existence and planetary speculations.

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Introduction

AI is emerging as a disruptive technology that has the potential to transform societies, offering new opportunities and challenges. Its occurrence beckons

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introspection, especially through the vantage points of divine authorship and human custodianship. From a philosophical perspective, the intersection of AI and these concepts demands careful examination, as it probes humanity's role as both creators of technology and custodians of the Earth. This article delves into the philosophical implications of AI in the context of divine creation and human stewardship, considering theological, ethical, and practical dimensions. This paper also explores whether AI development aligns with the theological concept of co-creation and how humanity can ensure ethical stewardship in its advancement.

Divine Creation and Human Creativity

To create is not just a basic need but is also an injunction of the act of creation, such as in the Judeo-Christian tradition in which humanity is created *imago Dei* 'in the image of God', which in part means the ability to create, innovate (Genesis 1:26-28, New International Version). It is this creative capacity that emerges in our development of AI — it is humanity's ambition to emulate divine characteristics such as wisdom, problem solving, and care for creation. But this ability also brings questions about limits and responsibilities.

AI, from a theological perspective, can also be considered an extension of creation by the divine; a human innovation through which we participate in the ongoing telos of God. However, this viewpoint demands prudence. Technology is not morally neutral (Verbeek, 2011); it molds human values and is molded by them. The advancement of AI thus should take place in accordance with principles of divine purpose that lead to practices of fairness, mercy, and flourishing, and not exploitation or harm.

While the main premise of Christian theology perceives AI as an illustrative example of human creativity and imagination as an expression of the *imago Dei*—the image of God—in which the humanity's moral and creative faculties are bestowed upon them, other religion perspectives enrich this discourse further. In Islam, people are considered to be *Khalifa* (stewards or vicegerents) on Earth and the creation of AI might be viewed as being part of this divine trust as long as it meets the criteria of justice (*adl*) and compassion (*rahma*). In Jewish thought, that of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world), AI might be construed as social enhancement provided that it does not violate the dignity preserving ethical boundaries, and the dignity of life. Meanwhile in Buddhist philosophy, the development of wisdom (*prajna*) and compassion (*karuna*) brings forth the question of whether these attributes can be

exhibited or assisted by AI without deepening attachment or suffering. These views, together, highlight that AI is not simply a technological genie in a bottle but rather a moral and spiritual enterprise—one that can attune or mis-tune to divine or cosmic order depending on the principles and values wired in its design and employment.

Human Stewardship in the Age of AI

Human stewardship, a term drawn from religious and philosophical traditions, describes humanity's responsibility to oversee the Earth and the beings that populate it. This integral role includes managing resources responsibly, protecting the Earth and promoting community welfare. AI can help address some of the most pressing challenges we face as a society, including climate change, poverty, and health disparities, thus adding new dimensions to this stewardship.

AI systems, for example, can optimize agricultural practices in the fight against hunger or model climate scenarios to inform policies (Rolnick et al., 2019). At the same time, that same technology can amplify inequities, entrench biases, or facilitate environmental harm if misapplied (Bender, Gebru, McMillan-Major, & Shmitchell, 2021). Humans have this responsibility as stewards to make sure AI can benefit the common good and align the behavior of the technology with ethics.

The emerging uses of AI for social and environmental stewardship are striking examples of how technology can also be co-created responsibly. In Kenya, Rainforest Connection's AI-powered tools use machine learning with old smartphones to illegally log activities in real-time by analyzing the sounds of the forest canopy, preserving biodiversity and indigenous habitats. Also, Google's DeepMind with the UK's National Grid has optimized energy consumption, more accurately predicting carbon emissions with AI, contributing to global efforts to mitigate climate change. Socially, AI has also been put to use in more noble causes, for example, during crises, the UNHCR actively uses machine learning to allocate resources for refugees ensuring fairness and efficiency. All these examples show that AI can perform not just a functionalistic role, but on moral action—provided ethical and theological principles that guide the system prioritize life, the environment, and compassion. These case studies highlight a constructed approach to AI grounded in theology and guided by ethics that transcends Sharon's theory into tangible service for our common home and the neglected.

Ethical Tensions and Divine Accountability

The philosophical discourse on AI also involves navigating ethical tensions. One significant challenge is the issue of autonomy. AI systems, particularly those employing machine learning, can operate in ways that are opaque to their creators, raising concerns about accountability and agency. If AI operates in ways that cause harm, who is responsible—the designer, the deployer, or society at large?

From a theological perspective, the idea of divine accountability adds a layer of complexity. Humans, as stewards, are accountable not only to one another but also to God for how they employ AI. This dual accountability underscores the importance of humility and discernment in technological development. Augustine's concept of ordered love (*ordo amoris*) offers a useful framework: human actions, including the creation of AI, should prioritize love for God, neighbor, and creation in that order (Outka, 1972).

The United Kingdom came into the spotlight when it was revealed that an AI-powered fraud detection system used by the Department for Work and Pensions discriminated against users based on age, disabilities, marital status, and even nationality. These events have provoked a global debate about algorithmic bias as well as the social neglect that accompanies these automated systems. Bluntly put, critics have questioned how AI systems operate, their transparency regarding vulnerable populations, and the lack of accountability when AI solutions inflict harm upon people. In America, AI technology is put into further scrutiny after a class action lawsuit against SafeRent Solutions that revealed their tenant screening algorithm was systematically biased against Black applicants as well as those with housing vouchers. Through a settlement over \$2.2 million, SafeRent agreed to alter their screening criteria. Workday now gets to defend itself in a series of lawsuits claiming that its AI hiring tools unfairly canceled applications from persons of color, older applicants, and persons with disabilities. All these events put forth the necessity of adopting stronger ethical guidelines, legal protection and social scrutiny in order for AI techniques to help promote justice instead of discrimination, which aligns with fundamental religious values aimed to safeguard human dignity.

A Path Forward: Integrating Wisdom and Innovation

The integration of wisdom with innovation is paramount in navigating AI's role within divine creation and human stewardship. Philosophical traditions, including those of Aristotle and Aquinas, emphasize the virtue of prudence (practical wisdom)

as essential for ethical decision-making. In the context of AI, prudence involves foresight, ethical sensitivity, and a commitment to justice.

Moreover, interdisciplinary dialogue is crucial. Philosophers, theologians, technologists, and policymakers must collaborate to shape the trajectory of AI in ways that honor both divine intentions and human responsibilities. Ethical frameworks such as the Asilomar AI Principles (2017) and UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021) provide valuable starting points for this dialogue.

Ethical frameworks provide AI development with unique interactive constructs for assessing its moral implications. The virtue ethics of ancient Greek philosophy focuses on the moral qualities and phronesis, or practical wisdom, of the developers and users, implying that the crafting and implementation of AI must mirror virtues like humility, justice, and compassion. The deontological approach of Kant, for example, puts greater focus on moral obligations, guiding principles, and upholding fundamental norms, human dignity, and treating people as ends; therefore, this branch of ethics is most applicable for protecting against AI that dehumanizes or exploits users. Any form of consequentialism, including utilitarian, evaluates activities based on the results, which allows for greater performance, as well as well-being, productivity, but does so at the expense of considering minorities and potential long-term damages. As opposed to that, theological ethics within Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and others, often stem a moral elucidation charge from a divine command, sacred texts, and telos, humanity and the cosmos flourishing. These approaches not only consider an outcome or a duty but human action in light of values beyond transcendental which include stewardship, mercy, justice as divinely commanded.

While civic principles of ethics (e.g., fairness, transparency, accountability) provide safeguards, theological ethics consider AI not only a human endeavor, transforming it into a fuller divine narrative, but as a responsibility within a greater theology.

Balancing Power and Responsibility in AI Development

The dual forces of divine creation and human stewardship necessitate a delicate balance between the power granted through AI and the responsibility it demands. Power without ethical responsibility risks technological hubris—a danger exemplified in historical and mythological cautionary tales, such as the Tower of

Babel (Genesis 11:1–9). Humanity's desire to "reach the heavens" without regard for divine order resulted in fragmentation and confusion. Similarly, AI's development must remain grounded in humility, recognizing the limitations of human foresight and the potential for unintended consequences.

Responsibility requires that AI systems not only serve utilitarian goals but also adhere to moral and spiritual values. The principle of proportionality, often used in ethical discourse, applies here: the benefits of AI must outweigh its risks, and its development should respect human dignity and ecological balance. This ethical mandate aligns with both philosophical reasoning and the stewardship ethic found in religious traditions.

The Role of Education and Public Awareness

A significant challenge in aligning AI development with divine creation and stewardship lies in public understanding. AI often appears as a "black box," its operations opaque even to those who design it. This opacity can lead to fear, misuse, or abdication of responsibility. Education, therefore, becomes a cornerstone of ethical AI integration.

As stewards, humanity must ensure that individuals at all levels—developers, policymakers, and end-users—understand AI's capabilities and limitations. Educational initiatives should integrate technical training with philosophical and ethical perspectives, fostering a holistic view of AI's role in society. This approach ensures that decisions about AI are informed not only by technical expertise but also by moral wisdom.

Embracing a Theology of Co-Creation

In addressing the theological implications of AI, the concept of co-creation emerges as a meaningful framework. Co-creation suggests that humanity, while subordinate to divine will, participates in shaping the world in collaboration with God. This view is consistent with process theology, which posits that creation is an ongoing act involving both divine and human contributions (Cobb & Griffin, 1976).

AI, as a product of human ingenuity, can be seen as a tool for co-creation. When aligned with divine principles, it holds the potential to enhance human flourishing and extend care to creation. For example, AI-driven conservation technologies have

been employed to monitor biodiversity, combat deforestation, and predict natural disasters. These applications exemplify how AI can serve as a means of honoring divine intentions for creation while fulfilling human stewardship obligations.

Theologians believe humans are not simply passive receivers of divine will but co-workers with God, sharing the unfolding of creation with Him in the work of co-creation. Among the advocates of Process Theology is Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne, who portray a more dynamic understanding of God who has a personality, is ever-changing with creation, and reacts to human initiative. In this perspective, AI-enabled co-creation is further viewed as an extension of divine creativity where it is humanity, created in *imago Dei*, which ethically and intentionally exercises companionship with God in the creation of technology. This is different than the more traditional Christian understandings of divine sovereignty which has predominated doctrine by emphasizing dominion and control with omniscience, often casting human ingenuity under an unbending divine roadmap. From this position, the development of AI must ever be yielded or else the boundary of challenging God's ultimate authority or disturbing the moral consensus is breached. In addition, the ability of AI to simulate reasoning, learned behavior, and autonomous interaction poses new, deep, and troubling questions for theology concerning free will and moral agency.

If creations start to replicate human decisions and actions, do they have agency or are they just complex ethical machines which act as mirrors to their creators? Theologically, moral agency implies the existence of a soul or a conscience which God awards, something AI does not possess. However, AI's growing power over human choices has the potential to obfuscate the boundaries of authentic moral discernment and algorithmic suggestion—new apologize us, call us sinners—undoing the way we think about responsibility, sin, and, in fact, grace itself. While these technologies are adopted more in our everyday life, such theological issues invite us to rethink our humanity in a world more and more defined by what we make.

Challenges of Anthropocentrism and Ecological Stewardship

One philosophical concern is the risk of anthropocentrism—the prioritization of human needs over the well-being of other living beings and ecosystems. While AI offers immense benefits to humanity, its development often comes at a cost to the

environment. Data centers, for instance, consume vast amounts of energy, contributing to carbon emissions.

As stewards, humanity must adopt an ecocentrism perspective, recognizing the intrinsic value of all creation. This perspective aligns with the biblical mandate to "tend and keep" the garden of creation (Genesis 2:15, New International Version). Technological innovation, including AI, should prioritize sustainability and minimize harm to ecosystems, reflecting an ethic of care for the planet. While most conversations surrounding AI and stewardship center on anthropocentric concerns—how AI serves humanity—eco-theology and deep ecology compel us to reflect on a more ecocentric paradigm. Deep ecology, as put forward by Arne Næss, calls for acknowledging the inherent value of all life forms regardless of their usefulness to humans. From this standpoint, AI should not be only a human problem-solving device, but could help preserve the integrity of the biosphere. Eco-theology, drawing from scriptural affirmations of the sacred nature of creation, such as the "letting the land rest" command (Leviticus 25:4) and mizan (balance) principle in the Quran, urges the envisioning of creation as a community of life in which humans are parts, rather than Lords over it. Thus, AI's participation in planetary stewardship could be re-conceived within this framework; not only as striving to optimize systems for human continuation, but also as enabling harmony within ecosystems, restoration of damaged habitats, and amplifying non-human life through bio-acoustic and environmental modeling. Such shift creates a challenge for developers and ethicists to infuse AI with a biocentric ethic of design, where 'rights' and consideration are no longer limited to human interests but the entirety of life.

It challenges us to be humble—acknowledging that the greatest manifestation of human intellect might be in conserving that which is greater than ourselves.

Toward a Moral Framework for AI

To ensure that AI aligns with divine creation and stewardship, it is imperative to develop a robust moral framework. Such a framework should encompass the following principles:

- **Respect for Human Dignity:** AI systems must uphold the inherent worth of every individual, avoiding biases and discrimination.
- **Justice and Equity:** The benefits of AI should be distributed fairly, addressing global inequalities rather than exacerbating them.

- **Transparency and Accountability:** AI decision-making processes must be understandable and accountable to both human users and societal norms.
- **Sustainability:** The environmental impact of AI development and deployment should be carefully managed to protect the Earth's resources.
- **Purposeful Innovation:** AI should be developed with clear and ethical intentions, serving the common good and promoting human flourishing.

Reflecting on the Future of AI in Human Society

As humanity ventures further into the era of AI, it is critical to continuously reflect on the values that guide its integration into society. The rapid pace of AI development necessitates ongoing dialogue across diverse disciplines, including theology, ethics, philosophy, and technology. This discourse must not only address current challenges but also anticipate future scenarios where AI might surpass human expectations or control.

The Concept of AI and the Sacred

A key philosophical question is whether AI, as a creation of human ingenuity, can ever attain a level of existence that intersects with the sacred. While some transhumanist thinkers posit that AI might eventually achieve consciousness or even surpass human intelligence (Kurzweil, 2005), traditional theological perspectives suggest that consciousness, morality, and the sacred are uniquely tied to the human soul—a gift from God that cannot be replicated by machines (Barth, 1960).

This distinction underscores the importance of understanding AI not as a replacement for human attributes but as a tool to augment human capacities. AI's role in divine creation and stewardship should remain subordinate to humanity's spiritual and moral obligations, ensuring that it serves as an extension of human values rather than an autonomous force divorced from them.

The ability, on the one hand, to discern right from wrong, to act with purpose, and to bear responsibility are some of the traditional features associated with moral agency; which is claiming autonomy, self-awareness, and free will. The ability of AIs to perform a wide array of tasks does not make them conscious. In reality, AIs operate through pattern recognition, probabilistic logic, and goal-directed algorithms and not through deep moral deliberation or cognitive choice. Guided by ethical

principles emanating from the Old Testament as well as Islam civilizations, the possession of moral agency is closely bound to a metaphysical assumption of the soul, viewed as a divine gift to endow one with a relational being, to building moral economy, and to love unconditionally. Merely by being human artifacts, one may imagine an AIs simulating behaviors of sagacity and love, yet the capacity to exhibit wisdom, song de-emphasized in these conditions, lies beyond human dictions. Socio-theological approaches of wisdom rests on the functions of data not only as a algorithmic task but requires them to be contextualized, moral, and character bound, in Doing so; wisdom becomes covenantally responsible. In the same manner, love as agape/rahma is self-relinquishing, intentionally, and morally committed for the interests of others' well-being. AIs knows how to act benevolently, and perform either pretending sympathy, but such activity merry-producing is void of intention, awareness or sacrificial concern.

Thus, while AI may exemplify the creativity of human beings motivated by God's attributes, it is in its essence too derivative and too lacking in being an autonomous source of existence to be considered a moral agent, or in any genuine sense, a likeness of God.

Ensuring Equity in the Benefits of AI

One of the greatest challenges in AI's development is ensuring that its benefits are equitably distributed. The digital divide, exacerbated by unequal access to technology, threatens to widen global inequalities. For instance, while AI-powered healthcare innovations have the potential to transform patient care, their impact is often limited to wealthier nations and communities.

As stewards, humanity must prioritize inclusive policies that ensure marginalized and underrepresented groups benefit from AI advancements. This approach aligns with the biblical call to care for the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40, New International Version). Practical measures include investing in education and infrastructure in underserved regions, fostering collaborations between nations, and promoting open-access AI research that addresses global challenges.

Reimagining AI's Potential

The role of imagination is central to the philosophical discourse on AI. As co-creators in the divine image, humans possess the unique ability to envision futures that reflect both the challenges and aspirations of our time. Imagination allows humanity to dream of AI applications that go beyond current paradigms, addressing issues such as sustainable development, global peace, and intergenerational justice. For example, consider the potential of AI in fostering global collaboration on environmental issues. AI could facilitate cross-border partnerships by providing data-driven insights, predicting ecological risks, and optimizing resource allocation. Such applications align with the stewardship mandate to protect and preserve the Earth for future generations, a principle echoed in both secular ethics and religious teachings.

Conclusion

AI is a profound expression of human creativity, bearing both the potential to reflect divine purposes and the risk of distorting them. As humanity continues to innovate, it must do so with a sense of sacred responsibility, mindful of its role as stewards of creation. By integrating philosophical, theological, and ethical insights, society can harness AI to promote justice, equity, and flourishing for all.

Through wisdom, humility, and collaboration, humanity can ensure that AI serves not as a mere instrument of power but as a testament to the divine image in which we are made. As the psalmist writes, “The Earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it” (Psalm 24:1, New International Version). Let us steward both creation and our creations with care.

The role of AI in divine creation and human stewardship is both a profound opportunity and a solemn responsibility. By integrating philosophical, theological, and ethical perspectives, humanity can navigate the complexities of AI with wisdom and purpose.

As creators, humans reflect the divine image, but this role demands humility and accountability. AI must not be an idol of human pride but a testament to our commitment to justice, care, and the flourishing of creation. By embracing a theology of co-creation and an ethic of stewardship, humanity can ensure that AI serves not only as a tool of progress but also as a means of fulfilling our sacred responsibilities.

In this era of unprecedented technological advancement, let us remember the words of Micah 6:8: “What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” These values should guide humanity as it shapes the future of AI in service of both divine creation and human stewardship. The philosophical discourse on AI’s role in divine creation and human stewardship is far from complete. As technology evolves, so too must our understanding of its implications, opportunities, and limits. By rooting AI development in humility, justice, and care, humanity can ensure that this powerful tool contributes to the common good.

Theologians, philosophers, scientists, and policymakers must work together to construct a future where AI enhances human dignity, supports ecological balance, and reflects the moral and spiritual values that underpin our existence. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and a commitment to ethical principles, AI can become not merely a technological achievement but a testament to humanity’s higher calling as stewards of creation.

In the words of Pope Francis (2015), “Technology, when well directed, can produce important means of improving the quality of human life.” Let us direct AI with wisdom and love, ensuring that it serves as a force for good in the unfolding narrative of divine creation and human stewardship.

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