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Faith in Technological Age, and the Future of Humanism: A Religion-Philosophical Autopsy into Artificial Intelligence and Moral Agency in Africa

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to investigate the philosophical and ethical challenges arising from the acceleration collaboration of faith, technology and humanism in contemporary African society. The chief problem addressed is the growing moral ambiguity and ethical displacement caused by technological advancement in African societies where religious worldviews remain central to value systems. The research questions addressed include: first, how does AI challenge traditional religious conceptions of moral agency? Second, what implications do this hold for humanism in contemporary Africa? And third, in what ways can religion-philosophical reflection provide an ethical framework for coexistence between human and machine intelligence? This way, the research aims to evaluate the connectivity between faith and technology in reshaping human moral identity and consequently construct an African religion-philosophical response to emerging technological ethics. It employs a critical and comparative philosophical approach, integrating religious anthropology and moral philosophy to bridge the gap in literature that often isolates theology or technology from their cultural interplay in African thought. The work reveals that while AI challenges traditional notions of moral autonomy, it also offers opportunities for reinterpreting stewardship, creativity, and ethical responsibility. The article concludes that a balanced religio-philosophical engagement is crucial to humanize technology and preserve moral agency in the age of artificial intelligence.

Keywords: Faith, Artificial Intelligence, Moral Agency, Humanism, African Philosophy..

1. Introduction

The 21st century is marked by unprecedented convergence of accelerating collaboration between faith, technology, and human. The rise of machine learning challenges deeply held theological and moral assumptions about human distinctiveness (Dike, 2025). In Africa, where religion no doubt

serves as the primary moral compass and the cultural marker, the encounter with intelligent machines raises critical questions concerning the moral agency, spiritual responsibility and the

human dignity. This way, the central concern becomes whether human, shaped by faith traditions, can retain their moral centrality and distinctiveness in an increasingly machine-mediated world.

Existing ethical literature is dominated by Western secular framework like algorithmic bias, privacy, while theological discussions often focus narrowly on eschatology or stewardship (Bostron, 2014; Floridi & Cowls, 2021, Coeckelbergh, 2022). Crucially, these discourses fail to account for African religion-philosophical perspective (Wiredu, 2009; Gyekye, 2010; Bujo, 2021), which see spirituality, community, and morality as inseparable aspects of human personhood. Consequently, the originality of this work is its attempt to bridge this gap by situating the AI debate within the African moral and metaphysical context, where faith is both an interpretive lens and a lived ethical reality.

A critical and comparative philosophical approach is employed, engaging both classical theological texts and contemporary AI discourse. This way, the study explores how technological rationality interacts with religious humanism to redefine agency, responsibility and personhood. The article constructs a framework of digital humanism grounded in African values of relationality, communal responsibility and transcendence. It posits that the integration of faith and technology is essential for understanding the moral evolution of humanity in the technological age.

In integrating how AI challenges the boundaries of moral subjectivity and the divine image-bearing, the article reveals the threats and the possibilities technology holds for African humanism. The work concludes that AI should not be viewed as a threat that displaces religious moral structures. Instead, it can serve as a site for renewing ethical reflection and reimaging stewardship as a collaborative creativity between human and machine intelligence. This way, the paper offers a culturally grounded and theologically informed perspective to enrich global debates on AI ethics and the future of human in Africa.

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This segment lays the foundational concepts and theoretical lenses guiding the religio-philosophical examination into Artificial Intelligence and the moral agency in Africa. The research is grounded in an integrative conceptual and theoretical framework designed to explore the connection of faith, technology and humanism within the African religio-philosophical landscape. It tries to establish the philosophical and ethical premises necessary to examine AI and moral agency in a manner that respects both the technological and spiritual dimensions of human life. The framework is built on the conviction that understanding the moral and existential implications of AI requires a critical negotiation between theology, philosophy and African cultural thought, especially because religion remains the core moral compass in these societies.

1. Faith and Technology

This section clarifies the specific understanding of Faith and Technology (AI) that guide this study's inquiry. In this context, Faith is described beyond ordinary doctrines and beliefs. It presents it as a living hermeneutics, a system through which people interpret reality and define moral responsibility. It connotes transcendental commitments and social expression of values. This way, it maintains the consciousness between the connection to the divine or spiritual realm and the shaping how communities perceive ethical accountability, agency and creativity.

Technology (AI) specifically represents humanity's growing capacity to externalize intelligence and decision-making through machines. Philosophically, it is not all that neutral hence it embodies values, structures of power and visions of the good life (Heidegger, 1977; Coekel bergh, 2022). When applied within the context of faith, technology transcends being a mere instrument of progress. It becomes a theological and moral question that challenges core ideas about human distinctiveness, freedom and purpose of creation.

Faith

In this work comprehensively, faith is religion-philosophically described as doctrinal belief and lived religiosity. It highlights metaphysical commitments, moral norms and communal practices. Faith functions epistemic ally (as an interpretive lens), ethically (as a source of normative claims), and socially (as a matrix of identity and communal responsibility).

Technology (AI)

Technology here refers specifically to algorithmic systems and computational devices capable of data processing, pattern recognition, prediction, and autonomous decision-making, collectively referred to as Artificial Intelligence. AI systems are socio-technical artefacts embedded in social practices and institutions.

Faith and technology interact at three analytical (Gyekye, 2010; Wiredu, 2009) levels:

1. Epistemologically, it is important to note that while technology tries to shape how knowledge is produced and validated like data driven methods, algorithms, faith on the other hand provides alternative epistemic norms such as reliance on revelation, tradition, and communal wisdom.

2. Within the moral-normative institute, while the technology (AI) impasses new moral dilemmas regarding privacy, accountability and value-alignment, faith supplies ethical vocabularies and duties drawn from concepts like stewardship, inherent human dignity and justice.

3. In social-existential angle, while technology reconfigures social roles and meanings related to work, agency, personhood, faith on the other hand, interprets these changes within narratives of human vocation (purpose) and transcendence (spiritual or eternal dimension).

Discovering Artificial intelligence with the aid of faith does not imply abandoning technological advancement. Instead, it asserts that the evaluative criteria for AI deployment must incorporate religio-moral priorities that foster human flourishing within specific cultural context (Dike, 2015). This way, the relationship between faith and technology is neither purely oppositional or merely utilitarian. It is dialectical. This further affirms that there is a dynamic interplay between transcendence (faith) and innovation (technology). Again, faith acts as a moral compass to orient technological advancement toward human flourishing. Consequently, technology challenges faith traditions to In social-existential angle, while technology reconfigures social roles and meanings related to work, agency, personhood, faith on the other hand, interprets these changes within narratives of human vocation (purpose) and transcendence (spiritual or eternal dimension).reinterpret ancient doctrines in the light of new technological realities (Dike, 2025).This discourse holds special significance in Africa, where religious worldviews are deeply integrated into

social and moral consciousness. Technology's transformative power must therefore be evaluated through the communal, spiritual and moral categories that fundamentally express African life.

2. Humanism in the African context

The second conceptual pillar of this work is Humanism. Its description is crucial as African and Western traditions offer distinct understandings of personhood and moral value. Whereas Western secular Humanism focuses on ground moral value in rational autonomy, individual rights and human self-determination with special emphasizes on individualistic and right-based normative focus, African Human on the other hand, is fundamentally communitarian, spiritual and relational. It pictures a person not as an entity or isolated rational being but as one whose identity is realized through the relationship (with community, nature and the divine. This is clearly exemplified by the Ubutu concept "I am because we are" Gyekye, 2010; Wiredu, 2009). This is unlike Western Secular humanism which often excludes transcendence (the spiritual or divine) as a primary source of meaning and relationship. African humanism this way, provides a framework where moral agency is inherently collective and intertwined with spiritual reality, offering a powerful counterpoint to AI's challenge to individual autonomy. In African religion-philosophical thought, human dignity flows from participation in a moral and spiritual order rather than from individual autonomy alone. Consequently, the ethical evaluation of AI in Africa must transcend anthropocentric and secular paradigms and include the relational, spiritual, and communal dimensions of human life.

African communal/religious humanism reframes humanism around relationality, communal personhood, and the sacred. African philosophical traditions (e.g., concepts of ubuntu, personhood as being-with-others) locate moral value in social embeddedness and spiritual dimensions of life. Religious commitments (Christian, Islamic, African traditional) frequently fuse with communal ethics to produce a moral vision where dignity is exercised in obligations to family, community, and the transcendent. The implication is that the debates about AI that foreground individual autonomy (e.g., privacy as individual right) will need reinterpretation in African contexts where responsibilities, social harmony, and spiritual accountability are central evaluative categories.

3. Moral Agency, philosophical and theological dimensions

The concept of moral agency occupies a central place in this framework. Philosophically, moral agency refers to the capacity of an entity to act with intention, reflect on reasons for action, and bear moral responsibility for outcomes. Kantian deontology and Aristotelian virtue ethics of traditional philosophical theories describes moral agency as the exclusive prerogative of rational beings capable of moral deliberation. No doubt, autonomous AI now performs functions like machine learning, predicting decisions making that seem to stimulate moral reasoning. As philosophers like Coekelbergh (2022) and Floridi (2021) observed, this stimulation of ethical behavior does not in anywhere equate al consciousness hence, ultimate responsibility remains human. Theologically, moral agency is linked to the Latin word, Imago Dei (the image of God). This expresses the religious belief that humans reflect divine rationality and moral awareness. This way, the emergence of artificial agents raises profound theological concerns namely; can non-sentient systems participate in the moral order? These questions are even more complex in African and Nigerian context, where moral life is fundamentally viewed as a communal-spiritual enterprise rather than a

purely individual cognitive act. This relational and collective view of morality challenges western, individualistic premises of agency.

Moral agency is the capacity required for a being to be considered morally accountable for its actions. Philosophers debate whether artificial systems can be genuine moral agents (holders of obligations) or only moral patients/objects (subjects of moral consideration). Many religious traditions ground moral agency in image-bearing (Imago Dei), conscience, and relational accountability to the divine and community. Theological accounts emphasize purposive vocation, moral formation, and spiritual freedom, features that complicate simplistic attributions of agency to non-biological systems.

The implications for artificial agents are that, if AI exhibits decision-making and autonomous behavior, several questions arise:

i. Can AI meaningfully partake in moral responsibility, or is responsibility inescapably tied to human intentionality?

ii. How do religious doctrines about personhood and soul (or spiritual status) inform whether AI should be treated as an agent, tool, or moral patient?

iii. What are the communal consequences when agency is redistributed across human–machine assemblages (e.g., accountability gaps, ritual significance, and social trust)?

4. Theoretical anchors and how they inform the study

4.1 African Communitarian Ethics (Gyekye, 2010; Wiredu, 2009).

The theoretical foundation of this research thus draws upon three complementary traditions. The first is African Communitarian Ethics, articulated by philosophers such as Kwame Gyekye and Kwasi Wiredu. Their works emphasize that morality is embedded in social relations and that personhood is achieved through ethical participation in community. Applied to AI, this means that questions of technological ethics should not be reduced to individual responsibility or legal liability but should encompass collective accountability and the communal effects of technological deployment. In African moral thought, an act is judged ethical not merely by its rational justification but by its contribution to communal harmony and moral balance. Gyekye's and Wiredu's work emphasizes that personhood is realized within social relations and that moral norms are communally grounded. Applied to AI, communitarian ethics shifts the focus from individual consent/models of autonomy to collective responsibility, social repair, and communal mitigation of harms. This theoretical anchor directs attention to the social and cultural consequences of of Artificial Intelligence deployment, specifically focusing on three core areas for AI governance: equity and social distribution of benefits/harms, impacts on traditional kinship and community structures, and ethical shaping and culturally specific of moral education.

4.2 Theological Humanism and Stewardship Ethics (Bujo, 2021 and Jenkins, 2023)

The second theoretical strand is Theological Humanism and Stewardship Ethics, exemplified in the writings of Bujo (2021) and Jenkins (2023). The concept of Theological humanism locates human dignity in a sacred religious relationship between God, humanity, and creation. It sees human beings as stewards rather than masters of creation, entrusted with the task of using reason and creativity to serve life rather than dominate it. This theological anthropology challenges the techno centric

narrative that pictures progress solely in terms of control and efficiency. From a stewardship perspective, AI is a moral trust whose ethical legitimacy depends largely on whether it enhances the moral and spiritual flourishing of the human community. This way, this framework calls for a responsible and compassionate deployment of technology that aligns with divine and communal purposes. Importantly, while theological humanism frames human dignity as both relational and sacramental, and humans as stewards or co-creators, stewardship ethics (found in Christian and other traditions) challenges humans for vital obligations toward creation and technology. Therefore, AI is evaluated by whether it supports or undermines human vocation, care for creation, and moral formation. This lens provides normative resources to critique techno-instrumentalism and to argue for designs that enhance responsibilities rather than dispossess them.

4.3 Philosophy of Technology and Post humanism (Coeckelbergh, 2022 and Floridi, 2021)

This section examines the philosophy of technology and Post humanism as the third anchor. This examination is in line with Coekelbergh and Floridi's view of Technology and Post humanism. Coeckelbergh's relational approach to AI ethics posits that moral consequence arises within the relationships between humans and technologies, not merely from internal capacities of the machine. Floridi's information ethics extends moral consideration to all entities that contribute to the "info sphere," emphasizing care for the integrity of the digital environment. These viewpoints offer tools for reimagining moral agency beyond anthropocentrism, while African religion-philosophical traditions provide the moral restraint needed to prevent dehumanization or value relativism. Together, they form a dialogical space where African spiritual humanism and global AI ethics can converge. Philosophy of technology examines how technologies mediate human practices and reshape moral concepts; post humanist debates question the boundaries of the human and seek to reconceptualize agency in hybrid human–machine systems. Floridi's information-ethics and Coeckelbergh's relational approaches offer tools for assessing AI's moral status and for proposing value-sensitive design. Combined with African and theological anchors, they help articulate an African digital humanism that resists both uncritical technophile and naïve Luddism.

In contextualizing these frameworks, the study proposes an African digital humanism that resists both uncritical techno-optimism and reactionary moral conservatism. It envisions a model of technological ethics where faith provides moral direction, technology serves as an instrument of responsible creativity, and humanism ensures that innovation remains anchored in compassion, justice, and communal wellbeing. This application not only expands the scope of AI ethics to include religious and cultural dimensions but also challenges global scholarship to recognize Africa's contribution to the philosophy of technology and the moral future of humanity.

3. Review of Related Literature

This review situates the present inquiry within three intersecting literatures, global AI ethics, theological reflections on technology, and African moral-philosophical responses to technological change, and concludes by identifying substantive gaps that motivate the study.

Global discourse on AI and ethics has been dominated by analytic and policy-oriented treatments that prioritize principles such as fairness, transparency, accountability, and human-centered design. Foundational contributions by Bostrom (2014) and later normative syntheses by Floridi and colleagues (Floridi& Cowls, 2021) lay conceptual ground for thinking about risk, alignment, and

governance; Floridi's "information ethics" reframes moral concern in terms of the integrity of the info sphere. Complementing principle-focused work, critics such as Zuboff (2019) and Eubanks (2018) expose socio-economic and political harms, surveillance, extractive data economies, algorithmic marginalization, thereby shifting analysis from abstract moral constraints to concrete distributions of power. Scholarship in computer science and policy (e.g., Mittelstadt et al.) supplies taxonomy and technical pathways for explain ability and auditing, while influential reports (UNESCO's 2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of AI; OECD, EU frameworks) translate ethical aspiration into governance instruments. Despite methodological pluralism, much of this literature remains rooted in Western liberal conceptions of autonomy and rights, and often assumes secular, individualized moral subjects when specifying safeguards and responsibilities.

Religious engagements with technology constitute a growing, though still comparatively marginal, strand that brings distinct moral vocabularies into conversation with AI. Theological treatments range from cautionary and eschatological reflections (Heidegger's critique of enflaming applied in theological readings) to constructive proposals that reframe technology within stewardship and vocation narratives. Works like Campbell's analyses of religion and new media, Bujo's theological anthropology, and Jenkins's recent theological work on ethics and sustainability foreground the idea that religious traditions supply resources, teleology, sacra mentality, communal accountability, for critiquing instrumental rationality. Contemporary contributions in theology and religious studies probe issues such as the theological implications of machine decision-making, sacramental understandings of creativity, and pastoral concerns about human dignity in technologically mediated lives. Nevertheless, much theological literature either treats technology as a cultural artifact requiring spiritual critique or, conversely, adopts instrumental engagement without sustained technical-literary dialogue with AI scholarship. The result is often a bifurcation: rigorous ethical-theological insight on one side and technical/algorithmic analysis on the other, with limited integrative work that attends simultaneously to doctrinal claims, social practices, and technological affordances.

African perspectives on technology and moral thought bring alternative conceptual resources, communitarian personhood, spiritual relationality, and collective accountability that both complicate and enrich global debates. Classical African philosophical voices (Mbiti; Wiredu; Gyekye; Menkiti) emphasise personhood as achieved through social relations and ritual embeddedness. BenezetBujo's theological ethics and Thaddeus Metz's philosophical elaborations on ubuntu provide normative frameworks emphasizing harmony, restoration, and interdependence rather than atomistic autonomy. Empirical and policy studies on technology uptake in Africa (World Bank reports; UNESCO country studies) document rapid adoption of digital platforms, mobile money, and AI-enabled services, alongside structural concerns, infrastructure gaps, capacity asymmetries, algorithmic bias amplified by data poverty, that produce distinct ethical configurations. Scholars engaging African religion and technology examine how religious institutions mediate technology's social effects, but such work is still emergent: ethnographies of digital religiosity and studies of faith-based responses to tech-driven social change remain relatively few and often descriptive rather than theoretically integrated.

Across these literatures a recurring limitation is evident: the separation of domains, technical ethics, theology, and African moral philosophy, such that debates about AI's moral status, governance, and

design rarely incorporate African religion-philosophical categories as constitutive evaluative criteria. Western AI ethics tends to universalize principles derived from liberal individualism; theological writings frequently lack technical specificity; and African moral philosophy, while rich in normative resources, has not yet been systematically mobilized to interrogate AI's ontologies, agency distributions, and socio-technical assemblages. This fragmentation produces practical lacunae: policy instruments and design practices that are insensitive to communal obligations, spiritual accounts of personhood, and culturally specific notions of dignity; theological interventions that fail to influence technical standards; and African philosophical insights that remain under-applied in global AI governance fora.

The literature also reveals methodological gaps. Few studies undertake comparative, interdisciplinary hermeneutics that translate AI design problems into religion-philosophical questions (for instance, reconceiving accountability not solely as liability but as ritual and restorative repair). It is chiefly obvious that the empirical research that examines how African religious communities experience and reinterprets AI-mediated interactions is limited; normative work that specifies value-sensitive design grounded explicitly in African communal ethics is scarcer still. Again, there is insufficient critical reflection on how conceptual tools like "agency," "personhood," and "autonomy" are reconstituted when read through African spiritual ontologies.

This gapsvalidate the present study's integrative aim: to bridge technical, theological, and African philosophical registers in order to construct an "African digital humanism" that can inform both scholarly debate and normative practice. In translating Western AI concerns into African evaluative categories and by subjecting religious canons to the epistemic realities of AI systems, the research addresses aunrelenting need for culturally anchored, theologically informed, and technically knowledgeable frameworks for the principled governance of AI in Africa.

4. Methodology

This work employs a qualitative, critical, and comparative philosophical design appropriate for grilling the moral and religion-philosophical implications of AI within the African region. This approach enables a reflective and analytical engagement with the conceptual intersections of faith, technology, and humanism, while situating them within both global and indigenous intellectual traditions. Rather than collecting empirical data through surveys or experiments, the research pursues philosophical inquiry through the critical analysis and interpretation of ideas, arguments, and values expressed in relevant texts and discourses. This is because it aligns with the methodological orientation of contemporary philosophy of religion and ethics, thereby prioritizing conceptual clarification, normative evaluation, and dialogical synthesis (Creswell &Poth, 2018; Smith, 2022).

Primary sources for this research consist of philosophical and theological texts, both classical and contemporary, that engage the nature of moral agency, human personhood, and the theological meaning of creativity and stewardship. Earliest philosophical contributions made by Aristotle, Kant, and Heidegger are scrutinized alongside contemporary authors like Floridi (2021) on information ethics, Coeckelbergh (2022) on relational AI ethics, and Jenkins (2023) on theological humanism. This work further draws on African philosophical writings, notably Gyekye's (2010) communitarian ethics, Wiredu's (2009) cultural universals, Metz's (2017)

articulation of ubuntu as moral theory, and Bujo's (2021) theological anthropology. These primary texts are complemented by scriptural and doctrinal materials that inform Christian and African religious perspectives on human dignity and creativity. Secondary sources include empirical and theoretical studies addressing AI ethics, religion, and humanism, with particular attention to UNESCO's (2021) Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, Zuboff's (2019) critique of digital capitalism, and Crawford's (2021) analysis of AI structures. Together, these foundations provide both normative and contextual foundations for questioning how technological development interrelates with ethical and spiritual principles.

Furthermore, the research engages a hermeneutical and analytic approach. The hermeneutical dimension involves interpreting key philosophical and theological concepts, such as "faith," "technology," "moral agency," and "humanism", within their historical, cultural, and linguistic contexts. This interpretive process is informed by Gadamer's (1975) notion of the "fusion of horizons," emphasizing dialogical understanding between traditions. The analytic component focuses on conceptual precision and logical evaluation, testing the coherence of arguments surrounding AI's moral status and the theological meaning of personhood. Through this mixture, the study aims to expose dormant assumptions within Western discourses on AI ethics and to reinterpret them through African religio-philosophical classes.

The comparative dimension of the methodology facilitates a cross-cultural synthesis between Western and African paradigms(Van Norloos, 2020; Etieyibo, 2022). It thoroughly contrasts Western secular humanism, grounded in individual autonomy and rational agency, with African communal humanism, characterized by relational personhood and spiritual interdependence. This comparative analysis allows the study to identify areas of convergence and stiffness between technological innovation and religious humanism, thereby developing a framework that is both universally conversant and contextually African. This way, the research contributes to the emerging field of intercultural philosophy of technology, which emphasizes negotiation rather than supremacy between traditions.

The scope of this research is delimited to the moral, theological, and philosophical dimensions of AI rather than its technical or engineering facets. While this work acknowledges the worth of algorithmic design, data governance, and computational architectures, its concern lies mainly in the ethical and existential implications of these technologies for human distinctiveness and moral obligation. Consequently, the study's conclusions are theoretical and normative rather than empirical or prescriptive in the technical sense. Furthermore, although examples are drawn from the African context, the research does not attempt a comprehensive examination of all regional variations but rather focuses on the conceptual and moral frameworks common to sub-Saharan African thought.

In combining hermeneutical interpretation, analytic reasoning, and comparative synthesis, the study provides a rigorous yet flexible structure for exploring how faith and technology can be reconciled within an evolving vision of humanism. It seeks not only to critique the moral displacement caused by AI but also to constructively reinterpret human agency in light of religious and philosophical insights from Africa. The method therefore collaborates Coeckelbergh's (2023) "relational ethics of technology", one that humanizes novelty through moral replication and cultural foundation.

5. Analysis and Discussion

The accelerating evolution of AI has deepened the ongoing philosophical and theological discourses about moral agency, personhood, and the future of humanism. In African context, especially Nigeria, where religious belief permeates moral reasoning, AI's emergence presents profound challenges to established notions of imago-Dei – divine image, moral autonomy, and communal ethics. This section advances a religion-philosophical inquiry that synthesizes global AI ethics discourse and African moral thought to explore how faith and technology intersect in shaping the meaning of human agency and responsibility, and the moral landscape of the digital age.

AI destabilizes religious conceptions of personhood by micking cognitive and decision-making capacities traditionally attributed to rational and morally responsible beings. In Christian theology and African religious cosmologies, personhood is not merely a matter of rational computation but of relational, spiritual, and moral consciousness (Gyekye, 2010; Bujo, 2021). The growth of autonomous systems capable of learning and acting raises the question: can machines possess moral agency, or do they merely simulate it? Coeckelbergh (2022) posits that, while AI parades functional agency, it lacks the moral interiority necessary for genuine ethical responsibility. Religion-philosophical, moral agency presupposes intentionality, conscience, and accountability before a transcendent moral order, dimensions that artificial systems cannot embody (Jenkins, 2023). Thus, while AI may alter human behavior and ethical decision-making, it cannot substitute the spiritual principal of human personhood as projected in both biblical anthropology and African metaphysical thought.

The dialogue between faith and rationality becomes essential in defining the moral boundaries of machine intelligence. Religious thought situates reason within a broader teleological horizon grounded in purpose, stewardship, and divine accountability. AI by contrast, operates through algorithmic rationality, functional, calculative, and devoid of inspirational connotation. The supremacy of technocratic logic, as Zuboff (2019) and Floridi (2021) observe, jeopardizes dipping human existence to data-driven patterns, thereby marginalizing ethical intentionality. African theological and philosophical traditions, however, scuffle such reductionism. They sustain that rationality must serve moral and communal ends rooted in godly order (Wiredu, 2009; Metz, 2017). Hence, faith provides a critical corrective to the instrumental rationality of technology, prompting societies that intelligence without morality becomes ethically vacuous and spiritually sterile.

In the technological era, humanism is undergoing reconfiguration. Classical humanism, which celebrated the autonomy and rationality of man, now faces a post human condition where machines increasingly intermediate human experience. Yet, as Jenkins (2023) notes, this predicament also offers an opportunity for theological renewal, a call to re-echo human uniqueness not in opposition to technology, but in creative alliance with it. Within Africa, this partnership must be guided by moral frameworks that emphasize responsibility, solidarity, and stewardship rather than control. The ethical task is to ensure that AI development serves human flourishing, especially in contexts like Nigeria where technological inequality and moral ambivalence coexist. Drawing from Bujo's(2021) notion of vital participation, humanism in Africa must be understood relationally, as the shared pursuit of well-being that reflects divine creativity and moral interdependence.

African religion-philosophical insights offer a distinctive input to this discourse. The communal nature of morality, central to African thought, stands in contrast to the individualistic assumptions underlying Western AI ethics. In Igbo philosophy, for instance, mmadubu chi ibeya ("a person is god to his fellow") expresses the sacredness of relational existence, where moral worth emerges through community (Iroegbu, 1995). This communalism implies that technological innovation must promote social harmony and the common good rather than individual gain or corporate control. Nigerian religious communities, Christian, Muslim, and traditional, can thus serve as moral mediators, integrating AI into society through the lens of communal responsibility and moral accountability.

Furthermore, the spiritual dimension of creativity and stewardship anchors African theology's engagement with technology. This way, human creativity, is a participation in divine creation, not a rebellion against it. Technology, when viewed through stewardship ethics, becomes an instrument of co-creation, an extension of human responsibility rather than an autonomous moral agent (Jenkins, 2023; Bujo, 2021). This contrasts with secular post humanist narratives that advocate for the transcendence of human limitations through technology. Contextually, within the African religion-philosophical imagination, transcendence is not technological self-deification but moral attunement to divine purpose.

Harmonizing transcendence and technological pragmatism remain a significant challenge for African societies navigating digital modernity. While transcendence affirms the spiritual dignity of humanity as created beings accountable to God, pragmatism demands engagement with the realities of technological advancement and socio-economic transformation. The Nigerian context illustrates this pressure vibrantly: as digital substructures enlarge, moral and religious discourses lag behind, resulting in ethical voids in data governance, surveillance, and automation. Obviously, a balanced religio-philosophical approach, "digital humanism", in Floridi (2021) terms, can bridge this gap by grounding technological development in moral reflection and communal stewardship

Objectively, this analysis demonstrates that faith and technology need not exist in antagonism. Rather, their incorporation within African religion- philosophical thought can humanize technological progress, ensuring that AI progress aligns with moral agency, communal ethics, and spiritual meaning. The African worldview, rooted in the harmony between the material and the spiritual, the individual and the community, provides a rich basis for the rebirth of humanism in the age of AI. This methodology reiterates that the future of moral agency in Africa depends not merely on technological complexity but on the enduring capacity of faith to guide reason toward justice, compassion, and the safeguarding of human dignity.

6. Findings and Implications

This study reveals four interconnected findings that bear directly on ethical theory, theology, policy, and practice in Africa, with particular concern for Nigeria, as the primary focus of the research.

i. Artificial Intelligence dislocates traditional philosophies of moral autonomy while calling for theological rethinking of human creativity.

Here, autonomous algorithmic systems reconfigure decision-making and distribute functions previously conceived as distinctly human (prediction, discretion, selection). This redistribution exposes the limits of liberal models of moral autonomy that associate agency

with individual deliberative control (Floridi; Coeckelbergh). Theologically, however, this interruption prompts a constructive reappraisal of human creativity as involvement in a divine vocation; technology may be understood as an extension of co-creative stewardship rather than a competing to human dignity (Bujo; Jenkins). In Nigeria, where congregational life and religious teaching shape moral development, this reframing supports pastoral and educational efforts that teach sensitivity in technology use rather than categorical rejection.

ii. African religion-philosophical ethics provides a corrective to techno centrism's reductionism.

Importantly, communitarian backgrounds, ubuntu, relational personhood, and communal accountability, redirect attention from isolated individuals to social relations and moral repair (Gyekye; Wiredu; Metz). These standpoints evaluate techno centrism's tendency to valorize productivity and optimization at the cost of relational goods. In practice, this implies that ethical assessment of AI in African settings must prioritize social cohesion, reciprocity, and restorative remedies for harm (e.g., communal redress mechanisms) rather than only litigation or compensation models prevalent in Western law-based approaches.

iii. Faith-based moral frameworks can guide the responsible deployment of AI for human flourishing.

Religious traditions provide normative vocabularies (stewardship, neighbor love, accountability to the transcendent) that can be operationalised in AI governance, through value-sensitive design, community oversight, and ethical impact assessments that include spiritual and communal indicators (UNESCO recommendation; Floridi). In Nigeria, faith institutions (churches, mosques, traditional religious councils) are potential partners in public education about AI, in mediating harms (e.g., misinformation, surveillance), and in advocating for equitable access to technological benefits (healthcare, education, financial inclusion).

iv. An emergent African digital humanism centers relationality, accountability and transcendence as normative anchors.

Synthesizing African communitarian and theological resources with insights from philosophy of technology yields a distinct model, African digital humanism, where technological innovation is judged by its contribution to communal flourishing, moral formation, and respect for transcendent values. For Nigeria, this model foregrounds concrete priorities: protecting vulnerable populations from algorithmic bias exacerbated by data poverty (Crawford; Eubanks), ensuring that fintech and automated welfare systems preserve social solidarities, and embedding rituals of accountability (public deliberation, faith-led audits) into governance structures.

Practical implications follow from these findings. Ethically informed policy should require multidisciplinary, community-inclusive impact assessments for AI projects; Nigerian regulators and civil society should collaborate with religious bodies to define culturally relevant values for AI systems. Academic curricula in theology, philosophy, and computer science must be expanded to include intercultural AI ethics and value-sensitive design. Technicians should assume participatory design methods that include religious communities and local knowledge holders to avoid epistemic

injustice and design myopia. Finally, transnational AI governance forums should create platform for African religion-philosophical aids so that global standards reflect plural moral imaginaries rather than a sole liberal paradigm.

At the end, AI needs not displace African humanism; when governed by religion-philosophical insight and communal accountability. It could be harnessed to deepen human flourishing. The task therefore is translational: to convert these normative resources into institutional practices, regulatory instruments, and design standards that are responsive to the lived realities of African cultures, particularly in plural, religiously soaked environments like Nigeria.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

In a way of drawing conclusion, one notes that the challenging traditional philosophies of moral agency and personhood, offer opportunities for ethical reflection and theological renewal. This way, acomposed religion-philosophical platform, affixed in African communal values, stewardship ethics, and spiritual accountability, can refine AI and sustain moral agency in Africa's technological future. In incorporating faith-based moral frameworks with technological revolution, societies like Nigeria can guarantee that AI development serves human healthiness, preserves relational and communal ethics, and respects transcendental moral principles, rather than reducing humans to mere data points or functional inputs. Consequently, African digital humanism will emerge as a viable framework for the unification of technological progress with ethical accountability and spiritual veracity.

Based on these findings, the study offers the following recommendations:

1. The combination of religious ethics in African AI policy development means that regulatory and governance frameworks should explicitly incorporate African religion-philosophical values. This way, it ensures that AI systems align with communal well-being, social justice, and moral accountability. Faith communities can serve as consultative partners in designing policies that reflect cultural and ethical priorities.

2. Importantly, by the promotion of interdisciplinary research on faith and technology, African universities and research institutions are chiefly challenged into and encourage into collaborative studies between philosophy, theology, computer science, and social sciences. This effort will produce context-sensitive studies of AI ethics, promoting knowledge that is both traditionally and socially relevant and technically knowledgeable.

3. Above all, the development of educational curricula on AI ethics and African moral philosophy within lower and higher institution of learning and professional training centers will incorporate courses that combine AI literacy with African moral philosophy and theological ethics. This attempt (curricula) would equip students, technologists, and policymakers with the academic and moral apparatuses necessary to navigate ethical dilemmas modeled by AI in Nigeria and across the continent.

Ultimately, any attempt at incorporating the innovations of technology with African religion-philosophical insights will not only safeguard moral agency but cultivates a model of digital humanism capable of guiding the African continent through the ethical and existential challenges of the AI era.

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