Journal of Politics and Ethics in New Technologies and AI

Journal of Politics and Ethics in New Technologies and AI

AI, International Relations & Religion

Dimitra Chatzivasileiou, Anastasia Psomiadi, Theoharris William Efthymiou-Egleton, Laura Kassar

COMMENTARY

AI, International Relations & Religion

Dimitra Chatzivasileiou
University of Macedonia, Greece.

Anastasia Psomiadi
Metropolitan College, Greece.

Theoharris William Efthymiou-Egleton
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK.

Laura Kassar
London School of Economics and Political Science, UK.

Abstract

This research envisions a future where humans and machines collaboratively enhance decision-making capabilities, fostering harmonious coexistence. Addressing concerns about the potential threat of artificial intelligence (AI) to humanity, the focus shifts to the benevolence of AI entities shaped by human influence. The prospect of AI functioning at a level where authority is wielded by an inaccessible and infallible entity lies in its role as an independent arbiter. This entails the capability to identify cultural barriers and navigate existing political constraints deliberately. Consequently, there is potential for discovering common political ground through algorithmic processes, leading to the resolution of longstanding political issues between states. However, uncertainties persist – perhaps these aspirations may not materialize as expected. The study explores AI's role in international relations and religion, particularly Christianity, emphasizing its potential as an independent arbiter capable of recognizing cultural barriers and navigating political constraints. This research explores the intersection of cultural sensitivity and AI in diplomacy, discussing ethical considerations and benefits. The impact of AI on conflict resolution and peacebuilding is examined, stressing the need for collaborative efforts to establish robust AI standards. Challenges to religious authority, ethical considerations in AI development, and AI's influence on humanitarian aid and religious values are also explored. The research concludes by highlighting the imperative to address algorithmic bias for inclusivity and equitable representation in the digital age.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Religion, International Relations, Diplomacy

Introduction

From the first council of Nicaea (325 BC) to the reformation, Christianity has played a central role in both the social and political life of people, irrespective of religion, opinion, and origin (McManners, 2001). The establishment of Christian doctrine has significantly influenced every aspect of life, shaping interactions with laws, governors, and foreign entities. As we navigate the current era,

understanding the potential impacts of seemingly alien technology, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), on the intersection of religion and international relations becomes crucial (Tzimas, 2021).

What was once science fiction in our minds is now the reality we face today, with AI as the rival to human intelligence. The 4th Revolution of AI is considered a major threat to global security, with cyber warfare changing the traditional landscape of battlefields (Rendsburg, 2019). AI's capacity to process vast amounts of data swiftly and recognize patterns holds the promise of fundamental changes in our understanding of politics at a global level (Cummings et al., 2018).

The most likely way in which AI could act to reduce human failure in international relations, a field where authority often rests with an unreachable and infallible figure, is by acting as an independent arbitrator capable of recognizing cultural barriers. This lens is essential in examining AI's interaction with religion, especially considering the humanistic evolution that led people to bring God into their "human" measures over the centuries (Geraci, 2008).

Certainly, machines possess the ability to rapidly process extensive volumes of data. They can store and retrieve significantly larger amounts of information compared to the human mind. When equipped with appropriate software, machines excel in swiftly and accurately identifying patterns in data, outperforming human capabilities. However, it's important to note that machines operate within predefined parameters. While a human child can instinctively identify a cat from any perspective, a computer, even after analysing numerous cat images, may encounter challenges if the cat's face is momentarily obscured (Le, 2013).

In international relations, the emergence of human-level artificial intelligence (AGI) capable of replacing human decision-makers faces significant resistance. While the idea of robotic leaders remains distant, AI is set to impact global politics subtly. Instead of fully taking over decision-making, AI is likely to inform human decision-makers by processing data, recognizing patterns, and influencing decision speed. Integrating AI into international affairs offers both opportunities and risks, necessitating early consideration of its impacts (Cummings et al., 2018).

AI and International Relations

Cultural Sensitivity and AI in Diplomacy

Cultural sensitivity and AI intersect in diplomacy, revolutionizing international relations. AI's real-time translation tools break down language barriers, facilitating meaningful diplomatic discussions. Additionally, AI-driven analysis of cultural data enables the curation of programs that showcase unique aspects, fostering cultural exchange and strengthening diplomatic ties. This technological

integration also aids diplomats in understanding cultural nuances, promoting more respectful interactions. Despite these benefits, ethical considerations surrounding privacy and bias must be navigated to ensure responsible AI use aligns with diplomatic principles. In essence, AI's transformative impact on diplomacy holds the potential to enhance global cooperation while requiring careful ethical management (Frąckiewicz, 2023).

Digital Diplomacy and Religious Dialogue

Digital diplomacy, or e-diplomacy, has revolutionized global interactions by utilizing the Iinternet and ICTs, emphasizing inclusivity and transparency. In parallel, AI is impacting unexpected areas, including interfaith dialogue. AI's strength lies in processing data, recognizing patterns, and enhancing understanding in diverse societies (Troy, 2013). While AI facilitates communication and offers valuable insights, it cannot replace the human element of empathy and compassion in these discussions. Ethical considerations are crucial as AI contributes to fostering inclusive conversations across belief systems (Diplomat Magazine, 2014; Frąckiewicz, 2023).

AI in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

The dual impact of AI on global peace and security necessitates collaborative efforts among peacebuilders, tech engineers, and policymakers. While AI's machine learning capabilities offer the potential for discovery and text analysis, there are risks, including misinformation and support for lethal automated weaponry. The peacebuilding field must raise awareness about AI's impacts, urging urgent actions for robust AI standards. Collaboration between peacebuilders and the tech sector is crucial to developing AI tools that transform divisive rhetoric into peaceful language, fostering social cohesion and facilitating peacebuilding (Alliance for Peacebuilding, 2023).

AI and Religion

First and foremost, the context underlying Christianity's position as a central figure in global diplomacy needs consideration (Hall, 2002). Augustine's influence under Emperor Constantine marked a shift from a pacifistic and non-political religion to one that provided a theological justification for war. This change set the stage for diverse forms of Christianity, leading to conflicts driven by cultural differences, notably seen in the Reformation and the emergence of Calvinist economics and liberation theology (Coverston, 2000).

Historically, this is best illustrated in Richard Nixon's attitude before his becoming president, where to reduce the chance of his opponent gaining the electoral fruits of a brokered peace in Vietnam (Farrell, 2017), he undermined US negotiations. Objectively wrong actions like this would be

significantly undermined by a transparent and non-partisan AI, which could account for both error and cultural differences such as religion, often key in determining sustainable diplomatic settlements, as seen on both sides of the Irish border.

AI, with its potential to offer non-combative solutions, holds a pivotal role in improving global justice and relations. It can address arbitrary clashes that undermine cooperation by providing transparent and non-partisan insights (Puzio, A. 2023). The historical example of political expediency undermining peace negotiations could be mitigated by AI's objective analysis. Furthermore, AI's potential as an independent arbitrator, proposing culturally sensitive and realistic solutions, could bridge gaps that human diplomacy may find challenging (Richter & Webb, 2014).

Moreover, while AI's ability to account for religion and its future change ought to be great, at a basic level, the fact that the views and theologies of many religious groups are determined by a few leaders means it is somewhat impossible even for a superhuman AI to provide solutions to all diplomatic problems. This is most evident in Catholicism where the remarkable concentration of power in the hands of the pope (Wood, 2017) (both politically and theologically too via the idea of papal infallibility) means that profound changes can occur almost at will, making long-term solutions perhaps objectively impossible rather than simply limited by diplomatic human error.

This imperfection, though, could be somewhat rectified by further consideration of the realms of the plausible, in that one means that we should accept some degree of conflict (Steele, 2015) in a human lead system is inevitable and instead, we should focus on improving the additional flexibility afforded and mitigating the potential for conflict brought by religion rather than unrealistically aiming to nullify its potential for good or ill.

Ethical Considerations in AI Development

The intricate intersection of AI development and religious ethics introduces a multifaceted terrain laden with ethical implications. The ethical discourse grapples with the tension between embracing the potential advantages of AI and the inherent risks of dehumanization and exploitation. Notably, the transformative impact of automation on the nature of work and the ethical dimensions surrounding data privacy emerge as pivotal concerns. Business leaders, contending with the imperative to harness AI for profitability and efficiency, find themselvesse entangled in ethical quandaries, navigating the delicate balance between technological progress and the preservation of human dignity (Vousinas, G.L et al, 2022). Moreover, the ethical considerations in AI development extend to international relations, where religious values play a substantial role in shaping frameworks related to privacy, transparency,

and the ethical application of AI, particularly in domains such as surveillance and warfare (Thacker, 2023).

Challenges to Religious Authority

The integration of AI into various aspects of life, including religion, poses challenges to religious authority. It enables spiritual conversations via trained applications but raises privacy concerns (e.g., Replika), impacting religious freedom. Historical examples (e.g., Llull, Spiritualists) show early tech-spirit intersections. Surveillance capitalism's rise, driven by big tech exploiting user data, jeopardizes autonomy and religious rights. AI, like facial recognition, threatens religious congregations through profiling. Yet, AI also fosters religious expression, as seen in robots reciting sutras. Effective regulation is crucial for navigating AI's impact on evolving spiritual landscapes and protecting fundamental rights (Panin, 2023).

Humanitarian Aid and Religious Values

The influence of AI in humanitarian aid and development offers analytical prowess but raises human rights risks. AI's potential to replace human decision-making, coupled with transparency challenges, poses a "black box" problem, hindering accountability for harm or discrimination. While some risks align with existing legal frameworks, others are novel, driving the emergence of AI ethics and governance. Organizations globally craft principles for responsible AI deployment. In humanitarian aid, AI optimizes distribution by embodying religious ethical principles like compassion and justice. As public sector AI deployment rises, proactive efforts are crucial for tool development, policy-making, and accountability, ensuring alignment with human rights and SDGs amid digital evolution (Pizzi et al., 2020).

Algorithmic Bias and Cultural Sensitivity

In the digital age, algorithms shape online content consumption in cultural domains, yet they harbour inherent biases from societal prejudices. Algorithmic bias, marked by systemic prejudices, adversely affects specific groups due to biased training data or development decisions. In cultural industries like music, film, literature, and visual arts, this bias perpetuates stereotypes, reinforces inequalities, and limits access to diverse content. Concerns centre on representation and diversity, where historical data may favour mainstream content, marginalizing voices and perpetuating limited representation. Recognizing and addressing algorithmic bias is crucial for fostering inclusivity, equitable representation, and cultural richness as algorithms increasingly influence our digital experiences (Oliver, 2023).

Conclusions

The historical influence of Christianity on global socio-political landscapes converges with the contemporary rise of AI, shaping a transformative dynamic in the interplay of religion and international relations. In AI and International Relations, the potential of AI as an impartial arbitrator, recognizing cultural barriers, emerges. The 4th Revolution of AI, considered a threat to global security, offers opportunities to inform decision-makers and influence global politics through rapid data processing and pattern recognition (Efthymiou et al., 2020). Resistance to human-level AI persists, necessitating early consideration of nuanced impacts.

Cultural Sensitivity and AI in Diplomacy reshape global interactions by breaking language barriers and fostering cultural exchange. Ethical considerations on privacy and bias require careful navigation for responsible AI use aligning with diplomatic principles. Digital Diplomacy and Religious Dialogue undergo a paradigm shift with AI, emphasizing inclusivity and transparency. While AI facilitates interfaith discussions, human empathy remains irreplaceable.

AI in Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding highlights the dual impact of AI on global peace and security. Collaborative efforts are imperative to harness AI's potential while addressing risks like misinformation and lethal automated weaponry. AI and Religion revisit historical influences, presenting AI as a potential non-combative arbitrator. Ethical considerations in AI development, especially concerning religious values, underscore the need for regulation and proactive efforts.

Challenges to Religious Authority, Humanitarian Aid and Religious Values, and Algorithmic Bias and Cultural Sensitivity underscore the multifaceted impacts of AI. Effective regulation and ethical governance are crucial to navigating this evolving intersection, ensuring alignment with human rights, cultural diversity, and ethical standards in the digital age. A thoughtful and inclusive approach is essential as we navigate this unprecedented era, harnessing AI benefits while mitigating risks and upholding global values.

References

Alliance for Peacebuilding. (October 2023). *Designing AI for Conflict Prevention & Peacebuilding*. https://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/afp-publications/designing-ai

Burton, J., & Christou, G. (2021). Bridging the gap between cyberwar and cyberpeace. *International affairs, 97*(6), 1727-1747.

Coverston, H. S. (2000). *Religious ideation and capital practice: A study of the Florida legislature*. The Florida State University.

Cummings, M. L., Roff, H. M., Cukier, K., Parakilas, J., & Bryce, H. (2018). *Artificial intelligence and international affairs*. Chatham House Report, 7-18. https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/publications/research/2018-06-14-artificial-intelligence-international-affairs-cummings-roff-cukier-parakilas-bryce.pdf

DiplomatMagazine. (2014, November 2). *Diplomacy and its Practice Vs Religious Diplomacy and Dialogue*. https://diplomatmagazine.eu/2014/11/02/diplomacy-practice-vs-religious-diplomacy-dialogue/

Efthymiou, I. (2024). Exploring the Frontier: New and Future Trends in Research. In B. Orlando (Ed.), *Innovation Capabilities and Entrepreneurial Opportunities of Smart Working* (pp. 48-68). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-8797-3.ch003

Efthymiou-Egleton, I. P., Egleton, T. W. E., & Sidiropoulos, S. (2020). Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Politics: Should Political AI be Controlled?. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology, 5*(2).

Farrell, J. A. (2017). *When a candidate conspired with a foreign power to win an election*. Politico Magazine. https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/08/06/nixon-vietnam-candidate-conspired-with-foreign-power-win-election-215461/

Frąckiewicz, M. (2023, September 8). *AI as a Cultural Ambassador: The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Diplomacy*. RS, TR, Artificial Intelligence, Newson. Retrieved from https://ts2.space/en/ai-as-a-cultural-ambassador-the-role-of-artificial-intelligence-in-diplomacy/#gsc.tab=0

Geraci, R. M. (2008). Apocalyptic AI: Religion and the promise of artificial intelligence. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 76*(1), 138-166.

Hall, I. (2002). History, Christianity and diplomacy: Sir Herbert Butterfield and international relations. *Review of International Studies, 28*(4), 719-736.

Le, Q. V. (2013, May). *Building high-level features using large scale unsupervised learning*. In 2013 IEEE international conference on acoustics, speech and signal processing (pp. 8595-8598). IEEE. https://arxiv.org/abs/1112.6209

McManners, J. (2001). *The Oxford illustrated history of Christianity*. Oxford University Press.

Oliver, P. G. (2023, June 18). *Algorithmic Bias in the Cultural and Creative Industries: Unmasking the Hidden Prejudices*. Data and Beyond. Retrieved from https://medium.com/data-and-beyond/algorithmic-bias-in-the-cultural-and-creative-industries-516d3969dbe1

Panin, S. (2023, May 10). *Challenges and Promises of Artificial Intelligence in Religion*. Talk About: International Center for Law and Religion Studies. https://talkabout.iclrs.org/2023/05/10/challenges-and-promises-of-artificial-intelligence-in-religion%EF%BF%BC/

Pizzi, M., Romanoff, M., & Engelhardt, T. (2020). AI for humanitarian action: Human rights and ethics. *International Review of the Red Cross, 102*(913), 145-180. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383121000011

Puzio, A. (2023). Theology Meets AI: Examining Perspectives, Tasks, and Theses on the Intersection of Technology and Religion. In Puzio, A., Kunkel, N., Klinge, H. (Eds). *Alexa, How Do You Feel About Religion? Theological Approaches to Technology and Artificial Intelligence* (Theology and AI 1). Darmstadt: wbg, 29–41.

Richter, A., & Webb, N. J. (2014). Can Smart Defence work? A suggested approach to increasing risk-and burden-sharing within NATO. *Defence & Security Analysis, 30*(4), 346-359.

Steele, B. J. (2015, September 26). *Review – Religion and the Realist Tradition*. E-International Relations. Retrieved from http://www.e-ir.info/2015/09/26/review-religion-and-the-realist-tradition/

Thacker, J. (2023, January 17). *Ethics in the Age of AI: Defining and Pursuing the Good for Our Good and the Good of Our Communities*. Retrieved from https://hc.edu/center-for-christianity-in-business/2023/01/17/ethics-in-the-age-of-ai/

Troy, J. (2013). Religion and Foreign Affairs: Essential Readings. *Politics, Religion & Ideology, 14*(4), 583-584. https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2013.838472

Tzimas, T. (2021). *Legal and Ethical Challenges of Artificial Intelligence from an International Law Perspective* (Vol. 46). Springer Nature.

Vousinas, G.L., Simitsi, I., Livieri, G., Gkouva, G.C., & Efthymiou, I.P. (2022). Mapping the Road of the Ethical Dilemmas Behind Artificial Intelligence. *Journal of Politics and Ethics in New Technologies and AI, 1*(1), e31238.https://doi.org/10.12681/jpentai.31238

Wood, M. (2017, July 18). *Today in History – Extinguishing the Pope's Power in England*. [Web log post]. In Law Library of Congress Blog. Retrieved from https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2017/07/today-in-history-extinguishing-the-popes-power-in-england/