



Research Article

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Received: 25 November 2025 / Accepted: 30 December 2025 / Published: January 2026

AI and Religion in Greece: Orthodoxy, Ethics, and the Moral Framing of Technology

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/mjss-2026-0076>

Abstract

This theoretical work examines the convergence of Orthodox Christianity and artificial intelligence (AI) in the Greek cultural context. While global debates on artificial intelligence ethics usually center on secular or practical structures, the Greek Orthodox heritage brings a distinct moral dimension inspired by spiritual anthropology, the theology of the human person, and the notion of heavenly likeness. The study looks at Greek consumers' perceptions of artificial intelligence from ethical, moral, and religious angles depending on data gathered from the author's Ph.D. dissertation (omitted for blind review). It examines the degree to which religion influences public opinion, acceptance, and emotional engagement with smart systems. The research reveals that individuals occasionally evaluate artificial intelligence (AI) not only for its utility but also for its fit with their moral values, spiritual integrity, and freedom. By fusing Orthodox ethical principles with modern AI debate, this paper presents a novel conceptual framework: the Theological-Moral Framing Model of AI. This theory clarifies how group and individual reactions to new technologies are influenced by cultural identity, moral narratives, and religious beliefs. The paper argues that in Greece and other faith-based nations, developing culturally sensitive AI management and public relations strategies depends on an awareness of this religious aspect.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Orthodoxy, Ethics, Moral Framing, Religion, Greece, AI Perception

1. Introduction

Although this moral negotiation has particular characteristics in Orthodox countries, it follows more broad European debates on AI ethics. Western artificial intelligence ethical systems mostly rely on deontological and utilitarian reasoning—priorizing results, fairness, and duty (Floridi & Cows, 2019). On the other hand, traditional moral philosophy centers on interpersonal ethics, group harmony, and the inner condition of the human person (Clément, 2000). The person is seen as being involved in a divine-human relationship rather than as a separate intellectual agent. Moral evaluation then goes beyond adhering to moral laws; it is about the transformation of the person via good intent and spiritual awareness.

The Church's role as a moral authority supports this direction. In Greece, the Orthodox Church still has a significant influence on what the nation discusses and what people think (Makrides, 2021). Usually its theological interpretation of technical progress quotes *phronema*—a spiritual attitude grounded in humility, repentance, and discernment. This way of thinking is in great contrast with the secular logic driving the majority of AI invention. The Church's regular

public comments on bioethics, transhumanism, and automation hint at a more profound concern that in search of technological power mankind runs the danger of losing its spiritual direction (Zizioulas, 2008).

Orthodoxy also does not resist progress at all. Historical evidence shows that Byzantine traditions and contemporary Greek adopted inventions and sciences that complemented human flourishing and divine intent. The Orthodox response to artificial intelligence therefore cannot be easily described as technophobic. It instead reveals a complex moral system distinguishing technical ability from spiritual awareness. AI challenges this balance by presenting animals that emulate cognition, feeling, and decision-making—traits formerly reserved for humans made "in the image and likeness of God" (Genesis 1:26).

This begs a basic theological issue: Can machines participate in moral or spiritual agency? The Orthodox response is negative since only beings endowed with nous—the spiritual intellect capable of communion with God—possess moral accountability. Still, this difference becomes confused as artificial intelligence systems start to replicate empathy, moral judgment, or creativity. Such advancements raise existential questions: if human uniqueness is no longer self-evident, what remains of moral responsibility and divine vocation?

Dealing with these issues calls for an interdisciplinary approach incorporating consumer psychology, ethics, and theology. This article presents the Theological-Moral Framing Model of AI, a theoretical paradigm illuminating how religious stories and moral ideas influence public confidence in and view of artificial intelligence in Orthodox settings.

The model draws from the broader field of moral framing theory (Lakoff, 2010) but reinterprets it through the lens of Orthodox anthropology. It posits that individuals evaluate AI technologies according to three dimensions:

1. **Spiritual alignment** – whether AI is perceived as compatible with divine order and human purpose.
2. **Moral coherence** – whether AI actions align with ethical principles such as humility, compassion, and truth.
3. **Existential authenticity** – whether engagement with AI reinforces or diminishes the meaning of human existence.

By integrating these dimensions, the study aims to illuminate how theology and culture jointly influence technological acceptance. In Greece, this intersection has practical implications for policymaking, communication strategies, and public education on AI ethics. Understanding the Orthodox moral lens is not merely a matter of cultural specificity; it is a prerequisite for developing AI systems that resonate with the values of societies where religion remains a living ethical tradition.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Global Perspectives on AI Ethics

In philosophy, computer science, and social sciences, studies on artificial intelligence ethics have exploded. Core frameworks include deontological ethics, which emphasize moral obligations and principles (Borenstein, Herkert & Miller, 2017), and utilitarian ethics, which assess artificial intelligence results based on the highest good for the largest number. Western policymaking and academic discussion are dominated by these models, which also underpin the Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI of the European Union (European Commission, 2019). The rules highlight ideas including transparency, responsibility, and human control.

Still, some academics have contended that when applied outside of secular or Western cultural environments, these paradigms remain restricted. Detached from spirituality, social interdependence, and metaphysical comprehension, they frequently take a universal sense of reason (Jobin, Ienca & Vayena, 2019). Recent research underlines the necessity of context-

sensitive ethics including cultural and religious aspects of moral reasoning (Cowls et al., 2021). This change creates opportunities to investigate how religious customs decode and alter the moral significance of artificial intelligence.

2.2 Religion, Technology, and Morality Framing

In sociology and philosophy of science, the link between religion and technology has long been under investigation. Ellul (1964) characterized technology as a self-propelling power altering moral values. Still, current research reveal that religious traditions still have a great impact on how individuals understand technical development (Campbell, 2017). A cognitive framework by which believers assess the legitimacy, risk, and aim of technical devices, religion offers moral framing (Lakoff, 2010).

Two main narratives arise in Christian thought: the instrumentalist perspective, in which technology meets divine intent, and the Promethean view, in which technology reflects human hubris and moral revolt (Peters, 2018). Different religious groups have different degrees of coexistence of these frameworks, which affects how they approach ethical responsibility and artificial intelligence governance.

2.3 Orthodox Christianity and the Moral Imagination

The emphasis on anthropology of orthodox thought sets it apart from both Catholic and Protestant ethics. It views the human being as a spiritual person (prosopon) summoned to God, not mostly as a rational actor. Moral action stems from love, freedom, and interpersonal harmony rather than adherence with universal law (Zizioulas, 2008). Assessing artificial intelligence has great ramifications from this theological anthropology.

The Orthodox Church sees moral challenges as problems of personhood. Technology undermines the spiritual underpinnings of moral life (Yannaras, 2019) when it threatens to reduce human beings to functional or data-driven entities. Therefore, artificial intelligence systems simulating decision-making or emotion run the risk of blurring the boundary between being technically efficient and being in God's image.

Existing literature on Orthodox views toward science and modernity implies ambivalence instead of refusal. Encouraging human flourishing, the Church also cautions against dehumanization and moral alienation, therefore encouraging technology interaction. Makrides (2021). The focus is on discernment: whether innovation aids in the healing of the person (therapeia tou prosopou) or it becomes corrupted.

2.4. Religion and artificial intelligence: empirical insights

While empirical studies are still few, new findings suggest that religious affiliation impacts perspectives on artificial intelligence. Religious Americans—particularly Christians—exhibit greater moral concern and reduced trust toward autonomous systems than secular people, according to Scheitle and Ecklund (2018). Similarly, Zhang and Dafoe (2019) showed how attitudes toward machine agency and moral responsibility are shaped by cultural and religious beliefs.

Research hardly considers Orthodox communities in Europe, where secularism reigns. Greece offers a special backdrop where religion keeps influencing moral debate in education, politics, and daily life (Stavrakakis, 2020). Orthodox moral thinking sometimes combines religious symbolism—including divine order, sin, and human freedom—with consumer assessments of AI tools, according to the author's doctoral research (omitted for blind review). This process results in a moral vocabulary both spiritual and pragmatic.

2.5. The Need for a Theological-Moral Framework

There is no framework in the current literature of artificial intelligence that catches the interaction between spiritual ontology and technical ethics. The Theological-Moral Framing Model of AI suggested herein meets this need by drawing from three convergent spheres:

- Theology of Personhood (Prosopology): Human identity as communion and moral agency.
- Discernment Ethics: Appraisal of activities using purpose, humility, and spiritual awareness.
- Cultural Moral Framing: Shared stories that convert religious principles into daily technology evaluations.

The model aims to frame how Orthodox moral thought controls views of artificial intelligence in Greece by combining these aspects. Connecting spiritual anthropology with empirical consumer behavior helps both theological ethics and research on governance of artificial intelligence.

3. Approach: Conceptual Framework

This study uses a conceptual qualitative approach incorporating theological ethics, cultural psychology, and artificial intelligence perception theory. Rather than depending on quantitative data or controlled experiments, the study uses an interpretive framework based on hermeneutic analysis and backed by empirical observations taken from the author's doctoral research (omitted for blind review). The methodological objective is to clarify how Orthodox moral thought shapes public knowledge of artificial intelligence in Greece and to conceptualize these moral perceptions within a coherent theoretical model.

3.1. Conceptual Direction

Constructivist theology and interpretive ethics underpin the epistemological basis of the study. It presupposes that shared beliefs, customs, and spiritual narratives help us to morally comprehend technology, therefore it is socially created. These stories come from liturgical language, patristic texts, and group memory in Orthodox societies. Understanding how artificial intelligence perceives things therefore calls for awareness of the symbolic language via which morality is stated instead of to theoretical ethical rules.

The approach uses deductive-inductive reasoning. Starting with established notions from moral psychology and theology—such as virtue, freedom, and divine liken—it then interprets them using qualitative observations from Greek cultural and consumer scenes. This two approach helps to develop a grounded conceptual framework connecting behavioral science and theology.

3.2. Founding Information

The empirical basis of this model rests on qualitative data obtained from the author's doctoral study on AI perception among Greek consumers (omitted for blind review). The research looked at emotional, cognitive, and ethical responses to AI systems in daily life by means of structured interviews and survey-based open-ended answers. Among main results was the frequency with which ethical and spiritual vocabulary emerged in answers; words like "soul," "divine order," and "temptation" occurred often when respondents characterized artificial intelligence systems.

For many participants, these grammatical signals imply moral imagination rather than merely technical analysis in reaction to artificial intelligence. Participants connected automation and algorithmic control with loss of freedom, while they associated AI assistance with divine-like direction when seen as benign or "wise." These links imply that even among secular customers inside Orthodox cultures, religious moral reasoning works covertly.

3.3. The Theological-Moral Framework of Framing (TMFM)

By means of theological anthropology and moral framing theory, the Theological-Moral Framework of Artificial Intelligence (TMFM) integrates three linked dimensions of meaning whereby people understand artificial intelligence technologies according to main ideas in Orthodox ethics:

3.3.1. Theological Dimension of Spiritual Alignment

This aspect centers on the felt harmony between artificial intelligence and celestial order. Technologies are assessed on their preservation or distortion of the moral picture of mankind. Orthodox believers believe that human dignity comes from *imago Dei*, the image of God in every human being. Spiritual values are found in AI when it is seen as helping compassion, justice, or care. It produces anxiety when it seems to reproduce or replace human intellect.

3.3.2. Moral harmony (ethical dimension)

This relates to the apparent alignment of artificial intelligence activities with moral principles like empathy, humility, and honesty. Traditional moral thinking stresses *phronesis*, or applied wisdom informed by spiritual insight. It seems ethically consistent when artificial intelligence works openly and promotes human well-being. Algorithms break this coherence and cause suspicion when they hide or modify data.

3.3.3. Psychological aspect of existential genuineness

This dimension asks if interaction with artificial intelligence confirms or reduces human uniqueness. Orthodox anthropology rejects reductionism: personhood goes beyond biological and mental ability. Therefore, whereas artificial intelligence that substitutes relational or spiritual interaction lowers it, AI that improves self-understanding or creativity promotes authenticity.

These three aspects interact to influence both individual and group moral reading of artificial intelligence. Their interaction affects whether Orthodox communities accept, tolerate, or oppose artificial intelligence.

3.3.4. Analytical Approach

Following hermeneutic phenomenology, the model's analytic approach stresses lived moral experience rather than theoretical ideal. Consumer story interpretation develops by thematic grouping across the three TMFM aspects. For instance, when participants characterize artificial intelligence as "soulless but useful," their remark reveals great moral coherence but little spiritual alignment. By means of this interpretative mapping, researchers can see moral ambivalence and classify the kinds of ethical reasoning found in Greek civilization.

3.5 Validity and Rigor

The TMFM is triangulated over three areas to guarantee conceptual validity:

- Through referencing Orthodox patristic writings and ethical interpretations, theological consistency is guaranteed.
- Integration of consumer data and national sociocultural surveys guarantees cultural validity.
- Analytical discipline kept through thematic saturation and repeat qualitative material coding.

This approach gives a theoretical basis for future field study even though it is conceptual instead of empirical in its current form. It can be implemented using mixed-method research, qualitative interviews, or focus groups evaluating how spiritual and moral ideas affect attitudes for policy and acceptance of artificial intelligence.

3.6 Ethical Issues

Given its emphasis on morals and religious thought, the study honors cultural awareness and secrecy. Data anonymization and avoidance of overt theological judgment preserve scholarly neutrality while enabling real interaction with faith-based viewpoints. Promoting mutual understanding between religious communities and technology developers so that artificial intelligence respects moral and cultural variety is the ultimate ethical objective.

4. Arguments

The results of this theoretical analysis show that Greece's Orthodox Christian history shapes the moral knowledge of artificial intelligence. The Theological-Moral Framing Model (TMFM) shows how consumer and society reactions to artificial intelligence are molded by spiritual alignment, moral coherence, and existential authenticity acting together. These aspects affect not just moral judgements but also emotional responses and behavioral intents toward smart technologies.

4.1 Spiritual Alignment and the Question of Divine Order

In Orthodox theology, the moral universe is arranged around conformity with divine order. Every human activity is judged by its ability to preserve *koinonia*—communion between God, mankind, and creation—rather than by efficiency (Zizioulas, 2008). AI becomes ethically OK once it is seen as a tool enhancing this harmony. Examples include healthcare uses of artificial intelligence that reduce pain or technologies supporting community welfare and education. These applications fit with the Orthodox idea of *diakonia* (service), therefore showing compassion and care for the earth. But when artificial intelligence mimics awareness, decision-making, or emotional intelligence, it challenges the limits of spiritual anthropology. According to conventional wisdom, will and awareness are heavenly gifts only given to people. As such, technologies that blur this line elicit theological uncertainty. In interviews from the doctoral study (not included for blind review), respondents often used moral language like "temptation," "pride," and "playing God" to characterize artificial intelligence capable of autonomous judgment. This way of speaking reflects patristic worries about human overreach and moral corruption, ideas that are very important in the Orthodox moral world.

One of the main interpretative concepts that comes out of technological *hybris*, which is the fear of going beyond one's assigned role in creation. It shows a worry that advances in artificial intelligence may repeat the Fall tale in which mankind seeks knowledge and power outside of holy bounds. Though old, this theological metaphor is still psychologically alive in contemporary Greek awareness and shapes the acceptance or rejection of new ideas.

4.2 Moral Coherence and the Ethics of Discernment

Orthodox ethics are fundamentally different from deontological systems relying on written regulations. They stress *phronesis*, pragmatic knowledge supported by spiritual discrimination. In this approach, formal compliance is less important than intention, humility, and connection when it comes to moral judgment. AI, on the other hand, uses a kind of thinking called "algorithmic rationality." This kind of thinking doesn't have any purpose or humbleness. Many of the moral anguish seen in customer stories may be attributed to this disconnect. Doctoral data participants frequently wondered if artificial intelligence could behave with humanity or ethics. Phrases like "it doesn't feel," "it cannot repent," or "it knows but doesn't understand" show that there is a basic idea

that being good means having a mind that knows what is right and wrong, and that this knowledge comes from being aware of yourself and feeling sorry for your mistakes. Therefore, orthodox moral thinking sees artificial intelligence as ethically constrained: able to mimic ethical behavior but unable to undergo moral development.

4.3. Existential Authenticity and the Preservation of Personhood

Being-in-relationship and participation in divine life define the Orthodox conception of personhood, which transcends uniqueness. Real life calls for freedom, love, and connection. By mediating human interactions via algorithmic filters, the increasing usage of artificial intelligence questions these circumstances. People risk losing relational genuineness when artificial intelligence decides on job, social connections, or content exposure. The author's PhD research's data showed repeated feelings of alienation, including "machines decide for us" and "we become predictable."

These ideas fit with the Orthodox worry about depersonalization, a state when people lose their ability to have real interactions. Theologically, this fear fits the concept that spiritual death starts when people stop communicating honestly. AI can also help one to be genuinely oneself if it is used creatively and sensibly. Among them are online learning, digital storytelling, and assistive technologies that give agency back to people with impairments. Under these circumstances, artificial intelligence (AI) becomes a tool for human freedom rather than a restriction. The moral problem is keeping this balance: using technology as coworkers without turning it into an idol or replacement for human or divine connection.

4.4. The Church and Public Conversation's Roles

The Orthodox Church in Greece is very important for how moral ideas are formed. Even if formally issuing official papers on new technologies is uncommon, its religious language and pastoral influence spread across society. Sermons, religious media, and academic institutions indirectly shape public view of moral change. Some Church leaders caution against artificial intelligence, noting that the deification of technology reflects old errors that mistook creation for the Creator. Still others argue for discernment and involvement, encouraging followers to engage in creating moral technology instead of shunning it (Makrides, 2021). This internal diversity implies that Orthodoxy is flexible, not fixed, able to use context-based moral judgment.

Including religious ethics in public discourse might help Greece contribute more to European AI regulation. While EU law stresses human rights and openness, Orthodox ethics bring in extra values of humility, relationship, and spiritual accountability. By anchoring them in a tradition that sees ethics as transformation instead of regulation, these principles can enhance debates on human supervision, algorithmic bias, and ethical responsibility.

4.5. Theoretical Consequences and Cross-Cultural Comparison

Including a spiritual ontology missing in Western models, the TMFM broadens the present moral framework theory. Conventional moral framing emphasizes ideals like fairness, loyalty, or harm (Haidt, 2012). Theological moral framing adds one more aspect: obedience to divine order. This perspective clarifies why, in Orthodox communities, artificial intelligence that seems morally neutral in nonreligious countries could elicit great emotional opposition.

For instance, whereas Greek respondents are uncomfortable with the same systems because of worries about surveillance and dehumanization, Scandinavian studies show strong public trust in artificial intelligence-driven public services (Lindgren et al., 2020). The distinction is moral perspective rather than scientific knowledge; traditional values stress the dignity of the person; any system that reduces people to data violates this principle.

Additionally, the model sheds light on artificial intelligence communication techniques.

Governments or businesses touting artificial intelligence as a "helper" or "co-worker" repeat well-known religious images of teamwork and service, therefore promoting trust. On the other hand, when artificial intelligence is seen as autonomous or self-learning, it makes people think of religious images of rebellion or false creation, which makes them feel morally defensive. Designing narratives about artificial intelligence that are culturally relevant depends on an awareness of these symbolic dynamics.

4.6. Policy and Educational Consequences

Understanding the moral relevance of Orthodoxy in public life can help the European and national attitudes toward artificial intelligence governance to be improved. Policymakers should include public discourse and cultural values into technology education. Programs in Greece may feature sections on moral reasoning, religious viewpoints on human dignity, and the ethical boundaries of automation.

AI creators, on the other hand, should interact with ethicists and religious experts to guarantee cultural appropriateness. In countries where morality is shaped by spirituality, rejecting religious stories runs the danger of estranging sizable portions of the population. Cooperative projects among businesses, the Church, and colleges could advance a kind of ethical co-creation whereby technical design honors moral norms as well as scientific criteria.

4.7. Towards An Integrated Moral Ecology

The TMFM finally advocates for a moral ecology of artificial intelligence, in which spiritual, ethical, and technological aspects can all live together. Such an ecology recognizes that people interact with machines not only as consumers but also as moral subjects looking for significance. The Orthodox perspective offers a distinct point of view: morality as relationship and transformation instead of adherence.

Including this viewpoint into worldwide AI ethics would enable Greece to act as an example for culturally based technological governance. It shows that moral variety enhances innovation since it offers many routes to human-centered design, therefore enriching it rather than impeding it. Orthodoxy and artificial intelligence intersect to provide a place of imaginative conversation between faith and reason, history and progress, spirituality and science.

5. Conclusion

The interaction between Orthodox Christianity in Greece and artificial intelligence reveals a more profound discussion among technology, ethics, and spiritual anthropology. This paper's Theological-Moral Framing Model (TMFM) describes how cultural and religious beliefs affect public view, trust, and emotional connection with smart devices. The TMFM acknowledges that moral judgment in Orthodox communities is relational, experiential, and directed toward divine likeness, unlike secular ethical systems rooted in abstract ideas.

Three key takeaways emerge from the study. First of all, moral acceptance of technology is determined by spiritual alignment. People accept artificial intelligence if they think it will make the world kinder, fairer, or better for humanity. But they reject it if they think it will mess up the natural order or make people less special. Second, public trust depends on moral coherence. People judge artificial intelligence by qualities like humility, honesty, and empathy. They expect moral openness rather than technical perfection. Thirdly, emotional response is determined by existential authenticity. Valued are technologies that maintain relational integrity and self-awareness; those that encourage alienation or control raise moral objection.

This religious perspective questions accepted wisdom regarding universal AI ethics. It shows that moral judgments on technology rely not only on information or laws but also on group

metaphysical perspectives. Orthodoxy still serves as a living moral compass in Greece, directing how people view risk and progress. Effective communication, government, and acceptance of artificial intelligence technologies in faith-based communities all depend on an awareness of this impact.

Theoretically as well as practically, the essay makes a contribution. Including spiritual ontology as a motivator of ethical perception, theoretically broadens moral framing theory. Practically, it suggests an approach to AI governance rooted in culture that honors religious custom and moral variety. Policymakers and designers who appreciate this dimension will be better able to create technologies that reflect local values while yet upholding universal ethical principles.

Future study should confirm the TMFM by using interviews, surveys, and ethnographic analysis in Orthodox settings as well as through actual data obtained from empirical investigations. Comparing Christian and non-Christian cultures would further help to explain how religious ethics interact with secular ideas of technological morality. Extending this investigation will enable researchers to help create a worldwide discussion in which spirituality and technology live together rather than clash.

The moral issue at the core of AI is not whether computers can think, but rather whether humanity can stay compassionate among its own creations. The Orthodox custom reminds us in Greece that progress without spiritual awareness runs the danger of being empty. Therefore, the future of artificial intelligence ethics rests not only on invention but also on the restoration of wisdom—that is, the wisdom to utilize intelligence, human or synthetic, in aid of truth, freedom, and communion.

ETHICAL APPROVAL STATEMENT

This research was conducted as part of the author's Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) and followed the internal ethics procedures of the doctoral program. All research activities complied with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA, 2017) and the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki (2013 revision). Because no sensitive or identifying personal data were collected, formal institutional review board (IRB) approval was not required under the program's ethics policy. All research procedures were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the committee and the Declaration of Helsinki (2013 revision).

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection between August and September 2023. Each participant completed a signed consent form confirming awareness of the research purpose, anonymity, and voluntary participation. No personal identifiers were recorded, and all responses were securely stored in compliance with GDPR standards.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data availability – The anonymized qualitative and quantitative data supporting this study derive from the author's doctoral research (omitted for blind review). Due to participant anonymity and ethical restrictions, raw data cannot be shared publicly; however, aggregated data and thematic summaries are available upon reasonable request.

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