

Religion

- Religion implies attachments that are antithetical to Enlightenment
- AIs as exemplars of proper behavior (in Religion)
- Spiritual? right by God (ceremony)? good works?
 - can a robot that is a positive role model subvert traditional (and perhaps misguided) lines of authority
- AIs as God like (Person of Interest — perfect observability and inferential prowess) — super intelligence
 - “and then there was light”
<http://scifisaturdaynight.com/?p=2698>
- Religion guides people, perhaps in heavy handed way, but not necessarily — perhaps a place for exploring the Great Unknown in the company of others — what of robots? Will they want religion? Will they serve as positive role models in religion?
 - “Whereas the chairman’s speech invokes deep-seated spiritual fears, the Grand Master Priest’s sermon is surprisingly pragmatic. He reminds his audience that religion (and the spirituality it contextualizes) is an institution that runs on the market economy of supply and demand. The masses seek guidance, which is the very reason for religion and its managers, like himself, to exist. However, “if someone or something could be simply born into the privilege of Enlightenment, a goal others toil to arrive at by surrendering all ties to the secular world and through scores, tens of thousands, and trillions of excruciating reincarnations, who would ever take such pains to seek spiritual truth?” (27). Helen
 - Links to Grand Inquisitor – among other connections, Christ leaves and Inmyo ŋ leaves

Enlightenment

- “In Buddhist terms, Enlightenment refers to the idea of awakening to the truth of the world, from self-consciousness as the “root-source of human suffering’” (Abe 63). Shin 2016
 - two parts — self-consciousness and awakening to the World – AIs better suited to one of both?
 - can the World be highly limited in scope? in what ways?
 - freedom from self consciousness (where self consciousness is taken to be "uncomfortably conscious of oneself as an object of the observation of others")?
- “Could, then, a being born free of the corporeal bondage of feeling, suffering, desiring, and knowing one’s mortal fate achieve spiritual Enlightenment? The issue at stake here is whether there actually is anything for the entity to be enlightened from.” (Shin 2016).
- In addition to whether its possible, is there value in the journey — are there characteristics of the journey that are worthy of reflection (e.g., authenticity)
- AIs shortcut to enlightenment
 - How about ability to simulate multiple lifetimes at super speed — remind us of Her and super intelligence arguments
- What is the relationship between super intelligence, consciousness, enlightenment?

Robots and humans

- robot enlightenment demotivates humans
- AIs as exemplars of proper behavior

Consciousness

- mimicing consciousness
 - <https://www.technologyreview.com/s/531146/what-it-will-take-for-computers-to-be-conscious/>
- tests of consciousness
 - mimicry, it seems to me, is a function of at least two people ... Perhaps consciousness of a person is best judged in the presence of another
- Perspective of AI as superior — does this show humility
 - AIs as God like (Person of Interest — perfect observability and inferential prowess) — super intelligence
 - filming juxtaposing robot and Bhuddha matches attitudes toward robot by monks and technician
 - <http://scifisaturdaynight.com/?p=2698>

Genetic engineering

- will this demotivate humans too
- Does this have theological implications too

Quotes from Helen's paper using keyword "Enlightenment" – had hoped to illustrate a "summarization" algorithm

I claim that the interactions between various parties of disparate ontological and social strata in the story show that the uncanny alterity of our own simulations is none other than our mirror images and suggest that what we deem to be the essence of our being may in fact be irreconcilably alien to who we are. **Enlightenment**, in this light, is the self-contradictory knowledge that admits to its own impossibility.

In Buddhist terms, **Enlightenment** refers to the idea of awakening to the truth of the world, from self-consciousness as the “root-source of human suffering” (Abe 63). In this state, the perspectival subject has been identified and set aside, but it still exists in physical form, exposed to the constant assails of earthly desires that constitute “a remainder of grasping” (Collins 39).⁴ Could, then, a being born free of the corporeal bondage of feeling, suffering, desiring, and knowing one’s mortal fate achieve spiritual **Enlightenment**? The issue at stake here is whether there actually is anything for the entity to be enlightened from. Could an ailing subject emerge from a body that does not, supposedly, feel?

I first introduce this rare gem of underappreciated Korean literature as a rigorous inquiry into the human condition, exploring its thematic framework to excavate a transnational and transcultural ontology that veers away from (while remaining in close conversation with) the intellectual legacy of the European **Enlightenment** through its Buddhist homonym. By doing so, I question the vision of the posthuman subject and build on existing scholarship on new technologies that complicate what it means to be, and is, human.

What such studies, among others, illuminate is that the advent of telepresence technology — technologies that fluidly reconfigure the boundaries of physical, temporal, and mental presence—has exposed the human subject as lacking any exclusive claim to ontological exclusivity in its subjecthood, which is the precondition of its transcendence, or **Enlightenment**.

Denying this order would mean, regardless of where one comes from (materially tethered to the chain of reincarnation from the previous life) or what one is made of (self-initiated conducts in the present life), every subject has the potential to reach **Enlightenment**, the most exulted state of being. While the chain of incarnation and spiritual ascendance mainly concern life forms, the Buddhist teaching of transcendent material equality may, on principle, also extend to the realm of inorganic agents.

On the other hand, the monk's recognition that **Inmyo űng**'s inorganic constitution and limited purpose may preclude the potential of **Enlightenment** aligns with property dualism—that there is only one substance in reality, which in the prapañca context would dictate that all physical substance is but an illusion. Mental and physical faculties are irreconcilably disparate, and therefore, no matter how closely a computer program resembles the human psyche in its functionality and expression, its material make (metal body, run by binary codes) denies any possibility of a self-aware mind.

Indeed, the monk is giving neither **Inmyo űng** nor the technician any say in the matter because they are essentially cogs in a wheel, their meaning of existence relegated to the realm of sheer instrumentality. The monk's consternation, spilling out in free indirect discourse, belies his devotion to the Maha űya űna path of seeking **Enlightenment** to indiscriminately benefit all sentient beings as his lofty logic begins to disintegrate in the face of the technician's challenge: “[H]aving finally seen the arrival of one who accomplished Buddhi after so long a wait, it would be unthinkable to let the name of the honored be sullied by releasing it to indecent commercials and crude shows on those vulgar 3DTVs or netTVs ...” (19).

Whereas the chairman's speech invokes deep-seated spiritual fears, the Grand Master Priest's sermon is surprisingly pragmatic. He reminds his audience that religion (and the spirituality it contextualizes) is an institution that runs on the market economy of supply and demand. The masses seek guidance, which is the very reason for religion and its managers, like himself, to exist. However, “if someone or something could be simply born into the privilege of **Enlightenment**, a goal others toil to arrive at by surrendering all ties to the secular world and through scores, tens of thousands, and trillions of excruciating reincarnations, who would ever take such pains to seek spiritual truth?” (27). The Grand Master Priest's statement reiterates the institutional necessity for denying **Inmyo űng**

cultural, spiritual, and social capital and reaffirms that when employed within the institutional framework of human religion, spirituality is just another word for anthropocentrism, which is the central creed of the ironically homonymic conflict clause of Buddhist Enlightenment: the eighteenth-century European **Enlightenment**, as a philosophical, cultural, and political movement that aimed to emancipate humanity from its radical alterity (almighty deity). When his question is met with silence, the Master Priest redirects to **Inmyo Ņg** and asks whether its intention is to distress the masses by impudently laying claim to congenital advantage, and by association, condemning humanity to despairing inferiority.

The robot asks the dumbfounded audience what is there for them to be afraid of, when the world was always and already is complete as it is and all beings including humans are already born with the seed of **Enlightenment** within. The potential exists, but has only been forgotten.

Yet, returning to Freud's definition of the "uncanny," what "was meant to remain secret and hidden [but] has come into the open" (132) is none other than the never fully comprehensible and therefore fluid meaning and presence of the subject (a self-conscious state of being and the conditions it entails), and the paradoxical realization that what we deem to be the essence of our existence may be irreconcilably alien to who we are. **Enlightenment**, in this light, is a self-contradictory knowledge that admits to its own impossibility, the inevitable consequence of which is the nullification—Nirvana—of both the subject and the material body that enables its awareness. Thus viewed, "Readymade Bodhisattva" is far more than an intriguing thought experiment about the future of artificial intelligence. The proposition that a nonhuman substrate may achieve spiritual transcendence presents a radical posthuman vision; meaning lies in the eye of the beholder at the specific spatiotemporal juncture they inhabit—in other words, in fluid presence—and value emerges from, rather than is neutralized by, this fluidity.