

## **A Theological Discourse on the Relation of Technology and Love**

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• ABSTRACT •

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## A Theological Discourse on the Relation of Technology and Love

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The purpose of this article is to examine the relation of love and technology in a Christian theological view. At first, love is *universal* in its original character. This means that love is purely universal without any doctrinal or ideological assumption. In contrast, technology is *universalistic* in its basic character. This signifies that technology is intentionally universalistic in its conspiracy with some ideologies or doctrines. In this respect, love and technology are fundamentally incompatible. On account of the coercive and violent character of universalistic technology, the sound way for them to be related is that the universal love is concerned with, embraces, and transforms the universalistic technology. However, it is difficult to anticipate the transformation of technology by love because the universalistic character of technology is as transformative as the universal character of love. The only way to anticipate it is that love has a unique character that surpasses technology. It is Christian love (*agape*) that can realize that anticipation. Through the Incarnation of Christ Jesus, it makes love concrete and not abstract, and in relation to technology, it enables love to overcome the fatal weakness of technology, i.e., *ambiguity* by giving love a unique character, *embodiedness*. Only when the relation of technology and love is extended to the relation of technology and *agape* (embodied/incarnated love), then technology and love can be cogently related, and even the transformation of technology by love can be anticipated.

**Key words:** technology, love, character, agape, ambiguity, embodiedness

## I. Introduction

In a modern society, it is very difficult to find any place on which technology does not have influence. As Andrew Potter says, “technology is a way of apprehending the world, it is a mode of existence that transforms the way we know, think, and will.”<sup>1)</sup> In this sense, technology is one of the most influential elements representing the modern society. Meanwhile, in a Christian society, it is very difficult to find any place on which love does not have influence. As a famous biblical verse, “these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love”<sup>2)</sup> says, love is one of the most essential virtues representing Christianity. In this context, it can be said that speaking of technology and love at the same time means speaking of the modern society and Christianity at the same time, and so, comparing technology with love signifies reflecting upon the meaning of Christianity in the modern society. This is the reason that this article attempts to talk about technology and love at the same time, and even to compare them in spite of their unfamiliarity.<sup>3)</sup> is it appropriate to speak of the relation between technology and love? It seems that it is still not. However,

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1) Andrew Potter, Introduction to the 40th Anniversary Edition in George Grant, *Lament for a Nation* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2000), xliii-xliv.

2) 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIV)

3) Of course, besides love, there are other essential virtues such as justice, equality, and freedom in Christianity. Among these essential Christian virtues, however, this article specifically chooses love as a crucial virtue representing Christianity, and seeks to look into the modern world driven by technology from a Christian perspective of love.

when their characteristics are compared, it becomes appropriate. In character, love is universal, whereas technology is universalistic. At first, this article examines the universal character of love and the universalistic character of technology, and compares their differences and similarities. Through this examination, it tries to show that love and technology are related in character and conflicting in their relation.

In addition, this article seeks to resolve their characteristic and relational conflict in the way that love is concerned with technology, and not *vice versa*. The reason that technology is the object and cannot be the subject is that its universalistic character is violent and coercive. Therefore, it attempts to enable love to be concerned with technology and transform its universalistic character in the direction that love universally pursues. Furthermore, it strives to reify such an attempt by suggesting the embodied love (*agape*) through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, which can overcome not only characteristic, but also relational weakness of technology, i.e., ambiguity. What this article ultimately pursues through this research is not simply to relate love with technology and compare them, but to pose a possibility to transform the modern world mastered by technology through the transformative vigor of love.

## II. Technology and Love in Conflict<sup>4)</sup>

Love is *universal*.<sup>5)</sup> In other words, the main character of love is *universality*. To begin with, the universality of love needs to be distinguished from the universalism of love. Terminologically, a word with the postfix -ism is concerned with some doctrine or ideology. The *universalism* of love, therefore, implies a universal doctrine or ideology of love. If love relates to a certain doctrine or ideology, it can easily degenerate into an aggressive and tyrannous virtue that Reinhold Niebuhr indicates: “love absolutism ... expresses itself in terms of a universalism, set against all narrower forms of human sympathy, as well as in terms of a perfectionism which maintains a critical vigor against the most inevitable and subtle forms of self-assertion.”<sup>6)</sup> In contrast to the universalism of love, the universality of love is not concerned with any particular doctrine or ideology. It goes beyond all doctrines and ideologies. It denotes that love is purely universal.<sup>7)</sup> Here, that which love is purely

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4) The argument on the relation of technology and love is originated from my doctoral dissertation, *Human/Posthuman Relationship in Love: Toward an Ethic of Neighbor-love in the Age of Technology* (Evanston: Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2010).

5) Here, that which love is universal basically means that which love can be concerned with anything, or which the boundary of love is boundless. In this regard, the word *universal* can be replaced by *catholic* (as a religious term) or *influential* (as a social term).

6) Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* (New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1935), 48.

7) In this regard, speaking of the universality of love is emphasizing the purity of love. There are many things that can be universal (that is, catholic or influential) in the world. However, there are very few things that can be purely universal, that is, catholic or influential with maintaining their relational purity.

universal means that love is solely universal without any assumption.<sup>8)</sup>

By contrast to love, technology is *universalistic* because it intends to be concerned and connected with some ideologies or doctrines.<sup>9)</sup> It is astonishing that technology has compromised with almost all modern politics.<sup>10)</sup> When it shakes its hand with them, it tends to concentrate on particular virtues that they consider most significant. Freedom is, for example, one of the most valuable virtues through which technology has been able to be connected with them. Because Marxism, liberalism, and even Christianity view freedom as one of the most significant virtues that must be pursued to develop their ideologies or doctrines, they have easily shared their ideologies or doctrines with technology that also ultimately pursues freedom in its scientific projects. Once penetrating their ideologies or doctrines, technology begins to manipulate them and maintain its universalistic vigor over them.

George Grant expresses this universalistic vigor of technology as the “mastery over human and non-human beings.”<sup>11)</sup> In a wider view, what

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8) According to Kierkegaardian view, it is because “[l]ove is the ground of everything” (Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love: Some Christian Reflections in the Form of Discourses*, trans. Howard and Edna Hong (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 212).

9) The comparison of ‘universal’ and ‘universalistic’ is neither based on nor directed to the dichotomy or dualism between these two terms or characters. As shown above in the analysis of love, for instance, even love that must be originally universal could become universalistic when it is concerned with a certain ideology or doctrine.

10) George Grant shows how technology has exercised its force by conspiring with liberalism in *English-Speaking Justice* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), 48-68; with Marxism in *Philosophy in the Mass Age* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); and Albert Borgmann demonstrates its conspiracy with democracy in *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 85-101.

is meant by ‘non-human beings’ can be understood not only as physically nonhuman beings such as plants, animals, and machines, but also as spiritually nonhuman beings like ideologies, doctrines, and computation. Under the universalistic mastery of technology, all physical and spiritual human and nonhuman beings are entirely dominated.

Jacques Ellul views this universalistic domination of technology as violent and coercive. He states, “Technical activity automatically eliminates every nontechnical activity or transforms it into technical activity.”<sup>12)</sup> With its violent and coercive universalistic vigor, technology, on the one hand, eliminates some socio-political activities that are not concerned with it, and on the other hand, it transforms some socio-political activities that are connected with it into its own activities. In doing so, “Technique, then, brings its own ideology; and every technical realization engenders its own ideological justification.”<sup>13)</sup> What conclusively remains in this ideological justification is solely “*technocracy*.”<sup>14)</sup>

In this respect, technology is certainly universalistic and not universal. When it spreads out its universalistic power, it seeks to remain *political*. Particularly, its universalistic power is politically reinforced when it ideologically pursues some ideal virtues, e.g., absolute equality and true freedom. When it pursues a certain ideal virtue, it

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11) George Grant, *Time as History* (Toronto: The Hunter Rose Company, 1969), 34.

12) Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), 83. In this book, Ellul uses the word *technique* instead of technology. He defines, “*technique* is the *totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency* (for a given state of development) in *every* field of human activity” (*Ibid.*, p. xxv).

13) *Ibid.*, 323.

14) *Ibid.*, 336.

can easily conspire with a certain modern politics, and as a result, it can continue to maintain its universalistic vigor. Otherwise, technology can hardly maintain its universalistic vigor. If technology and a certain modern politics do not have a common ideological denominator (e.g., freedom or equality or justice), they can rarely joint together, and accordingly, technology cannot exercise its universalistic vigor through and over it. In fact, since the *universalism* of technology is in itself ideological, it is very difficult for technology to have its universalistic power without pursuing a certain ideological virtue.

In contrast to any other virtues, love is the unique virtue that can be universal without being concerned with any kind of ideology. It is purely universal because it can maintain its vigor without any ideological assumption.<sup>15)</sup> Especially in exercising its influence, it is solely universal and not universalistic. Therefore, any interpretation on love without distinguishing its universality from its universalism can easily distort the original meaning of love. The universalism of love is, in fact, neither the character that love basically contains nor the direction that love ultimately poses. It is obviously a perverted character and direction of love. Referring to some ideologies, it tends to produce some distorted meanings of love, which are aggressive and coercive. In contrast, the universality of love is the basic character and ultimate direction of love. Regardless of any kind of ideology, it keeps the original meanings

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15) In this sense, Timothy P. Jackson claims that the “love’ ... must not be identified with any purely human achievement or even with any strictly human aspiration” (Timothy P. Jackson, *The Priority of Love: Christian Charity and Social Justice* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), 8.

of love, which are accepting and embracing. In this respect, that which love is universal must imply its universality and not universalism, that which love is perfect must signify its perfectivity and not perfectionism, and that which love is absolute must mean its absolutivity and not absolutism.

### III. Are Technology and Love Related?

In character, love can hardly be connected with technology. Concretely, the universality of love can barely be linked with the universalism of technology. Their link is almost impossible if love is not concerned with some ideological assumptions that technology concerns about, or if technology continues to concern about them which love is not concerned with. In other words, it is only possible either when the universality of love is changed into the universalism of love, or when the universalism of technology is altered to the universality of technology. Here, it is invalid to speak of the link between technology and love in the former case, because a universalistic love is no longer the love that is purely universal. If technology is connected with the universalistic love, this will mean not a link between technology and love, but a link between technology and a love-like ideological virtue.

Nevertheless, the former case actually occurs when love is misunderstood or distorted as just one of the ideological virtues such as justice and freedom. In this case, technology can exercise its universalistic influence in a religiously distorted situation. In a sense, the Crusades can

be understood as an example of the link between technology and a religiously distorted love. During the Crusades, technology had been able to exercise its universalistic military power by pretending to pursue a religiously absolute love, but actually displaying a distorted ideological love. In doing so, the universality of love had never appeared. There had been only the universalism of love, the universalism of technology, and their universalistic conspiracy. What their disguising conspiracy resulted in was just a distorted image of Christianity, i.e., a violent and coercive image of Christian love.

Meanwhile, it is cogent to speak of the link between technology and love in the latter case (the alteration of the universalism of technology into the universality of technology). It is, of course, almost impossible to expect that technology abandons by itself its ideological force and is transformed in a purely universal direction that love proposes. However, it is possible to anticipate that love is concerned with technology and transforms it. That is to say, that possibility is opened only when the universal character of love seeks to transform the universalistic character of technology.

Indeed, unlike the universalistic character of technology revealed as dominant, violent, coercive, aggressive, deconstructive, and devaluating, the universal character of love is exposed as cooperative, obliging, encouraging, embracing, reconstructive, and rehabilitative. From a biblical perspective, love “always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always persevere” (1 Corinthians 13:7, *NIV*). In contrast to technology intending to rule over and marginalize others, love intends to bear more

love in its relation to others. Timothy P. Jackson says, “[L]ove serves others most profoundly by making them loving in their turn.”<sup>16)</sup> In this context, it can be said that when love is concerned with others, they are *beloved* by love and finally produce fruits of love besides their own fruits. On this basis, it can be also said that when love is concerned with technology, technology is embraced by love, and as a result, the transformation of technology (especially the transformation of its universalistic character) by love (particularly its purely universal character) is anticipated.

However, it is still not easy to anticipate the transformation of technology by love, because the universalistic character of technology is as transformative as the universal character of love. Just as love universally embraces others and makes them *beloved* in its transformative scheme, so technology universalistically overwhelms others and makes them *technological* in its transformative paradigm. Needless to say, the fact that technology is as transformative as love makes it difficult to connect technology with love. Because technology is, like love, in itself transformative, it can hardly be connected with, embraced by, and changed by love. Concretely, when technology is concerned with love, the universalistic character of technology and its transformative force cannot help but conflict with the universal character of love and its transformative vigor.

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16) *Ibid.*, 127.

#### IV. Can Love Transform Technology?

How is it possible to speak of the transformation of technology by love? It seems not to be possible to speak of their sound link and the transformation of technology by love unless their characteristic conflict is resolved. For this resolution, it is necessary that love have a unique character that is not overlapped with and surpasses that of technology.

Particularly, this unique character of love must be able to surpass the most critical characteristic power of technology, i.e., the power of technology to make everything *ambiguous*. According to Grant, *ambiguity* is one of the most serious weaknesses that technology has. The ambiguity of technology is delineated well in his interpretation of the following statement that was made by a computer scientist: “The computer does not impose on us the ways it should be used.”<sup>17)</sup> By focusing on *should* in this statement, Grant discovers the feature of the technological ambiguity. He argues,

‘Should’ was originally the past tense of ‘shall’. It is still sometimes used in a conditional sense to express greater uncertainty about the future than the prophetic sense of ‘shall’. (‘I shall get a raise this year’ is more certain than ‘I should get a raise this year’. The colloquialism from the home of our language, ‘I shouldn’t wonder,’ expresses this.)<sup>18)</sup>

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17) George Grant, *Technology and Justice* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 19.

18) *Ibid.*, 28.

Because the computer in this statement is an exemplar of technology, this statement can be restated: *technology does not impose on us the certain ways it shall be used*. In other words, this means that what technology imposes on us is uncertainty, i.e., ambiguity. In order for love to have influence on technology, therefore, love needs to overcome the ambiguity of technology. If love has a unique character of overcoming that ambiguity, it will be able to pose a possibility to affect and transform technology.

It is Christian love (*agape*) that can pose that possibility. While a general inquiry into love as a virtue may remain an abstract discussion, a specific inquiry into *agape* can suggest a concrete exemplar of love beyond any abstract discussion about love. To be sure, it is Christ Jesus that is the concrete exemplar of *agape*. The tangible love demonstrated by him has a unique character of overcoming the philosophical ambiguity that the general inquiry into love as a virtue can easily cause. It proves that love has in itself a unique character of making the uncertain certain, the unclear clear, the opaque transparent, and the ambiguous obvious. Indeed, the Incarnation of Christ Jesus is not only the embodiment of the Word (John 1:14),<sup>19)</sup> but also the embodiment of Love. It concretely shows the substantiation of God's love through His Son: 'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son' (John 3:16).

The Incarnation also clarifies why the relation of technology and love should be developed into the relation of technology and *agape*. Only

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19) "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."

when love as a moral virtue is reified by love as a tangible substance, then love can be free from its conceptual ambiguity, and open a door to go beyond the ambiguity that technology causes. Jesus himself proves that the ‘imperfect’ image of love like ‘a poor reflection as in a mirror’ not only will be seen ‘face to face’ in the kingdom of God that will come (1 Corinthians 13:10-12),<sup>20)</sup> but also already has been clarified by his embodied love in the kingdom of God that *is* within us (Luke 17:21).<sup>21)</sup> It is not until a conceptual love is embodied by his concrete love that love can possess its unique character of making obscurity transparent, and can build up its unique paradigm of transforming ambiguity into clarity. With its transparent character and in its clear paradigm, love can eventually overcome the ambiguity that technology creates in its matrix.

To be sure, it is not until the embodiment of love is spoken through the Incarnation of Christ Jesus that love can abandon its conceptual ambiguity. Indeed, the event of the Incarnation makes it possible to assert that love is concerned with both the Infinite and the finite, and both transcendence and immanence. Slavoj Žižek argues in his interpretation of 1 Corinthians 13,

Crucial here is the clearly paradoxical place of Love with regard to All

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20) In this sense, “ambiguity has implied a corrective norm—clarity. Ambiguity has been an indication of imperfection” (Albert Borgmann, *Holding On to Reality: The Nature of Information at the Turn of the Millennium* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 185).

21) “[N]or will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”

(to the *completed* series of knowledge or prophecies). First, Saint Paul claims that love is there even if we possess *all* knowledge – then, in the second part of the passage, he claims that love is there only for *incomplete* beings, that is, beings who possess incomplete knowledge.<sup>22)</sup>

In contrast to the transcendent character of love that solely relates to the Infinite, the paradoxical character of love is concerned with both the complete and the incomplete. Precisely, this biblical passage implies that love has a unique character of going beyond any ambiguous knowledge regarding the ontological discrepancy between the Infinite and the finite, or between transcendence and immanence, and connecting both of them in its paradoxical embracing paradigm. As this biblical passage concludes, what results from this paradox of love is the completion of the incomplete and the clarity of the unclear.

Žižek discovers this kind of paradoxical character of love in the event of Christ. Concretely, he finds out that the Incarnation paradoxically shows the immanence of love as transcendence. He says,

Christianity ... offers Christ as a mortal-temporal individual, and insists that belief in the temporal Event of Incarnation is the only path to *eternal* truth and salvation. In this precise sense, Christianity is a ‘religion of Love’: in love, one singles out, focuses on, a finite temporal object which ‘means more than anything else’.<sup>23)</sup>

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22) Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute – or, why is the Christian legacy worth fighting for?* (London: Verso, 2000), 146.

23) *Ibid.*, 96.

Here, the encounter between temporality and eternity takes place when the Eternity paradoxically comes to temporal conditions, that is, when the eternal love of God is tangibly reified in temporality. The crucifixion of Christ is certainly the exemplar of that tangible reification of God's love. When it is confirmed that the eternal and transcendent love of God is paradoxically substantiated in the temporal and immanent event of the crucifixion, love can, at last, abandon its abstract image, overcome its conceptual ambiguity, and obtain its unique character of making the abstract concrete, the conceptual clear, the intangible tangible, and the ambiguous obvious, i.e., *embodiedness* which is the unique character of *agape* shown concretely by Christ Jesus.

## V. Embodied love (*Agape*) Transforming Ambiguous Technology

In particular, the Incarnation as the embodiment of love is sharply opposed to the ambiguity in the technological project of bodilessness, e.g., Hans Moravec's project of a bodiless super-intelligent machine that not only physically exceeds neuron-cell-based human species, but also intelligently exists without body.<sup>24)</sup> It is true that the bodiless projects

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24) See Hans Moravec, *Mind Children* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 178-196 and *Robot: Mere Machine to Transcendent Mind* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 191-211. Indeed, the technological project of bodilessness is currently one of the most ambitious scientific dreams as well as projects. Cutting-edge technologies like brain downloading and cybernetics can be understood as the examples of it. For the flow of these technologies, see Dong Hwan Kim, Can Posthuman Be Saved?, *The Theological Thought*, 160, 2013, 152-154.

of technology persuasively demonstrate how radically technology can be advanced and how radically technology can transform human conditions. However, it is also true that this technological idea of bodilessness, from the outset, has a fatal weakness, i.e., *relational ambiguity*. Especially in terms that such ambiguity intangibly appears, it is more fatal than any other ambiguity that technology tangibly produces, e.g., existential ambiguity between human and nonhuman beings (machines), and sexual ambiguity in human-like machines (artificial intelligences).

It is, once again, the Incarnation that is the exemplar of the tangible event of relationship as well as the concrete event of love. The Incarnation is not only the embodiment of love, but also the embodiment of relationship. It concretely shows how God *relates* to the Word (John 1:1)<sup>25)</sup> and how the Word *relates* to flesh (John 1:14).<sup>26)</sup> It also tangibly displays how God *relates* to the Love (1 John 4:8),<sup>27)</sup> and how the Love *relates* to the world (John 3:16).<sup>28)</sup>

Through this embodying progress of relationship, the Incarnation can provide a clue for human relationship to overcome the relational ambiguity that technology causes through its pursuit of bodilessness. First, it shows that the origin of relationship is God. Second, it displays that God forms His relationships not only in transcendent, but also in im-

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25) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

26) "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."

27) "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

28) "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son."

manent conditions. On the one hand, God transcendently makes a tri-une relationship in Himself. On the other hand, God immanently makes a dynamic relationship with others. The Incarnation reveals these two aspects of God's relationship at the same time. It explicitly demonstrates how the bodiless Being relates to bodily beings, how the embodiment of the Bodiless clarifies bodily relationships, and how the embodied Bodiless perfects all relationships through its bodily brokenness and its bodily resurrection. Brent Waters argues,

It is not just the soul (or mind or will) that God loves and redeems, but the whole, full, and complete creature that bears and embodies the divine image and likeness. In this respect, it is important to remember that for many of our ancestors in the faith it was the resurrection of the body, and *not* the survival of a disembodied soul, that seized their attention.<sup>29)</sup>

To be sure, the technological dream of a bodiless super-intelligent machine aims at the survival of a disembodied soul. It expects the realization of a bodiless relationship in which disembodied souls are eternally durable. In this dream, of course, there is no consideration on the relational vision of the Incarnation, i.e., the paradoxical encounter of body and soul. Since it is unwilling to see the whole picture of relationship, its relationship cannot help but be partial.

In this respect, the technological bodiless intelligent relationship cannot be the sum of relationship. It is just a side of a coin. Because it

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29) Brent Waters, *This Mortal Flesh: Incarnation and Bioethics* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2009), 56.

stubbornly seeks to abide in a bodiless world, it becomes an incomplete relationship. Since it intentionally avoids turning over the coin and showing the other side of it, it always becomes mysterious in its technological dream. From a religious perspective, just as the partial stress on the divine side of Christ in the early Christianity resulted in a heretical Gnosticism, so the partial emphasis on the bodiless side of relationship made by technology can produce a technological Gnosticism.

In the partial setting of technology, therefore, relationship cannot overcome its fatal weakness, i.e., ambiguity. In fact, relationship in that setting can hardly have an obvious intention to handle the matter of ambiguity, especially because they are commonly formed without purpose. If there is a purpose in them, this will be just pleasure. However, pleasure cannot be a purpose of relationship because it is too changeable, too flexible, too unstable, and too ambiguous to maintain a relationship. Empowered by technology, nevertheless, pleasure became a word of enabling a purposeless relationship to pretend to have a purpose. Indeed, it is easily discovered especially in cyberspace that such a purposeless relationship can be randomly made. However, it can hardly endure for a long time because its endurance and its relational development imply a technological "evolution without purpose,"<sup>30)</sup> and this purposeless technological evolution eventually produces the relational ambiguity.

Apparently, it is love that can overcome the relational ambiguity.

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30) Richard H. Overman, *Evolution and the Christian Doctrine of Creation: A Whiteheadian Interpretation* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 57.

Most of all, love can be a certain purpose of relationship. When relationship accepts love as its purpose, it can take off its ambiguity and put on its clarity. In this case, relationship with purpose can endure as long as it keeps its purpose. In other words, if relationship takes love as its purpose, it can endure as long as love endures in it. For instance, if a relationship takes a sexual love as its purpose, it can endure until *eros* ceases in it; if a relationship takes a friendly love as its purpose, it can endure until *philia* ceases in it. Meanwhile, if a relationship takes God's love as its purpose, it never ceases because *agape*, i.e., "his love endures forever" (1 Chronicles 16:34).

To be sure, the exemplar of the relationship, which takes *agape* as its purpose, is the Incarnation. The Incarnation of Christ Jesus explicitly shows that the purpose of God's relationship is *agape* itself. It concretely displays that God Himself began His relationship through His Son to demonstrate His own love (Romans 5:8).<sup>31)</sup> In terms that even God's relationship, which is the origin of all relationships, aims at His love, it is imperative for any type of relationship to aim at *agape*. Only when a relationship is directed toward *agape*, then is it able to ceaselessly endure, clearly endure, impartially endure, and completely endure in and with *agape*.

In contrast to the bodiless relationship of technology, particularly, the relationship directed toward *agape* as shown tangibly in the event of the Incarnation, necessarily undergoes the embodiment of love, and as

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31) "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

a result, it comes to overcome the relational ambiguity in its concrete process of embodying love. On this basis, it is conclusively argued that when not just love, but *agape* as the embodied love is concerned with technology, a possibility that the characteristic and relational ambiguity of technology is overcome can be posed, and only through this *agape* incarnated through Christ Jesus, a door that technology is not simply embraced, but even transformed by love can be opened.

## VI. Conclusion

Technology and love. At a glance, it seems that they have nothing to do with each other. However, when we look into their characteristics, we can find that they are related and even conflicting in relation. As already examined, on the one hand, they are different in terms that the universal character of love is innately pure without any assumption, while the universalistic character of technology is intentionally concerned with some ideologies or doctrines. On the other hand, they are similar in terms that both of them have a transformative force or vigor in their characteristics.

Based on this characteristic analysis, this article has attempted to pose a possibility that love is concerned with technology and even transform it. Why is it necessary for love to be concerned with and transform technology? It is because love is the unique virtue that can affect the modern society as a whole as much as technology can. As Ellul professions, modern society is certainly a technological society.

In this society, there is nothing that has nothing to do with technology. If technology has played a sound role in this society, this article might be meaningless. However, the universalistic character of technology that this article discovers is violent and coercive. In other words, the modern society driven by technology is violent and coercive, and it is true. Therefore, it can be boldly said that the attempt of this article is meaningful and necessary.

Just as there is nothing that has nothing to do with technology, then there is, as Kierkegaard confessions, nothing that has nothing to do with love in this world. Fortunately, the universal character of love that this article discovers is neither violent nor coercive. Rather, it is embracing and even sacrificial. Moreover, the clear embodied love (*agape*) through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ can surpass the ambiguous bodiless projects of technology and its ambiguous relationship. In this respect, if love is concerned with technology, love will be able to transform technology, and furthermore, this will mean that love can pose a possibility to transform the whole world that technology has influenced.

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• 국 문 초 록 •

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본 논문의 목적은 테크놀로지와 사랑의 관계를 기독교 신학적으로 규명해보는 것이다. 우선 기본적인 특성(character)에 있어서 사랑은 보편적(universal)이다. 이는 사랑이 어떠한 이데올로기나 교리적 전제를 가지지 않고 근본적으로 순수하게 보편적 특성을 지니고 있음을 뜻한다. 이와 달리 테크놀로지의 기본적인 특성은 보편론적(universalistic)이다. 이는 테크놀로지가 의도적으로 어떠한 이데올로기나 교리와 담합하는 보편론적 특성을 지니고 있음을 뜻한다. 이런 점에서 사랑과 테크놀로지는 본질적으로 서로 상충된다. 특히 테크놀로지의 보편론적 특성이 공격적이고 강제적이기 때문에, 사랑과 테크놀로지가 서로 올바르게 연결되기 위해서는 보편적 특성을 지니는 사랑이 보편론적 특성을 지니는 테크놀로지에 관여하여 이를 감싸주고 변화시켜 주어야 한다. 그러나 사랑에 의한 테크놀로지의 변화를 기대하기는 쉽지 않다. 왜냐하면 사랑의 보편적 특성 못지않게 테크놀로지의 보편론적 특성 또한 다른 대상들을 변화시키려는(transformative) 힘을 지니고 있기 때문이다. 따라서 이를 기대하기 위해서는 사랑이 테크놀로지를 넘어설 수 있는 어떤 고유한 그 무엇을 더 나타내어야 한다. 그 고유한 무엇이 바로 기독교적 사랑 곧 아가페이다. 예수 그리스도의 성육신을 통하여 아가페는 추상적이던 사랑을 구체화시키며, 특별히 테크놀로지와의 관계에 있어서 그 고유한 특성인 형체화(embodiedness)를 통하여 테크놀로지의 치명적인 약점인 모호함(ambiguity)을 극복하도록 해준다. 결국 테크놀로지와 사랑의 관계가 테크놀로지와 아가페 곧 형체화된(성육신된) 사랑의 관계로 확대될 때에만 사랑에 의한 테크놀로지의 변화는 기대될 수 있다.

**주제어:** 테크놀로지, 사랑, 특성, 아가페, 모호함, 형체화

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