

Artificial Intelligence – II

July 21, 2018

Artificial Intelligence is in fact a contradiction in terms. Anything artificial cannot be intelligent. Anything truly intelligent cannot be artificial. Any intelligent being must (as such) be living, spiritual and free. Anything artificial must (as such) be non-living and material and cannot be free. Therefore nothing artificial can be intelligent in the true sense of the word, and nothing truly intelligent can be artificial. An intelligence can be created by God alone. Man can create only things artificial.

To show as much, let us assume with the “Comments” of last week that there are three ranks of spiritual beings: the (1) Creator, (2) angels and (3) men, and four ranks of material beings: (3) men, (4) animal, (5) vegetable and (6) mineral. This means that man is the most complicated of creatures, because he alone is both spiritual and material. If anybody claims that man is purely material, he is probably making the most elementary of errors in philosophy, namely that only material beings exist. That error is widespread in our materialistic world of today, but either such a man has never thought or loved, or he is denying the full nature of his own experience. But if then he is nothing but matter, why does he have such a sharp sense of his own human dignity? And why does he behave as though freedom is of supreme importance to him?

In fact the six ranks of being can be graded by how far they climb out of matter. (6) Mineral is locked into matter but (5) plants are not so locked – they live and move, but still they are fixed in place and know nothing outside of themselves. (4) Animals live and move, but are not fixed in place and they have sense-knowledge and sense-desire of material things outside themselves. (5) Men live and move, are not fixed in place, and have not only sense-knowledge and sense-desire of material particulars outside themselves, but also intelligence

and desire by will of non-material universals outside themselves, which is a huge step forward in climbing free of matter. The word "intelligence" comes from the Latin "intus-lego," meaning "within I read," that is to say, intelligence reads within things sensed their non-material form or essence. This is because intelligence, and the will which follows it, are both spiritual faculties, belonging to that part of man which is, as such, free from matter and above matter.

And upon these two faculties follows the freedom of (3) man's will, shared by no other (4) animals which are all locked into their instincts. And that freedom manifests even to the most atheistic of materialists his superior dignity above all mere (4) animals, if he is only honest enough to recognise the fact. Above man are the (2) angels who are purely spiritual and intelligent but still particular beings, whereas (1) the Creator is universal spiritual Being Itself, locked into no matter nor even into any particularity.

Thus (3) man is living, and spiritual by his immortal soul with its intelligence and will which are the foundation of his free-will, making him free. Now is anything "artificial," like a computer or a robot, either living or spiritual or free? Firstly, is not living from within itself. Nature spills human, animal and plant seed in all directions, and every seed contains life. But despite tremendous effort now for many years, human art has not succeeded in creating one seed with life inside it (and one suspects it never will). Secondly, if nothing made by human art is living, still less can it be spiritual, because a spiritual being presupposes a high (3) form of life. And thirdly no computer or robot made by man can possibly be free, because free-will presupposes a spiritual intelligence which no human art can fabricate. A (3) spiritual intelligence can be created not even by a (2) angel, but by (1) the Creator alone, God.

Therefore (6) computers and computer-driven robots cannot be living, and can initiate nothing outside what has been

programmed into them. They cannot be intelligent in the full sense of the word, because that requires a spiritual being which God alone can create. And so they cannot be free to make any decision on their own, they are mere (6) machines, locked inside their (6) material programme. To credit them with any human passions, original thinking or freedom is simply childish materialism.

Kyrie eleison.