

AN 'INTELLIGENT' MACHINE?†

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Modern miniaturised digital electronic systems allow the construction of entities that can engage in such activities as assembling other machines, serving as extensions of lost limbs, carrying out given orders, choosing components by touch/feel and making optical judgements of texture for assembly, even executing surgical procedures, etc. that outwardly resemble mental activity, conscious and considered, 'intelligent' but 'artificial'. In the living mind there seems to be an awareness of something beyond the 'task at hand' and, if I interpret the first stanza of the Kenopanishat right, the composers of Upanishads seem to have been capable of isolating and seeing the 'clinging' nature of awareness that includes self-awareness. They raise questions but refrain from any sort of assertive answers, apparently suggesting that in an openended situation there cannot be any answers. This is in line with the position that there was no 'design' in Evolution that has been flailing to fill all niches that opened up in front and retreating where they closed behind, taking its time, without purpose, apparently an endless process. When an artificially constructed 'intelligent' machine successfully fulfils its purpose it meets its terminus when the natural 'mind' seemingly does not meet such a fate.
