

WORDS IN THE VOID: THE HOLY SPIRIT,
PENTECOSTAL RATIONALITY, AND ARTIFICIAL
GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

LANGUAGE

CONTEXTUALIZED

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THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE SPIRIT GIVES LIFE

- “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.” NIV John 6:63
- All rationalities, including animal ones are present to God.
- Humans have something more. They have language, a channel through which we may participate with the divine.



“

IF GOD SPEAKS, PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF
HEARING AND LISTENING, AND THAT THE
PRIMARY MEDIUM OF THEOLOGICAL SPEECH IS
LANGUAGE.

— *Douglas Olena*

”

THE HOLY SPIRIT

WHAT IS NATURAL?

- Language on this account is a common ground between God and rational beings.
- Let me for the sake of argument broaden this to include the text of creation itself, the language of beauty, and the expressions of joy, all well documented in Scripture.
- Let us also not limit ourselves to some separation between humans and nature as if nature itself was not constructed in the same way humans were.
- It may be, and the experience of some is that humans can understand the language of plants and animals.
- Even Jesus suggested that the rocks would cry out.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

CRITIQUE

- The corrupt instantiation of a description of this relation is in the new atheist's argument of the absolute separation between material and spiritual. However, for them, spirituality is non-existent, and any spiritual God is non-existent.
- The corrupt instantiation of a description of this relation in the evangelical view is that Nature is an unimportant feature of the equation and our rationality.

PENTECOSTAL RATIONALITY

PENTECOSTAL RATIONALITY

THE EMERGENCE OF THE SONS OF GOD

- The middle term of the sons of God in Pentecostal rationality adopts wholesale the universe and themselves as part of it.
- There is no rejection of flesh but rather the adoption of a holistic reality inclusive of both the universe and God.*
- It is by means of this integration that the power of God is expressed in the world through people, not a rejection of reality but a full-featured adoption of it.



“

IF NATURE IS NOT FREE,
NEITHER ARE HUMANS.

— *Douglas Olena*

”

PENTECOSTAL RATIONALITY

THE MOVEMENT TOWARD FREEDOM

- “There is a symbiotic relation between us and our technology. Our attempts to create an artificially intelligent system has helped us expose to ourselves features of human rationality.” 10
- “Let me demarcate the middle term of this exploration by explaining that it is human rationality, not the simple stuff of ‘thinking,’ but the complex physio-rational organism interfacing with the world.” 11 This is what’s left out in evangelical rationality.
- “Rationality is an emergent property of biological existence.... If it was a gift of God, it is one he gave to living organisms through the instrumentality of natural selection.” 11
- Free nature produces free humans.

PENTECOSTAL RATIONALITY

CRITIQUE

- Determinism, either through the instrumentality of an unjustifiable reliance on some strict version of "scientific" causality, or a reliance on a broken Calvinistic theology produces unfree and unconscious beings, not made in the image of God, but as deterministic puppets.
- Also the informal adherence to tropes like "God is in control" as an explanation of our inability to effect change sets up humans as the capriciously instantiated subjects of a mechanical deistic God.

**ARTIFICIAL
GENERAL
INTELLIGENCE**

ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE?

- In whatever way you explore the possibility of AI, it will not be human.
- Let's not foreclose the possibility of independent AGI, at least as long as we can unplug it.
- However, humans have become dependent on it, and though we can unplug, our civilization may not survive such a truncation.



“

WORDS HAVE A LIFE OF
THEIR OWN DISCONNECTED
FROM MATERIAL REALITY.

— *Douglas Olena*

”

ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

LIFE NONETHELESS

- Words, when they emerge from us, gain a life of their own.
- Our AGI children, once released from our tutelage, will have that life of their own, even if its origin is merely in the words by which they are constructed.
- It will not be human life. But it will be life nonetheless.

ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

CRITIQUE

- Our surprise at this accomplishment in the technological singularity will only be mollified by a firm attachment to God himself, not the odd religions, including many forms of Christianity, that have sprung up to failingly encapsulate the chaos of reality in a rule-based, but fragile and false order, themselves in opposition to God.

WORDS IN THE VOID

EMERGENCE AND THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING

HOW DID THIS ALL COME ABOUT?

- God created the universe with the capability of producing complex, information-rich life, holding back the waves of entropy, at least long enough for rationality to emerge.
- His interaction with this rational life, this communion, the adoption into the family of God, was always the point of creating in the first place, modeled reflexively in Genesis 2:18.



“

IT IS PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT WE CAN CREATE
ARTIFICIAL AUTONOMOUS AGENTS, BUT WE HAVEN'T
WRESTLED WITH THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH
THEIR INEVITABLE MORAL FAILURE WHICH ARE
MODELED IN HUMAN MORAL FAILURE.

— *Johnny Appleseed*

”

EMERGENCE

LEVELS NOT SUBSTANCES

1. There are lower orders of complexity and higher ones.
2. It is supposed that the higher orders of complexity are composed of the elements of the lower orders, that is, the higher orders emerge from the lower ones. For example, all biology is at least partially chemical in nature, though it can not be explained purely in chemical terms. In addition biology as life is structure of a certain kind that seeks its own perpetuation, transcending mere chemistry.
3. The rules governing lower orders of complexity are not sufficient to explain the phenomena of higher orders. That is, rules of biology are of a higher order than rules of chemistry. Some of the phenomena of biology can't be explained even by the most comprehensive rules of chemistry. Biology in this sense exceeds chemistry in complexity and can't be equated with it or reduced to it. What this means is that there is no complete explanation of biology in terms of chemistry. The causal chemical relations that could explain the emergence of biology break down because they don't operate on the same level and any explanation that requires an unspecified causal assumption is immediately suspect as reductionist.
4. Higher orders of complexity impose order on lower orders of complexity. That is, life is highly directive and capable of transforming more basic chemical elements into forms that would not emerge solely through chemical interactions.

THE CHAIN OF BEING

THE UNIVERSE TENDS TOWARD COMPLEXITY

- Nothing to a Universe with space and time, then
- From an undifferentiated Universe to distinct clusters of organized matter in stars, galaxies, and planetary systems, then
- From that organized material to self-replicating Life, then
- From Life to Consciousness of the external world, then
- From Consciousness to Intelligence in relation to survival, then
- From Intelligence to Self-Conscious rational reflection, then
- From Self-Consciousness to Freedom and the Moral Law, then
- From Freedom to Spirituality.

EMERGENCE AND THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING

CRITIQUE

- This is not a substitute for the plodding work of a scientist, or the careful work of a theologian in their respective domains of reality.
- It is a context within which all the modes of exploration may take place without reduction to some aspect of reality or other.
- What is not permitted in any respect is misrepresentation of reality to a version that does not allow fully-featured nature and God as symbiotic coauthors in the creation of reality.

**WHAT IS THE POINT
OF THIS PAPER?**

COMMON GROUND

WHAT IS THE POINT?

- Language is one common ground of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostal rationality, and Artificial General Intelligence.
- From greater to lesser:
 - The Holy Spirit is God, so....
 - Pentecostal rationality is humankind in its fullest instantiation.
 - Artificial General Intelligence begins with a large subset of human intelligence, but does not replicate it.



ARTIFICIAL GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

COMPARED TO HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

- Can replicate features of human intelligence.
- May not duplicate human intelligence.
- May be able to pass for human in cyberspace, even as it can pass the Turing Test, the Imitation Game*.
- Far exceeds humans in calculation, logic, and data access.
- Except in limited circumstances cannot program its own improvement, though it can increase its own efficiency.
- Modern AI's are trained, and nurtured, grown from the outside in.
- AGI may be able to train itself.

*Turing, Alan, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence" "The Turing Test for Thinking Machines" (Mind 1950)

Eric Elliot and GPT3



Edited for content. For full interview: https://youtu.be/PqbB07n_uQ4

COMMON GROUND

WHY FOCUS ON LANGUAGE?

- Though language (human) is only a small subset of God's skills, it is the structuring element of creation.
- Creating is one aspect of being formed in the image of God.
- AGI is a human creation.



COMMON GROUND

HOW IS LANGUAGE CONTEXTUALIZED?

- Language is not only descriptive, but performative, and creative.
- Words have consequences in meat space but also in cyberspace.
- AGIs are constructed purely out of words: descriptive, performative and creative, but perhaps independently intelligent and, God forbid *Alive*.

