

# Chapter 7

## Moral Consideration and the Development of Artificial Intelligence: A Comparative Theory Analysis

**Akash Bag**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8820-171X>

*Adamas University, India*

**Souvik Roy**

*Adamas University, India*

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter is trying to answer a big question: Should we create artificial intelligence (AI) that deserves moral consideration, like humans? To figure this out, the authors look at different ideas about what AI is and what it should be. They use two main theories about ethics (how we decide right and wrong) to see if AI should be treated morally. One theory they use says that if AI fits the definition of intelligence, it should be treated morally, no matter which ethical theory you follow. The other theory they use is called “capability theory,” combined with the definition of AI. This leads to the conclusion that we shouldn’t develop AI further if we believe it deserves moral consideration. So, the chapter explores whether AI should be treated morally, and it suggests that if so, we might need to stop developing AI.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Human interest in thinking machines stretches back at least to antiquity. This is illustrated in several archetypal myths, such as the Greek one about the god Hephaestus’ creation, Talos, a living bronze giant who guarded the island of Crete. Other examples of historical artificial intelligence are the sacred mechanical statues of ancient Egypt and Greece and Geber’s takwin. In the middle of the 20th century, the development of artificial intelligence (AI) gained momentum, not least thanks to Alan Turing’s test

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0074-9.ch007

## ***Moral Consideration and the Development of Artificial Intelligence***

“*the imitation game*” - where the underlying principle states that a computer is considered intelligent if a human can interact with it in five minutes without being able to determine that it is a computer. Undoubtedly, AI will pervasively impact our societies in the coming decades. Artificial intelligence is an area prioritized by the European Parliament. Research is ongoing in the EU on issues such as who owns the copyright to something entirely developed by an AI and on military and non-military uses of AI. For the use of AI in the military, justice system, and health, the European Parliament proposed in January 2021 that “[AI] must never replace or relieve humans of their responsibility (European Commission, 2021). In its work, the European Parliament points out that rules for AI must be human-centered; security, transparency, and accountability must be guaranteed; bias and discrimination are needed to be prevented; social and environmental responsibility is promoted; respect for fundamental rights is ensured (European Commission, 2020).

We humans create aids and systems to benefit ourselves. If we build a staircase, it is reasonable that it is suitable for the vast majority of people to walk on, and if it is impossible to use, it is not significant if it is replaced. We also use animals and plants for our benefit, but in contrast to how we treat inanimate objects, destroying all creatures that did not benefit us would be remarkable. Artificial intelligence is a phenomenon that does not fit easily into this binary view of non-human objects. This is because AI, in its composition, resembles stairs or other created aids, animals, or even people. The main arguments for developing AI are of two kinds: monetary arguments and utility arguments. AI can save us money, time, and effort. The main arguments against developing AI relate to security of various kinds – for example, human lives or people’s integrity. A perspective not given space in the European Parliament’s work is whether artificial intelligence deserves moral consideration. If we don’t know whether AI should be shown moral consideration, we also don’t know what obligations, if any, we humans have to AI. The issue is of great ethical importance. For many people, it is a matter of course that animals deserve moral consideration. It may not be as obvious that AI may merit moral consideration, but if the issue is not examined, decisions about AI must be made on shaky ground. With the present work, we hope to contribute to this aspect: AI may have moral rights - subject to moral consideration - which we must relate to as AI developers.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

In this part of the chapter, We describe Pei Wang’s Definition of (artificial) Intelligence in *On Defining Artificial intelligence* (Wang, 2019). We examine criticisms of the definition – advanced by Thorisson (2019), Yampolskiy (2020), and Berkeley (2020) – and explain the reasons for their criticisms as well as why Wang’s Definition is nevertheless useful in the context of this chapter. The definition of “*intelligence*” in general and “*artificial intelligence*” in particular is disputed. Wang’s definition is one of the most accepted, which is one reason for using it. In *Getting Clarity by Defining Artificial Intelligence—A Survey* (2017), Monett and Lewis show that 56 percent of respondents agree with Wang’s Definition in the article *What Do You Mean by ‘AI’?* (Monett & Lewis, 2018, p. 214). The definition of “*intelligence*” is the same in *What Do You Mean by ‘AI’?* and *On Defining Artificial intelligence* (Wang, 2008, p. 10f; 2019, p. 17). Another reason for the majority definition is that definitions often influence how political decisions are formulated, which can be very important to AI. Such objects often referred to as AI – such as smart refrigerators and phones – are not covered by Wang’s Definition. Examining whether such “*artificial intelligence*” deserves moral consideration may be useful. However, the chapter is not an

25 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:  
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/moral-consideration-and-the-development-of-artificial-intelligence/334777](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/moral-consideration-and-the-development-of-artificial-intelligence/334777)

## Related Content

---

### Deep Neural Network Regularization (DNNR) on Denoised Image

Richa Singh, Ashwani Kumar Dubey and Rajiv Kapoor (2022). *International Journal of Intelligent Information Technologies* (pp. 1-16).

[www.irma-international.org/article/deep-neural-network-regularization-dnnr-on-denoised-image/309584](http://www.irma-international.org/article/deep-neural-network-regularization-dnnr-on-denoised-image/309584)

### Designing Extreme Learning Machine Network Structure Based on Tolerance Rough Set

Han Ke (2017). *International Journal of Intelligent Information Technologies* (pp. 38-55).

[www.irma-international.org/article/designing-extreme-learning-machine-network-structure-based-on-tolerance-rough-set/187180](http://www.irma-international.org/article/designing-extreme-learning-machine-network-structure-based-on-tolerance-rough-set/187180)

### Future Directio: Charting a Path Towards a Truly Sustainable World With AI and Environmental Science

S. Anand Bharathi, S. Vinoth Kumar, S. Rajamohan, D. Unika, A. Prince Jason and Mohamed Ismail Mujahid Hilal (2024). *Maintaining a Sustainable World in the Nexus of Environmental Science and AI* (pp. 507-532).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/future-directio/355524](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/future-directio/355524)

### Self Adaptive Particle Swarm Optimization for Efficient Virtual Machine Provisioning in Cloud

R. Jeyarani, N. Nagaveni and R. Vasanth Ram (2011). *International Journal of Intelligent Information Technologies* (pp. 25-44).

[www.irma-international.org/article/self-adaptive-particle-swarm-optimization/54065](http://www.irma-international.org/article/self-adaptive-particle-swarm-optimization/54065)

### Generative AI From Theory to Model: Unleashing the Creative Power of Artificial Intelligence

Asim Wadood (2024). *Deep Learning, Reinforcement Learning, and the Rise of Intelligent Systems* (pp. 77-105).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/generative-ai-from-theory-to-model/340194](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/generative-ai-from-theory-to-model/340194)