

## 2. *Beings*

*'Any organism is held together in this action by the possession of means for the acquisition, use, retention, and transmission of information.'*

Norbert Wiener

**Synopsis:** *Beings can and will process information (1); Life is information processing: organisations and artificial Beings have lives of their own (2); All Beings, when they perish, become Things (3); Humans and states, although Beings, carry a distinctive characteristic from their kind (4–5); Organisations (6); Why do organisations come into existence at all? How do they die? (7–8); The state is an organisation (9–10); Biological Beings do not have a purpose, while non-biological Beings do (11); Artificial Beings (12–13); The effigy of an artificial Being (14); The bond with their state of origin (15); Words (language) (16); Money (17); Computer programs (18); A, materialised, fiction (19); Artificial Beings do not have a need to survive and can die (20–21).*

### 1. Beings can and will process information

Beings can and will process information on other Beings or on Things, because they have needs.<sup>88</sup> It is in their nature to do so, it is what they do, they cannot not do it.<sup>89</sup>

On the other hand, the other category of datasets,<sup>90</sup> meaning Things, (perhaps) can but will not process information on other Things or on Beings.<sup>91</sup>

---

88 See Chap. 5, par. 2.

89 Or, if seen differently, they can process information because they need to, their nature having shaped their abilities, see note 5/2/1.

90 See Chap. 1, par. 2.

91 See Chap. 3, par. 2.

## **2. Life is information processing: organisations and artificial Beings have lives of their own\***

Based on biology, we can distinguish between biological and non-biological Beings. With this in mind, biological Beings are humans and animals. Non-biological Beings are immaterial information that has been materialised (by humans) into either organisations or artificial Beings.<sup>92</sup>

However, to be biologically living (i.e. not dead) is different to being alive, meaning to be able to process information in the analogue or the digital world. Non-biological Beings come into existence in this sense as soon as they are created (by humans). They assume a non-biological life of their own, because, once created, they can and will process information.

Therefore, all Beings, as soon (and for as long) as they can process information, are alive, that is, they assume a life of their own.<sup>93</sup>

## **3. All Beings, when they perish, become Things**

Other Beings can process information on them, but they themselves are no longer able to process information.

## **4.**

Although humans and states are Beings as per their kind (animals and organisations respectively), there is a basic difference, a distinctive characteristic that differentiates each of them from their kind (explained in paragraphs 5 and 10, respectively).

## **5.**

Unlike all other animals, humans need to augment their information processing. This need makes humans unique among animals.<sup>94</sup>

---

92 See Chap. 1.1, par. 5.

93 See Chap. 1, par. 9.

94 See Chap. 5.1.

## 6. Organisations

Organisations are groups of more than one individual. Any and all types of corporations, associations, agencies, educational institutions, governments and religious institutions are organisations.

Importantly, the family<sup>95</sup> is an organisation. So are states.<sup>96</sup> In fact, these are the two organisations humans are born into, that are natural to them (and thus do not fall under the analysis on organisations that follows, i.e. they are different unless otherwise specifically mentioned).

Organisations become Beings as soon as they assume a material form in the analogue world. Before that time they are merely immaterial information (thoughts, feelings, wishes)—they cannot process information. However, as soon as they come into existence in the analogue world they can and will process information, because they are composed of humans.

Organisations are created by humans; it is therefore humans that define their nature. This means, among other aspects, giving them a form and a purpose: their coming into existence is not random, by biological birth, but by (human) design,<sup>97</sup> with the specific aim (and equipped with the optimal and necessary means) to serve a specific purpose. Therefore, their need to process information is channelled towards, and constrained by, their human-designed nature. They can use Reason, however, to exclusively serve that purpose.<sup>98</sup>

## 7. Why do organisations come into existence at all? How do they die?\*

Individuals create organisations because they imagine<sup>99</sup> that such Beings will augment their ability to process information, that through them they will achieve information processing that would otherwise be impossible alone.

Their purpose, however particular and specific in each case, is ultimately to create new information<sup>100</sup> through their processing—this is ultimately the reason humans create them at all. This creation of new information, how-

---

95 On the family, see note 8/2/1.

96 See also par. 9.

97 See Chap. 1, par. 9.

98 See note 5/2/2.

99 See also freedom, in Chap. 25, par. 1.

100 See Chap. 1, par. 7.

ever, immediately raises the question of who is able to exercise control over it.<sup>101</sup> Although organisations, as Beings, have control in the first instance, the new information created by organisations is actually gained by ‘their’ humans, meaning those humans who control them, either because they created them in the first place or because they participate in them (meaning those who are permitted<sup>102</sup> to process the information that the organisations create).

Similarly, if humans find ‘their’ (in the above meaning) organisations detrimental or even neutral to their processing they will remove them in the sense that they will stop participating in them.

Organisations which no longer have any humans participating in them are also no longer processing information, and are therefore no longer Beings but Things.<sup>103</sup> It is in this way that organisations die, ceasing to live as Beings—not through the fulfilment of their purpose, which, as will be explained,<sup>104</sup> is an intentionally unattainable goal.

Consequently, organisations<sup>105</sup> are human-centric and human-dependent.<sup>106</sup> In the same manner that humans need air or food, organisations need ‘their’ humans to keep using them, to keep augmenting their own information processing through them, in order for them (the organisations) to remain in existence<sup>107</sup> as Beings.

## 8.

Organisations, because they are human-centric, have to live (i.e. process information) in the analogue world,<sup>108</sup> even if they also live in the digital world. Like humans, they cannot live exclusively in the digital world.<sup>109</sup>

---

101 See Chap. 6, par. 4.

102 I.e. have the right, see Chap. 21, par. 1.

103 See par. 3.

104 In par. 11.

105 In contrast to artificial Beings, see par. 12.

106 Accordingly, there can be single-human organisations, but no organisations without any humans at all.

107 See Chap. 5, par. 3; this does not mean, however, that organisations have a need to survive (see par. 13) or that this is their only need.

108 Again, in contrast to artificial Beings, see par. 12.

109 Because it is humans that compose them, see par. 6.

## 9. The state is an organisation\*

States fall within the category of organisations: they are Beings, meaning humans' immaterial information (thoughts, feelings, wishes) that has been materialised<sup>110</sup> in the analogue world, and they can, and will, process information. Most importantly, however, and in contrast to any other organisation, states are natural to humans: they were formed naturally, automatically and immediately at the moment when two humans started to communicate with each other<sup>111</sup> using names. It is for this reason that states have no specific purpose<sup>112</sup>—no specific Being created them.<sup>113</sup> In essence, states are the first organisations, they are their precursor.<sup>114</sup>

As noted previously,<sup>115</sup> organisations need 'their' individuals. Without them an organisation ceases to exist, that is, it is no longer able to process information and it becomes a Thing. The same is true of states: a state without any citizens ceases to exist—it becomes a Thing.<sup>116</sup>

Organisations, therefore, need their individuals. In fact, because individuals need to augment their information processing and organisations need 'their' humans to keep using them, all organisations (including the state) need their individuals to augment their information processing through them. The difference between states and other organisations is that while organisations need their humans to augment their information processing with regard to their (organisations') specific purpose, for states this augmentation of information processing can take place for any purpose whatsoever.<sup>117</sup>

## 10.

Unlike other organisations, states do not need to be formally incorporated in the analogue world. There is no need for their formal incorporation

---

110 See Chap. 9.

111 See Chap. 8, par. 1.

112 See Chap. 11, par. 7.

113 Government, which controls states, came after their formation (see Chap. 12, par. 7); see also Chap. 13, on state justification.

114 . Sharing this role with the family (extended families were presumably the first states anyway).

115 In par. 7.

116 See Chaps. 10, par. 2, and 15, par. 4.

117 See Chap. 10, par. 1.

according to some regulation<sup>118</sup> or procedure, although, of course, they could be so incorporated—and this is, in fact, the case today. There is no law or procedure that takes precedence (thus coming from a higher authority, which, however, does not exist in Nature) over the creation of the state.<sup>119</sup>

On the contrary, states were formed naturally in the minds of humans, who in this way became individuals as soon as they started communicating with each other, giving states material form in the analogue world. States took the form known to us much later, when processing requirements, and processing capacity, increased.<sup>120</sup>

### **11. Biological Beings do not have a purpose, while non-biological Beings do\***

It is not the purpose of biological Beings to process information. The above points relate to what Beings can and will do, because it is in their nature to do so. However, information processing is not their purpose.<sup>121</sup> It is not the purpose of Beings to process information (but rather it is what they do while they are alive). In fact, biological Beings have no specific purpose whatsoever, while non-biological Beings do have a purpose, the one given to them by humans at the moment they were created.<sup>122</sup>

Importantly, however, this purpose given to non-biological beings is, in fact, unattainable. It is deliberately an open-ended, perpetual purpose, formed in general rather than specific terms, meaning that, in practice, the purpose of non-biological Beings can never be fulfilled.<sup>123</sup>

However, a clear distinction needs to be made at this point: it is not the purpose but the nature of a Being to process information. In other words, Beings process information because it is in their nature to do so, and not because it is their purpose to do so. Once a biological Being (i.e. an animal or human) sets a (or any) purpose or once a purpose is given to a non-biological Being (i.e. an organisation, artificial Being) then it will process information so as to serve this purpose.

---

118 See Chap. 20.

119 See also Chap. 20, par. 6.

120 Basically, when writing was invented, see Chap. 9.

121 This purpose is not the processing-operation-specific, Reason-relevant purpose, see Chap. 4.1, par. 3.

122 See also note 5/2/2. On the state having no specific purpose, see par. 9. On the (many) purposes of artificial Beings, see par. 12.

123 This is also true of the needs of biological Beings, see note 5/2/1.

## 12. Artificial Beings\*

As noted previously,<sup>124</sup> Things (perhaps) can but certainly will not process information: they do not have the will to do so. A knife, a thermometer, a car or a ship, regardless of the degree of its sophistication, has no will of its own to process information; it does not need to do so. Even if a Thing does process information, it does so following its design, its purpose being given to it by those who created it.<sup>125</sup>

However, in human history, a new intermediate category emerged: humans (relatively) quickly created, not just purpose-specific Things,<sup>126</sup> but a different kind of Thing, one which can process information but for no specific purpose—or, for any purpose whatsoever. These purpose-agnostic Things became crucial to the information processing of humans.

Although these Things have no needs of their own (and are not, therefore, Beings), it is the fact that at the time of their creation they were given an enormous, unforeseeable and unchartable number of purposes that decisively separates them from any other Thing. They thus artificially approximate Beings, because their many purposes give them an artificial will of their own.<sup>127</sup>

These artificial Beings are, following the order of their appearance in human history, words (language), money and computer programs.

## 13.

The invention of artificial Beings by humans coincides with (or has caused) the three milestone moments in humanity's development:<sup>128</sup> words (language) coincided with the acquisition of self-consciousness, money with the invention of writing and computer programs with the creation of the digital world.

---

124 In par. 1; see also Chap. 3, particularly par. 2.

125 See Chap. 3, par. 4.

126 Artefacts, see Chap. 3, par. 4.

127 Of course, organisations are also artificial (created by humans), therefore the correct term for 'artificial Beings' should be 'artefact Beings'; artificial is used in this analysis for ease of understanding (i.e. no unnecessary introduction of neologisms purposes).

128 See the Prologue, par. 6.

#### 14. The effigy of an artificial Being\*

Artificial Beings are, of course, material, but they are also composite: they have a tangible part (hardware) and an intangible one (software). Both parts are necessary for them to operate as intended by their creator humans.

The tangible part is easy to see: words are spoken (and later written down); money is printed (or in previous times mined) and exchanged; computer programs are installed on our information processing tools, or they move robots or drones. In most cases, hardware, which is the effigy of the artificial Being, is what is understood to be the artificial Being, and the part that is used by the vast majority of humans.

The intangible, informational part of an artificial Being (the software necessary for it to operate) is harder to discern—but material too, nonetheless. Words cannot operate outside an informational system, a language (which is, in turn, only possible on the information platform that is the state). Money cannot operate without an informational system regulating its use—which is also only possible on the information platform that is the state. Computer programs cannot operate (or exist) outside the digital world.

#### 15.

Crucially, Things can also operate as per their intended purpose outside their state of origin.<sup>129</sup>Artificial Beings, in principle, cannot: words and money can, of course, process information outside their state of origin but with limitations (for example, understanding of a foreign language or through currency exchange rates). The case of computer programs, similar to the digital world itself, remains, for the moment, contested.

#### 16. Words (language)\*

Words (language) were the first artificial Beings developed by humans. They are the necessary tool for the processing of information in the analogue world. They immensely increased humanity's information processing capabilities—and also turned humans into individuals.

---

129 See Chap. 17, par. 5.

### 17. Money\*

Money was the next artificial Being created by humans. It is the necessary tool for cooperation among (larger groups of, in the meaning of more than an extended family) humans. The creation of money only became possible when writing was invented.

### 18. Computer programs\*

Computer programs are the necessary tools for the processing of digital information. They therefore make the digital world possible.<sup>130</sup> Accordingly, computer programs need the digital world; they cannot exist only in the analogue world. In other words, the digital world is natural to them.

Computer programs may have effigies in both the analogue and the digital worlds (e.g. in robots and drones, or in online computer game characters respectively) or only in the digital world (i.e. their interfaces towards their users). This is, however, the only possible way to classify them, in view of their immense versatility (and, at the same time, an unavoidable difference from language or money, which both acquired tangible forms in the analogue world).

Computer programs run (operate) on information processing tools ('computers', meaning any artefact that is capable of processing digital information).

Humans have used computer programs to create the digital world. Certain computer programs operate as access points to it. They are the points of entry, the necessary tools through which the digital world is accessible to humans (i.e. they make it possible for its digital information to be processed by them).

### 19. A, materialised, fiction\*

Artificial Beings are based on a fiction, on (created) agreement among humans (essentially, on immaterial information that has materialised in the analogue world).

Language on the assumption that a specific word denotes a specific Thing, money on the assumption that every Thing (or Being) has an exchange value, and computer programs on the agreement to use computers.

---

130 See also Chap. 1, par. 11.

**20. Artificial Beings do not have a need to survive and can die\***

Artificial Beings (as is the case for organisations) do not have a need to survive. Only biological Beings (humans and animals) have the need to survive; artificial Beings only need to process information. If they can no longer process information they cease to exist as Beings and become Things.

**21.**

Artificial Beings can create Things and Beings (and, of course, other artificial Beings).