



# Moral Particularism and the Prospects of Machine Ethics

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## چکیده

Machine Ethics is a novel area of AI research aiming to develop intelligent machines that are capable of complying with moral norms. One of the challenges facing Machine Ethics comes from Moral Particularism—the view that morality is a particularized or unprincipled domain. Critics have argued that moral truths cannot be encoded for an algorithmic machine because cannot be captured in the form of exceptionless general principles. This talk examines the prospects of Machine Ethics in addressing this objection. I distinguish between symbolic and connectionist approaches in AI, as well as between radical and moderate versions of Moral Particularism. I argue that the more radical versions of Moral Particularism would make it impossible for either Symbolic or Connectionist AI to learn to comply with morality. But the weakest version of Moral Particularism, which is arguably most plausible, is compatible with the possibility of both Symbolic and Connectionist Machine Ethics. I then discuss the specific challenges each type of Machine Ethics would face if the domain of morality turns out to be particularized in this weak sense. In the case of Symbolic AI, the difficulty lies in the limited ability of Symbolic AI to uncover complex patterns. In the case of Connectionist AI, the difficulty has to do with impossibility of incorporating our theoretical moral knowledge.

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