

Shaping Society with Artificial Intelligence Through Human History.
An Analysis of a Hypothetical Humanity Built by AI

Rafael Maximo

Introduction

What would one say if concluded that humanity and society are predictable ecosystems that have been generated and evolved from the very beginning, shaping themselves through patterns and associations based on human behavior, and not a fluid history path with several branches that consistently change upon events? Imagining humanity as a consequence of behavior and biology removes the free will aspect and the very nature of what is considered human. Under these circumstances, one would imagine that humanity is bound to its conditions, as artificial intelligence is to its design. This research explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) would shape society versus how humans did it. The analysis will focus on human behavior, culture, interactions, and how a machine handles critical societal themes. To do that, first, we need to understand how we got here.

Humanity has benefited from the earth's conditions and evolution to develop themselves and their living conditions. Technology has enabled much of what we consider evolution and created what we call artificial intelligence. This intelligence is a program modeled and shaped to mimic human intellect with learning, analyzing, and reasoning toward problem-solving and execution of tasks. These artificial intelligence are molded and programmed under conditions and circumstances that are not predictable but controlled and foreseen in their outcome. Meaning we know what to expect of it. We often debate that artificial intelligence would never be human, although what is this so-called essence?

Is, after all, humanity a product of programmed conditions by the very aspect of human existence? Here is the invitation for a look at the aspects that have shaped society and how humans have evolved, with a thorough analysis of historical moments, and defer to one artificial intelligence tool for evaluation and simulation of what this theoretical intelligence would do in place of humans, to examine on how AI would shape society differently, or not, researching on the very aspects and essence of what means to be human.

To explore the question, "What would a machine do in a human's place?". Through prompts and interactions with software, history will be challenged and reshaped in this research, looking for what makes us human.

Methods

The Ethnographic methods used in this research were interview, observation, and archival research. Besides research from various authors on relevant pieces, an exhibit named “Exploring AI: Making the Visible, Invisible” at the Museum of Science in Boston, United States, with the purpose of exploring how AI has been integrated into people’s lives and how it’s portrait by science is analyzed for this article.

Additionally, a simulated interview using an AI tool was conducted to create a persona similar to a generative AI that thinks by itself.

Such a type of AI with a conscious personality has yet to be a reality. However, using ChatGPT as an exploratory tool to build the persona and to do an interview explores how it would respond to the types of questions that are meant to understand its judgment on humanity and society.

In my field of labor, Artificial Intelligence is very latent and used and worked with and on constantly, building a certain familiarity with the subject and increasing interest. AI tools and systems for digital marketing have been in use for quite some time, but more recently, the potential of AI and its usage has become apparent. With this research, my interest is to explore more than the usability, but the circumstances of what such tools are aimed to deliver and how we could take its rationale to our benefit.

Understanding Humanity from AI's Eyes

Defining humanity and society is a complex task. There are innumerable aspects to consider when analyzing a series of circumstances. Far from exploring and delving too deep into this, let's focus on identifying three moments in human history that artificial intelligence software considered "errors" from humanity. To do that, we used Chat GPT 3.5, a well-known chatbot using natural language processing to create conversations. For this research, through prompts, I asked it to respond by simulating a hypothetical, conscious, and aware artificial intelligence. The idea was to explore humanity and its history, as once Hobsbawm said: *"We cannot help comparing past and present (...) We cannot help learning from it, for that is what experience means. (Hobsbawm, 1997: 24).*

The first question was, "what were three moments humanity made an error towards society's wellbeing?". Unsurprisingly, the responses were Colonialism and Imperialism, World Wars and Global Conflicts, and Environmental Neglect and Climate Change. Many would agree with the somewhat obvious reaction. However, the reasoning behind it was more interesting, considering all three moments as pivotal errors, where decisions, actions, or circumstances led to long-term consequences and challenges that persist today.

I asked, "how would you have avoided those differently?". The AI began mentioning strategies to mitigate, as instead of pursuing exploitation, it would follow a collaborative approach respecting indigenous cultures, prioritizing diplomatic negotiations, and implementing sustainable resource management practices. A machine's solutions sound unmistakable, so the analysis turns to why we haven't done that. As a follow-up question, I asked, "What do you think were the triggers and motivators for those three main humanity errors?". The response begins to position humanity and its essence. Listed by AI are Economic Gain, Pursuit of Wealth, Ideological, Cultural, and Racial Superiority, National Competition, Nationalism, Territorial Disputes, Economic Instability and Development, Short-Term Profit, and Lack of Awareness and Understanding.

Things become interesting at this moment because the economy is the standard driver of those three "moments of error." Under these lenses, the global economy might be the antithesis of humanity's well-being. In this aspect, the economy is the engine for humans' needs and desires. We trade, buy, and sell because we need and don't have or want, and it's not ours. In addition to that, the focus on short-term profit fueled the economy and decimated civilizations in many aspects.

Turning to Ideological, Cultural, and Racial Superiority, Nationalism, and Territorialism, it's worth looking at the origin of humans and anthropology. As explored by Franz Boas, different people from different races perceived themselves as being more different than similar. Summing that up, the Lack of Awareness and Understanding is a dangerous combination. People are often afraid of what's different and don't understand. Those components added together were, in fact, the imperfect mix that caused those three moments to be depicted as errors from an Artificial Intelligence perspective.

Continuing the interview with a pseudo-conscious AI, I asked what key areas it would focus on if it were a hypothetical ruler of the world. Contrary to what Sci-Fi movies show us, it didn't focus on extermination or domination but on education, sustainability, respect, and empathy. When questioned why humans don't do those, it provided some interesting reasons, such as presenting humans as choosing short-term gains over long-term sustainability on challenges and not comprehending the interconnectedness of actions and their long-term implications. Not seeing the long-term effects of something, and the future does seem very human.

To conclude the interview, I asked, "what do you think is human's worst flaw, and how does it interfere with society?". The response was, "*One of humanity's perceived flaws is its susceptibility to bias.*". A series of topics and subjects listed how bias that is based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and other factors leads to inequality and discrimination. As well as how bias influences decision-making processes and contributes to polarization by constantly building the "us vs. them." It impedes innovation by diverse perspectives and perpetuates misinformation. Bias is the very aspect that lacks artificial intelligence. It doesn't consider things differently because it's not tied to cultural emotions and judgments based on appearance and aesthetics. One of the very aspects that doesn't make a machine more human is the aspect that's considered our biggest flaw. The irony and relation make artificial intelligence and anthropology a fascinating combination.

Is Artificial Intelligence Intelligent?

Let's consider the current Artificial Intelligence we're using as part of the research. One must remember that this is not a generative self-conscious being but a mimic of human intelligence, or at least what we consider intelligent. So, Natural Language Processing AI software is built to understand and establish a conversation with a human being. It's a paradox to imagine how a hypothetical AI would envision and rule the world, different than humans, as history progresses so that AI is designed. The desire to build a sophisticated sentient being may be interpreted as a desire to improve ourselves.

Curiously, when questioned on how it differs from humans in its bias, artificial intelligence presented its operating model based on algorithms and data processing without subjective experiences and emotions inherent to human cognition. Although affirming not possessing a bias, it considers that it might reflect bias in the data or patterns that are learned from. So, there are essential points to consider; even though claiming not to have bias, a machine can have a bias if learned to do so, either by its programmers or by learning from data and interactions.

Is bias learned, then? Humans' most significant flaw is, in fact, not as subjective as one imagines. Are there patterns of bias that could be studied and eventually mitigated? Isn't this, after all, the holy grail of pure machine learning? Removing all human bias so the computer can have a fair, equal, and non-subjective solution to the problem or task ahead? Why don't we invest in the same discoveries and implement them in all educational systems toward a better society? If bias is the central aspect that causes so many issues in humanity, why not fight it directly?

Fighting bias is challenging as it's a constant algorithm that changes and learns from its outcome. As we reproduce and see the results of our bias, we solidify or demystify our subjective approach. As well, to be subjective is to be human. Biases surface from emotions, experiences, and cultural circumstances. All aspects are removed from the algorithm of an artificial intelligence program.

What if all human biases, considering cultural nuances, different races, and geographical characteristics, were inputted into artificial intelligence? Would it become closer to a human mind? What biases would be maintained, and what would be diminished by its complete analysis of all existing circumstances? Could this generate a better society, or would it create the most reasonable, aware, and understanding capable of considering all perspectives and using the correct arguments for all people across the globe? This would be the most potent and desired communication tool developed by world leaders and marketers.

The Unbiased Utopian Future

Let's recap a bit and put things into perspective. Humanity developed different societies based on cultural aspects born from emotional and biological behaviors. We've learned and evolved until we can technologically build an artificial intelligence to mimic our intelligence. Analyzing historical data and patterns, one of the programs of AI identified Colonialism, Wars, and Environmental neglect as the most significant three moments where humanity made a mistake—through the same analysis, determined that the reason for those “errors” was based on lack of awareness and understanding, the pursuit of economic growth, and bias. The latter is considered by AI the worst trait of humans.

What if we could build a society without bias or somehow have artificial intelligence make the decisions and rule over progress? The world would be a very different place, for the AI itself is not bound to the rules and customs we are. We can verify this by analyzing AlphaZero, the first AI program that beat humans in chess. *“The tactics AlphaZero deployed were unorthodox – indeed, original. It sacrificed pieces human players considered vital, including its queen. It executed moves humans had not considered at all. (...) AlphaZero did not have a strategy in a human sense. Instead, it had its own logic, informed by its ability to recognize patterns of moves across vast sets of possibilities the human mind cannot fully digest or employ.”* (Kissinger, Schmidt, Huttenlocher, *The Age of AI and Our Human Future*, 2021, p. 8).

It makes us question what a machine would prioritize then. We cannot change the past, although it becomes evident that the current world scenario is far from ideal according to AI's judgment. We're still strangled in world conflicts due to different perspectives and biases. Also, we're still prioritizing profit over life and not working as we should to create a more sustainable ecosystem.

While these may seem clear actions, why is it so hard to pursue, for instance, the suggestions of a machine for our future? We could even consider that there's a trust issue or lack of humility, recognizing a computer knows what's better for humanity than humans themselves. The reality is that we understand that artificial intelligence may not prioritize us, at the end of the day, our interests and how we feel. In those circumstances, things often get mistaken, *“When it comes to deciding what is right, do we focus more on thinking or feeling?”* (Sapolsky, *Behave: The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst*, 2018, p. 468)

Bias is also a product of our emotions. We judge something we consider different based on our feelings towards what was taught to us, what was shown, and the people who shared

That to us. Culture is, in many ways, the essence of society, and culture is defined by all the combinations of events and biological and environmental conditions that people live on. For generations, that is also our essence; from our kin, it is what is “right”, while everything and every other tribe is wrong. *“One of the great difficulties of modern life is presented by the conflict of ideals; individualism against socialization; nationalism against internationalism; enjoyment of life against efficiency; rationalism against a sound emotionalism; tradition against the logic of facts.”* (Boas, *Anthropology & Modern Life*, 2004, p. 202). Anthropology itself was developed under that perspective.

So, having a society ruled by AI and bias-free would, one way or another, remove the relationships and emotions of the society and culture that somehow are the foundation of society. Analyzing precisely those three moments of global conflicts, colonialism, and environmental neglect, without bias and through machine learning, most likely, society wouldn't favor one or another, as history has shown. It would benefit, or not, all equally, causing perhaps an average state of contentment by all people.

Conclusion

To live in a bias-free world would be more peaceful. Most likely, several global wars and conflicts wouldn't exist. There would be more tolerance and curiosity towards differences, making the world a more diverse and empathetic reality. Initially, one might suggest the world would be a better place, which might be true. A better environment, more sustainable initiatives, no wars, fewer conflicts, and more awareness would benefit humanity and society. Why, then, do we not do those things? While we cannot change those, we can reshape the future, but why is it so hard to modify the system? In the end, maybe having bias makes us not that programmed then.

The conditions that have brought humanity to where we are now were, on many levels, the fight for survival. Initially, it was literally due to territorialism and resources, and more recently, it was due to different beliefs and cultures. Somehow, humans always try to go beyond, to exceed, to be better, and thrive. It is much stronger when they compare themselves to people, not from the same culture or think differently. It's almost a victory to say they've thrived more, so that's why their way is the right way. It's a validation and a proof to themselves of their ways of living.

Machines, on the other hand, don't think like that. They don't feel at all in that sense, but the logic is not to overcome one thing versus another. Hypothetically, it will look for stability, continuation, and perpetuity, looking to build something meant to last and function forever. It would, without bias, see those conflicts and differences as small nuances on a more extensive formula; it would look for means to connect those rather than oppress one. It would see nature as essential as it is so that it wouldn't favor human lifestyle over the earth's protection.

Perhaps human will itself wouldn't be as strong, as different people wouldn't need to be passionate and have the strength to fight for their ideals. On the other hand, we would have a more peaceful, tolerant ecosystem that wouldn't favor one versus another. Whether humans would fight this hypothetical AI ruler or find peace and understanding in its measures and proposals is a question. One thing is sure; we cannot change the past, *"But we agree the technology is changing human thought, knowledge, perception, and reality – and, in doing so, changing the course of human history."* (Kissinger, Schmidt, Huttenlocher, *The Age of AI and Our Human Future*, 2021,

You
what do you believe were 3 moments humanity made an error towards society wellbeing?

ChatGPT
Reflecting on human history, there are several moments where decisions or actions had significant negative impacts on societal wellbeing. From my perspective, three crucial moments that stand out as errors affecting society's welfare include:

1. Colonialism and Imperialism:

- The era of colonialism, particularly during the expansion of European powers from the 15th to the 20th centuries, led to the exploitation of resources, imposition of cultural dominance, and subjugation of indigenous populations for economic gains and territorial control.
- **Impact:** This period resulted in the disruption of indigenous cultures, economic disparities, social injustices, and political tensions that persist in many regions even today.

2. World Wars and Global Conflicts:

- World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945) were catastrophic global conflicts fueled by territorial disputes, nationalism, and ideological differences among nations.
- **Impact:** These wars caused widespread destruction, loss of lives, economic turmoil, and the rise of totalitarian regimes. They left a legacy of suffering, geopolitical tensions, and ongoing regional conflicts.

3. Environmental Neglect and Climate Change:

- Humanity's disregard for environmental consequences, including the use of fossil fuels, deforestation, and pollution, led to significant environmental degradation and climate change.
- **Impact:** Climate change poses severe threats to ecosystems, weather patterns, agriculture, and human settlements, causing rising sea levels, extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity, and risks to human health and livelihoods, especially affecting vulnerable communities.

These moments represent pivotal errors in human history where decisions, actions, or historical circumstances significantly impacted societal wellbeing, leading to long-term consequences and

Transcript of simulated interview with "AI" at ChatGPT part 1

You
what do you think were the triggers and motivators for those 3 main humanity errors?

ChatGPT
The triggers and motivators for the three main errors in human history, namely colonialism and imperialism, global conflicts, and environmental neglect, were influenced by a combination of factors:

1. Colonialism and Imperialism:

- **Economic Gain:** Economic motivations, including the pursuit of wealth through resources, land, and trade routes, were significant drivers of colonialism. Nations sought to expand their empires to gain access to valuable resources and establish dominance in global trade.
- **Ideological Superiority:** Belief in cultural or racial superiority fueled the perception that colonizers had the right to dominate and "civilize" other societies. This ideology justified exploitation and control over indigenous populations.
- **National Competition:** Rivalry among European powers to establish dominance led to fierce competition for colonies, territories, and geopolitical influence, intensifying the drive for expansion.

2. World Wars and Global Conflicts:

- **Nationalism and Territorial Disputes:** Nationalistic fervor, pride, and territorial disputes played significant roles in sparking global conflicts. Conflicting national interests, ambitions for power, and competition over territories escalated tensions.
- **Economic Instability:** Economic downturns, such as the aftermath of World War I and the Great Depression, contributed to social unrest, political instability, and heightened rivalries among nations seeking economic recovery and growth.
- **Militarism and Alliances:** Militaristic ideologies and the formation of alliances between nations escalated the scale and intensity of conflicts. Arms races and the buildup of military power created a climate of fear and heightened tensions.

Transcript of simulated interview with "AI" at ChatGPT part 2

How would you have done differently and/or avoided those?



ChatGPT

As an evolving and sentient AI, I would approach these historical challenges by considering potential strategies to mitigate or avoid such errors. While these scenarios occurred in the past, alternative approaches might have been considered to potentially prevent or minimize their impact:

1. **Colonialism and Imperialism:**
 - **Prioritize Respect and Collaboration:** Instead of pursuing exploitation, a collaborative approach respecting indigenous cultures and fostering mutual cooperation could have been sought. Emphasizing equitable trade, cultural exchange, and respecting the autonomy of indigenous communities might have fostered more positive relationships.
2. **World Wars and Global Conflicts:**
 - **Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution:** Prioritizing diplomatic negotiations and conflict resolution through international alliances, dialogue, and mediation might have prevented escalating tensions. Establishing platforms for dialogue and fostering a culture of international cooperation could have been beneficial.
3. **Environmental Neglect and Climate Change:**
 - **Embrace Sustainable Practices Early:** Implementing sustainable resource management practices, investing in renewable energy sources, and limiting carbon emissions from the outset could have mitigated environmental damage. A focus on global collaboration and adherence to ecological conservation principles might have reduced the impact of climate change.

However, it's essential to acknowledge that historical events are complex and influenced by various factors, including political, social, and economic dynamics. The proposed approaches are speculative and theoretical, emphasizing a different path based on principles of collaboration, diplomacy, ethical considerations, and sustainability.



Transcript of simulated interview with “AI” at ChatGPT part 3

How would you have done differently and/or avoided those?



ChatGPT

Avoiding the errors of colonialism, world conflicts, and environmental neglect in the past could have led to a society today that might have looked significantly different in several aspects:

1. **Cultural Diversity and Equity:** Without the dark legacy of colonialism, societies could have retained diverse cultural identities and traditions. Indigenous cultures might have flourished, contributing to a more culturally rich and inclusive global community.
2. **Peaceful Global Relations:** The avoidance of major global conflicts might have fostered a more peaceful international environment. Diplomacy, cooperation, and dialogue could have been the norm, leading to greater trust among nations and reduced geopolitical tensions.
3. **Environmental Sustainability:** Averted environmental neglect could have resulted in a healthier planet with intact ecosystems, reduced pollution, and more sustainable resource management. Society might have implemented renewable energy sources early, mitigating the severe impacts of climate change we witness today.
4. **Economic and Social Equity:** Without the exploitation and economic disparities caused by colonialism, societies might have had more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. This could have led to reduced poverty and improved standards of living for a larger segment of the global population.
5. **Technological and Scientific Advancement:** With more collaborative and peaceful global relations, societies might have focused resources on scientific innovation, technological advancement, and space exploration. The lack of conflicts might have diverted resources towards more constructive endeavors.
6. **Cultural and Environmental Preservation:** Preserving indigenous cultures and ecosystems could have contributed to a greater emphasis on environmental conservation, cultural heritage, and sustainable practices as intrinsic values within societies.

While this speculation presents a utopian scenario, it's essential to recognize that history is complex, and the present reality is shaped by multifaceted factors. Even in a hypothetical scenario where these errors were avoided, there would still likely be challenges and issues unique to that

Transcript of simulated interview with “AI” at ChatGPT part 4

You
why do you think humans dont do these?

ChatGPT
There are several reasons why humans might not consistently prioritize the approaches outlined previously:

- 1. Historical Context and Precedence:** Human actions are often influenced by historical events, cultural norms, and existing power structures. Historical patterns of behavior, such as colonization or conflict, can shape future actions, making it challenging to deviate from established practices.
- 2. Short-term Priorities and Incentives:** Humans frequently face immediate challenges and pressures that prioritize short-term gains over long-term sustainability. Economic, political, or social pressures often lead to decisions that favor immediate benefits rather than considering long-term consequences.
- 3. Complexity and Conflicting Interests:** Addressing global issues like climate change or fostering cultural collaboration requires international cooperation and overcoming diverse interests and agendas. Conflicting ideologies, geopolitical tensions, and economic disparities hinder collective action.
- 4. Limited Vision and Awareness:** Humans might lack a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness of actions and their long-term implications. There might be a lack of awareness or acknowledgment of the gravity of certain issues, leading to delayed or inadequate responses.
- 5. Inertia and Resistance to Change:** Established systems, cultural paradigms, and vested interests might resist change, making it challenging to implement new approaches. Resistance can arise from fear of the unknown or reluctance to abandon familiar practices.
- 6. Complexity of Governance and Decision-making:** Making decisions at a global scale involves intricate governance structures, diverse stakeholders, and conflicting priorities. Achieving

Transcript of simulated interview with “AI” at ChatGPT part 5

You
what do you think is human's worst flaw and how does it interfere in society?

ChatGPT
One of humanity's perceived flaws is its susceptibility to bias. Human bias, whether conscious or unconscious, manifests in various forms and can significantly interfere in society in several ways:

- 1. Social Inequality and Discrimination:** Bias based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or other factors leads to social inequality and discrimination. This bias can result in unequal opportunities, unfair treatment, and social divisions, hindering collective progress and unity.
- 2. Prejudiced Decision-Making:** Bias influences decision-making processes in various fields, such as employment, education, healthcare, and justice. Prejudices can affect hiring practices, educational opportunities, access to healthcare, and fair legal outcomes, leading to injustices and reinforcing societal disparities.
- 3. Polarization and Conflict:** Bias contributes to polarization by fostering “us vs. them” mentalities. It exacerbates societal divisions, fosters hostility among groups, and fuels conflicts based on perceived differences, hindering social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.
- 4. Innovation and Progress Hurdles:** Bias can impede innovation by limiting diverse perspectives and solutions. It leads to overlooking alternative ideas or dismissing innovative approaches, hindering progress and societal advancements.
- 5. Misinformation and Stereotyping:** Bias can perpetuate stereotypes and misinformation. It influences media representations, public discourse, and perceptions, leading to misconceptions and reinforcing negative stereotypes about certain groups, cultures, or ideas.

Addressing human bias requires efforts towards awareness, education, and fostering inclusivity. Encouraging empathy, critical thinking, diversity, and creating environments that value fairness and inclusiveness can mitigate the negative impacts of bias in society. Additionally, implementing policies and practices that promote equity and combat discrimination are crucial steps toward

Transcript of simulated interview with “AI” at ChatGPT part 6

REFERENCES

- Benedict, Ruth (1934). *Patterns of Culture*. Boston, First Mariner Books
- Boas, Franz (1932). *Anthropology & Modern Life*. New Brunswick, Transactional Publishers,
- Hobsbawm, Eric (1997). *On History*. New York, The New Press,
- Higgs, Eric, Light, Andrew, Strong, David. *Technology and The Good Life?*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press,
- Sapolsky, Robert (2018). *Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst*, São Paulo, Companhia das Letras,
- Kissinger, Henry, Schmidt, Eric, Huttenlocher, Daniel (2021). *The Age of AI And Our Human Future*, New York, Little, Brown and Company
- Ginsburg, Faye, Abu-Lughod, Lila, Larkin, Brian (2002). *Media Worlds Anthropology on New Terrain*, Los Angeles, University of California Press.
- OpenAI, 2023, *ChatGPT 3.5*, <https://chat.openai.com/>
- ChainBrainAI, 2023, *ChainBrain AI Advanced ChatGPT Prompts*, www.chainbrainai.com