The Age of AI - My Thoughts

AI is poised to impact every aspect of our lives. Over the past decade, advances like *AlphaFold*, which revolutionizes medicine by predicting protein structures, or AI-controlled aircraft outperforming human pilots in dogfighting, illustrate the profound capabilities of this technology.

Beyond the need for regulation, ethical considerations, and caution in integrating AI into politics and warfare, the book raises a compelling philosophical question: Will AI fundamentally transform humanity's understanding of itself, or is it simply another tool we adapt to?

Historically, humanity has encountered groundbreaking innovations that redefined specific aspects of life. For instance, the invention of the automobile replaced horse-drawn carriages, profoundly changing transportation but leaving the broader human experience relatively untouched. AI, however, has the potential to transcend such localized impacts and influence every dimension of human existence.

One of humanity's long-held beliefs is that our ability to reason and think distinguishes us. As Descartes put it, *"Cogito, ergo sum"* ("I think, therefore I am"). Yet, a potential of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) challenges this notion. Unlike today's AI, which operates under human guidance or generates outputs that are pretty much probabilistic sequences based on vast datasets, AGI would (said to) possess genuine reasoning capabilities. This raises profound questions: If AGI can reason like humans, what then sets humanity apart?

While the creation of AGI would signify an extraordinary achievement, I think it would not alter humanity's distinguishing quality from a philosophical standpoint. After all, it would still be a product of human creativity, data, and technical expertise. However, AGI could drastically reshape societal structures and the value of individual contributions.

For instance, many fields—particularly those requiring years of specialized study, like mathematics or computer science—could see their works generated more efficiently by AGI. This could lower the cost of intellectual labor, potentially driving down salaries and diminishing the unique tangible societal value of an average individual'. The ripple effects on employment, education, and the economy could be profound, potentially forcing humanity to redefine its role in a world where AI outpaces human capabilities in many domains.

So how would we preserve our unique identity and the values we offer while embracing this transformative (and kind of dystopic) technology?

Atilla Colak - Dec 29, 2024

Sources

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The Age of AI

Henry Kissinger

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Eric Schmidt

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Daniel Huttenlocher

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