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## Artificial intelligence and spirituality: The four domains of concern



Dr.KAMAL BHATTACHARYYA @HERBINGER

DEC 01, 2021, 15:59 IST

Artificial Intelligence is now selling like hot cake. Every university of the world is branding AI under their courses. The objective of AI is to replace human effort and work in precision that requires skills and tenacity, like medical operation or quick calculation and many more. AI is nothing but collection of data that are premeditatedly stored in sequence and prompted by command and does the work. It is nothing but systematic action and reaction but with limited boundary that means if the machine is not fitted with a particular responsive data the machine will fail to act. For example if a robot is fitted with data to response against good

**Dr.KAMAL BHATTACHARYYA**  
**@HERBINGER**

The only means of salvation is

morning to good morning and good night to good night, and if it is not fitted with data of good evening, and if you say to it good evening, it will not reply anything. But now AI is working under manipulating data, and the artificial intelligence will select the data from the store and put them together by itself and be responsive. On the other hand spirituality is automated action and reaction and spontaneously takes its decision without harbouring any other support.

Does it have any influence of AI on spirituality? Will AI be able to affect spirituality? Let us discuss four major domains of concern and the distinctions and relations of AI and Spirituality. The cliché is that every invention has good and bad effects. AI might have more good effect on human being and society and less adverse effect and vice versa. The possibility of AI is abundant and acknowledged. Since AI will be used by human, so ethics are involved like all other applied sciences. There are cannons of ethics to follow. So to discuss this issue I will keep it under the area of human understanding and philosophy common for every religion. The first domain of concern is concentration, patience and attention. Surprisingly the common field of every spiritual philosophy is concentration. Every spiritual teaching teaches to be first concentrate be it Buddhist philosophy, Vedanta Philosophy, Jain Philosophy. AI by dint

proactive knowledge. The incredible thing about knowledge is that the more you will donate, the more it will grow.

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of its advanced technology is peeping in our privacy and attention. It is causing social dilemma in the society. The social media platforms are providing us services and without any cost, and surprisingly we the users become the product unwittingly in the hands of the companies. AI is harping on our attention. Every now and then our mobile phone sounds of some message, and we cannot control but to see the contents and these companies compel us to see the message or advertisement and earn money out of your attention. So here the AI is seeking our attention successfully and we are gradually being doll in the hands of technology. It is beautifully explained by Swami Sarvapriyananda in a lecture by United Nation that the Mobile phones, which are a product of AI, gradually making us addicted to them. It is like the gambling machine in Las Vegas to train our neuropsychology and production of dopamine and snatch your attention. This is truly insidious of this domain. So technologies are not neutrals, like guns are available with every adult individual in America but they are kept in gun cabinet so that they do get into the hands of the minors. The damage has been done in the mode of continuous partial attention. People's attention has been intermittent and rest of the attention has been channelized on our phones and our attention is generating money for the MNC through advertisements. So

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we are the product. So technology will affect the spirituality and it will reduce the attention power surreptitiously.



Anubhuti Yadav



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The second domain of concern is the selflessness. The attention deficit attitude of common people will not lead a life empathically. If one cannot pay attention to one's neighbor the life will not be lived worth. Altruistic life will be rare in the society. AI will reduce the arena of the person who will be more engaged in him. Spirituality within general people will be less. Kathoponishad explains that we are unable to realize the truth because we are distracted with external affairs, our body, possession, love, sex, so technology will lead us further from the inner-realization to materialistic world. AI will compel us to be immersed in virtual world and cutoff from the external world. We will be less compassionate as to be compassionate we require attention.

The third domain is devoutness or adherence whatever you may call. All theist and atheist practitioners follow one thing in common which is sacrifice, love and devoutness to somebody who is greater than us. Our demands are flowing in different directions and devotion means to collectively sacrifice all these demands to somebody or some entity referred as God, or any other names. The profit making technology in the

form of AI will be a substantial helping hand to fulfill the little desires of human being and reduce the possibility of faith and devotion.

Finally the area which is also an area of concern is the knowledge of discovering and analyzing ourselves. The Vedanta, the human spirituality and AI both analyze our demands, but both do it differently. Spiritually, as Vedanta says, we are neither body nor soul but an accumulated energy of light transcends from the higher self. On the other hand AI analyzes our thought pattern, speech pattern and behavior pattern and builds enormous database and analyses using algorithm and micromanaged the human desire. But AI will not be able to find anything higher or greater transcendent beyond this. Therefore there is vast difference between spirituality and AI, and bases are different. AI based on materialistic consciousness which can be controlled and manipulated. Spirituality is not materialistic feeling but transcendent and it is indivisible.



**Manoj Das**

i find the ideas expressed here are not original but picked up from swami sarvapriyananda's 17-minute video talk in its entirety (without even acknow...

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WORLD

## Globally active China



asad mirza @*Marginalia*

DEC 01, 2021, 13:59 IST

The aggressive and planned manner in which Chinese companies have forayed globally, poses a risk not just to the economic interests but also the defence interests of the collaborating and neighbour nations.

Recent reports by Wall Street Journal have revealed that the US intelligence agencies found evidence of construction work on what they believed was a secret Chinese military facility in the United Arab Emirates, and which was stopped after Washington's intervention.

It says that satellite imagery of the Port Khalifa revealed suspicious construction work inside a container terminal built and operated by a Chinese shipping corporation, Cosco. It included huge excavations covered in an apparent attempt to evade scrutiny and apparently for a multi-story building.

asad mirza

**@MARGINALIA**

A political commentator. Writes on politics, minorities, foreign affairs and interfaith issues. Was earlier associated with BBC Urdu Service, Khaleej Times, Dubai.

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Biden's tour de Saudi Arabia

The Biden administration initiated urgent contact with the UAE authorities, which appeared to be unaware of the military activities, according to the WSJ. It said the discussions included two direct conversations between Joe Biden and Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, in May and August.

The US officials visited the UAE in late September and presented the intelligence details to the Emirati authorities. The construction work was suspended after the US officials recently inspected the Port Khalifa site.

### Chinese forays in the Gulf

Basically, China, the world's largest trading nation, has thrown its weight behind Abu Dhabi as the Middle East hub for its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its biggest project is the Khalifa Port. Moreover, it is trying to expand its presence globally by constructing ports, railways and roads in partner countries albeit at terms which tilt hugely in its favour, besides challenging the US interests.

Cosco, the Shanghai-based, state-owned group that ranks among the biggest shipping companies in the world, has invested an initial \$300 million in the CSP Abu Dhabi Terminal, the first step in an investment

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programme that could help make it one of the biggest ports in the Arabian Gulf over the next five years. The deal with Cosco is aimed at attracting foreign investment into the UAE via the Khalifa Industrial Zone of Abu Dhabi (KIZAD), the huge logistics and manufacturing zone that borders the port.

By 2023, the Port Khalifa is expected to overtake Jebel Ali, just 50 km away in Dubai, in capacity terms, thus proving once again which is the strongest emirate in the UAE.

Trade ties have been growing between China and the UAE since a visit by Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan to Beijing three years ago. Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the UAE last summer.

In alignment with their goal of augmenting UAE-China trade, DP World, a UAE owned company in partnership with Zhejiang China Commodity City Group (CCC) has also launched the Yiwu Market as part of the first phase of Dubai Traders Market, located in the heart of Jafza. Dubai Traders Market will span approximately 800,000 square metres, with Yiwu Market covering about 200,000 square metres. The market will give traders and businesses from across the globe access to wholesale

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traders and businesses from across the globe access to wholesale

discounts with minimised supply chain costs and turnaround times.

## Regional Geopolitics

China's BRI is a state-sponsored strategy to enhance land and sea trading infrastructure in Asia, the Middle East and Africa via multibillion-dollar investments in trading hubs across the eastern hemisphere, though it has been criticised by some observers for leaving the partners of Chinese companies in debt, as happened in Sri Lanka and Venezuela.

In recent times Persian Gulf powers like the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been engaged in expanding their influence in the Horn of Africa and are busy opening commercial and military facilities in the Red Sea region. Major global powers like the United States (US), Japan, China and France have established military bases in Djibouti. Reportedly, India had also demonstrated interest in opening the base at Djibouti and Russia has recently announced that it will establish a military base in Sudan.

China is engaged in developing major infrastructure projects such as ports and railways in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. As a result of these activities, the littoral and continental space from Sudan in the north to

Kenya in the south has become a focal point of strategic rivalries between regional as well as global powers.

### Chinese ventures in Somaliland

The port of Berbera and Somaliland's geopolitical location at the crossroads of West Asia, Horn of Africa and Indian Ocean is likely to assume increasing strategic importance as the Indo-Pacific rivalries sharpen. Historically, the strategic location of the port near the straits of the Bab-el-Mandeb, which is a key maritime choke point for international trade and global energy security, has attracted foreign powers. In the last few years, UAE has established a firm foothold at Berbera. Meanwhile the UAE, Ethiopia and Somaliland have reached an alliance for developing Berbera Economic Zone.

The Chinese navy established a facility in Djibouti, its first overseas base, about four years ago, which was placed within a Chinese-run commercial port, at Doraleh. In addition in June this year, a new container terminal was inaugurated at the port of Berbera in the self-governing territory of Somaliland. Somaliland is a breakaway region of Somalia and is not recognised by any other state. The port of Berbera is located along the southern coast of the Gulf of Aden.

For UAE, developing the port of Berbera and building strategic partnership with Somaliland serves two inter-related objectives: challenge the pre-eminence of the port facilities at Djibouti for the shipping enroute to the Suez Canal and expand its influence in the Horn of Africa. Through its entrenched presence in Somaliland and in Southern Yemen, UAE is in an enviable geopolitical position: it can monitor the strategically important Gulf of Aden closely and shape the strategic affairs of the region.

### India's Interests

Gulf of Aden is an integral part of India's maritime neighbourhood and sharpening rivalries between major powers underscore the need for increasing India's strategic presence in the region. India has recently opened its embassy in Djibouti and has been steadily expanding its engagement with the Horn of Africa.

Officially, there is no contact between India and Somaliland. A foothold in Somaliland would expand India's presence and prove useful in monitoring Chinese activities in the region.

India could use its ties with the UAE to forge newer ties with Somaliland.

Compared with the unstable politics and prevailing insecurity in Somalia, democratic Somaliland is stable and secure. This will also serve its purpose of keeping an eye on the Chinese activities in the region and be a force to reckon with in the Gulf of Aden.

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##### SPORTS

## The crown belongs to the king



Zarqa Javed @*Footballmaniac*

DEC 01, 2021, 10:50 IST

The Ballon d'Or was back with football again after getting cancelled in 2020. The Ballon d'Or award ceremony is one of the most anticipated events in the football world. The award, first given out in 1956, is sponsored by the French weekly magazine to the best footballer of the year. The 2021 edition of the Ballon d'Or was the 65th award ceremony.

The men's and women's Ballon d'Or winners were honoured at a gala event at the Chatelet Theatre in Paris.

Lionel Messi won his 7th Ballon d'Or in 2021 at the Théâtre du Châtelet on the evening of 29 Nov (IST) in men's category. Alexia Putellas won the Ballon d'Or in the women's category. Fans all around had tears of happiness flowing down their cheeks. Some fans said that Lewandowski was robbed of 2020's Ballon d'Or. But, we all agree that despite the cancellation of Ballon d'Or in 2020, Lewandowski is the winner. Each one around the world congratulated the winners. Barcelona's official page commented on France Football's photo- "Made in Barcelona." The photo displayed Alexia and Messi together with their Ballon d'Or award. I think we can all agree with Barcelona's comment.

Lionel Messi was the topmost favourite to win the Ballon d'Or; his stats were undefeated. In 2021: 41 goals, 17 assists; Won Copa America & Copa del Rey. It was sure that Messi is going to win the Ballon d'Or of 2021 despite his slow start at PSG. For that reason, Messi had the edge in one of the closest fights for years. Lionel Messi is now the only player who has won the Ballon d'Or in three decades- in 2000, 2010 and 2020. Messi is also the only player to own seven Ballon d'Or.

Zarqa Javed

**@FOOTBALLMANIAC**

I am a football maniac and hope you are one too!

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Everyone was present at the French Gala and, the celebration was phenomenal. Zendaya and Tom Holland were even spotted on the red carpet. Lionel Messi and Lewandowski sat together. When the host declared the Ballon d'Or winner, cheers rose in the Theatre. Messi went up the stage but, the question was- who will give Messi the award? In 2020, there was no Ballon d'Or so no winner was there to give the Ballon d'Or to Messi. In 2019 Lionel Messi only won the Ballon d'Or and he couldn't give the award to himself. Luis Suarez gave the surprise visit with the Ballon d'Or in his hands. It was a lovable sight, seeing the most honourable award being given by the winner's best friend. At the award ceremony, Lewandowski got honoured with the "Best striker" award. Donnuruma got honoured with the "Best Goalkeeper" award aka the Yashine Trophy.

The celebration isn't over yet, on 29 Nov Barcelona celebrated its 122nd anniversary. On the 29th of November 1899, Joan Gamper founded the Football Club Barcelona. Barcelona's pride won great awards at the French Gala. Pedri Gonzalez won the Kopa Trophy and Alexia Putellas won the Ballon d'Or in the women's category. Both are inspirational players of FC Barcelona. Barcelona's legends, who don't play for Barcelona anymore, won startling awards too:

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Lionel Messi won the Ballon d'Or  
Luis Suarez was honoured with the Alfredo di Stéfano Trophy for the Best Player. (Not at the French Gala)

Barcelona's 122nd anniversary ended in the grandest way imaginable.  
Messi and Suarez wished a happy anniversary to their former club,  
Barcelona. They sent the wishes via their Instagram stories.

While everyone was exulting about the French Gala, Pascal Ferré wrecked the mood. Ferre had told the New York Times: "Ronaldo has only one ambition, and that is to retire with more Ballons d'Or than Messi.... and I know that because he has told me." Ronaldo posted on his official Instagram page denying this fact. He even termed Pascal a 'liar'. His respect for Pascal Ferre has gone downhill and the football fans are even in disgust with Pascal. Ronaldo corrected the false statement of Ferre, by writing:

"I always win for myself and for the clubs I represent, I win for myself and for those who love me. I don't win against anyone. The biggest ambition of my career is to win national and international titles for the clubs I represent and for the national team,"

Football fans all around are cursing at Pascal Ferre, it's a shame seeing

people fake things. Pascal Ferre, as mentioned by CR7, has done this scandal to promote himself and the publication he works for.

Football is a respectable game and we implore that people do not make it loathsome.

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