

“Why A.I. could be the worst event in human civilization?”

“A.I. could be the worst event in the history of human civilization”... one of the last Dr. Hawking’s “Wall-e”- like words that stroke the world news. Isn’t Wall-e the toy tank from the cartoon? The pretty big eyes with cute smile, that loves humans, feels sorrow about them and helps them to back to their damaged native planet Earth and inhibit it again? And in order to talk and think he has A.I.? Wow... a moment. What? A.I.? Warning? Damaged? Inhibit the Earth? Again? You may say nonsense. It is just a cartoon. But let me take you on exciting journey. Let me guide you through the thought of the one for whom is said “When he speaks, you listen”.

Let’s start it simple. A.I. stands for Artificial Intelligence. It is one of the rapidly developing fields in computer science. It gives basically the ability of the computer to discover how to execute specific task without guide manual. For examples, in traditional computer science some geeky like engineer will say to the computer “Okay buddy, you will play chess using only specific set of moves which are stored somewhere in memory. If your opponent play move A, you are only allowed to play moves B or C, but you will never play move D”. Instead the task to computer is “Okay buddy. You will play chess. I will show you how we people play chess, but nothing more. All strategies, all counter moves you play it on your own.”. There was time, when everyone was laughing on this idea. But then one day, the computer named “Deep Blue” stroke the chess grand master Garry Kasparov. He won in one-vs-one match against then world champion Kasparov. Deep Blue’s moves were described “human-like” and “stunning”. Luckily the machine knew only to play chess. In recent years, more similar stories raised. Although, entitle as the game of smart people, chess is shown to be very easy to be played by computers. In the following years a games like “Checkers”, and “Jeopardy” have fallen. Next big thing was the so called “Alpha GO”, a software that is able to terrorize the best world players in far more complicate game Go. The opponent in the first match, although one of the top 2 players, lost 5 times in a row. He described the moves of “Alpha GO” as “non-human” and “no intuitive”. He needed few months to understand why the system is playing the moves it is playing. At the end when he understood it, he said the moves were “astonishing beautiful”. Now, we are facing situation where starting from “intuitive human-like” actions, the best of humans can barely understand the actions of the machine in few months’ time. You think that this is not fascinating? Just hold one to hear some more interesting parts of the journey.

A.I. doesn’t only play games. It has much wider application. Starting from day to day searches on internet, translation on text and text from pictures, recommending some stuff to buy based on recent searches or time spend on specific video to assistants for elderly people, suggesting friends to add on social networks, systems for autonomously driving cars and much more. One very interesting application is the one on the online store Amazon. They are using A.I. systems to predict which product the person is going to buy, before even buying it in order to move geographically closer to the customer and provide one day service option. Is this means that we are tracked? The Big Brother is alive? No it can’t be... But these systems recommend pages to like, based on the things I’ve already liked and my group likes. It connect me to the people similar to me. A morbid feeling of imprisonment and shaped type of thinking, manipulating? Sound the alarm... In fact, this is one major problem. Not long ago there was huge affair of using such targeted marketing for president elections in one of the most influential country in the world – USA. This situation is identical, although much less significant for the whole world, as for example someone to constantly say that hamburgers are good for your health, and bombard you with different stories about hamburgers, and not informing you or even negatively speak about the positive effect of eating vegetables, fruits and sea food. This in time will become natural to you and because the other option that exist you will consider non healthy it will be non-valid. The result will be negative effect on your health, just because there is absence

of enough information that shapes your opinion. In this situation you are just a puppet in someone else hands that manipulate you. To the question how is this done, the answer is very simple. In order to work A.I. must have data. From where does it take it? From the user. The user does not agree! Mistake!!! Anytime when someone is opening account on some social networks need to click a button “I agree the proposed terms. Proceed”. There lies the catch. Usually this terms and condition are really large and almost nobody is reading it. Even tough if someone decide to read it, parts are written in catchy form so can be interpret at free will. When someone on Internet say something is for free, it is NOT. You’re paying it with your data. To whom you agree to give your data, then use it to sell it, or use it to feed its own artificial intelligence system and discover interesting things used in beneficial way, which not necessary is the one that is of your interest too.

All this sound morbid, but the good is that it is still done in benefit for humans. What if the intelligent machine and humans misaligned in their perception of what is good and how to perform a task? Then we have one of the most dangerous situation a humanity can face. There are two things that can be considered. The first one is related to A.I. designed to do something devastating. Now a days exist active development of autonomous weapons and A.I. systems that are designed to kill. Usually this systems are connected with the property “hard to “turn off”. If it falls in wrong hands it can have massive casualties. The second things is related to A.I. that is designed to do something beneficial, but it develops a destructive method to achieve its goal. The simplest example to explain this is if an autonomous car is asked to drive to the airport as fast as it can. But if it decide that some constrains are not important, it will achieve its goal chased by helicopters if not previously stopped by bullets. Another interesting example is if from A.I. is asked to design some geoengineering project, and if A.I. ignores some constrains like for example havoc in the ecosystem, then the humans will try to stop it. But then the A.I. will treat humans as danger that need to be deal with. Such super-intelligent system will be extremely good at finishing its tasks but if its goals are misaligned with humans goal there is a problem. Now suppose that you are in charge of some hydroelectric project, and there are few anthills to be flooded. What will you do? Would you like to be the ant?

Today, humans are superior animal on the Earth because of their superior cognitive ability regarding others. But what if we build a system that is able to outperform us in cognitive ability. I bet you got it. We will “become” ants. Well there are two interesting theories behind this. One is that humanity will be destroyed and replaced with machines or cyborgs (half man, half machine) as the future evolutionary scale in human evolution as a spice. Such super-intelligence will have gathered all human experience and the goals set are beyond imagining for such intelligence. Wall-e will not be needed to safe the humans from excision. This is where dr. Hawking is the most afraid of. Just as is in the cartoon, the Earth will only preserve human’s tracks. This is just one way how the things can go and from what not only Dr. Hawking, but impactful people like Elon Musk, Steve Wozniak, Bill Gates, Peter Norvig and other big names in the world of artificial intelligence are concerned. The brighter story is related on human and machine cooperation. Just as Wall-e and rest of the human civilization survivors build a society for both the intelligent machines and humans in harmony. It is our moral responsibility to choose how the evolutionary scale of the humanity will go. It is to us to find the most appropriate way to continue the story of flash and bones on the planet Earth, so others can speak for other planetary species, the history of time or even the begging of the time itself and many more enthralling journeys than this one. Let’s make the A.I. the best event in human history.