



Would Machines Overtake Humans?

This year witnessed sophistication of the AI in many autonomous uses in robotics, vehicles, drones, medical and various industrial appliances. They all operate with varying degrees of capability, coordination and intelligence. The next year is chartered to bring further developments in achieving higher capabilities to match a human brain for decision making, intelligence or general-purpose learning.

At the time of writing these lines, heated competition is ensuing in the United States and around the world using the joint capabilities of the artificial intelligence to create machines that can even teach and develop themselves. This is what the 100-year old futurist James Lovelock predicts in his new book "Novacene" or "New Age", detailing the new evolution of humanity fueled by AI.

According to Lovelock, the New Age has already begun with Google like AlphaZero as a starting point. Those machines may overtake humans as the superior life form, being the next surge of intelligent life on earth. He warns that humans may soon cede their top spot to their own artificially intelligent creations. — A new age indeed where humans could be eclipsed by these machines!

He dubbed such new future "understanders" as "cybergs" that will have designed and built themselves. He asserts that in the "Novacene", the replacement of humans won't necessarily be a violent shift, but simply an evolutionary one instead.

The process is already underway via sophisticated Artificial Intelligence systems that have been developed like AlphaGo, AlphaZero and DeepMind. These intelligent systems, capable of continually enhancing themselves, constitute a major linchpin toward the completion of the Novacene, Lovelock says.

He believes the crucial step that started the Novacene was the need to use computers to design and make themselves, where a new form of intelligent life will emerge on Earth from an artificially intelligent forerunner made by one of us, perhaps from something like AlphaZero.

Such predictions were reverberated during a recent TV interview where Elon Musk, the Tesla and SpaceX founder, declared that computers are getting

cleverer to an extent where it won't be long to quickly exceed human intelligence.

During the World Artificial Intelligence Conference in Shanghai, Musk told Jack Ma, chairman of Alibaba, "he guarantees that humans will eventually be surpassed by computers "in every single way." He added: "The first thing we should assume is that we are very dumb, we can definitely make things smarter than ourselves." He asserted: "mark my words, A.I. is far more dangerous than nukes. So why do we have no regulatory oversight?" With all such worries about this upcoming technology, it remains a big concern for him. In 2015, he rallied with several other technology geniuses and donated \$1 billion to the research of group "OpenAI", to further advance this digital intelligence and benefit humanity.

This same group is already working on a scheme to help people who suffer from paralysis, it will help them perform actions by simply thinking about such actions.

Besides, Musk plans to launch a huge satellite web costing about \$10 billions to swathe the Earth with readily available internet access. He already asked permission from the American government for a huge 5000 satellites to provide fast, global coverage. The system, named "SpaceX" is designed to deliver cheap internet services to any entity on the globe with an unprecedented broadband, in lieu of all the cables, fiber-optics and the other terrestrial internet system currently available.

And by no means this is the end of the way for this era's technological marvels. "DeepMind" for instance, founded in London in 2010 and now being developed in Canada and California, is designed to push the AI boundaries to further dimensions. We may now imagine a machine that can solve any complex problem without needing to be taught how, or one that can correct or renew itself. When this comes to fruition, it would be one of the most important and widely useful scientific advances ever invented. Many soft wares are now derivatives and applications of DeepMind including the most complex and intuitive games ever devised. This is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to AI, and the avenue is still wide open.

