Being Human & Artificial Intelligence

0. Introduction

Author: Thomas Tiller
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Before I start: In this series of short texts, I will share some thoughts on AI[i] and on being human. My underlying question is: What difference does the appearance of a thinking machine make to our individual lives? Not the big and flashy stuff that you can read everywhere. And I am neither going to join in with the absolutely euphoric crowd nor with the dystopic movement. There is not much left to add. It has all been said, shared, shouted about, argued about or "secretly revealed to the unknowing". Philosophers, politicians, social scientists, and many others have debated it deeply and passionately, and so have the tech bubble and many other groups of people.

Now: these aren't scientific articles. Nor are they a commentary on the current situation. This is simply sharing a couple of thoughts and experiences that I have collected in my professional work. I facilitate groups and individuals in their processes. I hold a neutral, non-judgmental space for them when they need it: in a conflict or a crisis, or when their process has led them into unknown territory. This can also include the vertical realm, also called the spiritual realm. This is my background, and it is a source of the thoughts and experiences I share here.

Also important: I share these very personal and subjective thoughts and experiences because they might offer a different view. Public debates mostly seem to be about the pros and cons of AI. My thoughts are meant as an addition to all the explanations of how things came about and of what should or should not be done about them.

This brings me to another essential point of this whole sharing. I am taking a first-person perspective. I am not talking about all of this as if it were an abstract thing.[ii] I am talking from the only perspective I have ever really had: being human. AI is real and AI is here to stay. The question that is rarely asked is: what does that mean for me? For me, not for us. A small, yet very important difference.[iii]

I stick to sharing what I experience, learn, perceive and think. That is the first-person perspective. Still, I have to talk "about" it. So, there will also be a third-person perspective, but it looks at my own experience, not at the topic itself. Too complex? Well, to put it more simply: I am talking about my "experiencing the world" and not about an absolute truth. Use it as you wish, but please don't use it as an absolute reference for anything. It's not.

Here is another important thing to mention, before I go on: I don't claim that these ideas are mine. Nor do I claim that they are new. I am somebody who intuitively synthesizes information, ideas, and visions. I am not even sure where I get the information from. It might be a book, a conversation, my own contemplation, or anything else that brings along new information on any level. These thoughts and

ideas arise from my own process. Yet they are very much part of a co-evolution with many others. If I don't name these others, it is not out of ill will. I simply may not know or remember who the original "source" of an idea is. This is due to the way I process information. If I know that a specific person or group brought an idea into the world, I will quote them. If you notice that something here was first brought into the world by someone else, please let me know. I will check it.

Again: This is sharing some thoughts and ideas that might or might not be inspirational to others. They may change their perspective on things or they may not. That's it. Should I have to explain concepts along the way to make things more comprehensible, this doesn't mean I want to explain how the world works. I don't know anything about how the world works. I have been trying to find that out for the last 55 years. With little success – at least, that's how it appears to me.

There is one last thing to mention. I am keeping the articles short and simple by only looking at one topic or one aspect. In the end it might be much more complex. All the aspects I touch on exist at the same time and are connected. Still, to keep things understandable, I may simplify them. I leave it to you, the reader, to put it all together again. And I am always open to any kind of dialog about all of this. Dialog, not debate. Sharing thoughts, experiences and ideas for co-evolution. Not being right or wrong.

With all this said, let's get started. For now, this short series has three topics, one per article.

1. Giving answers vs. holding questions.
2. Unidirectional contact vs. bidirectional contact
3. Human-Machine-Co-Evolution

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[i] When I use the term AI it might have different meanings. It can mean AI as an overall concept, problem-solving machines, special software and apps that implement various models, AI agents that interact with people or other agents, and more. To keep things simple, I only use the term AI. I trust you as a reader to pick the right meaning from the context.

[ii] As most of the ongoing debate does.

[iii] As soon as we discuss the consequences for society, most people switch to a third-person perspective. There is no "I" in "we". So how can anyone take a real first-person perspective?