

INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE

AI AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF A MATRIX SOCIETY. EDUCA- TIONAL IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Rapid technological development requires us to continually expand our knowledge and acquire skills that will help us to not only function in society in general but also interpret messages and meanings correctly. Self-development helps us to distance ourselves from untruths, think independently, become informed citizens and easily distinguish truth from falsehood. Primarily, Artificial Intelligence (AI) was made to support humans, yet in their lives, it has come to play a different role. It takes thinking out of their hands, that is comfortable, but it also uses multiple, also unreliable sources. AI has become a discussion (and not only a discussion) but also a partner, a doctor, a lawyer, an oracle. Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is coming to be a fast, but often also unreliable assistant and adapted to users' preferences and views, provides users with information and materials. This user places too much trust in AI and becomes

complacent, knowing that they do not have to make any effort to get what they want or need. Educators now face an extremely difficult task of restoring younger generations' faith in the meaning of science, independence, honesty, and critical thinking. The task is made even more difficult by the fact that the highest offices are held by people who display crassness and a lack of elementary knowledge, thus showing that it's not worth being an honest and hardworking person. Nevertheless, this rapid development and human laziness prove that the topic of AI should still be explored by scientists from different disciplines, and that countries should ensure that appropriate regulations are in place to guarantee the safety of users. Especially as its rapid development affects not only younger generations but also people of all ages and at all levels.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, practical philosophy, posthuman society, values, simulacrum

INTRODUCTION – AFTER THE END OF HISTORY

The beginning of the 21st century is a time of fast and rapid changes in multiple realms of social life simultaneously. Actually, we have already witnessed the collapse of the end of history idea (Fukuyama, 1993). It seems that the current cultural and political world order has collapsed, and we are beginning to observe the birth of new fundamental values and, related to them, rules, content, and social structures. One may get the impression that theories that explain and sort out our way of thinking about the world have been put on hold. Insufficient to feel properly rooted and safe in an inhospitable reality. Political and cultural changes show how inhospitable this reality is. Postmodern scepticism regarding the value of science and art had already gained momentum at the end of the 20th century (Baran, 2003). It was a bit of a nuisance to the consistency of systems, which have always been putting themselves in the spotlight and claiming the right to explain everything, to be an indisputable authority, legislator, and judge. A result of this postmodern scepticism in culture and art was the intertwining of aesthetics, expression and free experimentation (Martin et al., 2021). A world of politics, both at the high-level (national and international) and local (local government) and also management on an institutional level, follows its own line of reasoning, in which stability, predictability, order and effectiveness (as a guiding principle) had to dominate. Whilst aesthetics used to offer diversity, amazement (sometimes even shock) and experiment, managing people's day-to-day activities and organisation of social life had to be predictable (or at least give that impression) so that a man could have some sense of belonging and a hope to achieve basic life goals, like life in peace or remuneration for work done (Jashapara, 2004). Peace and predictability of individual faith can be guaranteed only by a stable political environment in which the so-called public sphere and a common good take precedence over individuals' interests. However, a social contract, understood in this way, was ter-

minated in many communities at the beginning of the 21st century. This, in turn, causes disorientation, doubt, and a deep civic depression.

In this whole postmodern and posthumanist jigsaw puzzle, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has its own special place. It was devised as a tool to assist human work, like a new kind of hammer or saw. In fact, however, in many cases it has brought a completely new kind of problems down on us, particularly when it comes to so-called Generative AI (GenAI). On the other hand, GenAI usage aligns with a trend that has been developing for some time in developed societies, namely the simulation or even replacement of reality with its simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1994).

CULTURE AS A SIMULACRUM

Cultural anthropologists state that since prehistoric times, human life was determined/divided by two spheres – sacrum and profanum (Eliade, 1959). In this context, art should be perceived as an attempt to step out of a sphere of everyday experience (profanum) towards something behind the individual's existence, towards something timeless, for thousands of years associated with something supernatural (sacrum). An example of such research and experiments, aimed at reaching the sacral beginnings of art, was the work of Jerzy Grotowski and numerous theatrical reformers since the end of the 19th century (Slowiak & Cuesta, 2018).

Grotowski discovered that theatre (and more broadly, various types of performance, for example, in a form of painting, sculpture, film, or properly organised space) stems from ancient shamanic rituals. Nowadays, we could say that the roots of art should also be sought in various rituals that transport a person into another reality. Including those related to plant nurseries, ritual dances and the use of psychoactive substances causing altered states of consciousness.

At the moment, when we cannot speak about canon, pattern and golden ratios anymore, a sense of art as a passage to a different, "better", more comprehensive, more important, more significant reality stays current. It wasn't also changed by the new concept of art as an experiment deprived of a pattern or a canon. The replacement of canon with beautiful intellectual speculation has only opened new possibilities for expression and interpretation. It can be said that the moment of departure from the canons brought about authentic artistic freedom and opened multiple new doors, offering numerous possibilities for interpretation on the side of the recipients themselves.

In this context, culture as a unique product of human activity should be considered as a kind of simulacrum. Sometimes this reality emerges from everyday life, especially meaning and, so far, imperceptible relationships and knowledge from the threshold of consciousness; sometimes it is a sort of game that does not necessarily have anything to do with truth. Jean Baudrillard suggests that it is the media that presents precisely that simulacrum in its pure form, which is set to replace the truth with narration.

To fully interpret the meanings and values, and to fully participate in the cultural game (for example, by playing with themes and associations), one needs to be properly prepared. It can be assumed that the main threat is not so much a matter of distorting reality (as it was interpreted by Baudillard) as it is about producing low-quality cultural products which are to take up time and attention, and lead to dizziness, without respect for human intellect and sensitivity. José Ortega y Gasset (1930) and many other defenders of cultural heritage protested against this a long time ago. The sin of modern education lies in the insufficient preparation of future generations to read broad cultural codes (Bernstein, 1977).

On the other hand, we should be aware of the fact that each generation has its own set of habituses, its special codes and meanings as well as its filter bubbles which are incomprehensible for previous generations. Just like distinctive virtual societies that are sometimes held together solely by a particular cognitive perspective/worldview that are distinct and generally opposed to widely accepted prevailing beliefs (such as anti-vaccine movements, religious and political sects, flat-earthers, and believers in a global reptilian conspiracy). Simulacrum of such societies are equally poisonous for truth and a healthy social life as those defined by Baudillard. Their destructive influence is the bigger, the more supporters they convince and recruit. If they gain political agency, they become a danger at the national level, and if a country is a world power, they become a danger to a region or even the globe.

One way or another, the world of culture, specifically understood in a narrow sense as art (from a German perspective), forms reality, which, for a properly prepared recipient, is a reason to raise awareness, enrich meaning, develop sensitivity, and, foremost, becomes a kind of cognitive challenge. For an unprepared person, without deeper experience, the ability to think critically, or cognitive curiosity, cultural reality is likely to be a hermetic simulacrum. Useless if it cannot be cashed out or put to practical use in a different way (Mahrik & Kralik, 2026).

It seems that the idea of viewing culture as a cognitive challenge should resonate more strongly with educators, or at least, this is the perspective we should convey to our students. A world that is clear, recognisable, understandable, and knowledgeable is a world that will arouse curiosity and complacency, and lead to self-realisation. In an accessible world of culture, humans will be capable of artistic expression, if only at an amateur level.

UNPREDICTABILITY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The second trend, which can be treated as another step towards building a society of appearances, is a social life theatre (Goffman, 1959). Public sphere, in which we take on specific social roles, which has a lot in common with a real theatre, where (as previously defined) appearance can emphasise some meanings or forge them.

Taking on a role always entails acceptance of social requirements and compliance with them (Znaniecki, 1965). Admittedly, depending on the pressure exerted by the environment, a particular social role can be modified to match one's individuality and personality, yet only to some extent. If this lack of scope for expressing one's individuality is unbearable, rebellion against the system takes place. Therefore, either we surrender to the requirements and sometimes, against ourselves, try to survive, or we face the music in the form of being a victim of social ostracism.

On upbringing (it is the essence of pedagogy), one can look in a positive light, as on introducing people to a world of values cherished by society – teaching norms and principles that these values represent, or critically, as on a system of coercion designed to ensure social norms fulfilment in a socially acceptable way and considered acceptable, as it is seen by classics of anti-pedagogy. At an individual level, those are acts of rebellion associated with specific developmental stages that express such resistance on the part of people of all ages towards an inhospitable community, reality, and everything that, in a way, forces us to betray ourselves. In social terms, we witnessed such a rebellion in the 1960s during the counterculture era, and we are currently seeing it among Generation Z (Gen Z) representatives, who reject education, careers, and a new form of the rat race. One might even draw certain parallels between Gen Z's current rebellion and the counterculture, for example, rejection of the idea of social development at the expense of individual well-being.

It seems like nothing new, since adopting and playing social roles are as old as the public sphere itself. Yet, a keener observer can notice something in the form of a middle distance in this show, which currently is a social life theatre.

Artificiality, pretence and appearance are inherent features of the culture of public life. To some extent, this convention can be understood only if we realise that everything happens in the name of higher values, such as peace, the absence of conflict, and harmony (Roubalova & Kralik, 2026). We put up with the boss's absurd instructions in order to fulfil our roles as employees properly. We go to socialising events, even though we do not fancy any of our coworkers, so as to project an image of a close-knit team, and not to stand out from the others and not to give them reasons to marginalise us. Thanks to those subtle games and plays, we can function reasonably well in a social environment, without conflicts and predictable (apart from minor inconveniences arising from abuse of power or social structures). Such a social contract is a sort of non-aggression pact or, at most, minor, hidden aggression.

But what if there are no higher values underlying this convention, but simply a necessity so as to survive? So as not to kill one another in accordance with Hobbes' principle? What if the world is just one great *bellum omnium contra omnes*?

The early 21st century saw a crisis of confidence in the public sphere. The more it arouses, the more evident the shocking changes in politics become. Western political science and education have to meet a new order. Not so long ago, Francis Fukuyama was convincing us that history had come to an end. Back then, it was still impos-

sible to believe that the world was divided into democratic and authoritarian ones. Meanwhile, the rise to power of an extreme right and its excesses in public resources management and affairs revealed that independent media made us realise that kleptocracy may just as well develop inside democratic parliaments (Appelbaum, 2020). Moreover, regardless of experience and legal safeguards (constitution, rule of law, independent media/courts/prosecutor's office and audit bodies) of so-called mature democracies. Neither the rule of law nor independent institutions were able to properly protect societies from the greed of new elites, leaders of populist parties, oligarchs, corrupt politicians, and obsequious, manipulative media (Akimjak et al, 2025).

This, in turn, leads to deep mistrust among citizens in Western societies towards the political order and the public sphere in general. It can be said that a clear pathologisation of social life, characterised by overt manipulations, rule of law violations, and simply just theft, discourages participation and over time leads to apathy. In such an atmosphere, when facts contradict political leaders' assurances of concern for the public good, the honest life of a decent citizen seems inappropriate. When faced with politicians' dishonesty, an honest citizen emerges as a loser, who is too stupid to steal. This causes frustration among honest people, who have to give up their hope that the guilty will be punished (an altruistic punishment mechanism). Permission to distort and corrupt the public sphere must, in the long term, have a destructive influence on society as a whole. And requests for support for education will not help until corrupt elites decide to change. And they will not decide to change since it is against their self-interests, in a narrow sense, and deep needs. This creates a vicious circle and a dead end.

Unpredictability of the public sphere has serious negative consequences for education. How can we teach about values in the face of epistemic catastrophe inflicted on us by corrupt elites from the world of politics? How to explain the fact that a man holding qualifications that extend his abilities can become a president? With a scientific title which apparently has no value whatsoever in the face of an embarrassing lack of knowledge during public speeches? Without mentioning the names of presidents and politicians in the highest positions, one can indicate a Doctor of History who does not know the facts taught in primary school, and a Doctor of Laws whose actions are at odds with teaching law to first-year students. All of that, just like the insolence and rudeness of those in the highest echelons of power, happens in Western democracies! How to explain to kids the sense of science and work if insolence, crassness, and a lack of respect for others led those people to the highest offices in the state? As teachers are on a hiding to nothing. Conclusions seem to be hopelessly pessimistic. We are unable to defend the value of self-improvement in the face of clear examples of careers built on rudeness, crassness, and undereducation. Moreover, glaring examples of incompetence on the part of people with academic titles and degrees leave a bad taste in one's mouth and give rise to doubt about the sense of education, even amongst well-educated citizens.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A NEW TECHNOLOGICAL MATRIX

In education, we primarily have a brush with GenAI. For this reason, in the minds of many educators, there is no room for a proper understanding of what AI really is and for knowledge, this is only one aspect of this new phenomenon in our reality. A lack of understanding of the nature of AI as a form of statistics based on data processing, algorithms and mathematical models, leads to many misunderstandings and unreasonable user expectations towards this tool.

First and foremost, the very term “intelligence” is misleading, as it is commonly associated with virtues of the human mind such as empathy, thinking, and emotions. Meanwhile, here we have a burh with pure, cold logic, probability calculus, and results achieved through analysis of strictly defined input data (Dąbrowska et al., 2026).

Another issue is the view that AI is endowed with consciousness. Due to the accuracy of the results obtained during “conversations”, users often get the impression that AI is aware of the nature of the problems more than psychologists, lawyers and doctors. This is why they are keen to seek advice from chats, treating them as specialists who understand the nature of the problem and have vast specialist knowledge. The natural human tendency to anthropomorphise living or even inanimate elements of reality also applies to chats. Users do not just express their emotions when communicating with chats, but they may also think that they are building relationships similar to those they form with other people. An example can be a famous wedding of a Japanese user with ChatGPT. It even appears that conversations with chats may be preferable and considered better than those with humans, since AI has a vast amount of information, far more extensive than that of the people we meet on a daily basis and becomes an ideal conversation partner. The partner who does not oppose, does not argue, does not just adapt to its user’s expectations, but also adapts to their communication style, what makes it seem even more understanding (Alam et al., 2026).

Chats are often given the undue benefit of the doubt by users. AI’s “knowledge” and competencies are worth as much as the output data, which it uses. Trust must have its limits here since users are not able to recognise whether the creators of algorithms act in good faith and what data AI refers to during conversations. Undoubtedly, proper legal regulations and monitoring of the user community are necessary. Otherwise, AI could easily become a tool for manipulation, shaping the political consciousness of societies under the dictates of political elites, technocrats, and anyone who can afford to pay the appropriate price.

Critical thinking, as users’ individual competence, is not enough (Pavlikova, 2018). A reason is not just a limited ability to recognise the importance of different arguments, which should naturally develop as we age, but, foremost, cognitive laziness, which increases with the frequency of AI usage (Fan et al., 2025). Why would one check,

look for counterarguments, and compare if a chat can give us the only appropriate solution within a few seconds?

Excessive trust combined with cognitive laziness causes users to voluntarily give themselves up as cognitive prisoners of AI, thereby freeing themselves from thinking and truth-seeking. Currently, it seems to be the biggest challenge for a regular user in AI development. Much bigger than the other, including rapid application development, opening a whole lot of possibilities that are easy to get lost in (Łabuz, 2026).

In the last few years, rapid GenAI development has raised concerns about the originality of texts submitted to journals and final assignments, for example, by pupils or university students (Atamhenwan, 2026). The first experiences in this area show that the crux of the matter is not in the hands of a creator – it is about insufficient supervision by specialists. Although it seems easier to fabricate research and results, a properly conducted audit should prevent such abuses, just as has been the case to date with submissions of articles based on fabricated data (Krimsky, 2003). Abuses have always occurred, yet the appropriate reactions of teachers, editors, and reviewers, along with the contribution of the so-called human factor at the very end of the process of approving creative works, can limit or even prevent attempts at fraud.

One should be aware of all the doubts and dangers mentioned regarding AI development, yet there is no doubt that we face a technological breakthrough that ushers us into a new reality. Even if we consider the statement that AI ushers us into a new (post-human) era an exaggeration, the flood of AI-based applications and scientific works analysing emerging opportunities shows that a technological leap has already occurred.

AI should be treated as another type of technological matrix, creating entirely new possibilities for the development of individuals and societies. On many levels and multidimensionally. This includes education (Alam, 2025a).

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Rapid AI development provokes extreme emotions in potential users. Beside reliable scientific analyses, we also meet both extreme enthusiasts, who see in this technological change the beginning of a new era, and sceptics, who express serious concerns about the future of humankind as a species.

The future of AI and humankind as a species remains an open question until AI gains consciousness and autonomy in decision-making. It depends on people themselves: in which direction those new tools will be developed and how they will ultimately be used (Alam et al., 2026b). Today it foremost depends on politicians, who (as the analysis shows) can easily give in to the temptation of developing artificial technology to ensure efficient manipulation and disinformation. This, in turn, becomes a challenge for civil society, which must oversee the control mechanisms of technocrats, political and financial elites (Stan & Pavlikova, 2026).

Informed and capable of being audited, society needs a good education of all types: formal, non-formal and informal. The results of formal education in the area of AI will be seen in a while, when students become graduates. For now, we need educators and specialists in science dissemination who will work with adults, especially teachers. Technology changes rapidly and offers a constant stream of new possibilities, among others, in the field of speeding up the educational process and tailoring it more effectively to individual educational needs (Grab, 2026; Alam, 2025b). All things considered, it seems that this latest educational challenge affects all of us. It includes publishers and editors of scientific texts. Otherwise, we will have to face another possibility of building a simulacrum, yet this time supported by AI-based tools.

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