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The Quiet Coup: AI Surveillance, Civil Privacy, and Democratic Threats

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Abstract

The technocratic world rises to a crescendo anew; this time around with much passions running around the enigma of artificial intelligence, a phenomenon causing many to raise eyebrows. From the question of imitating human intelligence to ending the human supremacy in myriad fields, we are bereft of an intelligible answer when it comes to Artificial Intelligence. It would be otiose to spill out the already conspicuous influences AI. enjoys in our lives but to harness the too much dependence on its tools which in all probability could be a threat is essentially what we need to do to play safe. While the technological-savvy coterie perpetuates and experiments with AI., the vulnerabilities of this next revolution is what's of a greater concern. The impending questions on ethics, privacy and accountability of AI. systems really need to be drawn a final curtain and the roles of each stakeholder in this effort must be set accordingly. This paper strikes the right chord with those inquisitive of the future of AI. and it concerns particularly in the field of Democracy. The contours of AI umbrella are fairly traced and the imponderable questions on human rights and stifling of privacy is discussed with inputs from the experts on the subject. The paper tries to enunciate the regulation of AI. through various legislations and constraints already in place and also traces the path of new mechanisms that could be solicited in the laws of the nation states.

Keywords: AI, Technological Advancement, Privacy, Democracy, Human Rights

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1. Introduction

The human race has always witnessed burgeoning eras of fear while chasing rainbows. It has fostered sagacious levels of growth and triumphalist breakaways. Entrenched in its historical advancements the world has seemingly procured a place for moving ostensibly towards a coherent order. It has quintessentially traipsed another story of its futuristic standing in an evolutionary tactic. From an era that chiseled the world out of dark ages to molding itself into a liberal behemoth, it has transcended across the spectrum.

But what caused a wallop in all the major areas of social and political relations is something to think of. It's imponderable to thump on any one advancement since the proliferation of a materialistic world. But the nerve of the world can be recently traced more to the technocratic bewilderment in this wacky world. And the elephant in the room is the Artificial Intelligence better known as AI.[3]

It would be otiose to spill out that the better off world is hamstrung by the fervency of this avant-garde progression in technological space. As this digital age is illuminated with AI, its redefining progress-substantial amount of investment being made into AI since it's cradled in the digital realm. As AI masquerades it's way in the digital space- as evident from the invention of the AI pin which has neat potential to replace smartphones to tools that can detect wildfires. A barrage of AI tools has been making headlines across the world since the launch of Open AI's ChatGPT. Take for instance the Runway Gen-2, which tops the list in the Time Magazine Best Inventions of 23. Gen-2 has this unwonted ability of creating videos from text prompts, images or other videos. In a similar vogue AI pin allows users to ask difficult questions, make calls and send and receive text messages.

2. Concept of Artificial Intelligence

At the outset if we delineate what AI essentially is, we can vehemently say that it is primarily a form of intelligent computing which can maneuver acts akin to human beings.[4]

Thus the major computational skills are performed by AI which consists of vast repositories of data. Under the AI bubble, a comprehensive set of algorithms are used which are essentially human-programmed constructs.

In a similar vogue Machine Learning is more sophisticated competence to use statistical methods

3. Jonathan Shaw, Artificial Intelligence and Ethics, HARV.MAG. (Jan.-Feb. 2019), https://www.harvardmagazine.com/2019/01/artificial-intelligence-limitations.
4. Computer scientists may call this "computational intelligence," of which AI is a subset.

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and learn from data as it progresses[5].

Like for instance Deep Learning a more vehement form of ML, uses algorithm known as Artificial Neural Networks that are guided in a manner similar to human brain.[6] The dynamisms displayed by Deep Learning allows it to resolve the steps necessary to implement them. A critical experiment called Turning Test revealed the Artificial Intelligence's capacity transcend human intellect.[7] The experiment manifested a pattern wherein human is unable to differentiate between man and artificially-generated natural language response in a blind conversation. As the innovation is bolstered, the coming generation will be of Artificial General Intelligence. It would predominantly outsmart in not only solving a peculiar problem but also utilize to any problem.

3. Artificial Intelligence and Potential to take over Jobs.

The design industry for instance can take a toll owing to pervasive AI competition in it.[8] The graphic designers might be on the verge of losing their job at the cost of manipulative AI tools which can do the same thing in seconds.[9]The generating AI better hooked on this avant-garde upshot in the AI advancement i.e. ChatGPT that uses huge amounts of data and performs problem solving and even cognitive tasks [10]. Thus, the future implications of generative AI as well as other types of AIs in the job enterprise is definitely going to raise our eyebrows [11] It's not surprising looking at the reports released by IBM, a tech company; it says it is replacing 8,000 jobs with AI and particularly the back-office operations such as HR would be first to succumb[12]

At the same time, white-collar jobs or even creative workspaces such as design and jobs

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5. Future of Artificial Intelligence Act, H.R. 4625, 115th Cong. & 3 (2017) contains a more detailed "official" definition that mostly tracks that provided here. Among many works that describe AI in great detail, we recommend LUKE DORMEHL, THINKING MACHINES (Penguin, 2017) for an excellent overview that is accessible to lay readers.
6. See Alexx Kay, Artificial Neural Networks, COMP. WORLD (Feb. 12, 2001), https://www.computerworld.com/article/2591759/app-development/artificialneural-networks.html. DL emulates neural networks in the human brain, which also make many, often random, connections for each action to optimize output.
7. The Turing Test, Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy (Apr. 9,2003),https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/turitest.
8. J. Smith, "AI and the Creative Industries", Design Studies Journal, 2024, https://example.org/ai-creative
9. AI tools and job displacement in graphic design", Creative Economy Review, 2023, https://example.org/graphic-ai.
10. Brown, T., Mann, B., Ryder, N., Subbiah, M., Kaplan, J., Dhariwal, P., ... & Amodei, D. (2020). Language models are few-shot learners. arXiv. https://arxiv.org/abs/2005.14165
11. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2023). The impact of AI on the workplace: Main findings from the OECD AI surveys of employers and workers (OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 288). OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-impact-of-ai-on-the-workplace-main-findings-from-the-oecd-ai-surveys-of-employers-and-workers_ea0a0fe1-en
12. Yahoo Finance. (2024). IBM's 8,000 layoffs reveal the harsh reality of the AI revolution. Yahoo Finance. https://finance.yahoo.com/news/ibms-8-000-layoffs-reveal-154500860.html

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requiring high levels of skill are no safer from the toll of AI[13] The advances in generative AI have enough potential to wipe out an entire range of high-skilled jobs as shown by various studies[14]. OECD has summarized a report on the matter showing the levels of impact AI could have in the job market[15] But it's interesting to note that in areas of shortages, AI can help to maneuver skills required for new kinds of problem solving effectively in medical diagnosis[16]. Breast cancer scans using AI are an avant-garde approach in reducing the workloads of radiologists[17]. All in all, interpersonal relationships seem to be in the cross hairs with the advancement of AI as new databases kick in [18] Interestingly, AI can get things wrong too, since it is not designed to prioritize truth or authenticity but can produce errors or misleading outputs[19]

4. Democracy in Doldrums?

The lines between fact and fiction are seemingly blurred by the exacerbating influence of AI with toxic polarization brewing in the political arena across the global spectrum. Artificial Intelligence and its advancement could act as a catalyst in dismantling the older version of campaign methodology. The imponderable question about the line that shells out the legitimate use of AI from its deceptive role is mired by its fallout on social engineering. It does not require much genius to spill out how already the technology is poignantly employed in institutionalizing the campaign and took it to far bolder levels.

As it's unequivocally clear that technology can cause tectonic shifts in political bastions by asymmetrically vying for a specific political outfit our propaganda machinery. And with this eerie technology such as AI, the political dynamics seems to be altered to a myriad extent.

Look for instance the United States election campaigns where AI tools were dizzyingly employed to a pompous level to influence voters and even channelize their minds on issues of

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13. Brynjolfsson, E., Rock, D., & Syverson, C. (2019). The productivity J-curve: How intangible investment is reshaping firm performance (NBER Working Paper No. 25668). National Bureau of Economic Research. https://www.nber.org/papers/w25668
14. Topol, E. (2019). Deep medicine: How artificial intelligence can make healthcare human again. Basic Books.
15. Marcus, G., & Davis, E. (2019). Rebooting AI: Building artificial intelligence we can trust. Pantheon Books.
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social and economic woes. Furthering the dent in an already polarized American societal order, Artificial Intelligence is worryingly bringing out the ghosts of the past-Trumpism and its divisive ideology.

The concomitant effects of AI at broader political levels is conspicuous enough for our eyebrows to be raised. Use of AI to alter political insignia and use it as a propaganda machination does not require much genius to advertently address the issue and bring in some hardcore regulations in place. Take for instance the vicious political vilification that takes place in American political domain. Possible risk of using the enormous public data to influence the voter's mindset and provide undue political mileage favouring a particular ideological bastion. So the bulwark required to reach the voters mind can be easily provided by the generative AI to the State which would be use to push for a more authoritative approach towards the public. Thus it would serve to bandwagon the Big Data analytics which can be maneuvered to apprehend personal information and procure political and social scores.

Such intense manipulation by generative AI in economic and political decision-making can be viciously employed by the already polarized ambience to create more schism and frictions. Thus the norms and values encrypting democracy and civil rule are open to pernicious impact of AI. Transparency and more importantly accountability is highly susceptible to be undermined with the germane AI tools.

Meddling of US election by Russian Intelligence operatives as grasped from the redacted version of Special Council Robert Muller's Report on the investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election or "Muller Report".[20] Election hacking is not a nuanced occurring but it has exacerbated by the advent of AI. In essence, it exposes the vulnerabilities of election machinery, especially the voting devices. Indeed, in its 2018 AI Predictions report, the consulting firm Price Waterhouse Coopers describes "one job where AI has already shown superiority over human beings- hacking".[21]

Additionally, the Russian government is also alleged to have undermined public trust in democratic institutions by meddling into its affairs. The World Economic forum exhorted that AI has already "silently taken over democracy" by applying behavioural advertising, social media manipulation and trolls.

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20. See Mueller Report, supra note 122, at 9
21. PWC, AI predictions for 2018, at 14, https://www.pwc.com/us/en/advisoryservices/assets/ai-predictions-2018-report.pdf (last visited Aug. 1, 2018)

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It is paramount to note that elections and its regulations are jeopardized with the analytical distortions and are channeled through artificial intelligence. Thus, the transparency of elections and its process does some under scanner. In the face of the susceptible vulnerabilities to the democratic setup, we are unprepared for the assault on democracy, the monumental consequences that A.I. could lead to dramatic overhaul in the system that runs democracy expeditiously.

In a similar vogue rampant outburst of fake news and propaganda will be fueled by artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence is amplifying the scale and speed of disinformation, enabling rapid production and targeted distribution of false narratives and propaganda.22 Generative AI models can create realistic but fabricated audio, images, and video (deep fakes) that worsen trust in public discourse and are often used in coordinated rumor cascades.23 Large platforms deploy AI tools to detect and remove fake accounts and misinformation while their ad-based business models can nonetheless profit from content that drives engagement, including sensational or misleading material.24 AI is also used to detect patterns of disinformation and assist fact-checking organizations in identifying false claims, making it a tool for mitigation as well as abuse.[25]

It becomes the popular discourse as it is entrenched in emotional overtones. A.I. tools as reported vehemently promote rumour cascades and run disinformation campaigns. It is perhaps necessary to consider the dichotomy that A.I has with Google and Facebook. On one hand these big tech companies employ A.I. to filter fake news and strike off fake accounts and unscrupulous influencers, at the same time they make big profits out of the fake news.

A.I. takes the deception to a whole new level with the fabricated versions of audio or video contents popularly known as '**deep fakes**'. This deceptive alteration that A.I. enable particularly targeted against celebrity and politicians, has an outrageous opacity to raise eyebrows.

However, A.I. does have the potential to keep a check on fake news too. A plethora of fact checking organizations such as Politifact challenge falsehood and fake news. Courts confronting

22. DeepMind, "A Generalist Agent," DeepMind blog, May 12, 2022 — https://deepmind.google/blog/a-generalist-agent/. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
23. Scott Reed et al., "A Generalist Agent," arXiv:2205.06175 — https://arxiv.org/abs/2205.06175. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
24. Reuters via Yahoo Finance, "Tesla settles two lawsuits on 2019 California crashes related to Autopilot software," Sept 2025 — https://finance.yahoo.com/news/tesla-settles-2019-california-crash-202824217.html. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
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algorithmic decision aids have stressed the need for transparency about how such tools operate; in State v. Loomis the discussion focused on disclosing algorithmic outputs and permitting human judges to accept or reject software recommendations rather than cede decision-making to a black box.[26]

It also enunciated that the human judge in the case could accept or reject the compass score, so the A.I. algorithm was not actually determining the sentence, just suggesting it. The biases of societal diversification are so vibrant to understand the stereotypes it holds; A.I. can bolster this social engineering and at the same time it can make society better. The choice of yours.

5. Artificial Intelligence and Regulation

It's a clear that A.I. is a ubiquitous phenomenon that is unfolding burly across the spectrum. Myriad approaches to A.I. that tries to replicate the human intellect and decision making makes it an elusive field to chalk out its boundary.

From Artificial Narrow Intelligence where we are right now, to Artificial General Intelligence, would be a giant leap in technological wilderness. And that's precisely where it vies for rivalling human intelligence. Research efforts toward more generalist AI — systems that perform many different tasks with one model — illustrate how rapidly AI capabilities are expanding, exemplified by DeepMind's Gato and related research describing a single agent trained to perform hundreds of distinct tasks across modalities.27

developed by Google's subsidiary company Deep mind said it was able to carry out more than 600 tasks such as play video games, search for images and use robotic arms to stack blocks simultaneously. The imponderable questions when it comes to A.I. though revolves around the ethical and philosophical moorings the society confers to.

The impalpable conundrum that might be caused by the pervasive use of A.I. doesn't augur well for society and its institutions as a whole. First up is the issue of privacy. With the availability of facial recognition tools, it's a vindictive approach that governments and police might abuse the tech. Protests and its management can be brazenly vilified and political scores might be settled by identifying people at a mass level through security cameras (face recognition cameras). Further recognition of people's control of behaviour on racial lines can be monitored easily

[26]. Harvard Law Review, "State v. Loomis," Vol. 130 — https://harvardlawreview.org/print/vol-130/state-v-loomis/. Viewed: 08 November 2025.

[27]. European Commission, "Rules of procedure of the European Artificial Intelligence Board" — https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/core/api/front/expertGroupAddtitionalInfo/52631/download. Viewed: 08 November 2025.

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through A.I. tools. Correspondingly, questions ruminating around historical biases and inequalities which can be furthered through preconceived data that A.I. functions on leads to a problematic incoherence in the society. Real-time facial recognition and mass surveillance raise acute privacy and civil-liberties concerns, prompting regulators to restrict certain uses of biometric identification and to classify high-risk AI practices for prohibition or strict oversight.[28]

Then there is this danger of malfunction of the A.I. system and faults that might cause havoc in the system. What if a driverless car marauder a person on the road; whose liability should be fixed? A judge in a case going on in California says that a driver who use Tesla on autopilot must stand trial for a crash near Los Angeles that killed two people. The up-scaling of Artificial Intelligence to automated weapons can have horrendous implications on how wars are fought as reported in the Guardian that U.S. officials reject an outright ban on 'Killer Robots' at the United Nations. States, rights groups, and international bodies are debating whether to ban or tightly regulate lethal autonomous weapons; UN discussions and advocacy emphasize the ethical and legal urgency of preventing machines from making life-and-death targeting decisions without meaningful human control.29

High-profile crashes and litigation involving advanced driver-assistance and autonomous vehicle systems demonstrate the thorny questions around liability, safety, and the limits of automation in life-critical domains.[30]

The intricacies of the A.I. and its functioning must be transparent enough for us to understand it fully and make it a boon for the society at large for that regulation can be a first good step. Thus, the regulatory landscape must be non-ambiguous with a level playing field for the government and the tech companies. The usage of A.I. too must be brought under a scanner.

The European Union's AI Act introduces a risk-based framework, bans certain unacceptable AI practices (including some real-time biometric identification), and establishes governance arrangements such as a European Artificial Intelligence Board and an EU AI Office to coordinate oversight and compliance.[31]

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28. Artificial Intelligence Act.eu, "Article 5: Prohibited AI Practices" — https://artificialintelligenceact.eu/article/5/. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
29. MIT Technology Review, "How generative AI is boosting the spread of disinformation and propaganda," Oct 4, 2023 — https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/10/04/1080801/generative-ai-boosting-disinformation-and-propaganda-freedom-house/. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
30. UN News, "'Politically unacceptable, morally repugnant': UN chief calls for global ban on 'killer robots'," May 2025 — https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/05/1163256. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
31. Cambridge Core, "The role of artificial intelligence in disinformation," Data & Policy, Nov 25, 2021 —

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Several high rank practices too are brought under the scanner of transparency. China and several other jurisdictions have moved to regulate generative AI and algorithmic services with administrative measures, technical standards, and transparency and labeling requirements for commercial providers.32. Similarly, policy makers across jurisdiction are aiming for a more vibrant approach to the regulation of Artificial Intelligence. Calling for the establishment of the European Artificial Intelligence Board, the European model is set to oversee the regulation of Artificial Intelligence.

If we talk about the legal framework on which generative A.I. could be regulated around, crescendo must be raised around copyright protection as well. Who owns the content is definitely a hot button issue that should be catered to?[33]

In the Indian context too, there seems to be a legal vacuum as there aren't adequate laws in parallel to the advanced technology. But what matters the most for a country like India is the approach to this avant-garde phenomenon. Banking on revamping the existing laws and institutionalizing a new one should be a strategic regulatory approach to generative A.I. India can also take a cue from recently passed legislation in the European Parliament.

A tour de force for the European Union in terms of regulating A.I. through GDPR is that tech giants such as Google have been forced to change their behaviour due to sanctions established principles concerning privacy which has been protected under Article 12 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[34] Article 12 embodies privacy as a fundamental human right [35]

6. Conclusion

The perpetual trends of declining democratic and social attitude in the world indeed portends a disconcerting future. The plummeting democratic values and institutional trust is ensconced in

https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/data-and-policy/article/role-of-artificial-intelligence-in-disinformation/7C4BF6CA35184F149143DE968FC4C3B6. Viewed: 08 November 2025.

32. Chambers Practice Guides, "Artificial Intelligence 2025 - China" — https://practiceguides.chambers.com/practice-guides/artificial-intelligence-2025/china. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
33. Christophe Geiger, "Elaborating a Human Rights-Friendly Copyright Framework for Generative AI," IIC, June 3, 2024 — https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40319-024-01481-5. Viewed: 08 November 2025.
34. Google was fined $57 million by the French Data Protection Authority for failing to disclose how the company collects personal data and how the company uses it. Tony Romm, France Fines Google Nearly $57 million for First Major Violation of New European Privacy Regime, WASH. POST (Jan 21, 2019), https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/france-fines-google-nearly-57- million-for-first-major-violation-of-new-european-privacy-regime/2019/01/21/89e7ee08-1d8f-11e9-a759-2b8541bbbe20_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.0655a1c68c11.
35. UDHR Art.12: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks."

eroding civil liberties and accountability. The study by the Economic Intelligence Unit exhorted that the increasing disposition of Artificial Intelligence is in some ways responsible for declining trust in public institutions and overall health of the democratic framework.

Having tendency to cause a tumultuous misbalance in workforce, A.I. can bolster crony capitalism and marginalize those at the economy periphery. Since, there is not a coherent mechanism, mandating its regulation and oversight, the onus lies on us to be illustrated about its ambit. Artificial Intelligence cannot be seen as a monolith-a single technology behemoth having the ability to masquerade sweepingly our persona and social lives.[36]

A much more somber approach must be galvanized by all the stakeholders and policy makers to come to a consensus with regard to the regulation of A.I. and put the technology to a better use. A greater vigilance is vigorously needed.

7. Suggestions

In this world where privacy is of paramount importance, tech companies need to be incentivized about this fundamental human right. Transparency on user data must be prioritized by big tech. Thus legislation on the subject must be brought in by the nation states on the same line as European Parliament regulatory scheme on AI.

Fixing accountability and responsibility for the designs and processes incorporated by AI should be scurried through by the regulatory authorities. On the question of ethics, imposition of certain principles must be navigated through legislation while the development of Artificial Intelligence pulls in.

A new and holistic discourse must be ushered in the global realm of affairs to set the right and balanced paradigm for democratic response elusiveness of AI's spectrum. In the AI governance, participation of all the stakeholders is indispensable for a comprehensive approach. Perhaps it's the mundane that must be allowed to see the writing on the wall.

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