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AI's Intrinsic Relation to Humans

In my presentation, I propose a novel view on the relation between AI and humans. Traditionally and up to today, this relation is usually conceived as an external confrontation. AI is either thought to be an object, such as a tool, or directly compared to humans, as if it were an alien being. Already the Turing Test directly compares human and machine output, and early visionaries believed AI could soon simulate all of human behavior. Today, a popular question is not whether but when AI becomes more intelligent than humans, such as in speculations about singularity. Many believe there is no alternative way to conceive of AI.

I argue that this conception of AI is fundamentally mistaken, and that it leads to grave misconceptions of the chances and dangers of AI technology. I propose a radically different understanding of the relation between AI and humans. I argue that AI is neither a mere tool, nor a subject. Rather, AI is embedded in the world of human experience and understanding, in a unique way. Constitutive for artificial "intelligence" is the interrelation of AI hardware, humans, lifeworld, and digital representations or data. I show the specificity of each of these interrelations. According to the novel view, the relation of AI and humans is not one between two given entities, but constitutive for AI.