



YUVAL NOAH HARARI: FABULIST OF AI

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Yuval Harari points out on page 45 of his book, *Homo Deus*, that the priority projects in the 21st century will be those aimed at protecting Humanity and the Planet (both with a capital letter) from the dangers inherent in "our own power." This approach, although it might sound grandiloquent and even palatable, is in fact nothing more than a contradiction emptied of real content. Harari speaks of a hypothetical human power in charge of protecting humanity—but how can a human power protect humanity, if humanity itself represents that power? Harari's thesis seems to imply the existence of a human entity that is apart from Humanity itself to which he refers, and that perhaps encompasses all members of the species Homo.

In the same text, *Homo Deus*, Harari clearly argues that population growth poses a challenge to the ecological balance of the planet. According to this author, "Humanity has been slow to recognize this danger and has acted insufficiently until now." He adds that, despite all the rhetoric about pollution, global warming and climate change, most countries have not made significant sacrifices or adopted serious policies to improve the situation. It is curious that Harari, who talks so much about a "Global Humanity" that has awakened and seeks new challenges for the future, recognizes that, when it comes to taking concrete political action, there are specific states and political societies within them, which do not always interact in the harmonious and peaceful way that his humanitarian idea seems to suggest.

This recognition leads us to ask ourselves, how does Harari believe that these political societies and concrete states are linked to this Humanity considered as an attributive totality? According to Harari, national states represent an obsolete mechanism that are hindering the development and evolution of Sapiens on a global scale. In this sense, it can be said that Humanity is to Harari what the Absolute Spirit is to Hegel and History is to Francis Fukuyama (2006).

If the Hegelian Fukuyama spoke of the end of History in 1990, the Hegelian Harari proposes that Humanity itself has reached a culminating point in its evolution, being on the verge of becoming something more than the sum of all Sapiens gathered in national societies. The next step, it seems, will be the merger between man and machine, which could take us beyond a historical existence proper to something different. In this fusion, even the finitude of geographical time could be radically transformed.

These ideas of Harari converge, and perhaps reflect, the most recent obsession of this author, which he has been referring to since the beginning of 2023. We will refer specifically to Artificial Intelligence (AI)

in its various versions, commercial and non-commercial. In his *Homo Deus* and his [21 Lessons for the 21st Century](#), Harari readily wonders how AI will treat human beings once it exercises control over them. His answer is that these technologies will treat us the same way we treat animals ([Harari, 2017](#)). These reflections have given Harari many a sleepless night in recent months, and there has been a veritable flood of articles, lectures, and interviews in which he warns of the dangers these technologies pose to "Humanity" ([Anthony, 2017](#)).

Here, Harari suggests that our worst nightmares will come true, not because of AI per se, but because of the disruptive power they could have in the wrong hands. In other words, in hands other than the social groups that, according to Harari, would be fit to run the world according to their parameters. In this sense, it is possible to find an extensive catalog of quotes and apocalyptic comments by this author on the subject, alerting us to the need to control these technologies. A control that, of course, should be exercised by the reliable and "rational" Humanity; that is, the one that Harari and his followers represent.

In this sense he tells us:

It could soon be a reality. On a more prosaic level, we could soon find ourselves having lengthy online discussions about abortion, climate change, or the Russian invasion of Ukraine with entities that we think are human, but are actually AI. The problem is that it is utterly futile for us to spend time trying to change the stated opinions of an AI bot, whereas the AI could hone its messages so precisely that it has a good chance of influencing us ([2018](#)).

The issue with the example cited is not so much the cases mentioned per se, considered as self-evident universal concerns, but the reference to "we." This plural that Harari employs to articulate his ideas can be interpreted as an allusion to Global Humanity. Yuval does not seem to realize that his "critical" argument, his warning about the sinister possibilities of AI could easily be adopted by political forces allied to Harari and his followers. There is no rational argument that both sides, "democrat/rational Obamaharian" and "totalitarian, irrational Putintrumpeans" are not capable of the same manipulative stratagems to achieve their goals. Which, on the other hand, is not surprising, since this is a part of the political exercise as it manifests itself in material reality.

Moreover, Harari ignores the complex web of power relations and economic interests that also underlie so-called "democratic societies." Democracies are not simply "conversations between people" ([The](#)

[Economist, 2023](#); The TED [Interview, 2022](#)), but complex structures of power and hierarchy, with inequalities of wealth and privilege, and constant struggles for control of the state and resources.

At this point we could ask ourselves the following question. If this Global Humanity of which Harari speaks does not exist, and what really prevails are different human groups, divided by cultures, languages, nations, classes, sexes, etc., the question that arises is: who is Harari really addressing in his analysis? Or, in other words, who is or are the Humanity to which this "oracular philosopher" of the next step lectures every three years? The answer is simple: the sociologically identifiable and perfectly categorizable elites, whose ideology considers that they are inhabitants of the planet, beyond the national borders that the material geopolitical reality presents. It is they who, in practice, Harari believes should take control of AIs, since this tool, even if dangerous, in the right hands could be very useful, as the author himself acknowledges.

Reflecting on these assertions, it becomes clear why Harari is so influential among the social groups and institutions that promote globalism. This author is little more than the last of the prophets of a global world in evident decadence; and although it is likely that his fate will be similar to Fukuyama's, and he is headed for absolute oblivion, we still do not know what impact he might continue to have and what other measures will justify his delusions.

And it is not that his work lacks interest, but that it has been conceived and written within the framework of an understanding of a world that seems to be ever closer to the beginning of its decline. This world is none other than that of the Pax Americana, of the American empire as the "Guarantor of Freedom" and of the imposition of the Western vision of reality by means of dollars and aircraft carriers. Current events suggest that this hegemony is coming to an end, which does not imply the disappearance of the power of the United States, but rather its disappearance as the only dominant empire.

In a truly multipolar world, Harari's philosophy has no place, as it overlooks the dialectics between individuals, classes, states and empires. In his abstract and politically metaphysical thinking, where myths underpin the architecture of reality, there is no room for a plurality of this nature. Similar to Harari, the same can be said of the social groups that promote his work ([2018](#)), who have begun to understand that the realities on which politics, trade, economic development, free markets and, in short, "progress" are based, are sustained in dialectical power relations where violence and even war are means of communication as tangible and real as treaties and agreements.

A philosophy such as Harari's, which interprets these geographical and political realities as vestiges of a certain type of "mentality," rather than as mechanisms inherent in social, political and historical relations, is likely to become increasingly incompatible with the world that actually exists. An increasingly segmented world landscape, where the Hararian mythologies of "Humanity," "Progress," "Nature," "Homo sapiens," etc., have no chance of explaining anything concrete, in which his philosophy will be condemned to the status of an anecdotal curiosity of a bygone time.

In his call for "Humanity" to control AI, Harari actually addresses the last bastions of the post-Cold War world. That is, a call to the remnant elites defending the global order, pompously rebranded with the label "new world order." It is these who, ultimately, he says should control not only these technologies, but the destinies of Sapiens. Once again, Harari ignores the tensions and divisions inherent in different human groups, from which these superior Sapiens are not exempt, either.

In conclusion, it is essential to approach Harari's considerations from a critical viewpoint, unmasking the assumptions and implications underlying his postulates. This is not so much because of the force of his arguments, but because of the instrumentalization that certain sociologically defined groups make of them. While his works provide to some degree useful insights into our relationship with technology and its possible impact on our future, it is vital not to overlook that these futuristic visions can be exploited to justify and perpetuate existing inequalities and concentrations of power, especially by attempting to ignore them.

Instead of uncritically promoting Harari's perspective of a "Global Humanity," we must strive to imagine alternative futures, certainly—but where the diversity and multiplicity inherent in the ever-interconnected humanity that inhabits our planet is realistically contemplated. It is crucial that technology be understood and used as a tool to empower individuals—but we must remember that these individuals are also part of groups, part of specific states, which can sometimes become part of larger dynamics linked to empires. With this realistic view of the social and political, perhaps we can become proactive architects of our own future, rather than mere spectators in a show orchestrated and controlled by an increasingly decadent global elite.

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