

Artificial Intelligence: Guards of Panopticon System

Yunkun Zeng^{1,*}

¹ Teensen Genesis School, Nanchang, China

*Corresponding author. Email: yunkunyunkunzeng@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence penetrates into every aspect of our life. The government is integrating AI into political work by connecting AI and the panopticon system is one of the most common ways of managing society today. This paper studies what AI can do in social management and whether AI is suitable for large-scale social management by analyzing how it is irreplaceable in our daily life with examples. The author will show you that the panopticon system indeed benefits the society management, but it also has some disadvantages potentially.

Keywords: AI, Panopticon system, Society management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 20th century, when the concept of AI was created and emerged, it has become increasingly noticeable. Over the decades, AI has become so perfect that it can even work more efficiently than humans. It is common to see AIs, such as traffic lights and electronic police, exist in our daily life. In the past, researchers concluded that AI provides conveniences to people, and regulates their behaviors, so AI should widely apply to social management. However, nobody ever noticed that AI controls human lives slightly, especially when AI is related to the government. What is the relationship between AI and the management of the government? How does this relationship affect people's daily lives? The author would search for this information by seeing people's feedback toward social rules. People may understand society better by clearing those questions and be able to adapt to social rules. For example, follow the traffic lights.

2. RESEARCH ON THE PANOPTICON

2.1. The definition of the Panopticon

A panopticon means a place where prisoners are kept. There is a central tower where guards stay to observe prisoners, and prisoners are locked in circular cells around the central tower. Such a design enables guards to watch prisoners, while prisoners cannot see those guards. Therefore, the prisoners internalize the presence of a guard—even if there was not one; this will lead to self-discipline in prisoners, and when prisoners can control

themselves all the time (whether the monitors exist or not), the purpose of the panopticon system has reached.

Beyond the use of the system in the aspect of crime, it is also an efficient tool in society. Actually, the panopticon system is far beyond the scope of "prison". By holding a broad sociological view, people can realize that the system of panopticon is actually affecting our daily behaviors. It is reasonable to explain this by making an analogy between the influence of a cell and the impact of the panopticon system: Citizens are like prisoners in the panopticon, and social rules can be seen as prisons. Prisoners are able to maintain self-discipline in panopticon, the same reason as citizens do to follow laws or rules. In this aspect, the panopticon system can be seen as a way of controlling society[1].

2.2. Panopticon system participates in society management

The aim of this chapter is to analyze the relevant reasons based on the panopticon system. Now, it is common sense that one will be punished by traffic police if he runs a red light so he stops when he sees a red light. However, this common sense can only be interpreted as something "superficial"; what is the "potential", is one may suffer from a traffic accident if he ignores the color of the traffic light. The panopticon system brings direct benefits to human society, citizens generate the so-called self-discipline under the supervision of it. In the same way that inmates are scared of being observed and punished in a panopticon, no one would willingly transgress the social rules. Then, self-discipline exists. It is rare to see people who run a red light now, even though

there are neither police nor cameras around them, which ensures residents' safety when they cross the road. All above are the positive effects of self-discipline, which generates from the panopticon system, on social management. Self-discipline is at the heart of the panopticon system, and through a mixture of humans and AI, the government has succeeded in instilling self-discipline in its citizens and establishing a society of rules. By applying the panopticon system to social management, the government indeed reached their goal: to make everyone has a sense of self-discipline, thus holding the society stably. Without the help of the panopticon system, people may have to be monitored and limited by the government to ensure all residents will not break the social rules. Therefore, it is worthwhile to use the panopticon system to govern society.

3. AI AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT

3.1. The functions, pros, and cons of AI

AI plays an increasingly important role in our daily life. This chapter aims to analyze the functions, pros, and cons of AI. What are the benefits, what are the risks? AI collects data like one's information and then uses a complex algorithm to analyze those data collected, to get the information it needs, then uses that information to push messages that one may prefer to him. Scientists designed a powerful supervising ability for it, which enables it to monitor every action people take online. For example, when one uses the Internet, everything he does is monitored; AI records every page he visits, his search history, etc. Then, by analyzing those data to determine one's preferences, data will be collected and stored into a database, and AI will deliver "suitable" advertisements to him[2].

However, it is unreasonable to conclude that AI can only give us absolute benefits. It has some risks. In common, people never know when their information will be analyzed and collected. This means not only people may have to endure many advertisements sent to their e-mail, but they also will never know what will their information be used for after being collected! However, people are somewhat potentially affected by that collected information while they are not aware of it. AI-controlled information sale is so universal in modern society (whether lawful or illegal)!

Also, what AI shows to a person may sometimes affect his mind or influence his decisions, even influence his political behavior. Zeynep Tufekci said in Tedtalk [3]: "On election day, someone gets a post that says, 'It's Election Day,' and someone gets a post that is slightly modified." The change, which was made by an AI algorithm, was intended to increase the number of voters, and it indeed yielded good results! Different people see different advertisements or posts; people are now not even sure that things they see are real.

Furthermore, AI also plays an important role in social media, which is indispensable in most people's life today. AI enables social media platform to analyze their users and give them a personal feedback[4].

Someone may complain that AI's development will take their place in many fields. Actually, there is no need for people to concern about that. The world is advancing, which will definitely generate more new area for people to take a part in[5]. However, AI indeed increases people's economic burden. Not hinting at the high price of most applications that combined with AI, the author wants to declare that the fast develop of AI may lead to a big international economic revolution, which is beyond people's expectation that they may have no idea to correctly face this revolution[6].

4. DISCUSS THE AI PARTICIPATES IN SOCIAL GOVERNANCE

AI helps govern society by monitoring and passing on information[7]. AI has an advantage over humans: not only can it acquire information quickly, but it also deals with problems more effectively. In this respect, AI can indeed govern society efficiently. Cameras are a classic example of AI, used by governments to obtain real-time information to keep citizens safe and reduce crime. When people know that they are monitored (by cameras) they are discouraged from committing crimes. Speaking of information dissemination: In the past, people did not develop communication technology, so situations like information shortage often occurred, which resulted in the citizens of that time being indifferent to national and international events. With the help of AI in modern society, information can transmit easily, more people can participate in political activities. In short, AI spreads information and details about political events everywhere to ensure that all citizens are informed of the role they play in these events[8].

All of this AI-assisted governance is based on data analysis and information delivery. Although AI can effectively help human beings deal with problems, it is still irrational for AI to participate in social governance, because it has some disadvantages. For example, privacy issues, or bias in the analysis. Privacy breaches are resisted by all citizens. Its harm is unquestionable; Improper analysis of AI can also lead to serious negative consequences. It is widely accepted by the Chinese people that China relies heavily on AI to govern society and maintain national stability. However, if people see its disadvantages, it will be easy to conclude that it is unreasonable. Thanks to its vast data storage, AI can efficiently handle a large number of daily tasks; however, the ethical issues of AI are also troubling people, because, in some areas, it does bring some negative effects. For political reasons, I won't point out where AI bias lies. Unfortunately, people tend to blindly trust AI data, so it can lead to a lot of unfair errors or biases. Therefore, from

a moral point of view, AI should never be the best choice for social governance. In social management, Molarity precedes productivity, so I do not agree that AI should be involved in social governance.

5. AI AND PANOPTICON SYSTEM

In common, there is a relationship between panopticon system and AI: The government needs AI to maintain social stability; the government accepted the existence of the panopticon system in society and wants to keep it.

So the link, the center of the connection, is the government. The government requires the panopticon system to maintain social peace. Again, the panopticon system intends to make people control themselves, namely, self-discipline. However, it is not enough to manage society only with the system, but also need the participation of "monitors". If there is a more efficient way to supervise people, this system will be extremely effective, and AI is the most suitable choice. Again, cameras are in my classrooms. Gradually, people got used to learning under the surveillance of a camera. People have to focus during a lesson, and not dare to do anything meaningless to studying. Cameras do a great job of creating authority and then letting people generate self-discipline. These days, most students adjust their costumes and start learning (or pretend to study) as soon as they enter the classroom because they know there is an authority. Even though there are no cameras in the classroom, students will maintain the atmosphere of learning. For the same reason as in a crossing, even if there is no police or camera to monitor a person's behavior, one will follow the traffic rules. However, it will be nearly impossible for people to intentionally ignore social rules for conveniences when there is no strain! Look at older Chinese: they never contacted AI when they were young, which somewhat leads to the disregard of social rules. Indeed, running a red light when there are no cars on the road has no real impact, nor does it make any sense for the red light to last too long, so there is nothing wrong with ignoring traffic rules more or less in the eyes of the elderly. There are flaws in the design of social norms, and it does not make sense to encourage them through AI. However, noticeably, by combining rational behavior and errors, AI manages society efficiently. If there are no cameras, no traffic lights on the streets, then everything will be chaotic; at that time, it will be not only old people who run the traffic lights. Thus, people can conclude that AI plays a critical role in the panopticon system. Theoretically, humans can take the place of AI to maintain social order, but this will work against the original purpose of AI—the incorporation of human information processing and problem-solving skills into computer systems [9], thus reducing people's burden. In addition, humans cannot cope with things as

fast as AI does. Manpower is largely limited, so AI will be the most appropriate choice.

6. THE USAGES OF AI TO CONTROL THE SOCIETY

Governments should not use AI to control society undemocratically.

AI helps govern society by monitoring and passing on information. AI has an advantage over humans: not only can it acquire data quickly, but also it deals with problems more effectively. In this respect, AI can indeed govern society efficiently. Cameras are a classic example of AI, used by governments to obtain real-time information to keep citizens safe and reduce crime. When a person realizes that he is being supervised, he no longer desires to commit a crime. Therefore, the crime rate will be largely reduced. Speaking of information dissemination: In the past, people did not develop communication technology, so situations like information shortage often occurred, which resulted in the citizens of that time being indifferent to national and international events. With the help of AI now, people can transfer information conveniently, so more people can participate in political activities. In short, AI spreads information and details about political events everywhere to ensure that all citizens are informed of the role they play in these events.

AI is so functional and applicable that people are willing to treat it as a part of their lives. The government relies on AI to build democratic measures, such as voting systems, well-accepted by citizens. However, what if rulers use AI to consolidate their rule or control their citizens in illegitimate and inhuman ways? This question raises problems far beyond morals. It is unavoidable to utilize AI to govern society for the government in modern society. While using AI, the government should also pay attention to ensuring that they are used democratically. AI is often difficult to manage that people must think about how to reduce misuse or immoral abuse. For example, many people, including me, oppose cameras in classrooms. It is the "immoral abuse" mentioned above because nobody wants their private things to be monitored by others all the time. Plus, there is the so-called "smart uniform" by implanting an AI chip into school uniform then requiring students to wear it, parents and teachers can track students' traces uninterruptedly[10]. Indeed, parents and teachers are relieved, but what about students? Do uniforms benefit students or destroy students? As mentioned above, the abuse of AI, or blindly following AI, will bring many immeasurable negative effects. Dictatorial politics requires massive population surveillance to maintain the government's dominance, which China is doing, and AI is undoubtedly the best tool. I remember that at that time, masks were too expensive to buy (about six times more than before)! Where was the media at that time? Why did they not come up and impose all the truth onto the news

or social platform? There was no information about the virus until it was announced, but people absolutely cannot blame the media. At that moment, the government created an “information monopoly” and prevented the media from spreading information worldwide through platforms. The government-controlled AI and the AI somewhat controlled society! Thus, the abuse of AI can have many negative impacts.

7. CONCLUSION

Considering limitations of my research, I attempt to do more field researches to complete my following exploration.

All statement the author has made above are powerful enough to prove the final intention of this paper that if the government utilizes AI democratically (which means without bias, unreasonable management, and limited voting ways), citizens can undoubtedly enjoy a stable and happy life. However, many governments intend to rely on AI to check people's political compliance and use it to arrest those who oppose him, which will obviously not contribute to the positive aspect of AI-management. In addition, the large number of cameras prevents people from organizing privately, which makes it impossible for any private force to compete with the power of the government. When a suggestion that could benefit society clashes with the political context, it will be prohibited. If the government maintains its current pace, residents will feel oppressed by the government and will be hesitant to propose new ideas, resulting in the collapse of society. The government's use of AI to maintain the panopticon system is a good example. This brings us back to the concept of the panopticon.

REFERENCES

- [1] Brown University (2009). Internalized Authority and the Prison of the Mind: Bentham and Foucault's Panopticon.
- [2] Ross Andersen (2020). The Panopticon Is Already Here.
- [3] Henry Ajder & Walter Pasquarelli (2021). AI & the New Age of Social Control.
- [4] Jyoti Gupta (2020). Role of Artificial Intelligence in Social Media.
- [5] Bernard Marr (2021) What Is The Impact Of Artificial Intelligence (AI) On Society?
- [6] Joanna J. Bryson (2019) The future of AI's impact on society.
- [7] Zeynep Tufekci (2017). We're building a dystopia just to make people click on ads.
- [8] Peng Zhang (2018) AI promotes development of social governance
- [9] Benoît Dupont (2017). How artificial intelligence will be used for social control. University of Montreal. <https://www.cicc-iccc.org/en/news/how-artificial-intelligence-will-be-used-for-social-control>
- [10] Daniel Faggella (2019). Artificial Intelligence for Government Surveillance – 7 Unique Use-Cases.