

# RETHINKING OUR HUMANITY IN A NEW TECHNOLOGICAL ERA

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**3<sup>rd</sup> GAMAICIBR**

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# OUTLINE

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- Current development
- Polarisation
- Globalisation and inequality
- Post-truth era
- The roots of our identity
- Physical self vs. digital self
- Singularity
- Human rights vs. machine rights
- Questions to ponder

# CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

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- **Rapid** development of technology, not only in ICT
- Technological **gap** remains an issue
- Too much **hype** and **excitement** on the advancement of technology
- The end of **social-construction of technology** paradigm (Bijker et al., 1987)
- Technology are becoming more **deterministic**
- **Secularism** are becoming normal -- rationalisation of everything

# POLARISATION

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- **Automation** are becoming to take away our jobs (Autor, 2013)
  - The rise of ATMs vs. the declining number of bank teller
  - The rise of OTAs vs. the closure of travel agents
- Our (old) labour is becoming **redundant** and our skills **obsolete**
- Shifting towards more **cognitively demanding jobs**
  - Administrative/clerical works towards sales marketing job
- We are becoming “**shadow worker**” for our selves
- Demand for **multitasking** technical expertise

# GLOBALISATION & INEQUALITY

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- Globalisations creates **homogenisation** -- but only for major cities
  - Convergence among major cities worldwide, e.g. London, New York, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Singapore, Jakarta, Istanbul, etc. are becoming similar
  - Divergence among less irrelevant cities, remote, and underdeveloped areas
- **Income gap** and **inequality** -- The top 1% of earners captured less than 21% of total income in the late 1930s, rising to 22% today (Piketty, 2013)
- Orchestrated shift from national-level inequality to **global-level inequality**
- Questions towards national **sovereignty**

# POST-TRUTH ERA

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- Systematic **pattern of deviation** from norm or rationality in judgment, whereby inferences about other people and situations may be drawn in an illogical fashion
  - Individuals create their own “subjective social reality” from their perception of the input
- **Borders blur** between truth and lies, honesty and dishonesty, fiction and nonfiction (Keyes, 2004)
- Objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to **emotion** and **personal belief**
  - Driven by a combination of the 24-hour news cycle, false balance in news reporting, and the increasing ubiquity of social media
- Merit-based and evidence-based policy were replaced by **judgment** and **subjectivity-bias**

# THE ROOTS OF OUR IDENTITY

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- Millennials are becoming **significant** (Rainer & Rainer, 2011)
  - Usually university educated, sometimes graduated overseas
  - Professional workers or lifestyle entrepreneurs
  - Relatively well paid, tech savvy and more globally minded
  - Relatively high expectations and more demanding
  - YOLO (you only live once) spending habit -- work hard, play hard
- The rise of **ageing** populations and retirement (UN Population Division, 2015)
- Histories, attitudes, belief systems, and biases that thread through all families and societies are becoming **irrelevant**
- We are becoming more comfortable with global identity rather than local/particular identity -- we are no longer seek a defining **narrative**

# PHYSICAL SELF vs. DIGITAL SELF

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## PHYSICAL SELF

- Biological organism
- Electron transfer within enzymes and biomolecules
- Non-deterministic
- Mortal

## DIGITAL SELF (Schmidt & Cohen, 2013)

- Algorithmic creatures
- Logical procedures through mathematical process
- Deterministic
- Immortal

Those two selves are **interacting, intertwined, interdependent**.

We can represent our selves as algorithms, but we are **not** algorithms.



# SINGULARITY

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- The total computational powers of all computers and machines are becoming **on par** to the total brainpower of all human kind (Kurzweil, 2005)
  - Humans are following geometric sequence
  - Technology are following arithmetic sequence
- We are becoming more frequently interact with **human-simulated machine**
- Most communications occurs between **human-machine**, instead of human-to-human
- We are beginning to have more intense relationship with **computerised personalities (AI)** -- simulated personalities are perceived to have some advantages over human partners
- We are **no** longer having advantages over machine/computer brains

# HUMAN RIGHTS vs. MACHINE RIGHTS

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- This might be too **speculative**, but the risk is there
- The notion of “life expectancy” is becoming **irrelevant** due to technological advancement in health science and bioengineering
- The rise of AI will create “**machine rights movement**” (Poole & Mackworth, 2017)
  - Demand of legal protection and civil rights for computers and machines
- Humans and machines are living together, becoming **convergent**, without clear distinctions

# QUESTIONS TO PONDER...

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- What constitutes as “**human being**”?
- When reverse engineering becoming possible, should we “**create**” human?
- We realise that AIs have some sort of immortality. Should we “**kill**” them?
- What are the roles of **religion** and **culture**?
- Who determine the **fate** of this universe?
- Are we becoming **God**?

# THANK YOU

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