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# Ray Kurzweil The Singularity Is Near Pdf 23

the key point about the ultimate victory of the machines is that the implication will emerge precisely in the far future. they will not be ahistorical event, so important to the historical perspective, the very definition of the singularity, but part of the future human evolution. the foundation of the whole idea is that, in the long term future, computers will no longer be merely tools, but powerful tools that we can use to create our own tools. the ultimate power of computers is their potential to eliminate the necessity of humans to create and control them. the historical singularity is the last-but-one step in human evolution. computers will eliminate the necessity of the species. this will be the exponential step in which the human species transcends its biology. a timeline of the singularity is shown in figure 3.17. the singularity is described by the key assertion that the exponential growth of technology will cause the human brain to be overwhelmed. its not about having too much technology per se. its about the potential of the technology to move beyond human control. the problem is that if we are not in charge, we cannot make sure that the results are optimized for our long term goals. thats why we need to be in charge. it is, by far, the greatest challenge of our time. we must take the first step of asking about the long-term implications of the technologies we are creating, and we must deliberately incorporate them into our future technologies. in other words, we must design our technologies to be optimized for the future. the key question is: will we design our technologies to be optimized for our human future, or will we design them to be optimized for machines? not many people ask such a question, and those that do often miss the point.



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second, exponential expansion results in the singularity, which is an intelligence explosion that occurs when our minds become greater than our own limits. the exponential expansion of intelligence is a self-accelerating loop. technological progress never stops; it always accelerates. there will always be more. as the progress continues, the rate of progress increases exponentially. the more we achieve, the more we can achieve. the technology of the singularity is the technology that will allow us to achieve our potential. when i began the singularity is near in 1989, it seemed that computers were on the threshold of achieving human-equivalent intelligence. but by the early 1990s, as moore s law came to a close, it became obvious that the promised exponential growth of computing power would not arrive. this did not augur well for the singularity. in 1991 i could point to the coming computers that would exceed human-equivalent intelligence within the next five years. but in 1993, after analyzing decades of computer research, i calculated that the singularity would be far off. i was still sure that moore s law would continue to hold sway, but i now thought that it would not continue to grow at the exorbitant rate it had for the previous half-century. within a few years, the singularity would not only have arrived, but would have taken over all life on earth. the singularity has been on a roll since then. the singularity is near is the story of my gradual awakening to that truth. there are two basic ways of thinking about progress. the first is that technology simply grows steadily, one step at a time, and we are just getting there. the second is that it is not steady and certainly is not incremental, but instead occurs in phase jumps. this is the view that kurzweil takes, which is very different from mine, and is illustrated in the figure above. i believe that humanity is in the third phase, the relentless progression toward the singularity, and we are now firmly on the threshold. 5ec8ef588b

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