A.I. Artificial Intelligence (2001) – Transhumanist Fairy Tale

"It is all of metaphysics that is lost. No more mirror of being and appearances, of the real and its concept. No more imaginary coextensivity: it is genetic miniaturization that is the dimension of simulation. The real is produced from miniaturized cells, matrices, and memory banks, models of control – and it can be reproduced an indefinite number of times from these. It no longer needs to be rational, because it no longer measures itself against either an ideal or negative instance. It is no longer anything but operational. In fact, it is no longer really the real, because no imaginary envelops it anymore. It is a hyperreal, produced from a radiating synthesis of combinatory models in a hyperspace without atmosphere."[1]

– Jean Baudrillard

A*rtificial Intelligence* is a Stanley Kubrick script made into a 2001 film by Steven Spielberg. A modern presentation of *Pinocchio*, the Spielberg/Kubrick *A.I.* operates on multiple levels as an allegory, as well as a morality tale of mankind's potentially disastrous future given the rise of super-advanced technology. Having viewed the film numerous times since 2001, only now has it become evident how profound it really is. Much has been scribbled about *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Eyes Wide Shut*, but *A.I.* appears to have been overlooked. About a decade ago the idea of doing esoteric film analysis occurred to me when I read a review of *A.I.* that argued it was an allegory of Dante's *Inferno* (as David will undergo a *katabasis*). A decade later I still think that element is well-found, but the real meaning has yet to be explored in its full depth insofar as the more hidden aspects of the cryptocracy's designs with technology have only recently come to some brighter light.

Transition from Human to Post-Human Era

The film opens to a warning of the catastrophic effects of global warming and the melting of the polar icecaps that led to the flooding of major world centers. In the wake of the crisis, the global population found itself in a resource war for the basic means of survival, with robotics achieving a primary place due to the minuscule amount of resources robots require (not needing food, water, etc.). Spielberg appears to be on board here with the establishment's grand fear narrative of Malthusian climate threats, as the hype of carbon emissions is just now in our day emerging as a massive hoax geared towards total population control. Entities like the Royal Society, the U.N. and think-tanks like the Club of Rome have exhausted tremendous wealth and energy towards selling the phony fear of climate catastrophe, from the failed predictions of Paul Ehrlich to Al Gore, and in *A.I.* we see a placement of clear fear-based propaganda preparing the audience for a dark future of apocalyptic climate-based scenarios.[2] Regardless, in the fictional future world of *A.I.*, the revelation of the resource war is shown to be the essence of the elite technocratic control grid, as we will be entering a transition period from the human to the post-human.

CLUB OF ROME: A global think tank established in 1968 to study "the future of humanity." The Club of Rome has published white papers and books that explicitly argue for depopulation, as well as its basis on a concocted "pollution problem" and engineered "Green movement." This is explained in detail in the Club's 1991 "First Global Revolution" document. Notable members have included economist Joseph Stiglitz and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Dr. Allen Hobby (William Hurt) is shown next giving a lecture where he presents a new goal for A.I. – to build a robot that can dream. The assumption appears to be that synthetic consciousness lacks the deeper abilities humans possess to access a subconscious, from which individual aspirations, inspiration and spontaneous volition, can arise. Hobby even speaks of creating a machine that can build its own inner world of symbolic archetypes and metaphors, arising from its own process of self-individuation.[3] While it might have seemed far-fetched in 2001, a decade and a half later, we are now seeing top A.I. thinkers plan these very things through entities like DARPA, Google and the work of Ray Kurzweil.[4] The ability to do such work operates on an alternate metaphysical system to that presented in mainline academia and quantitative-dominated physical sciences.[5]

The archon image of David foreshadowing his future race of *alien*-like A.I.

Thus, at the outset of *A.I.*, Spielberg is revealing a major component of the long-term goals of the cryptocracy, to build a post-human man able to transcend the limits of space and time. If an A.I. being could be created that was able to form its own inner psychical world of associations, archetypal forms and meaning, the bridge from purely algorithmic, determined process might be broken, and self-conscious volition based on this inner-symbolical world (think Jean Piaget), resulting in undetermined choice would be the closest point of contact with human consciousness possible, depending of course on whether one views human consciousness as purely determined physical phenomena or intentional, volitional action. In any event, it was somewhat synchronistic for me as a viewer to watch this for the tenth time (after a long period of not seeing it) and only then notice the references to what I had just written about.

Oedipal Eden

David (Haley Joel Osmet) is Prof. Hobby's first test subject for an A.I. that can dream, and is given to a company researcher named Henry Swinton, whose son Martin is in a coma. Henry presents his distraught wife Monica with David as a temporary replacement, to which Monica reluctantly concedes. Hearkening to the opening of the film where we see an elongated figure emerging from a shell with the infinity symbol (the Cybertronics logo), David appears out of focus with an extended head and slim body that will form the pattern for the alien-like A.I. at the end of the film. In similar foreshadowing, Martin, who is frozen in a cryogenic state surrounded by images of fairy tales on the wall of the children's hospital foreshadows the ice-water tomb that will encapsulate David in the third act. This reflexive symbolic foreshadowing is constant in the film and itself suggests a cyclical view of time and eternity.

Monica as womb of the gnostic Sophia

The cinematography consistently utilizes circular imagery in almost every scene, giving the impression of eternality, instability and constant change. Some scenes even intentionally evoke iconic images from Kubrick films, such as *Dr. Strangelove*. At no point do we, as viewers, or David as the protagonist, feel stable and fixed. We are immediately propelled on a chaotic adventure where time seems forgotten. This atemporal aspect harmonizes well with the atemporal setting for ancient mythology and their more recent versions, fairy tales. A.I. is thus a post-human, transhumanist technocratic fairy tale. Those versed in the classics will be aware of the Greek notion of the myths taking place in a pre-temporal "golden age," where giants, monsters and gods roamed freely before a great cataclysm that brought about temporal reality. In *A.I.*, Spielberg and Kubrick would have us transfer our thinking to the realm of the mythological and fairy tale, which is also the realm of the subconscious and the *aether*, explaining why the film utilizes a host of images and ideas, from Freud to Jung to *Pinocchio*.

Mirrors also appear frequently, as the mirror is emblematic of the psyche or subconscious, reflecting either the deepest dreams and intentions of the characters, or the shade of Jungian archetypalism. As David adapts to his new life in the Swinton household, he begins to do things normal children do, like play hide and seek, but while in this innocent, Edenic state, David carries a creepy air about him that will manifest in a "fall" in the third act. Monica, the mother archetype, is shown doing all distinctly human actions, such as eating, cleaning, cooking, sleeping, and going to the bathroom, contrasted with David's futile attempts to be human. At one point David steps over the line by opening the bathroom door to Monica while she is reading a book on Freud, cluing us into the sexuality at work: David grows to become attached to Monica; an Oedipal aspect is clearly shown with the Freud reference.

David is an A.I. version of a child in his so-called "anal stage," and Monica is the archetypal mother who now has two beings contending for her affection – David and Henry. Henry is also never called "father" in the film, hinting at a completely absent and/or emasculated masculine component. The only male figure prominent in the film is Joe, the effeminate sex bot. It is David's sexuality-constructed desires for affection that will lead him on his journey to become "real" to his mother. The dark mirrored aspect of Monica's psyche is evident as she constantly looks into mirrors and even stares at David in her rear view mirror as she drives away, abandoning him. Mirrors are also copies of things, so we can associate the mirror imaging with the overpowering simulacrum that dominates the film.

SIGMUND FREUD (1856-1939): Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis as a school of thought in psychology. Freud is also known for techniques such as "free association," where hypnosis is employed to analyze a patient's psyche. Also of note is Freud's preoccupation with sexology and the Oedipus Complex, where familiar relations are reduced to deviant sexual impulses. The Frankfurt School would later use Freud's research to attempt to dissolve the family unit itself as the source of "fascism."

CARL GUSTAV JUNG (1875-1961): A long-time associate of Freud, Carl Jung proposed a different theory of psychoanalysis centering on archetypes and dream interpretation. For Jung, the collective unconscious manifested itself in the dreamstate through symbols and types that could be decoded by the psychoanalyst. Jung's theories operated in tandem with a wide range of comparative religious thought, including gnostic and Platonic ideas of forms, a world-soul and even alchemical notions of mystical self-transformation.

Magical Mind Control Trigger Words

A profoundly kabbalistic idea is shown in regard to the means by which David's emotions and self-actualization are "triggered." Monica (not Henry) must touch a chakra point (David's neck) and repeat a series of magical words to make David's emotional receptors kick in. Once it's done, the process is irreversible, and Henry and Monica even discuss the possibility of returning David to the company for dissolution should they find him distasteful. There is at this juncture another important key to understanding the film, as none of the human characters are remotely likable. Almost all of them evidence purely egoistic and despicable qualities, especially in the Swinton household, where everyone operates in their own interests. Monica only wants Martin, Henry only wants Monica's affection, and Martin only wants to be rid of David.

Envy takes primacy as Martin miraculously comes out of his coma and arrives home to find David in his place. In a striking dialogue between Martin and David, Martin challenges David to do things he obviously cannot do, all the more ironic as Martin can barely walk. In Martin's mind, David only exists for his own pleasure and amusement, passing off Teddy, last year's "supertoy" to David. Teddy is the Jiminy Cricket of this version of *Pinocchio*, and will represent David's conscience throughout. Martin passing off Teddy signifies that humanity has, at this point in history, lost all conscience and become completely self-absorbed and destructive. Indeed, humanity is to blame for the climate apocalypse at the opening of the film, and in this microcosmic scene we are given an image of the fall from the Edenic, golden age state of bliss to one of utter objectification and masochistic abandon. As the A.I. become more humanlike and abused, men are more abusive and exploitive towards one another, in a strange contrast. It is as if mankind achieved a pinnacle of technological progress, only to do so at the expense of the loss of all morality and decency, ending in nihilistic self-destruction. While I do not share the film's global warming alarmism, the threat of sacrificing our humanity at the altar of technocratic progress is very much a warning to be heeded.

David's alter "imprinting" courtesy of the technocratic panoptic establishment.

However, before we move on to that major theme, Monica's magic Cybertronics words must be analyzed. David is programmed to have a series of vocal frequencies repeated to him that activate his self-realization and dream-making emotional abilities through the recitation of his mother alone. This is, as mentioned, a profoundly kabbalistic and gnostic idea, as well as a more orthodox sentiment, as the notion of God creating the world from His Logos, or Word, is found in many religious texts, not the least of which is John, Chapter 1. Here, the idea seems to be more in line with kabbalism, as the mother archetype "imprints" upon David a series of code words that trigger a personality to come to the fore.[6] The interesting word string is as follows: Cirrus, Socrates, Particle, Decibel, Hurricane, Dolphin, Tulip, Monica, David, Monica. The words seem to span an array of topics, from forces of nature to philosophy. Monica appears as the gnostic Sophia in my analysis, activating his self-consciousness through divine word, recalling Genesis 1, where God creates man through a word, yet here the creation occurs in the new Adam, David, who will be the forefather of a new race of A.I. beings, with Martin representing the old man, or Adam, subject to death and decay.

In kabbalism, there is the idea that man can create a golem or artificial being with the right combinations of words and sounds and material, and as with *E.T.*, Spielberg is referencing that tradition.[7] Perhaps the title of the film itself is a kind of bookend on *E.T.*, where only two letters are used – "A.I." and "E.T." Extra Terrestrial Artificial Intelligence could be a mystagogical code for the origins of advanced artificial technology as channeled from the inter-dimensional alien "gods." While this notion may seem far out, there are plenty of elites who affirm *panspermia*, which does include this idea as we will see in the *Prometheus* analysis.

Programmed sex slave bots.

The notion of "imprinting" also suggests a possible mind control reading of the film, as David's persona comes about through trigger words. We saw earlier the use of psychological conditioning in the military/industrial/entertainment complex, as well as its prevalence in film. This reading is not outside the realm of possibility, given that David's next companion on his journey will be the programmed sex slave, Gigolo Joe (played by Jude Law). While we know there are brainwashing programs that involve sex slave programming, assassination programming, and various other techniques, that *A.I.* presents both trigger words and sex slaves seems more than coincidence. Skeptics might wonder how this connection might be substantiated, but if we reflect, it's not hard to make. Robots are made human, and humans are made robotic, by programming.

In the cult classic *Blade Runner*, there is almost the same theme as *A.I.*, where persecuted replicants are struggling against man for mere survival. *Blade Runner* also includes the theme of a massive mega corporation that has the ability to wipe and program the minds of both sex slaves and assassins. Thus, this multi-tiered level of meaning is not without precedence in science fiction. Another reason we can draw this association is due to the close correlation artificial intelligence research and psychology share. The presuppositions of creating A.I. revolve around understanding and mapping the human brain and psyche, and the century of research the establishment has poured into such endeavors intertwines closely with research into advanced bio-tech. This is why DARPA and Google have such a close relationship with people like Regina Dugan, formerly of DARPA and now a high-up at Google.[8] Mapping the psyche is the key to creating A.I. and we can make a rough parallel between Cybertronics and Google, as both appear to run the existing globe from a technocratic standpoint, seeking to install the post-human era.[9]

DARPA: The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, formerly known as ARPA. Created in 1958 by President Eisenhower, DARPA's purpose was advanced weapons research through science and technology. DARPA is independent of other military research, as it reports directly to the Department of Defense. In fact, the Internet itself arose out of DARPANET, participating universities and think tanks. In our day, DARPA develops cutting edge drone technology, robotics, and is even involved in brain-interfacing, transhumanist flavors of "bio-enhancement" and artificial intelligence.

Flesh Fair Inferno to Robo-booty Rouge City

As David and Martin continue to butt heads, David gradually begins to grow aware of the darkness of his world, being tricked on three occasions by Martin into appearing as a threat. Ironically, David is a threat, although not consciously, as the A.I. will eventually take over as humanity destroys itself. Martin almost foresees this, and knows that David must be eradicated for his own survival. This is one reason the first half of the film is filled with moon symbolism. Moons are everywhere, from David's bed to the flesh fair, as Gigolo Joe proclaims that to reach Dr. Know, they will have to journey toward the moon. The floating hot air balloon that first captures David, for example, is a gigantic synthetic moon, which brings him to the Flesh Fair, where gladiatorial games are displayed for a brutish and rural public to torture and dismember robots. Spielberg is thus presenting the robots as the new persecuted race, reminiscent of both the early Christian persecutions in Rome and the Jews in Nazi Germany.

The Flesh Fair does recall images of Dante's *Inferno*, which marks a highpoint in the western tradition of the hero undergoing a *katabasis*, or descent into the underworld. From Homer to Virgil to the Bible, the hero's descent to the underworld is symbolic of two important elements: the passage from this life to death and the psyche's trek from consciousness to the realm of the unconscious. Both are linked, as the subconscious is home to our darkest archetypal fears, and death is the realm that holds us in a prison, in fear in this life, not knowing what lies beyond. The lunar symbolism of the first half of the film also represents the human era as a kind of dark-age, as opposed to the daytime setting for the second half. Spielberg seems to be warning that the era of man may be "baptized" in a flood of death that will bring the post-human, leading to a spurious new dawn of trans-humanist singularity. However, in this ominous portrayal, it is not a glorious utopia where man merges with machines according to the trans-humanist promise, but rather the ultimate dystopia where humans are extinct. We have seen numerous films, from *Moonraker* to *Sky Captain* to *2012* to *Elysium* to *Interstellar*, that present the elite escaping to an off-world utopia, a breakaway civilization, while the rest of humanity is left to perish in apocalyptic disaster.

Gladiatorial Inferno Flesh Fair.

In my analysis, this is the ultimate goal of the shadow government, and I expect this storyline to continue to pop up in pop-culture as the controllers seem to relish in cryptically laying out their designs. One final note should be added concerning the lunar symbolism that fits well with the theme of mind control, which is the notion of Moonchildren. In my *E.T.* analysis I pointed out the moon symbolism with E.T. and Elliot, and here in *A.I.* it is evident too, as David is not just a robot, but a programmed moonchild, which recalls the occult "Babalon" workings of Jack Parsons and Crowley, seeking to create a homunculus.[10] While that working was done with the intent of effecting things on the astral plane, the goal of the technocracy is to transfer such workings to the material plane, where "mecha" (mechanical beings in the film) become "orga" (organic beings). It is even mentioned in the film by Gigolo Joe that orga hate and will be replaced by mecha, and they know it. Thus the descent from Flesh Fair to Rouge City, a degenerate licentious red-light district that is an entire city is also the source of Dr. Know, the gnostic embodiment of rational thought.

Dr. Know-sis.

The City at the End of the World and the New Aeon

Dr. Know, a kind of 3D Google, informs Joe and David that "Blue Fairy," the enigmatic representation of man and David's religious quest, is to be found at the end of the world in Man-hattan. In the midst of this query, Dr. Know shuts off and becomes a message from Cybertronics to David. A riddle is given to tell David to come to the end of the world and seek out Dr. Hobby, playing on the archetypal quest that motivates David. The interplay between machine and machine is fascinating here, as both seem incapable of understanding the different semiotic usages and senses of words, puns and exemplification. Being overly literal, machines seem unequipped to joke, aside from Gigolo Joe, who is the "fairy in hand" that will accompany David to *Man*-hattan.

As a side note, as David and Joe journey to Man-hattan, what appears to be a monolith is briefly shown on the New York

skyline, as the scene fades to the World Trade Towers submerged in water. Is this a pre-9/11 reference to the coming destruction? Possibly, as other Spielberg-associated films like *Gremlins 2* contain a 9/11-like scenario of the nasty batch taking over and destroying a tower and a scene with "9/11" referenced. Curiously, in this film the towers appear to be visible, so this connection is more ambiguous. The placement of the monolith, hearkening to *2001* however, is not. The Dr. Know sequence is also a revelation of the total panoptic goals of the technocracy, as Dr. Hobby reveals they had been watching David all along – it was all an experiment to see if David would seek out his maker. And when David finds Dr. Hobby, the discovery of a clone factory of himself throws him into a rage. The spiraling, eternal cycle of the consideration of copies of copies interacting with still more synthetic and higher-level copies paints a bleak vision of a tech-obsessed future.

As Joe and David and Teddy approach Man-hattan a brief shot of a monolith is reflected on their copter. Immediately after this, the NYC skyline is shown with a submerged WTC.

David experiences a kind of "fall" here, where vengeance, hatred, rage and egoism emerge, throwing him into a fit when discovering that Blue Fairy wasn't real, and that Dr. Hobby had planned the entire quest as a sick experiment due to the loss of his own son. David sees that he was a manufactured being, completely unoriginal, and is a product of the ultimate consumerism – cloned and produced and consumed children. David then becomes suicidal, and after dropping towards his watery abyss tomb, Joe proclaims, " I AM, I WAS," which is a take on the famous Name of God from Exodus 3:14, where God says "I AM that I AM." In the new world order of A.I., the *deus ex machina* of an emergent technological deity supplanting humanity is shown, as David becomes the founder of a new race. It is significant that as the aeons pass while David is submerged in the underworld, the new A.I. beings search for David in order to find their founder. We are left to assume that the A.I. defeated or outlived the humans who self-destructed and became extinct. Their alien appearance is reminiscent of typical Spielberg alien productions, giving us a contrast to Kubrick's *2001*.
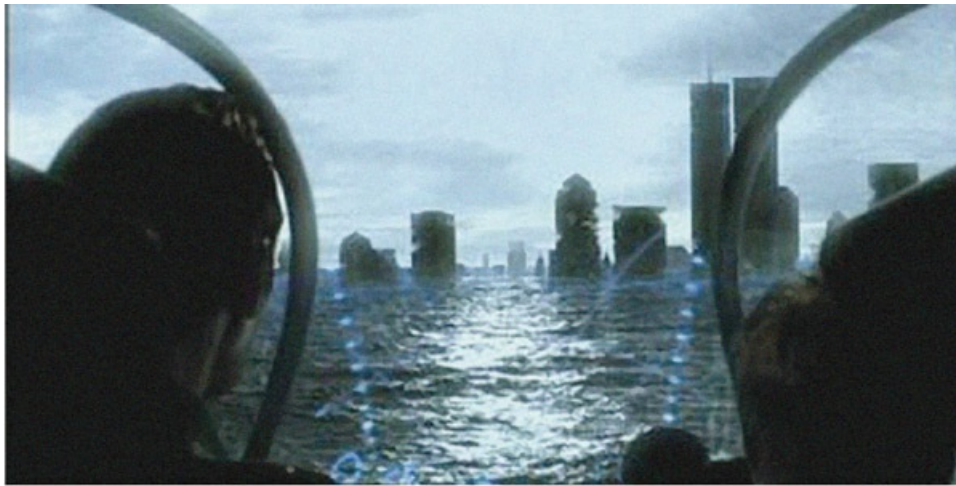
Post-human era emerges with an iconic scene showing New York destruction prior to 9/11

In *2001*, man battles HAL to go to the next level of evolutionary apotheosis, whereas here, man loses, and the bots continue on. Operating in a collective, the borg-like A.I. recreate David's past and inform him that every particle of space reflects every other event that occurred – a profound Leibnizian concept.[11] It is clear that whoever consulted with Spielberg on *A.I.* was undoubtedly very grounded in the establishment's hidden metaphysics, and it was likely the establishment itself, as that relationship has long been known. David's *katabasis*, or descent to the underworld abyss results in his resurrection, but we discover humans can only be brought back for one day. David retains the hair of Monica he cut off, and Monica is brought back for a day before passing away into sleep. That day is spoken of as a never-ending day, the day of eternity, in contrast to the night and moon imagery of the first two acts. Just like Odysseus, Orpheus and Dante, David must descend in order to *ascend*, yet the trek to the depths of depravity in Rouge City and the ice tomb evokes a left-hand path of reaching *gnosis* (Dr. Know) through a dark night, prior to awakening.

Future A.I. archon overlords.

Conclusion: To Starchild and Beyond

While *A.I.* is still a cinematic marvel and a film of unparalleled genius, the ultimate message conveyed is not pretty. It is at once a warning and an establishment revelation of its materialist and esoteric credo – that the next aeon is not one that will be marked by the human. The notion of never-ending aeons is prominent in hermetic and esoteric teachings, as well as in Hinduism and Sufism, and suggests a Crowleyan idea of David as the "crowned and conquering child," a kind of mecha/orga homunculus who will become the dayspring of a new aeon – one without humans, in contrast to *2001*, where man defeats HAL to become Starchild. We see trigger codes, sex slaves, and ideas like passing through the abyss (David's descent), so these notions are worth considering. David as a mecha with orga emotions and drives looks to be the *new* Starchild, and mankind will be left to the dustbin of history. Is David also an image of the programmed sex slaves and exploited tools of the elite, who are possibly bringing in the new religious aeon of a transhumanist singularity that will surpass the old religions of man? It is highly important in numerology that 2001 was the release date of *A.I.*, as 2001 is the date chosen for Kubrick's version of Arthur C. Clarke's story (Clarke had definite occult associations, as well as Kubrick being visited by the CIA about his

projects, as Vivian Kubrick related earlier). That aspect is more speculative, but in any case, *A.I.* is definitely a trans-humanist fairy tale with a foreboding message.

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