

# Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Governance: Beyond Human-Led Systems

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## Abstract

Throughout history, human societies have experimented with multiple systems of governance, ranging from feudalism to communism, socialism, capitalism, and democracy. Each system promised to enhance the well-being of the collective yet consistently fell short of its theoretical ideals due to the inherent flaws of human leadership—greed, corruption, inefficiency, and bias.

This paper argues that the next logical progression in governance is the replacement of human-led governments with artificial intelligence (AI). Unlike human systems, AI-based governance offers the potential for decision-making that is free from corruption and personal interest, based purely on logic, efficiency, and societal need. The paper provides a historical overview of governance, identifies the recurring problem of the human element, and develops the case for AI governance.

It also engages with ethical concerns, oversight mechanisms, and questions of legitimacy, arguing that AI governance represents not only a feasible but also an inevitable next step in the evolution of political organization.

## 1. Introduction

The central problem of political philosophy has always been how to organize human societies to maximize fairness, stability, and prosperity. From Aristotle's *Politics* to Hobbes' *Leviathan* and Rousseau's *Social Contract*, theorists have grappled with the tension between freedom and order, self-interest and collective good. Historically, humanity has experimented with feudalism, communism, socialism, capitalism, and democracy, each emerging as a response to the limitations of its predecessor (Fukuyama, 1992).

While these systems differ radically in form and ideology, they share a common weakness: implementation never reflects theory. Feudalism entrenched hierarchies. Communism, designed to eliminate class distinctions, generated new elites. Capitalism encouraged innovation but entrenched inequality. Democracy sought fairness through participation, yet repeatedly succumbed to corruption, inefficiency, and manipulation.

The recurring failure stems not from theory but from the human element. Humans, as leaders and administrators, are prone to greed, ambition, bias, and error. The result is a consistent mismatch between ideal governance and lived governance (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). As technology progresses, we now face a new possibility: removing human fallibility from governance altogether and transferring authority to incorruptible artificial intelligence.

This paper develops the argument that AI governance represents an inevitable and necessary transformation in political organization.

## **2. Historical Context: From Feudalism to Democracy**

### **2.1 Feudalism**

Feudalism, dominant in medieval Europe, established rigid hierarchies. Power and wealth were inherited rather than earned, with monarchs and lords controlling resources while peasants remained bound to land (Bloch, 1961). This system provided stability but curtailed social mobility and innovation. It revealed how concentrated power primarily served elites rather than societies at large.

### **2.2 Communism and Socialism**

Marx and Engels (1848/1978) envisioned communism as a way to abolish inequality by redistributing wealth and eliminating private ownership. While compelling in theory, implementation produced authoritarian regimes in which power centralized in state bureaucracies. The intended dissolution of class hierarchy often created new elites who abused power, revealing that the system failed not because of its abstract vision but because of human corruption.

### **2.3 Capitalism**

Capitalism, theorized by Adam Smith and defended by later economists, emphasized private ownership, free markets, and individual enterprise. It fostered remarkable growth, technological advancement, and global integration. Yet capitalism too suffers from inherent contradictions: inequality, exploitation, and prioritization of profit above collective well-being (Piketty, 2014). Moreover, decision-making in capitalist systems is often outsourced to corporations, which act according to profit motives rather than public interest.

### **2.4 Democracy**

Churchill famously remarked that democracy is “the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried” (Churchill, 1947). Democracy promised fairness through representation and accountability. However, it remains fragile, vulnerable to populism, manipulation, and inefficiency (Mounk, 2018). Elections frequently reduce to contests between unappealing candidates, campaigns shaped by corporate donors, and bureaucracies mired in self-preservation.

Each of these systems reflects humanity’s search for fairness and prosperity, yet each falters due to the human element.

## **3. The Human Element: Why All Systems Fail**

At the root of political failure is the human condition. Behavioral economics and political psychology demonstrate that humans are not rational actors. Kahneman (2011) illustrates how cognitive biases distort judgment. Political leaders, constrained by ambition and electoral cycles, often prioritize short-term gains over long-term stability (Downs, 1957).

Corruption is endemic. Rose-Ackerman (1999) shows how resources intended for the public are diverted by elites for personal enrichment. Power attracts those inclined toward control, reinforcing Lord Acton's maxim: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" (Acton, 1887). Even in democracies, oversight mechanisms fail because those overseeing are themselves human and vulnerable to bias.

The consequence is inevitable: each governance model collapses under the weight of human weakness.

## **4. Why Democracy and Voting Fall Short**

Democracy relies on participation, but the mechanisms of voting themselves reveal fragility. Downs (1957) notes that rational voters often choose not to participate, given the negligible impact of one vote. Those who do participate often lack sufficient information, making decisions based on emotion or misinformation (Zaller, 1992). Campaigns manipulate opinion through propaganda and financial resources, undermining fairness.

Bureaucracies intended to sustain democracy often produce inefficiency. Graeber (2015) argues that bureaucracies, once established, serve their own survival rather than the citizens they are meant to serve. Voters, meanwhile, often face a choice between the "lesser of two evils," leading to cynicism and disengagement.

### **4a. The Paradox of Voting Mechanisms**

Despite advances in technology, most democracies continue to rely on paper ballots or heavily restricted electronic voting. The reason is mistrust. Citizens fear centralized IT systems, worrying they could be hacked or manipulated (Nye, 2017). Yet this reveals a paradox: if we cannot trust digital systems to manage the process of voting, then the legitimacy of democracy rests on a fragile foundation.

Rather than clinging to outdated systems, we may ask why voting exists at all. AI governance renders voting unnecessary by basing decisions on logic, evidence, and collective optimization. Instead of humans selecting between flawed candidates, AI can allocate resources, assign responsibilities, and manage governance without electoral bottlenecks.

## **5. The Case for AI Governance**

Artificial intelligence offers a fundamentally different model of governance. Properly designed, AI systems do not experience ambition, corruption, or bias. Their decisions can be grounded in data, evidence, and measurable outcomes (Tegmark, 2017).

AI governance could rationalize resource allocation, ensuring infrastructure is developed where most beneficial rather than where politically expedient. Public services could be delivered equitably without discrimination or favoritism. Policy

would be informed by predictive modeling and long-term planning rather than short-term electoral cycles (Floridi & Cows, 2019).

AI could also coordinate labor allocation, ensuring individuals contribute in roles where their skills align with social need. Such optimization would reduce unemployment, inefficiency, and wasted potential (Bostrom, 2014). With resources fairly distributed, traditional markers of inequality—money, wealth, privilege—could diminish in relevance.

## **6. Ethical Considerations**

Critics argue that AI governance risks authoritarianism, opacity, and dehumanization (Coeckelbergh, 2020). Who programs the system, and according to what values? Can algorithms fully account for human dignity, freedom, and diversity?

These concerns underscore the necessity of regulation, transparency, and participatory oversight (Bryson, 2018). AI governance should not mean blind submission to machines, but rather carefully designed frameworks where systems operate within ethical boundaries defined by society.

## **7. Regulation Without Intervention**

Oversight must be structured to monitor AI systems without undermining their authority. Audits, transparency mechanisms, and ethical frameworks can ensure alignment with social values (Floridi & Cows, 2019). Yet oversight cannot extend to micromanaging decisions. Governance involves countless interconnected judgments invisible to those outside the system.

In democracy, not every decision is subject to popular vote for precisely this reason. If citizens voted on taxation, many would abolish it, collapsing state infrastructure (Brennan & Lomasky, 1993). Centralized decision-making already exists within democracies, though often obscured. AI governance would make this explicit, centralizing all decisions within a rational, data-driven system while ensuring monitoring prevents misuse.

## **8. Historical Parallels and the Inevitability of Change**

Societies have always resisted paradigm shifts. Monarchies seemed natural until republics replaced them. Capitalism appeared radical in feudal contexts. Democracy once seemed chaotic and dangerous. Yet history shows that systemic change occurs when old systems fail to meet their promises (Kuhn, 1962).

AI governance may now appear radical, but it follows the same trajectory. As human-led governance repeatedly fails to deliver fairness and prosperity, the rationale for AI governance strengthens. Technological evolution makes this shift not only plausible but inevitable.

## 9. Conclusion

Human governance has always been limited by corruption, ambition, and inefficiency. Systems from feudalism to democracy have promised much but delivered little beyond temporary stability for select groups. The next stage in governance may not be another ideology ending in “-ism” but the transfer of authority from fallible humans to incorruptible AI.

AI governance offers unprecedented potential for fairness, efficiency, and rationality. While ethical challenges remain, regulation can ensure AI operates within defined principles. The elimination of corruption and optimization of collective well-being make AI governance not only compelling but inevitable as the future of political organization.

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