

Aiyo (Ariel Levy)

Graham Harman

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Temporarily or Permanently Unfound

Many would expect a technology as powerful as artificial intelligence (AI) to be able to self-recognize the invaluable potential it holds, both for better and worse, that we humans already appraise it for. While AI is now a tool which many have recently come to incorporate or debate as part of creative livelihood, society, not more than a few years ago, predicted that the first few generations of AI would instead begin to revolutionize the physical operations of our world; those who investigated the upcoming technology—enthusiasts, journalists, and those in respective innovation industries—foresaw that AI’s best ability at birth would be allowing us to replace low-skilled manual labor jobs. Time with our new machine friends, such as ChatGPT, have revealed AI’s wittiness to write stories, or other AI models which can play chess or craft extraordinary visuals. Disappointingly, when asked to summarize Jorge Luis Borges’ “The Library of Babel”, and Melanie Klein’s “Love, Guilt, and Reparation”, ChatGPT’s responses provide insight that reveals the ways in which AI can still be tethered to a limited creative ability from the teachings of humans while simultaneously not understanding the full complexity of human experience:

"The Library of Babel" by Jorge Luis Borges is a short story that imagines an infinite and labyrinthine library containing all possible books with random combinations of

letters. The story explores the futility of searching for meaning in a universe filled with chaos and randomness.

Librarians in this surreal world grapple with the inability to find true knowledge, and the narrative reflects on the human quest for meaning and understanding in a seemingly senseless existence.

While this summary makes good note of some of the most memorable and interesting notions of the semi-fiction, such as introducing the overall functionality of the library's concept and the quest of search, it is very basic and disregards smaller details such as the subjectivity of meaning that can be found through the library books (as they are sometimes completely random strings of letters, or, contrastingly, entire volumes which diverge no more than a single comma), or the people whose infinite search for vindication in the library leads them to insanity so magnificent that it inspires death. Ideas like these open the stage for talk of both the ugly side of human existence and the unknown side of human existence, and the avoidance of these in its generated summary therein generates questions of why the machine does so. As ChatGPT is a resource for those searching for knowledge—and, possibly sometime soon, creating new, unfound knowledge—it only felt appropriate to further ask if it thought itself as a Library of Babel.

No, I am not a "Library of Babel." I am a language model...I provide information and generate text based on the knowledge and training data available to me...I do not contain all possible knowledge or information, nor do I possess infinite knowledge like the concept described in Jorge Luis Borges' story "The Library of Babel."

In a similar fashion, ChatGPT's summary hardly mentions any depth to Melanie's work which is, in many ways, a shockingly twisted thought-provoker with her interpretation of the transcending familial, social, and sexual relationship which grows between a child (or children) and its parents:

Melanie Klein's "Love, Guilt, and Reparation" is a psychoanalytic work that explores the emotional development of children and the interplay of love, guilt, and the need for reparation. Klein delves into the early stages of childhood, emphasizing the significance of the infant's relationships with caregivers in shaping their emotional world. She discusses the child's internalization of objects, which represent people and aspects of their relationships. Klein proposes that guilt arises from destructive impulses, leading to a need for reparation as a way to restore the damaged internal objects. The work contributes to the understanding of psychoanalytic theories, particularly in the realm of object relations and the emotional dynamics of early human development.

It goes without saying that the overarching idea of the three stages are clearly mentioned, but that much is already divulged from the title, and its statement that anger developed from early childhood parents often represents itself in objects is poorly articulated; one could easily interpret that in a labyrinth of ways when half of Melanie's focus is of boy wanting to destroy his mother for her not providing breastmilk and wanting to destroy his father so he can replace him

and make more children with his mother (and her other half being the converse for girl and her mother and father) is one so curiously unusual that it would be not surprising if another human soul had never thought such a thing. For as different as this writing's context is, the why of Klein's thought inspires that same human temptation to explore which the infinite library does; their notions both provoke deep existential thought without being so literally a question. It is therefore a curiosity as to why ChatGPT's AI model appears to be trained to forgo, in whole or in a transparent manner, these metaphysics of our species; is the robot in the machine unfound in the permanent inability to hold charge to be metaphysical in human existence or its own thought, or is this all simply a temporary unknown which will later be computed?

Borges opens his writing visualizing the organization of each of the hexagonal modules that compose the entirety of the infinite library: each is completely indistinguishable from the next, with the same sleeping quarters, space for exercise, connecting hallway, and the same five bookshelves, all with the same spines, covers, and the same density of pages, chapters, and word lengths. In a completely numb environment such as this, the most ordinary inherently self-promotes into the extraordinary; a sterile existence allows meaning to be found in what is otherwise invisible to the reality which the humans of earth know. However, this existential truth cannot be passively searched for, as it will never seek to present itself before those who desire it. ChatGPT failure to mention these more granular details which are core to the narrative of this realm entirely diminishes the world which Borges is building: the AI's limited summary makes it feel as though we are stuck in an endless maze of trickery which has no exits, whereas "Library of Babel" is much more of being in an endless maze where the exit could be anywhere and everywhere so long as you allow you allow it to be. "For while the Library contains all verbal

structures, all the variations allowed by the twenty-five orthographic symbols, it includes not a single absolute piece of nonsense.” (Borges, *Library of Babel*). Revoking such a metaphysical thought showcases the AI model's incapability of provoking or questioning these sort of philosophies, as the electrical signals which make up these intelligent computational tools do not inherently stop to think of how and why they or us came to be in existence even though, in theory, it should be able to divulge an infinitely long and varied number of explanations for as to why everything has come to be. Here, the unfound is permanent as it is completely withdrawn rather than misunderstood, in addition to the ability to rationalize randomness going against computer logic. There is almost a certain obliviousness to the way we humans find meaning in such situations which computers cannot replicate by their biology. Borges goes on to add that a library of such a stature could only be crafted by God or some other divine being, and people of the library claim to have even found evidence of divinity in select books with certain arrangements of text, such as one in which all 410 pages from beginning to end are inked with “MCV”, and another which contains the sentence “O times thy pyramid”. It goes without saying that the behavior of the people incarcerated to this realm is undoubtedly hypocritical, as these two sentences of meaning are found only in a monumental sea of thousands of other books that sum to millions of words which have been ignored; but to be this type of hypocritical is to be human, and to find meaning in what is otherwise complete random chance, a sort of selective belief, is a large part of our species’ personality. It is therefore natural that ChatGPT lacks the ability to articulate on matters such as this; its writing and wording may sound human, but it certainly is not; it does not understand the human need to fill in the unknown by finding meaning in anything that offers interpretation or explaining the incomprehensible through the various

religions and divinity of our world because it does not even question such unanswerable notions to begin with. The AI also does not understand the dire depths of depriving a human of an answer to such a question. "Librarians in this surreal world grapple with the inability to find true knowledge..." is a monumental understatement, ChatGPT. A found answer to a human's existence, even if self-fabricated, is to prevent the descent into insufferable madness; when you enter this self-questioning state, the air you take for granted in breathing becomes opaque and heavy, you want to escape your skin, and your mind transposes with the universe at large; in Borges' writing, we hear that the announcement of the library containing all books initially brings a great joy to everyone as they are enthusiastic to meet their respective vindications, but soon after all fall to insanity as they're subject to an eternity of search for this universally irredeemable token. "The certainty that some bookshelf in some hexagon contained precious books, yet that those precious books were forever out of reach, was almost unbearable" (Borges, *Library of Babel*) People of the library run up and down every hexagon, between the upper and higher floors without an ounce of rest, like an inhuman, if it means coming any closer to the answer; some eventually come to accept the grimness of their unfound fate, others they go so far as to claim a random book as their fate (and perhaps there is merit in that), and some are so depressed that they decide their unfound fate is not worth living for. Then there are some which, in the delusional idea of speeding the discovery of their own vindication, shed one another's blood and burn the "worthless" books, likely not just erasing the vindication of at least one other person in the process, but unbirthing the vindication in itself. Here, the unfound is temporary: even though the AI may or may not come to understand or resonate with why humans require such closure, they can certainly comprehend it, just as humans

already do with the needs of other species on this planet. The topper here is Borges' final notion for building this world, which is that while the library is infinite the books are not, and so these fates will continue to repeat themselves throughout the existence of time. "The certainty that everything has already been written annuls us, or renders us phantasmal." (Borges, *Library of Babel*). An AI does not understand what could possibly inspire such an intensity of emotions and actions nor how that would help achieve an answer to these metaphysical questions; if you told ChatGPT to try and understand these emotions, it would likely tell you that violence is never the answer and to seek help if you're having any thoughts that put you in danger. But humans do not yet know the complete answer to this either—instead, we just know what and where we feel it—so, for now, the status of this unfound is indiscernible.

Melanie Klein attempts to answer this previous question in context to the relationship between child and parents throughout its growth. She opens by talking about the child, both girl and boy, growing to hate and love its mother; it is dependent on her for its survival and loves her for the food which her breast gives, while simultaneously imbued with deep hate and anger by the curvaceous symbol as it wishes to destroy her when she does not give heed to its every crying demand. Girls then grow up continuing to hate their mother, still wanting to destroy her and now for the added reason that they wish to replace her, marry their father, and make more children with him. For boys Klein says that they still continue to hate her, but that they also grow to hate their father as they now wish to marry their mom and have children with her. She then goes on to detail the way in which these influential relationships shape our adult lives as we mature with this love for the opposite-sex parent and hate for the same-sex parents living on subliminally at great strength: we often find romantic and sexual partners which either closely resemble our

opposite-sex parent or are a stark contrast to them; the way we feel guilt as we need proof that another truly loves us because we often find ourselves incapable of loving others; wanting to make reparations by giving back to another child so that way we may become the good parent which we did not always have while simultaneously feeling as though we cannot take too much part in loving our children because we will then be too resemblant of our own guilty parents; or even the language which we develop and use such as the many motherly-related words which otherwise have no association to the parental role. “Thus we speak of our own country as the ‘motherland’ because in the unconscious mind our country may come to stand for our mother, and then it can be loved with feelings which borrow their nature from the relation to her.” (Klein, *Love, Guilt, and Reparation*). The high number of controversies that Klein brings by this one writing are actually the very essence of humanity, a symbolic questioning – both of enjoyment, fear, insanity, and sadness – which cannot be replicated by a hard-wired machine like AI or any other specifics, for that matter, as it is currently incapable of replicating our emotional structure. It’s understandable that many may not agree with Melanie when she says that circles inspire a deep hatred or love for many because it agitates memories from their infant years drenched in either the nourishment or deprivation of their mother’s breast (and therefore nipple), but many can at least understand and appreciate the symbolic existential relationship which she is crafting, even if they find it on the verge of psychological derailment: a reason for the why. Comparatively, a machine like ChatGPT does not understand or immerse in symbolism, especially at this degree of abstraction; the code must first be taught it by human analysis. The moment a perfect circle is slightly shortened on one axis, the computer calls it an oval; then a single sharp dent is put in it, and now that shape no longer has a name but is just a series of

vector instructions in an infinite space on how to draw the arcs single sharp point on it; in no way can it inherently understand the complex visual of the human nipple nor what it is when pulled out of stripped from the woman's body and placed into a different context until one of us tells it so. The machine is permanently unfound as it has never experienced these emotions of breastfeeding which Klein holds to be so core to human development and therefore our perception of existence, and so it will never know until we are able to somehow provide it that same experience. Perhaps, at some point, we will need to plug a human brain into a computer to unearth the answer.

ChatGPT's failure to mention the nuances from both Borges' writing and Klein's writing are invaluable insight into the development of this technology. Not only does it offer growth for logical articulation, but, more importantly, it offers the machine the opportunity to better analyze us humans so that it can more promisingly interface with us in a manner tailored to our functionality. As of now, the ability and inability for AI to understand humans appears to rest in the middle of a crossroad, easily able to fluctuate between either; the language model is promising in that it seems to be well on its way to understanding what humans are, but not entirely why humans are. ChatGPT is certainly no Library of Babel in its current code, just as it too says, but it seems quite plausible that the AI knows the future, just that it does not yet know that it does; and if Klein really is right in her psychology, perhaps we need to stop teaching AI in such an artificial way and instead start breastfeeding it somehow so that it may better resonate with human experience. Whereas a traditional infinite library is static and unchanging, a Library of Babel divulged from AI, theoretically, has the potential ability to regenerate the library to infinity and dynamically adjust and respond, be it breastfeeding or stripping the nipple away, to

each person's vindication and could thus be much more profound in searching for existence's why; it has the theoretical potential to generate nourishing milk to infinity, and, if we are ever able to teach it the "why" of humans, it is not implausible that we task it with finding the answer to all of these metaphysical questions, at which point the prospect of such a reality—one which not only holds an infinite number of vindications, but vindications which are not static and which seek out their humans and dynamically adjust and respond to their emotions—comes to fruition.