



Lesson 132

2024 Mid-Year Summary

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In this lesson, we are going to review what we have discussed in our last four Youth Prophecy Group lessons, from lesson 128 to 131.

Lesson 128 – January 7, 2024

Historic Elections of 2024

This year has been and will be an interesting year for democracy around the world with over 60% of democratic countries holding elections. In lesson 128, we examined some of the highest profile elections taking place this year. A few days ago, one of the elections we spoke about took place in South Africa. On May 29th, as speculated, the African National Congress (ANC) party lost its 30-year majority (from 57% to 40%) in the parliament. Now it has to form a coalition government with other parties. There are other elections that still need to take place in Africa, the nearest one being the presidential election in Rwanda in July - where the current president amended the Constitution so he could run again. In India Narendra Modi is running for re-election; he is the leader of the right-wing Hindu nationalist party (BJP). Since he became prime minister in 2014, he has been tightening his hold on the country - like the media and the judicial system, as well as silencing his opponents. Some experts are saying he is turning India, the largest democracy, into a dictatorship. But he is very popular so he will most likely win; the election ended yesterday and although the results won't be reported for a few days, exit polls show him in the lead. As was stated in lesson 128, Indonesia had their presidential election on February 14th. Winning 59% of over 96 million votes Prabowo Subianto and his running mate Gibran Rakabuming Raka won the election. Subianto was the defense minister and a former general, and although he was the most popular candidate for president he is also accused of human rights violations when his father-in-law was a dictator. The new vice president, Gibran, is the son of the previous president who had the Constitution amended so he could be eligible for office. The election was a little rocky, and other candidates plan to contest the results, but haven't done anything yet. Today is the Mexican presidential election. Claudia Sheinbaum is most likely going to win, and she shares a similar platform to the former president, but either way Mexico will have a female president for the first time since her opposition is also a woman (Xóchitl Gálvez). From March 15-17th Russia held its presidential election. Putin won, of course, with 87.3% of the vote. Several things have happened that led to Putin securing power again, being the longest leader in power since Stalin, including the Constitutional changes and the disappearance of his opposition (for example: the death of Alexey Navalny in mid-February). The Taiwanese presidential election was held on January 13th, but the winners didn't take office until May. Lai Ching-te, the former vice-president, is the new president and Hsiao Bi-khim (former envoy to the United States) is the vice president. Lai is part of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and he wants to have a closer relationship with the West; this election further strains the relationship Taiwan has with China. Another important election this year is the United States presidential election. In November Biden and Trump will face each other again. This election has become even more interesting with Donald Trump's criminal convictions a few days ago. The last country that we looked at was Venezuela, whose election is scheduled for late July. Nicolás Maduro is running for re-election again, but he is a dictator and is infamous for rigging elections in his favor. This year he has promised to allow outside countries to monitor the election in exchange for the United States removing sanctions on Venezuelan oil. So, while many of the major elections this year have already taken place - we still have a few to go. The outcomes of these elections say a lot about the state of democracy in these countries and also about the people themselves.

Africa

Several countries in Africa will have elections this year. This will be the tightest race in South Africa since 2024. Ghana will have a new president, while the president of Rwanda enabled himself to serve a third time.

India

India's conservative leader Modi will be running for a third term in office. He is a Hindu nationalist and has the characteristics of a dictator such as silencing his opponents and controlling the media.

Indonesia

Three different candidates are running for president in Indonesia, the world's third largest democracy. The country has the possibility to return to dictatorship in this election.

Mexico

The elections in Mexico will determine what relationship it has with the US, mainly when dealing with border security. It's likely Mexico will have its first woman president since both front runners are women.

Russia

Although Russia will hold elections this year, it's likely that Putin will be reelected for another term in office since he essentially has complete control of the country.

Taiwan

Taiwan's elections will decide how it's relationship with China will continue. One side wants to stay independent from China, and the other side wants a closer relationship with China. (A third side wants a compromise).

United States

The presidential elections in the US will likely be another race between Trump and Biden. If Trump is able to win, democracy would be at risk. There are also elections being held for congress.

Venezuela

In Venezuela, the country's dictator Maduro will be facing elections. He is known to tamper with elections in the past, so a deal was made with his opponents to allow outside countries like the US monitor the elections.

Lesson 129- February 4, 2024

The Conflict between Israel and Palestine

YPG Lesson 129 is titled *The Conflict Between Israel and Palestine*. We first looked at why the Jews migrated to Palestine. Hundreds of years ago, most Jews lived in Europe but decided that they no longer wanted to live there. They decided that Palestine was the ideal place to move since their ancestors used to live there. The first Jews began to move there in the late 1800s. The problem was that the Arabs living in Palestine did not like the Jews moving there, viewing it as European colonialism, and it didn't take long before violence erupted between Israel, where the Jews all congregated, and Palestine, where the Arabs stayed, to erupt. In 1897, due to the persecution that the Jews were facing, the Zionist movement was formed, aiming to create a Jewish state in Palestine. Despite the challenges, the movement succeeded, and Israel became an official nation on May 14, 1948. (This did not end the conflict between Israel and Palestine though, only intensifying it with events such as the 2008, 2012, and 2014 attacks on Gaza that resulted in numerous Palestinian deaths.) Nearly 40 years after Israel became a nation, in 1987, Hamas was formed. Hamas is Israel's biggest opponent and has over 20,000 members. Hamas is a lot of things, including the second largest political party in the country, and a military group that was classified as a terrorist group by the United States in 1997. Hamas' goal is to destroy Israel and form a Palestinian state and have been using violent means to reach their goal. For example, on October 7, 2023, Hamas conducted a surprise attack on the border. 8,000 rockets were launched, and 3,000 Hamas fighters invaded Israel. Over 1,000 Israelis were killed, and hundreds were taken hostage, most of them being civilians. Ten days later, Israel retaliated by attacking the largest hospital in Gaza which was being used to shelter people who were displaced due to the conflict. Ten days after that Israel launched an attack against Palestine on the ground and has since killed about 25,000 people. These attacks back and forth are making life harder for women, who were already at a disadvantage when it began. On the Gaza strip, about 1.9 million people were displaced and half of those were women and girls and 70% of the Palestinian deaths have been women and girls. Hamas fighters have gone out of their way to torture the women they capture before killing them. The very few women that have survived the torture do not seem willing to talk to the press about what happened. As it is accustomed in conflicts such as this, countries are taking sides. Qatar has gained the favor of Hamas and refuses to publicly denounce them, putting them in the favorable position to negotiate the release of prisoners because Hamas will listen to them, which the country has done. Iran has publicly sided with Hamas, unlike Qatar. Iran praises Hamas for the violence it causes and supports them financially. Syria and Lebanon blame Israel for the violence while the United States and Europe support Israel. Most people across the world, however, want there to be a ceasefire between Israel and Palestine. The problem is, Gaza is holding Israelis captive and refuses to let them go until a ceasefire. Israel, on the other hand, refuses to agree to a ceasefire until all the captives are returned. As of today, there has been no permanent ceasefire.



Due to persecution, Jews migrated to Palestine which became known as the Zionist movement.



Israel and Palestine have a history of conflict since the 1800s that has resulted in unrest, riots, etc.



Hamas is a conservative Sunni Muslim group that has controlled Gaza since 2007.



Hamas staged a surprise attack against Israel on October 7, 2023.



Israel performed retaliation attacks that destroyed a hospital and began a ground invasion in Gaza.



Women are being tortured and killed. In Gaza, they are in need of basic necessities.



Countries like Qatar and Iran have gotten involved in this conflict.

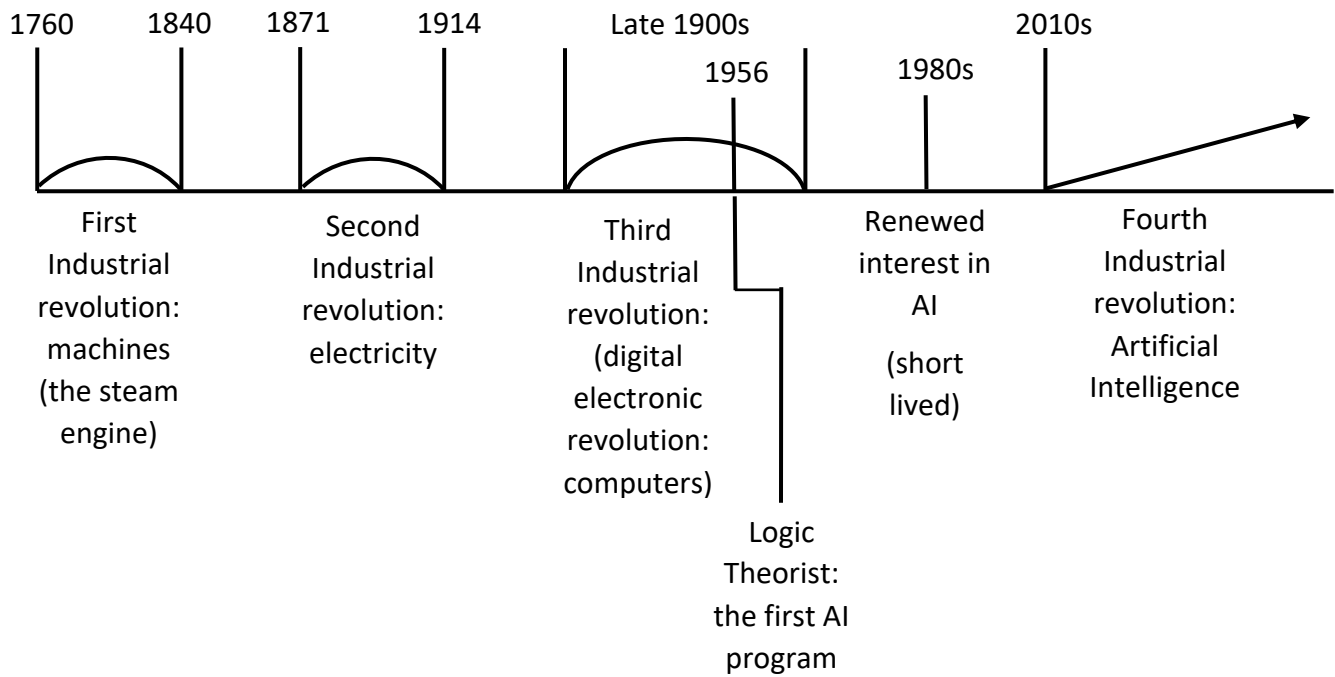


Talks of a ceasefire have been going on, but both sides demand different requirements for this agreement.

Lesson 130 – March 3, 2024

The Rise of Artificial Intelligence

The Rise of Artificial Intelligence was presented and published on March 3, 2024. In *The Rise of Artificial Intelligence*, we studied how Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been changing the world, and how it will continue to do so. Some are saying that we are living in a fourth Industrial Revolution. If the invention of steam engines can be seen as the first Industrial Revolution, the use of electricity seen as the second, and the invention of computers being the third, then the development of AI recently is the fourth Industrial Revolution. We say recently, but AI has actually been around for a long time. In 1956, the first AI program called Logic Theorist was invented - it was able to solve simple tasks similar to people. From the 1900s until now, AI has become much more intelligent some say that AI is equivalently intelligent as a dog, since it requires a large amount of training data to do simple tasks. It is able to pass certain tests better than humans, but sometimes it fails when the question is simply worded differently. One way you could test AI's intelligence is to use a chat bot. AI chatbots are one of the most popular forms of AI today. They use a technology called a Large Language Model to generate responses to questions provided by a user. However, text isn't the only thing AI can generate. It can also generate images and music by learning from existing data. For example, it learns what a dog is from pictures and is able to generate what it believes is a dog. The ability of AI to generate predictions is also being used in the medical industry. Since AI can be trained on pictures, one of the things it can do is identify objects within a picture. In the medical industry, this can be used to quickly find a problematic area on a scan/picture of a patient's body. With all these technologies that AI is enabling, it's no surprise that AI isn't always used for good. AI has been used to generate false information and deep fakes with the purpose of lying to the public. Sometimes AI doesn't even need to be directly used in order to spread false information - somebody could just claim certain information is AI generated, and because it's possible, people will believe them, even if that information is real. But disinformation isn't the only problem AI is creating. Many people will be put out of work because AI can perform their job faster and more efficiently. Additionally, AI can be hard to control. AI might be given input and produce an undesired output, but the common person can't see the progress AI makes and how it went wrong, which some say is an issue that can cause AI to take over the world.



You

are you smart?

< 1 / 2 >



ChatGPT

I'm an artificial intelligence designed to assist with various tasks, so in that sense, I am programmed to be knowledgeable and helpful. However, I don't possess consciousness or subjective experiences like humans do, so I wouldn't say I'm "smart" in the same way a person might be. My abilities are based on algorithms, data, and programming rather than independent thought or understanding.



AI can do other things besides give information, like:

- AI can generate images.
 - Prompt: spring hill covered in flower buds at dawn after a rainy night (via hotpot.ai)
- AI is also useful in the medical field with things like diagnostics.



AI has also been used to spread disinformation (sometimes even by governments) through things like fake videos and pictures in order to sway public opinion. This also leads to doubting other pieces of media - whether they are real.

Some problems that AI can cause:

- People losing their jobs because it is more convenient for a computer to perform it.
- Plagiarism - because it is hard to tell where chatbots like ChatGPT get their information.

Lesson 131 – May 5, 2024

Decided and Undecided: the 2024 Supreme Court

In lesson 131 (*Decided and Undecided: the 2024 Supreme Court*) we examined some prominent cases that the Supreme Court is looking over this year. Only one of the cases that was undecided when we did the lesson in May has since been decided, so we will look at the decision later. *FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine* is a case surrounding abortion access. The Alliance is suing the FDA over one of the abortion medication pills: mifepristone. They want the pill to be restricted like it had been in previous years, but the Supreme Court still hasn't decided. We also considered the cases *Fischer v. United States* and *Trump v. United States*, we looked at them together since they covered similar issues. These cases are still to be decided as well. In *Fischer v. United States*, a man who participated in the January 6th riot is trying to get out of the "obstruction of a congressional proceeding" charge that was leveled against him. This is important because this is also something that Trump is charged with - so whatever happens to him will probably happen to Trump. In *Trump v. United States*, Donald Trump is trying to argue that he still has presidential immunity from prosecution for what he did as president - specifically with the 2020 election and January 6th. Both of these cases impact Donald Trump and his future in the courts. The next undecided case we looked at was *Murthy v. Missouri*. This case will decide if the government's actions to limit disinformation and/or conservative content (for example: dealing with issues like the pandemic) on social media violated people's right to free speech. *Ohio v. EPA* is another case that we looked at, and it encompasses four other cases. They are still undecided. These cases stemmed from the EPA introducing the Good Neighbor Provision, where states had to propose plans to protect other states that were downwind from their pollution. When this didn't happen, the EPA introduced a plan for the upwind states to follow but they are suing saying that they don't want federal intervention and the plan won't work. *United States v. Rahimi* is another case that is yet to be decided. This case involves a man that had a restraining order placed on him after he assaulted his girlfriend. This was supposed to not allow him to own a gun, but he got one and was the perpetrator of five shootings. The Supreme Court will decide whether a restraining order on violent people affects their Second amendment rights. The case *Alexander v. The South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP* was recently decided. The six conservative justices decided that South Carolina's congressional map was not gerrymandered to favor Republicans - even though it moved around African American voters and made a swing district into a Republican one. In the lesson we also looked at a few important cases that had already been decided this year. First was *Donald J. Trump v. Norma Anderson* where the Supreme Court ruled that only Congress can decide if someone is ineligible to run for president (even though Colorado was trying to get Trump off the ballot for his support of January 6th and denial of the election). *Muldrow v. City of St. Louis* was another decided case that we examined. In that case the Supreme Court sided with a woman who was suing for workplace discrimination when she was transferred to a different job, saying that a job transfer has to disadvantage you in order to claim that you were discriminated against - not "significantly disadvantage" you, as it had previously been. Finally, we looked at the cases of *O'Connor-Ratcliff v. Garnier* and *Lindke v. Freed*. These cases were decided although the Supreme Court sent them back to lower courts after they released a statement. Both cases dealt with city government officials blocking people from their social media pages after they criticized some things that they did. These people sued saying their First amendment rights were violated. The Supreme Court said that if a government official, who had authority on the subject in dispute (and spoke with that authority) did this then yes, it was against the First amendment. These nine cases (or groups of cases) only represent a few of what the Supreme Court is dealing with this year, but they cover important topics for this Movement, from Climate change to free speech to Donald Trump.

Cases Yet to Be Decided

Food and Drug
Administration (FDA) v.
Alliance for Hippocratic
Medicine:

Food and Drug
Administration (FDA) was
sued for loosening
restrictions around
mifepristone. The Supreme
Court has to decide the
case.

Fischer v. United States and
Trump v. United States:

Fischer appealed to the
Supreme Court to overturn
his obstruction charge,
which if granted could be
used to overcome Trump's
charges. The Supreme Court
has to also decide if Trump
has immunity for charges
against him.

Murthy v. Missouri:

Since Twitter tried to limit
misinformation during the
pandemic, Republicans
claimed it violated their
right to free speech. The
Supreme Court has to
decide the case.

(Ohio, Kinder Morgan Inc,
American Forest &,
Paper Assn, United States
Steel Corp) v. EPA:

The EPA passed the Good
Neighbor Provision which
requires states to make
plans to lower emissions.
Some states don't want the
government intervention.
The Supreme Court has to
decide the case.

United States v. Rahimi

Rahimi was criminally
charged for conducting 5
shootings while under a
restraining order preventing
him from having a gun. He
claims his 2nd Amendment
rights were violated. The
Supreme Court has to
decide the case.

Decided Cases

Donald J. Trump v. Norma Anderson

Norma Anderson filed a lawsuit to remove Trump from the Colorado election ballot, claiming he violated the 14th amendment on January 6, 2021. The Supreme Court decided that only congress can enforce this, not courts.

Muldrow v. City of St. Louis

Sergeant Muldrow sued her city for discrimination when she was transferred to a different position in her job that removed several of her privileges. The Supreme Court sided with her, saying that an employee can claim discrimination if they are disadvantaged by a job transfer.

O'Connor-Ratcliff v. Garnier and Lindke v. Freed

In both cases, local government leaders blocked people who criticized them on social media. Those critics claimed their 1st Amendment right was violated. The Supreme Court set rules on whether officials can block people, and let lower court re-hear the critic's cases.

Alexander v. South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP:

South Carolina's districts were redrawn in 2020 to favor Republicans. The NAACP sued for violating the 14th amendment and the Supreme Court has to decide the case.

Official Youth Prophecy Group website:

youthprophecygroup.org

If you have any questions or comments on any of the material contact us at:

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Find all the YPG lesson videos at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeltzVajTXgSQRL-o2XOq_g

Link to YPG Zoom meetings which are at 10:00am Pacific Time on the 1st Sunday of the month:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87170293849>