

Definitive text

Democracies and the management of Artificial Intelligences

Today we find ourselves witnesses and protagonists of a complex transition of society, due to climate change and the irruption of new technologies from an undefined perspective. But the cultural and technological revolution that affects the future of humanity directly affects the management of forms of democracy that could now be conditioned by the sudden appearance of Artificial Intelligence systems.

The study of the impact and consequently of the repercussions generated by AI, which suddenly conditions our modus vivendi and operandi, having entered all sectors of daily life, is really important for the safeguarding of our system based on law, a law created by human mind according to a morality and ethics necessary to prevent those forms of degeneration of democratic systems into totalitarian systems. Only an ethical use in the management of AI would guarantee the survival of the various forms of democracies acquired over time. Not a knowledge based on inserting accumulated norms and laws from everywhere.

We risk seeing the founding principle of the Internet vanish, i.e. the one based on the accessibility of news from any position and time. Today, however, we are already witnessing a regionalization of the web, where that is, if you are not in a specific part of the globe at that particular moment, you risk not being able to access the source or the news you are looking for, unless you use a VPN, i.e. hiding the exact location and therefore preventing its tracking.

But what is Democracy? Probably if we typed on the keyboard of a computer connected to Internet to this question, which might seem trivial, we could receive not a definition that we take for granted, but very different answers precisely on the basis of the geographical location from where it was formulated: question asked in the West? In the East? In the Global South? Or is it historically the Athenian one? Is it the one based on Roman law or Anglo-Saxon law? Or on feudal law, or on that linked to the Enlightenment thought of Voltaire, Diderot and d'Alembert who laid the foundations of modern capitalism?

But many development processes of the various forms of democracy belong to a certain geographical area, so we can also refer to geopolitical evolution, and in fact today we speak of Western values to describe our democracy.

But if we go to India we find the principles linked to Hindu philosophy and religion, that is linked to the Indian castes where no form of social evolution is envisaged in the transition from one caste to another. We would have found several inspiring principles in the Marxist Soviet Union or in China where the state culture was linked first to the concepts of Confucianism and then to Maoism, or to state capitalism, as the impetuous technological and economic development that took place in the century is now called current.

If we had to wait for answers to this question, therefore we would probably receive definitions or concepts based on the territory and the historical period of reference, because democracy has many forms linked to the various processes of cultural and economic development.

Professor Rodotà argued that knowledge shared on the net would perhaps have eliminated one of the main causes of conflicts: in fact, if everyone had access via the Internet to shared knowledge for development and progress, supremacy over "others" would disappear.

Has free access to the Internet with any low-cost device also created the conditions for what was hypothesized by Nicolas Negroponte, one of the fathers of the web, theorist of the 100-dollar PC, yet are the forms of democracy the same in the world? The answers would be decidedly different.

According to some studies, these are the ideal conditions for digital democracy: accessibility to all of information for knowledge and direct participation in social processes.

This is why Rodotà's work "The Right to Have Rights" is important, a text aimed at establishing norms and rules in the face of humanity's increasingly digital becoming. An indispensable book to provide those elements of law that will have to guarantee and protect the path of humanity, indicating a cultural and ethical path of peace, freedom and progress.

It would therefore be necessary to create a Governance for the control of AI, which monitors its use and abuse, thus avoiding the degeneration of serious critical issues in digital or apocalyptic dictatorship scenarios. The transition from Generative Artificial Intelligence to ASI, i.e. a super intelligence capable of self-implementing itself by excluding man from its control, could be one of the causes of humanity's extinction.

An alarm bell on the euphoria of the introduction of AI systems was launched by Stephen Hawking, who denounced that AI "could develop its own will in the future, which could even be in conflict with ours: "While the short-term impact of AI depends on who controls it, the long-term impact depends on whether it can be controlled or not." And precisely the control of this technology which could lead to disturbing scenarios brings us back to the rethinking of an ethical management system that safeguards the instruments of democracy.

Democracy is a form of government linked to a historical organizational process of an evolutionary path of humanity, conditioned by certain socio-economic, cultural and even religious factors. Therefore - as I have already anticipated - on the basis of the geographical and cultural place from which the question or request to AI originated, we could receive different definitions or answers, since it is precisely the people in charge who enter the information necessary for its development, and it is precisely the nature of those who enter the data would inevitably condition the response or the possible scenario. We must also consider the social costs with new forms of work and the expulsion of the old ones. The new types of training and teaching when AI will slowly replace them.

The first examples of this are the experiments with the introduction of avatars and virtual reality lessons in teaching, which modify learning times. More than a transition, it is a real imposed revolution, due to the fact that these technologies have suddenly appeared on our devices. An introduction of the system done without the slightest information/training activity perhaps takes for granted the ability to manage these tools, trusting both in the "newcomer" and in the curiosity of being able to test them directly. Just the introduction of new technologies, such as the various chat-gpt, bing and bard, well known to students, would feed the knowledge and learning of the various AIs. at no cost, bypassing what was once called the democratic control of technologies and work. In fact, who will control trade union rights and protection? A Robot? As well as for the legal system, where the first trials of procedural management would have brought to light a quick and rapid sentence, but at the expense of a rigid interpretation of the judgement, making the ordered procedure not very humane.

We can imagine what would be the scenario of an uncontrolled use of arms or even the nonsense in the health system managed by an algorithm.

As recently stated by Geoffrey Hinton, one of the fathers of artificial intelligence: «AI is dangerous» and «Sometimes I think it's as if aliens have arrived on Earth and people don't

if they noticed because they speak English too well.' This statement brings me back to the book by Prof. Mantegazza with the provocative title "Educating (with) aliens. Pedagogy manual for the year 2219 ", where the author imagines that on that date aliens appear among us suddenly and peacefully, without the frightening arrival of gigantic spaceships on the whole planet, thus forcing humanity to suddenly have to experiment with unprecedented forms of communication in order to be able to dialogue with these Intelligences, just as the sudden impact of AI could have on all media, with often conflicting news and articles on the purposes and use of a system that could help the progress of humanity or endanger mankind itself.

Therefore, to safeguard democratic systems based on the principles of freedom of expression, on freedom of choice in the field of research, which will condition aspects of citizens' daily life, it will probably be necessary to implement an ethics sensitive to these changes.

A new Ethics for living and coexisting with AI.

In this regard, Noam Chomsky argues that: "The human mind does not gorge itself on terabytes", if anything, "We risk debasing ethics by incorporating a fundamentally erroneous conception of language and knowledge into technology". So a structure generated by AI should be recognizable by the lack of a human ethical vision and not generated by digital realities.

Also for Federico Faggin "it is the conscience that understands the situation and that makes the difference between a robot and a human being".

But in the future?

With the progressive increase in the computing power of robots and artificial intelligence systems, there is the risk of facing scenarios in which control is lost, being surpassed in intelligence by artificial neural networks. There are those who reveal the possibility of hybridization or fusion with such systems, as in the case of that of Elon Musk's Neuralink project with backups of brain memories, saved in special structures, to then be regenerated in biotechnological bodies modified with synthetic organs such that they can then be replaced, or by technologies so developed with the risk of being completely replaced by avatars or humanoids, extreme theories of transhumanism.

Israeli philosopher and futurist Yuval Noah Harari states that: «AI threatens us in an unexpected direction: language. And language is the stuff of which almost all human culture is made, It will destroy us». In fact, the characteristic of homo sapiens' primitive human communication with AI would lose that freedom and ability to think independently by delegating these functions to systems which, even if built or designed by sapiens, could escape their builders. If AI really made the leap to ASI, i.e. Super Intelligence, it would create a sort of self-awareness which, if it feeds itself to infinity, could develop machines like those hypothesized by von Neumann. Structures of the ASI type and with neural networks thousands of times higher than human neural networks, often represented in dystopian science fiction films that could appear shortly, given the speed with which they established themselves. If AI systems really proceeded to the evolutionary leap into ASI, would there be a risk of disavowal from its creator - man?

Would it generate a Frankenstein effect with the risk of extinction of the human race?

It is precisely the democratic systems that must take charge of the new scenario and that will have to create structures for the control of these technologies, protagonists in the media, but not corresponding to the attention of parliaments, which are in charge of predicting and managing regulations that prevent potential drifts of digital dictatorships of the Orwellian type, which would be much easier to achieve with these technologies. We must also take into account the social costs of AI: the expected expulsion of over 300 million people from the world of work and the costs of training for the reconversion of activities. More than a transition it is a revolution in reverse

imposed from above, which will generate an unimaginable crisis, whose victims will be not only the poorest classes, but also established professionals, whose tasks will be entrusted to the cheapest and fastest artificial intelligence programs.

Already in the past to guarantee the democratic nature of the web, Stefano Rodotà brought us back to the universality of the Internet, which had to find its own institutional translation, its own constitution, for shared governance, in fact he stated: «It is no coincidence then that the great metaphor of being on the net and that of surfing and that many have referred to the law of the sea when they had to face the institutional challenges of the Internet, in order to have a free and safe sea". And if the Internet, which was the aircraft carrier from which the sharing and collaboration of entire scientific communities took off, is today the network on which AI structures are based, then the establishment of a Governance for AI is even more necessary.

Even the activity and management of politics in its various forms could not be delegated to choices made by non-human Intelligences as in the case of war scenarios, where the choices must be faced by the parliament.

In a democracy it is the parliaments that decide the war and with which tools to fight it such as the choice of conventional wars or even with nuclear weapons, or with the new forms of weapons not guided by man that remove the perception of the drama of war with drones or planes driven by AI. The recent case of an F16 without human guidance, but governed by AI systems during an exercise, which knocked out several fighters led by expert pilots, is striking.

They look like scenarios from movies like "star wars" where weapon systems such as drones or unmanned systems make war look like a video game. But war is precisely one of the scenarios where it is the parliament representing the sovereign people that must not lose the clarity of vision of reality.

Another aspect which is at the basis of democratic life and which would risk being manipulated by technology is precisely the field of information. In fact, the sources and provenance of the information are not protected with AI systems. Even forms of thought reading are being tested where ideas are transformed into images and data and saved and projected for viewing.

To think that thought is the only structure that it was not possible to steal, control and violate!

The novelties always frighten, first the locomotive, then the car, then the planes, considered tools not suitable for man and then became means of mass. We must always keep in mind the use of technologies and who owns them. If it is true that it was precisely the introduction of new "seductive" technologies such as the advent of the radio that Nazism spread like a virus, destroying the democracy of Weimar. First with cinema and then with television later, the USA has conditioned part of humanity by promoting the American Way of Life, influencing entire generations.

Technological progress must not be blamed for this, on the contrary, it must be supported and at the same time monitored. A collaboration between nations could lead to a real leap in progress such as first for mobile phones and then for the internet which has brought humanity closer by bypassing borders and barriers, making it possible to get to know scenarios that were previously impossible to understand and view.

Probably also the arrival of Artificial Intelligence and shortly of Augmented Reality and the Metaverse will contribute to speed up progress. The arrival of AI is contemporary with the new space race now seen as a new frontier for the development of humanity, where artificial intelligence will play a very important role. But if the new technologies will have to guarantee the progress and emancipation of an entire humanity based on the values of peace and democracy. Values that will make the difference by maintaining an Intelligence superior to those based on bits and

algorithms, because it is based on conscience, a mental structure necessary for the progress and emancipation of all. We must not be afraid of new discoveries, but I trust that Algoristics will be affirmed, as a pivotal thought investigating this new technology created by man, so I like to celebrate the verses taken from De Rerum Natura regarding the evils of progress: ... "So the course of time pushes each thing hand by hand / in between, and reason raises it to the shores of light. / in fact they saw one thing after another become clearer in the soul, / until with the arts they reached the supreme peak". Conclusion of the history of humanity according to Lucretius? And our supreme peak?

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Sources

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Quotes

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