

# DEMOCRACY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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## **Demos**

From an etymological point of view and in light of the forms of coexistence throughout history, democracy is the "government of the people". A sovereignty, a political subjectivity, exercised through instruments of popular consultation for the delegation of representation and for the subsidiary exercise of Active Citizenship. With the digital extension of the public space, its asynchronous pervasiveness, the computing power of its infrastructures, we must ask ourselves "government of the people" by whom? Otherwise: how to guarantee citizens' conscious participation in the governance of public affairs and their own personal dimension. The development of the Information Society with the Knowledge Society has not only affected the system of economic, financial and industrial relations. It constituted a revolution in the system of social relations and therefore in politics, which registered a significant weakening at the beginning of this millennium. A weakening that has not taken shape with the development of digital computational technologies.

It was not an inevitable process but a model of unlimited quantitative development resulting from the choices dictated by the interests and practices implemented by social actors, social bodies and state structures. It is the effects, the outcomes, of the direction of this ongoing process that can be irreversible for the constitutive nature of our species and of all living beings. Constitutive nature that has an informational character from the cell in the biological sphere, to the bit in the anthropological one and in the relationship between them, as in the landscapes of the Tuscan hills or in plausible renderings produced by digital applications.

## **Polis, Market, Tribe**

An effect of choices well described by Simon Reid-Henry in Empire of democracy: "Convinced that democracy would go where capitalism led, Western leaders, in the immediate postwar period, focused on maximizing returns from this capitalist franchise rather than on embedding liberal social values into the global institutional architecture: for some years, it was precisely their domain of order. The return flow on that particular historical investment is all too evident today." of previous profit". "The competition was tougher; comforts for all have been replaced by luxuries for a few and their burdens, usually free, for others." In the form that this struggle eventually took, territorial nationalism became the antithesis of economic globalism. In the process, not only political consensus but also pluralism of values has become more difficult to achieve.' (...) 'But pluralism in its essence is both more and less than the acceptance of 'others'. It is the disposition to voluntarily surrender some of one's privileges". "Society is torn and torn."

Islamic fundamentalism was the reflection of a tribal reaction to the type of globalization in progress, in other latitudes it was populism and sovereignty rather than the armed revival of an imperial presumption.

## **The Digital Sea and the Void**

The void left by the ideological narratives of the 1900s in the definition of common sense of acting in society, in the current context of social atomization in the production processes of

value is filled by network responses, however generated, however manipulated. Answers to the question of individual sense of social action which, added up, becomes multitude and direction. The interconnected digital network and its social networks constitute a collective cognitive ecosystem that has extended the public space, has disintermediated the relationship between institutional sources and access/production/sharing of information. Its pervasiveness allows for the traceability of behavior and the profiling of consumption, with the possibility of forecasting economic, political, religious, sexual and trade union choices. It is this plot that brings out the crucial element of the current crisis of the institution of democracy: international domination.

### **States Without Territory**

The large digital corporations have a larger budget than large states, they pollute like an average state, with their computer centers and with the materials needed for infrastructure, they evade and evade taxation with their planetary dissemination and in tax havens. They have the power to intervene on the market which, in the financial drift of the economy, makes them capable of directing collective action, with the replacement of a workforce, including a cognitive one, which does not respond to any mandate, even if even autocratic. Aside from the Chinese government imposing conditions on corporations to test and perpetuate restrictions on freedom of association, limit freedom of conscience and minimize the likelihood that freedom of information and expression will form a political solidarity capable of challenging its authority .

A company unknown to the general public may apply for GAFAM integration, the acronym that represents the cartel of ICT and AI corporations in the West: Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft. Nvidia's performance on the stock market has almost reached the "trillion", one trillion dollars, +160% on the Nasdaq since the beginning of the year. Enough for a company born among friends in a fast-food restaurant in California's Silicon Valley thirty years ago to enter the exclusive club. It does not produce AI solutions such as ChatGPT, chatbots, cryptocurrencies, but microchips for artificial intelligence generators. For the AI gold prospectors, shovels and excavators are needed.

### **Commons enclosures**

There is something beyond the nature of a business model: Corporations have attempted to trade the alphabets used to produce them as patentable products. They may be alphabets related to the biological sphere, such as the gene sequences for transgenic combinations that may be sterile to create dependence on demand, or they belong to the anthropological sphere such as strings of algorithms. With the reduction of the alphabets to a proprietary availability within the liberal model, which presents the global environmental, health, social and political account, the freedom of narration is compromised within predefined standards. Moreover, the production of value within the knowledge society that lives in a complex paradigm is forced into a reductionist paradigm where the sharing and contamination of alphabets and grammars constitute the necessary condition for generating new combinations capable of responding to the unexpected. Where the interoperable pluralism of operating systems is essential for the robustness and survival of the collective cognitive ecosystem. If conditions of monopoly or regulatory choice reduced this pluralism to a single operating system with its specific applications, it would not only preclude us from possible creative developments but, in the face of an unexpected systemic problem that this operating system cannot address, the cognitive ecosystem itself would be at risk.

### **Strings Sequences Alphabets Grammars**

This has raised unavoidable questions about the forms and exercise of economic, political and social power. The availability, transparency, access, knowledge of the functions performed by algorithm strings to gene sequences, is equivalent to that of alphabets and grammars, notes and chords, colors and signs. Essential for defining the life plans of every human being in conditions of freedom.

Politics is weak in relation to finance and digital corporations and the institution of democracy is experiencing a profound legitimacy crisis in the countries that have chosen it. For this reason, politics as an expression of subjectivity and direction in the Civil Pact is called into question in a way that cannot be postponed. The factor of change that has exponentially accelerated this process has been the World Wide Web. The Internet, the network of interactive planetary networks, a collective cognitive ecosystem which, with the leap to Deep Learning and Artificial Intelligence, unfolds like a neurocerebral network, which it relates to those of our minds. In the Internet network, a multiplication of functions and relationships between the various expressive languages that produce knowledge is possible, with experiences of relational and cultural nomadism in which the regimented battalions are replaced by swarms in their composition/decomposition and mobility.

### **Virtuality vs Virality**

In a network governed by predefined algorithms, albeit evolutionary, with what discretion and autonomy what happens? This is where the problems arise, precisely due to the non-virtuality of the 'network of networks', because it is an extension of the cognitive possibilities and the production of meaningful responses. In the digital age, even more so with the developments in AI, privacy does not concern the right to be left alone in one's privacy. It means the right to consciously and freely define one's identity and not to suffer its heterodefinition. In the digital extension of the public space, disintermediation is accompanied by the full convergence of digital media, with absolute traceability and profiling of everyone's identity according to arbitrary criteria and codifications and with discriminatory consequences in relation to the guarantees of the Italian Constitution and the European Constitutional Treaty. Furthermore, as was well highlighted in the acclaimed case of the 'Russia Gate' in Trump's electoral campaign, these practices can also lead to a manipulative heterodefinition of identities as well as the establishment of fictitious identities and the implementation of actions aimed at manipulating the free formation of convictions in public opinion.

### **Technologies are Policies, Politics is Decision**

The network is not disintermediated and free, 'one is not worth one' unlike the electoral vote of every citizen, on the net certainly counts the authority but certainly the viralization power. Technologies are political and power lies in the control of their possibilities of codified profiling and predictive selection.

Artificial Intelligence is not a new form of intelligence but a component, certainly crucial of intelligence: the predictive function. Robots have nothing to do with it. Artificial Intelligence is a predictive technology, predictions serve as input for the reduction of uncertainty in the decision-making process. AI systems can be useful decision aids, they can be dangerous when they are substitutes for the responsibility to decide.

Semantic Artificial Intelligence is a combination of methods and tools to solve cases in a precise way, with a more automated data quality management, overcoming the criticalities of Machine Learning systems that produce partial results.

The reasoning process of semantic Artificial Intelligence systems dynamically combines information to answer questions and for indications even in ways that are not anticipated or algorithmically specified.

### **Awareness, Sense, Identity**

The question cannot be relativized or deferred: to what extent do we entrust our cognitive process to systems of semantic algorithms? How much more do we entrust our questions of meaning to these systems?

The risks associated with the use of Artificial Intelligence are due to "bias", i.e. prejudices internal to the coding logics in software design, so data-based analysis systems present discriminatory or underestimating results against specific groups of people. Preconceptions of race, gender, biological sex, generation, political and cultural orientation. It is about the definition of the possible hetero-definition of our identity.

Surveillance, orientation, common sense of collective action, diversions of participation in deliberative processes, control of digital data. Algorithms allow for oriented data processing. They are logical procedures which, through instructions with a sequence of elementary and unambiguous finite steps, solve problems relating to data organization and representation structures. Already today the computerized computing power allows the analysis and comparison of a previously impossible quantity of data. If the question is about the definition of gender orientation, genetic predisposition to certain pathologies and the possible probability disabling, indications, assessments and socio-health, insurance, job opportunity choices may take shape, of a discriminatory nature towards individuals. So for opportunities related to merit and prospects of success, it is true for the education sector, with selective criteria based on the precedents that can screen out new candidates with different paths and not contemplated by the algorithm. The same is true for the justice sector and the probability of recovery or recidivism.

### **The Informational Nature of the Living and Selection**

The constitutive nature of the living is informational, starting from the cells, and their differentiation in multiplying. Algorithmic strings will increasingly be the coding register with which we relate to the biological sphere and to existing and possible gene sequences. Consider the corporate powerhouses who gave birth to the Longtermists and Effective Altruism network, a lodge of powerful and agit-prop courtiers from ICT companies and academia. They have invested and collected considerable resources to define forecasting methods of coding criteria for the selection and direction of resources and investments in order to guarantee, with utilitarian rationality, life prospects, development and existence for digital individuals from now to a millennial future. Everything is justified by this end: social discrimination and eugenics are almost an automatic and logical effect. Nicoletta Prandi in 'ATLANTIS EFFECT how to save us from the digital shipwreck' asked Emile P. Torres, philosopher of the University of Hanover: "Reality shows that the connections between Long-Termism and business, politics and academic research already exist. That's it?" "Absolutely. the Long Term has penetrated the tech industry (Elon Musk is an exponent of it and the plastic representation of its principles is the idea of unleashing the full potential of the human mind by perpetuating it as much as possible in the future), there are also exponents within United Nations and many others are trying to win leadership positions in public institutions. There's more than \$46 billion invested in the long-term community, billionaires engaged: a superpower."

No conspiracy paranoia but public information for the exercise of a critical conscience.

We don't have to ask

ourselves if Artificial Intelligence can change society and the common sense of collective action, because this is happening. We must ask how politics, as a discretionary exercise of

collective subjectivity, can direct this change.  
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computers are emerging as the new frontier of digital development. They envisage a pervasive revolution, as happened with the advent of information technology, thanks to the ability to process information in ways that are now impossible. For example in cryptography and computer security. By enhancing or threatening the security of current cryptographic systems. They could help develop new drugs and new materials by simulating the behavior of molecules. They could improve the speed and effectiveness in analyzing data and developing AI machine learning models. Speed and precision for weather forecasts, with more accurate climate models, also thanks to the new weather satellites, building predictive models of natural disasters and climate change.

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## **Freedom is Informed Participation**

In the potential, therefore in the opportunities and risks of use of Artificial Intelligence lies the second ambivalence of the digital pervasiveness and of the analytical procedures of the algorithms. Here there is a further logical leap because we pass from the control of the network and its products to the substitute generation of political and ethical values. Can we externalize the cognitive processes and all the consequent choices? Can we entrust choices relating to fundamental human rights to algorithms? Can we reduce intuitions, empathy and perception as a combined outcome of senses/knowledge/wisdom, to the predefined calculability?

We must ask ourselves whether the nature of the relational and cognitive processes proper to this context allow you to seize the unprecedented opportunities. This is because digital technologies, the tools we use, social networks and their pre-established relationship processes with information, communication, knowledge, are dramatically re-configuring neural processes, our brain possibilities and cognitive processes. Our central nervous system changes throughout life. New synapses are continually forming in the brain, while those that are no longer used degenerate. This sophisticated process, known as neuroplasticity, plays a crucial role in learning processes, with functional and anatomical changes.

## **Freedom is Responsibility**

The logic of computational control, the comparative and predictive potential, the generative potential of sharing for interconnected collective intelligence, constitute an extension of the individual and social mind. Where, on the other hand, there is the externalization of memory, intelligence, thought organization, data classification, information processing, we become cognitive symbionts and, together with the responsibility for choices, we give up the exercise of a free individual and social subjectivity, we therefore renounce citizenship.

This within digital systems capable of learning and which, in any case, must relate to the principle of sustainability of their effects on nature. After the environmental disasters of wishful thinking and the presumption of an anthropocentric hubris, today we risk the relativization of our existential fullness through the transfer of sovereignty to Artificial Intelligence and algorithm controllers that do not respond to any general interest and to any democratic mandate and accountability.

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Therefore the persistence of the full mind-body-nature relationship is vital, the balanced relationship between the anthropological sphere and the biological sphere, between knowledge and wisdom. Collective intelligence through the connection of experiences, skills, allows a sharing of knowledge never experienced before and with it a public opinion that has never been warned, both a consumer and a producer of knowledge. This scenario appears to be the most important possible social change of this beginning of the millennium.

Once again we are called by an unprecedented challenge to ask ourselves the question of the meaning and sense of being human, human animals, in an irrevocable way. The public space defined by the networks of digital networks of the new media is therefore proposed as a space of new democratic opportunities and new minorities and inequalities. At the same time sociability and the social and cultural gap increase, the disintermediation of information and its opacity, which accompanies that of power. What highlights the development of Artificial Intelligence combined with Big Data and financial concentration is the crisis of the institution of democracy.

Simon Reid-Henry in *Empire of Democracy* writes:

"The problem doesn't concern populists and anti-liberals, any more than it concerns immigration, or globalization, or any other of the scourges of the moment. It lies in the different ways in which liberalism, democracy and capitalism have forged together in the post-70 era, in a moment of transnationalization and in the light of a set of common social and political-economic challenges. But where does the recognition of this leave us today and in the future?" "Democracy is a reflection of the will of the people who agree to be bound by the bond of common and civic norms. If people are angry, resentful, and confused, so will the democratic system they constitute. Forgetting this is one reason why some of the more complacent but widespread explanations of democracy's current travails see that the real threat to democracy lies elsewhere, in its tendency towards reckless excess."

Jason Brennan, political philosopher, argues that 'People have so little say with their one vote that it doesn't make sense to participate in the first place.'

### **Awareness and Netizenship**

We need awareness so that our relationship with the digital extension is functional to our human dimension for the development of a culture of shared citizenship in the digital public space, for a conscious *netizenship*. A species consciousness is needed, a responsible connection to give life and public address capacity to a social block of qualitative innovation, therefore socially and environmentally enabling and sustainable.

Here we need to understand how to relate to Artificial Intelligence and its algorithms to elaborate our relationship with the living. It is the expression of individual freedoms and of the sustainability, for our species, of the actions and effects of the development model on this small Earth in the full unfolding of the digital age which presents a constitutive nature with a double ambivalence. The problem of "bias" is crucial for a reliable AI model. It is a revision process that is successful if it is open and participated. We are all prosumers of knowledge in the pervasive interactivity of the web.

### **Prosumer**

Astutely Nicoletta Prandi in 'ATLANTIS EFFECT How to save us from digital shipwreck', regarding the entry into the scene of Chat GPT, points out "Why did OPEN AI release the app for free, which cost billions of dollars? For us to try and get from us, at cost

zero billion useful information: how we use it, what we ask it to do, what system flaws we run into.”

Deep Learning is in full coherence with digital pervasiveness therefore with based decisions on predictions generated by algorithms. Decisions that use and concern social platforms, job search, news, criminal records, distribution of advertising, access to loans, enrollment in training courses, social services and so on, listing the sectors.

For this reason, the shared participation of all stakeholders, experts, programmers, consumers, can identify the signs of prejudices, build coding processes capable of considering particular cases and at the same time contribute to the development of machine learning. For this reason, the shared availability of information and processes in place must remain public. The precautionary principle for the analysis of possible effects in space and time is not an obscurantist interdiction of innovation, but the informed exercise of a responsible subjectivity.

It is therefore important to ask and know who are the actors in the scenario of evolution digital, with what roles in the comedy of life and the living, with what powers in particular. Especially with what controls and reporting and who could force them to comply with them. Corporations and research centers must respond to a duty of social reporting also in the discretion of interventions and applications of bioengineering or social engineering.

The full involvement and empowerment of social protagonists is essential: le businesses, consumer organisations, trade unions and representatives of civil society bodies. Informed participation in the deliberative process responds to the constitutive need of democracy: political equality and equal treatment.

### **Learning to Learn**

AI solutions must verify and review models, processes and codifications of social, economic and public institution aspects to guarantee this condition through successive approximations. Josh Simons and Eli Frankel in 'Why democracy belongs in artificial intelligence? argue that “Since the policy challenges presented by predictive tools depend hugely on what those tools are used for, we need an underlying insight that can animate the regulatory solutions we develop across domains. That idea should be the flourishing of democracy. From this idea we can draw principles such as the need to establish and protect political equality among citizens, to have a healthy public sphere and to ensure that the public infrastructure is shaped and guided by democratic structures that can help us build a vision for the governance of artificial intelligence, machine learning and algorithms.”

Exercise of Active Citizenship: living and not residing as spectators in a city and in a territory, even in the extended digital territory. This requires the exercise of critical thinking.

The architrave of democratic regeneration in the Knowledge Society is constituted from the articulation of the education and training system. To recompose the natural/artificial relationship within the biological/anthropological one, it is necessary to develop ways of learning and developing cognitive processes based on the exercise of all the senses. We can think of orientation education processes with a discrete disposition, that is capable of contextualizing the relationship with experience both with empathy and with detachment: with awareness. Where academic success lies in the balanced relationship between knowledge and wisdom. A success that is not measured in 'know-how' but rather in 'learning to learn'.

### **Watch, Edit, Share**

The widespread use of open, therefore transparent, shared, modifiable systems for predictive analysis strengthens democracy, the quality of social life and the environment if included in the governance of the decision-making process and applied technology. Let's think about the experiences in progress

in the Metropolitan City of Milan: - the Agreement with the World Space Agency to use the software developed using the satellite to monitor the structural condition of all the bridges and overpasses on a regular basis; - the agreement and formation of many local administrations for a register of public spaces in order to allocate services, personnel and access time slots in a functional way; - the development of a software and a visual detector prototype placed on the cars of the Provincial Police to detect all the abusive billboards, which alter the landscape and feed an illegal market controlled by organized crime, of the largest Agricultural Park in the belt in Europe, the South Milan Agricultural Park.

Only open and participatory processes, social and digital, can regenerate the democratic field through a large public opinion, produced by the widespread practice of Active Citizenship. A public opinion capable of demanding effective, binding forms of participation and expression of democratic will, for which it is worthwhile to participate instead of the current renunciation of 60% of those entitled.

### **Inhabiting the City, Inhabiting the Earth**

We are inside the dying crisis of the institution of democracy, which is combined with an endemic pandemic in its variables, with a climate and energy crisis inherent in a model based on fossil fuels and their emissions, with nationalist autocracies that think they are acting with impunity given the inanity of the United Nations. The possibility of expressing a democratic collective subjectivity lives in a *glocal* dimension in inhabiting one's own city and in inhabiting the Earth through the humanistic background of our European continent.

The European Union is the contradictory reflection of this awareness and necessity: it has a Common Market, a Common Currency, a Central Bank, but it does not express a full and univocal democratically defined political subjectivity, both towards the financial markets and in international politics. The General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation or GDPR) is the main European regulation on the protection of personal data. the EU has approved the rules on the traceability of crypto-assets transfers, i.e. the MiCA Markets-in-Crypto-Assets Regulation which will be applied in 27 member states of the European Union, comprising a population of around 500 million people : the European Digital Single Market. The EU has started the procedure for approving the AI Act, the European Artificial Intelligence Regulation to regulate the use of artificial intelligence, which creates conflicts and legal problems with Big Tech and potentially undermines the rights of citizens of the 'EU. The European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles sets out the EU's commitment to a sustainable and secure digital transformation that puts people at its heart, in line with EU fundamental rights and values.

### **Terra Matria**

The philosopher of complexity Edgar Morin referred to precisely this ambivalence, which makes each of us citizens of Europe responsible

“So here are the problems. We are in globalization, but this will have to be overcome by the 'society of the world'. We are in development, but this will have to be overcome by the idea of a politics of civilization and a politics of humanity. We are in a state of chaos, a state of agony; but you know that the word agony means supreme struggle between the forces of death and those of life, and that, paradoxically, what can bring death can also give new life”.