



Statement Pro Human Intelligence (HI)

INTRODUCTION

The advent of the digital revolution and its most emblematic innovation, namely the so-called Generative Artificial Intelligence, require a rethinking of the conceptual boundary of Human Intelligence (HI), which also differentiates us from other living organisms which we share a basic Biological Intelligence (BI) with, and from the Artificial Intelligence (AI), which some schools of thought propose not only as complementary to human intelligence, but also competitive with it and, in some extreme cases, as a substitute. The scientific literature on the subject amply demonstrates that HI and AI share only some characteristics but not all, and the latter takes the former as a structural model; just think of artificial neural networks. However, we still do not have sufficient scientific knowledge to explain exhaustively and clearly even how the human inspirational model works, i.e. what is meant by "brain", "mind" and "consciousness". There are different theories on the subject and experimental research is still in full swing. At present, these concepts all refer to a "paradigm of complexity" that is addressed by multiple disciplines, combining the humanities and the natural sciences. Therefore, today the issue of intellectual traceability of products and services created with the total or partial contribution of AI is urgent, requiring that users be provided with adequate, explicit and prior information, i.e. enabling them to discern the differences. Just as we demand clear labels for the origin and nature of the food that nourishes our bodies, it is equally legitimate to demand this traceability for products and services that nourish our minds and our perceptual experiences.

Discernment and the obligation of transparency.

It is no coincidence that "discernment" is a concept that, expressed in various forms, runs throughout the Encyclical Magnifica Humanitas, on the theme of the protection of the human person in the age of Artificial Intelligence, published by Pope Leo XIV last May 25th: <https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/it/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html>.

In particular, the Encyclical, while appreciating the remarkable advances in technology, among which AI stands out today, and to which it does not oppose in principle, nevertheless calls for *"a moral and social discernment that safeguards the primacy of the human person, in order to ensure that it will always be human intelligence, with its conscience and freedom, that guides technical*

innovations and responsibly determines their use and limits".

Words that resonate with the secular European Regulation on Artificial Intelligence (EU AI ACT) of 2024, which states in Article 50: *"Providers shall ensure that AI systems intended to interact directly with natural persons are designed and developed in such a way that the natural persons concerned are informed that they are interacting with an AI system, unless this is obvious from the point of view of a natural person who is reasonably well-informed, observant and circumspect, taking into account the circumstances and the context of use"*.

Although attenuated in the second part of the article, a right to transparency is enshrined as a guarantee for citizens. An obligation of transparency that some major players would like to fulfil by means of software agents capable of "discerning" differences through a "watermark" invisible to the human eye. But would this option really be a solution to the problem or an ingenious way of circumventing it?

The delegation process

Despite the call for critical oversight in the use of Artificial Intelligence stated in the European Regulation, in social practice we are witnessing a rapid, unstoppable and progressive process of "delegating" decisions or pre-decisions – traditionally the prerogative of human institutions – to AI-based machines. This phenomenon does not take due account of the systematic errors made by AI (hallucinations), of the cognitive biases embedded in the training data sets and, in general, of the fact that these machines act without understanding (*agere sine intelligere* in Latin), that is, they process symbols according to formalised rules (algorithms) without understanding the meaning of those symbols, as in the case of conversational chatbots that use language. They therefore act according to principles of statistical correlation that tend to predict the probability of one string of symbols occurring after another string of symbols. To this day, it has not been proven that this procedure is equivalent to or resembles that implemented by a human mind in processing both information from within (the brain and body) and information from the outside world (the environment). Furthermore, this process of delegation is not "politically neutral" because it encourages a gradual shift in the governance of nations from national and international institutions that represent their peoples to "external" technocratic oligarchies that are difficult to control, driven by purely economic interests that often diverge from the pursuit of the "common good" strongly emphasized in the Encyclical Magnifica Humanitas.

Is it the end of an anthropocentric habitat?

Furthermore, as stated by the most critical philosophers and anthropologists, this digital revolution also tends to create a new architecture of the human habitat. In other words, it pushes human beings to adapt to physical and cultural environments tailored to "smart machines", and not the other way around. An architecture that affects everyday life, from home automation to smart cities, where the modes of interaction between human beings and the environment, and between human beings themselves, are dictated by the "algorithms" that make "intelligent machines" work, and not by the "antroporithms" that ensure the proper functioning (health) and psychological well-being of people.

The Fallacy of the Turing Test

Even the so-called "Turing Test"- devised to verify whether a machine, when prompted by a human input, is able to produce responses (output) indistinguishable from those that a human being would provide in the same circumstances - has been heavily criticized, since it does not prove a capacity for "intelligent thought" but rather the ability to produce sequences of symbols that are cohesive and consistent with a set of formal rules. The equivalence of the outputs does not prove the equivalence of the processing operations, nor, even less, the existence of conscious intentions and purposes. Just as an electronic calculator programmed to perform mathematical calculations can only produce results of mathematical operations that are indifferent to the purposes of the calculation and to the entities of the natural world to which these calculations are applied. Machines are not biological organisms and therefore, by definition, they cannot share either the characteristics of biological life (the tendency to homeostasis, reproduction, etc.) or the specific "human condition" that represents the horizon of meaning from which the sense of every symbolic production arises.

The danger of ineluctably.

The advance of this now omnipresent use of AI, supported by a very strong economic pressure from powerful international players, seems to be spreading a submissive and defeatist cultural attitude, which we define as **ineluctably** in public opinion and also among political decision-makers. In other words, a dangerous conviction is spreading about the inevitability of this evolution, especially among the young post-digital generations, which causes the critical spirit to retreat to a very defensive position according to which the only realistic objective, to protect the human race, can be to mitigate the negative effects of the "digital revolution" on the lives of communities and people with some regulatory corrective measures. This position is diametrically opposed to the vibrant appeal of Pope Leo XIV: "Disarming AI".

Cui prodest? Who benefits from it?

That is a fundamental question that is rarely explored in depth, even in the countless debates surrounding the digital revolution and AI. When we focus on this aspect, which is more fundamental than any other issue, the proponents of technological development "without obstructive constraints" argue that all of humanity will benefit greatly. However, these benefits, which give rise to enormous economic profits monopolised by a small technological aristocracy, are not equally distributed among those who work to make Artificial Intelligence possible, and have a significant impact on the ecosystem as AI consumes large amounts of natural resources (water and energy). Therefore, the "collateral damages" caused by AI puts everyone at a disadvantage. Furthermore, when we examine them more closely, we realize that these benefits are placed more in the future than in the present and are often limited to certain areas where there is a need to process large amounts of data to facilitate human decisions, speed up the creation of products and improve the provision of services; for example, text processing, interlinguistic translation, the writing of programming code; the production of audiovisual materials; the application of meteorological models, the optimization of agricultural systems; medical research in both the preventive and therapeutic fields; support for people with disabilities; telecommunications. Despite this limitation of the genuinely beneficial areas of application, the AI revolution is already profoundly affecting all aspects of the daily lives of billions of people, also creating induced needs and imposing new lifestyles, starting with a new physical appendage from

which we rarely part: the smartphone. This magical box engulfs people of all ages, opening the doors to a virtual and pleasant world, an inexhaustible stimulator of dopamine, where they spend a large part of their lives. However, since life is not infinite, what is added on the one hand is taken away on the other. Therefore, the time spent in the virtual dimension is a subtraction of the time spent in the real dimension. Do we have evidence that this subtraction increases the degree of physical and spiritual well-being of humankind? "There is a time for everything," reads an ancient book of wisdom, Ecclesiastes. Are we not running the risk that in the end there will be time "for just one thing"? To this, it must be added that this hypothetical technological progress is by no means equally distributed if it is true that about a third of the world's population does not have access to the Internet and digital devices (Digital Divide)[2].

¹ Data provided by the ITU (International Telecommunication Union), a United Nations body. <https://www.itu.int/en/mediacentre/Pages/PR-2024-11-27-facts-and-figures.aspx>

Narcissistic wound or incommensurability of the two types of intelligence?

Transhumanists often object to techno-sceptics regarding the development of AI, arguing that after the three great narcissistic wounds of history – the Copernican revolution (*the earth and man no longer at the centre of the universe*), the Darwinian revolution (*man no longer the favourite creature but a simple link in the animal evolutionary chain*) and the Freudian revolution (*reason no longer the absolute dominator of psychic life*) – this skepticism arises from a persistent cognitive bias embodied by a cultural stance that can be defined as human dominance. In other words, it is only this prejudice that prevents many from accepting a fourth wound, namely the advent of a post-human superintelligence – a hypothetical event often referred to as the "technological singularity" – which would surpass Human Intelligence in power and capacity or radically change its characteristics by hybridising human beings and technological devices (cyborgs). However, this perspective completely ignores the incommensurability of the two intelligences. A "qualitative" intelligence bound by the "antroporithms" of a sentient, conscious and mortal being, characterised by universal spiritual tensions, and a "quantitative" intelligence based on "algorithms" but dependent on an unproven reductionist paradigm according to which any aspect of human life can be the subject of a computational heuristic.

Human and artificial creativity

This is not the first time that humanity has been faced with the need to distinguish and recognize the uniqueness of living beings. Already at the end of the last century, with the birth of Dolly, the first mammal cloned from an adult cell, a fundamental reflection emerged on the relationship between original and copy, between biological identity and technological replication. Today, that same question is being asked again in a new dimension: no longer only on a genetic level, but in

¹ Dati forniti da ITU (International Telecommunication Union), organismo delle Nazioni Unite. <https://www.itu.int/en/mediacentre/Pages/PR-2024-11-27-facts-and-figures.aspx>

the field of creativity, invention and cultural production. If cloning has raised the issue of recognizing the biological individual, the era of artificial intelligence also raises the issue of recognizing the creative individual. How can we identify, protect and value a person's original contribution within increasingly automated processes? How can we ensure that the invention, the work of ingenuity, the artistic or scientific intuition maintain a clear link with their author? This initiative also arises from this need: to build cultural, legal and technological tools capable of preserving the recognition of the contribution of human beings in creative and innovative processes, so that technological progress continues to develop with respect for the identity, dignity and responsibility of authors and inventors.