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Deconstructing Artificial Intelligence

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The word “deconstruction” of my title refers to Jacques Derrida’s text *L’université sans conditions*, in which Derrida poses the question of humanities in the era of cybernetic globalisation. This text was written in 2001, before the generalization of artificial intelligence, so I use it only as epigraph, that I develop further in my paper. I will investigate AI as a work of a kind of art, that does not relieve us of the task of thinking but on the contrary obliges us to improve our reflective capacity.

The “deconstruction” of AI consists, firstly, in challenging the uncritical use of the term “intelligence.” AI is not intelligent in the sense that it is neither conscious nor capable of thinking (involved in a research of truth). Incapable of evaluating the relation of its products to the sincerity of the producing agent and to the reality of its object, AI is bound to remain an idiot: no doubt an Idiot Savant, but an idiot nonetheless.

AI consists in artificial production of noetic objects, so the “deconstruction” of AI consists, secondly, in asking what the qualifier “artificial” implies. If artificial noesis is not strictly speaking true, it is not truthless fiction, either, and luckily so, because it gives more and more often the construction blocks of the contemporary society. In the terms of Kant’s 3rd Critique, they can be analysed like works of art that display a kind of finality which is neither natural nor free but that still makes sense. To put it briefly, the matter of these works is data obtained from digitalized archives, and their form results from computation compiled from diverse programs. This production makes the “genius” (artist/engineer) redundant and calls for new forms of agency. In Kant’s 3rd Critique, the evaluation of works of art requires a specific kind of judgement, reflexive judgement, and deconstruction is a later version of this attitude. The most important task of humanities today is to understand the kind of reflexive judgement required by the works of IA: they must learn to deconstruct the works of IA. How is the scene of IA framed? Where does data come from? Under what conditions are programs written? Hencetoforth, these questions condition both democracy and educational institutions. AI is not a superintelligence that usurps our democracy but it can become an idiocy that chokes it unless we learn to impose our intelligence on it.

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