

Rage against the machine or cooperation with the machine: resistance and resilience in AI governance

Introduction

Artificial intelligence has become an integral part of our lives, changing various aspects of everyday life – from the manner in which we communicate, work, and learn, to the tools by which we are monitored and evaluated by algorithms when using media. Generative language models, which debuted in the general public on November 30, 2022 in the form of GPT 3 Chat from OpenAI (OpenAI 2022) – and this was only the first language model widely available; its popularity was followed by models of giants such as Microsoft or Google – nestled in a technologically accelerating reality. In this dynamic, technology is not neutral: its shape and direction depend on decisions made by technology corporations, governments and perhaps us, users. The aim of this article is to consider how citizens can actively participate in the process of shaping the future of technology in order to avoid the consequences of authoritarian decisions and to ensure transparency and ethical aspects of techno-development.

Rage Against the Machine (RATM): attitudes of resistance

The English terminology was used not coincidentally. As a fan of the band Rage Against The Machine since my early teenage years – today a little less because of the lyrics and more because of the music – I want, drawing on what shaped my emotions and outlook on the world in terms of pop culture, with reference to a punk sensibility, to consider two various attitudes to technology: resistance and cooperation. *Rage* symbolises opposition to uncontrolled development that threatens our freedom. Whereas collaboration means looking for ways in which we can shape

technology together to better serve society. The article aims not only to analyse these attitudes, but also to present potential actions that will allow citizens to take an informed and active part in guiding the development of AI. In the context of contemporary challenges – such as the dynamic development of artificial intelligence, growing social inequalities, the threat of authoritarianism and the invasiveness of technology – the key questions become: How much of our response should be based on criticism and resistance, and how much on constructive collaboration and co-creation? And should we use black and white glasses to perceive the world? The technological chaos and uncertainty we currently face requires us to reflect on how we engage with technology and what values guide our actions.

Attitudes of resistance to the development of technology, particularly artificial intelligence, express a deep concern about the direction in which the modern world is heading. The threats posed by the uncontrolled development of AI, including loss of privacy, increasing automation of work or widening social inequalities, direct to historical references such as the Luddite resistance movement of the early 19th century, when workers destroyed machines, perceiving them as a threat to their jobs. This reference may serve as a symbol of a technological kind of resistance – an attempt to regain control of a technology that causes changes in the labour market that can have the character of permanent exclusion from it. The dream of replacing humans with bots and robots for our benefit would thus be out of reach for certain social or professional groups. Without proper regulation, AI can become a tool of oppression and degradation in various fields. Extreme examples are pointed out by a European Parliament report entitled *Artificial intelligence (AI) and human rights: Using AI as a weapon of repression and its impact on human rights*. It analyses how AI-based technologies are used to monitor, influence and suppress opposition and dissent. The documentary presents cases from various countries where AI is used for surveillance, censorship and predicting the actions of dissidents, posing a serious threat to human rights. The report emphasises the need for international regulations to ensure that technological developments do not undermine fundamental freedoms (Ünver 2024).

Contemporary examples of resistance include various forms of technological activism. One example is the OFF Radio Krakow initiative, which was intended to be, and for a moment actually was, one of the first projects almost entirely created by artificial intelligence (Pulit 2024). The decision was met with criticism, particularly from the dismissed journalists, who highlighted the loss of authenticity and diversity of voices in the media. As former editor Matthew Demski noted: “Artificial creations are supposed to talk about culture and art, social issues, civil rights, and the needs of queer people. On issues in the broader humanities – requiring special tenderness and sensitivity” (Demski 2024). His appeal opposes the transformation of public media into a field for experimentation instead of ensuring the quality and authenticity of the message. Initiatives such as these demonstrate the importance of technology serving the public interest, rather than being used

to limit the diversity and originality of social voices. It is also important to develop systems that are in the public interest and promote social equality. Working with AI should also be based on values such as transparency, accountability and respect for human rights. This makes it possible to ensure that the technology serves everyone and not just a select group of actors.

Resistance often takes the form of criticism of the technology and its creators. It is pointed out that there is a lack of transparency, that power is concentrated in the hands of a few corporations and that AI, rather than redressing inequalities, may be exacerbating them (Ciecierski, Nogacki 2024). In the spirit of emancipatory pedagogy, this resistance can be perceived as an expression of the quest for liberation from the domination of technology – an attempt to regain control over one's own life and future. This approach emphasises the need to build civic awareness and critical thinking in order to be able to consciously oppose the negative aspects of AI development. In the article *Is it possible to rebel against artificial intelligence?* Tomasz S. Markiewka addresses the lack of transparency of AI algorithms and their impact on exacerbating social inequalities. The author notes that the details of how algorithms work are often unknown even to their creators, raising questions about the possibility of opposition to decisions made by AI (Markiewka 2023).

However, resistance does not always mean constructive criticism – sometimes it can degenerate into radical, anti-technology forms of opposition that reject any cooperation with the institutions and structures responsible for technology development. Such attitudes, like the rebellious spirit of the punk subculture, express frustration with the *status quo* and a belief in the need for radical change. This is how resistance to AI also becomes a form of expression of disagreement with a social order that allows technology to dominate humans.

Criticism of technology

Criticism of technology is a key element of resistance to its uncontrolled development. Artificial intelligence, despite its many advantages, raises concerns about the risk of loss of privacy and increased concentration of power. As Piotr Kowzan notes, the development of technology is having an impact on shaping the educational processes, particularly in the context of using artificial intelligence in educational research and considering the ethical aspects associated with its application (Kowzan 2024). Kowzan emphasises that AI can support teaching processes, but also requires special attention to social responsibility and the protection of educational values (ibid.). Many of these concerns relate to the transparency of AI systems and their impact on social structures, where a lack of control over algorithms can exacerbate existing inequalities. Therefore, criticism of the technology highlights the need for greater transparency and accountability on the part of developers to ensure that AI is a tool that supports rather than harms society.

Technology corporations that control the development of AI are often reluctant to disclose how their algorithms make decisions. Moreover, this can lead to situations where the desire to present and make the product available as quickly as possible is considered more important than safe implementation. In March 2023, Microsoft disbanded the Ethics and Society team in the Artificial Intelligence division as part of wider layoffs involving 10,000 employees. The team has played a key role in ensuring that the company's AI products comply with ethical standards and social values. Their tasks included identifying potential risks associated with the integration of OpenAI(Hawkins 2022) technology. Disbanding this team has left the company without a dedicated group to oversee the ethical aspects of AI development. Despite these redundancies, Microsoft still claims that it remains committed to the responsible development of AI through its Responsible Artificial Intelligence Office that establishes principles and guidelines for AI initiatives undertaken. The company emphasises its commitment to creating AI products and experiences in a safe and responsible manner (Hawkins 2022). The decision to disband the Ethics and Society team has raised concerns about the future of ethical oversight of AI projects at Microsoft. Critics argue that such measures could undermine a company's ability to identify and counteract potential negative impacts resulting from the implementation of artificial intelligence (Hawkins 2022).

This leads to a situation in which users and society as a whole become increasingly dependent on technology – and in a variety of contexts (I tentatively hypothesise that this has to do with cultural capital): from entertainment to accelerated generation/creation using the potential they have – while having no control or knowledge of how it works. An analogy with a modern car can be used here: its operation is managed by computers and applications, including those that may, depending on subscriptions or contracts, result in certain functions being made available or blocked. The introduction of a subscription model for certain vehicle systems has been met with mixed reactions. Many customers express dissatisfaction at having to pay extra for options that are already physically present in the vehicle. Critics argue that this approach could lead to additional costs and complications for users. Despite the controversy, the trend of introducing subscriptions for in-car features seems to be gaining ground. Manufacturers argue that such a financing model allows for greater flexibility and customisation of vehicles, as well as updating and adding new features as they develop (Hawkins 2022). The case may be similar with AI in the apps or hardware used every day, which will widen the gap in access to technology related to economic divides and inequalities.

The impact of technology on education and culture is also significant. This can be perceived from an emancipatory perspective, but also, paradoxically, from an extremely liberal, anti-pedagogical perspective – as a loss of freedom of self-determination in the age of algorithms that control broad fields of human activity, with reference to, among other things, the consumption profiles built by large media platforms. Meta, owner of Facebook and Instagram, planned to use

public content shared by UK adult users to train its artificial intelligence models. The company has assured that private messages and data of users under the age of 18 will not be used in this process (Reuters 2024). In response to these plans, the UK Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), raised concerns about how Meta intended to obtain users' consent to use their data. As a result, Meta halted its actions, while declaring that it would take the ICO's comments into account and make it easier for users to opt out of having their posts processed for AI (ibid).

In the context of education, there is a concern that AI may lead to standardizing thinking by reducing creativity and the ability to reason critically. And reaching for an emancipatory pedagogy that recognises and identifies dependencies of subordination, but also systemic fostering, which Prof. Joanna Rutkowiak once initially described as hidden – although not in the sense of a *hidden curriculum*, rather hidden, which is how I read it years later – the corporation's educational programme (individual interviews; Rutkowiak 2012). The anti-pedagogical approach, like the rebellion of the punk subculture – to which I refer in the context of the coincidence of the subtitle of one part of the article with the name of a band challenging, as one of many over the decades, systemic dependencies – rejects rigid structures and standards, promoting self-reliance and non-conformism. In this way, the critique of technology also becomes an objection to the over-automation of education, which can threaten the development of autonomous and critical thinking.

Risk of technological authoritarianism

The risk of technological authoritarianism is another important aspect of resistance to the development of artificial intelligence. As technology becomes more advanced, so does its potential to be used to control society. State authorities and corporations can use AI to track citizens, predict their behaviour or influence their decision-making, leading to restrictions concerning freedom and privacy. We can see this in China's social ranking limiting people with a lower social ranking, i.e. losing initial points due to government-monitored activities undertaken, access to high-speed rail, comfortable hotels, or other services (Spegele 2024). There is nothing to prevent democratic states, also in defence of the *status quo* or to guard order and uphold the law, from using similar methods, using AI. In the context of technological authoritarianism, it is worth noting how AI can be used to strengthen surveillance. Facial recognition systems, biometric data analysis, online activity monitoring – these are just some examples of where technology can be used to increase control over an individual. AI may become a tool of repression to maintain power through surveillance and, in extreme situations, the elimination of the opposition, as I pointed out when referring to the EU report (Ünver 2024).

In response to these threats, critics of technological authoritarianism emphasise the need for regulations that protect citizens' privacy and limit the use of AI for

surveillance purposes. An example is the AI Act introduced by the European Union (AI Act 2024). An emancipatory approach to technology development implies that AI systems should be designed transparently, taking into account human rights and giving citizens control over their data. This is the only way to avoid technology becoming an instrument of oppression rather than liberation. Vinod Khosla, an entrepreneur associated with OpenAI says that „Additional fears include AI being used to manipulate public opinion, control information, and influence elections through targeted propaganda or deepfake technology. In fact, we are already seeing Russian interference in the 2024 US election and it can get much worse with more powerful AI. This could undermine democracy and create a society where truth is difficult to discern. However, the fears around manipulation and control rely on the assumption there would be a single, despotic AI overlord, which is far-fetched. More likely, we'll see a diversity of AIs, each serving different interests and thereby preventing the consolidation of power and influence”. (Khosla 2024). It is worth remembering that Khosla, as someone associated with the development of the technologies discussed in the article, may be trying to reassure the public. The risk of technological authoritarianism is precisely related to consolidation, the concentration of power in the hands of a few corporations with access to vast amounts of data and resources. Without appropriate regulatory mechanisms and social control, the development of AI could lead to a situation where these corporations have a significant, if not decisive, say in influencing the political choices and actions of decision-makers, the economy and the daily lives of citizens. Therefore, it is necessary to develop social initiatives and grassroots movements that will seek to democratise decision-making in terms of technology – the so-called MAMAA (Meta, Alphabet, Microsoft, Amazon and Apple) control (McInnis 2022).

Cooperation with the Machine: responsible co-creation

Technological education

Education plays a key role in responsibly co-creating technology. Preparing citizens to make informed use of AI requires developing not only technological competence, but also critical thinking skills. Media and technology education constitute essential tools in forming civic competences that enable informed participation in the information society. Only through appropriate educational preparation can we ensure that society has the opportunity to actively shape the direction of the technology and thus avoid the negative consequences of its deployment (Stunża 2024). Technological education should promote both an understanding of how AI works and the ability to assess the implications of its use. Introducing topics related to technological ethics and the knowledge of what consequences the development of AI may bring into curricula will help to build a more informed society that can actively participate in shaping the future of technology.

In the context of education, it is also crucial to promote the so-called competences of the future – i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes from intertwined key areas – that will be necessary in the changing world of work (see, inter alia, Włoch, Śledzińska 2019). AI and automation are having a great impact on the labour market, so education should emphasise developing qualities and skills such as creativity, adaptability, collaboration, and problem solving. This kind of competence will enable individuals to better adapt to dynamic changes and to take advantage of the opportunities presented by technological developments.

Technological education should also promote an emancipatory approach – developing social awareness and critical thinking concerning technology, enabling individuals to make informed decisions about the use of AI. It is only through proper education that we can be sure that society will be able to co-create technologies in a way that serves everyone and not just selected interest groups. Furthermore, education should include aspects related to the responsible use of technology, such as privacy protection and the ability to recognise disinformation.

Co-creation of technology with various stakeholders

For AI collaboration to be truly constructive and democratic, it is necessary to involve a diverse group of stakeholders – from technology developers to end users, as well as community organisations, regulators and educational institutions. This approach allows diverse perspectives and needs to be taken into account, leading to more equitable and inclusive technology solutions. Working with various stakeholders also means that trust and mutual understanding must be built. Transparency in the technology development process, open communication concerning the opportunities and limitations of AI, as well as a willingness to make changes in response to user feedback are key elements that can help build sustainable partnerships between various groups. This makes it possible to jointly develop technologies that will respond to real social needs and contribute to improving the quality of life. Interestingly, like Khosla quoted above, Bill Gates also draws attention to these issues. In the article *The Age of AI has begun* he emphasizes that the development of artificial intelligence technology requires broad cooperation across different sectors and the engagement of the global community in order to effectively shape the new era that this technology is ushering in. Gates points to the crucial role of governments and philanthropic organizations, arguing that market forces do not always deliver products that serve the poorest or address the most pressing social problems. Therefore, in his view, it is essential for these institutions to collaborate, enabling the use of AI to reduce social inequalities and foster development where innovation is most needed (Gates, 2023). Gates also highlights the importance of cross-sector cooperation, particularly in areas such as healthcare, education, and combating climate change, which will gain new opportunities for advancement through AI. In his vision, effectively harnessing the potential of this technology

requires the involvement of multiple sectors and international dialogue so that AI regulations are balanced and serve the global good. The AI era described by Gates is a time when the success of the technology will depend on cooperation among governments, the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and the international community (ibid.). When thinking about grassroots, civic oversight of the development and impact of the use of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, it is useful to invoke high-powered personalities among technology developers.

Responsible innovation

Collaboration with technology should be based on the idea of responsible innovation – an approach that assumes that any new technology should be assessed in terms of its impact on society, the environment and the economy. This is very much in line with the ideas mentioned by Gates. As shown by the results of a systematic literature review by Rob Lubberink and colleagues show, responsible innovation includes practices such as stakeholder engagement at early stages of the process and deliberative forms of governance to guide technology development ethically and socially (Lubberink et al. 2017). Responsible innovation requires not only an assessment of the benefits that AI can bring, but also of the potential risks and threats associated with its implementation.

Moving forward, let us reach out once again to Khosla. He points to the need to implement measures such as a universal basic income and other forms of social support to prevent the potential negative effects of automation and ensure that the benefits of AI development are evenly distributed across society (Khosla 2024). An important element of this approach is the precautionary principle, which, as Hans Jonas, whom the Institute of Civil Affairs cites in Hanna Schuda's article, points out, imposes an ethical obligation on us to anticipate and take into account the potential effects of technologies, especially in the face of uncertainty about their safety and ethicality (Schudy 2021). If there is any doubt about these aspects, extreme caution should be exercised and appropriate safeguards put in place.

Challenges and the future of AI: the balance between resistance and collaboration

Faced with the rapid development of artificial intelligence, it is crucial to understand that both resistance and collaboration have their place in shaping the technology. Resistance – understood as the critical analysis and expression of concerns about potential risks – helps to detect problems that may arise with the development of AI, such as the aforementioned loss of control over algorithms, the deepening of social inequalities, the risk of technological authoritarianism or radical and rapid changes in the labour market and in civil liberties and rights. Whereas, collaboration

provides the opportunity to participate in the design and implementation process of the technology, allowing for a more informed, inclusive and pro-social approach that takes into account the needs of various social groups and minimises the risk of negative impacts of the technology. The future of AI requires a balance between these two strategies so that the technology can evolve in a way that is safe, ethical and serves the public interest. It is important that both resistance and cooperation are carried out in a constructive manner, with a view to long-term social benefits, sustainable development and the pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

Civil society has an important role to play in shaping the future of AI. NGOs, social movements, and citizens' initiatives can work to ensure that the development of AI is consistent with democratic values and serves the public interest. Civil society can support the process of shaping AI by promoting appropriate regulation, organising educational campaigns and raising public awareness of AI risks and opportunities. Educating and involving citizens in decision-making processes regarding the development of technology is crucial to avoid AI becoming a tool of control instead of an instrument to promote freedom and prosperity.

Conclusion

Contemporary developments in artificial intelligence raise questions concerning how to ensure that technologies serve the common good and not just the interests of a select few. The role of civil society, technology education and appropriate regulation cannot be overstated. It is necessary to build public awareness, develop future competence and promote ethical standards to ensure that artificial intelligence contributes to fair, sustainable development. In the coming years, how we approach the shaping of AI will be crucial to our society, economy and culture. Therefore, both resistance and cooperation must be considered as complementary strategies that together can contribute to creating technology that serves all of humanity. Developing cross-sectoral cooperation to enable an integrated approach to social and economic problems will also be key. International cooperation and the exchange of good practices between countries will be important in terms of creating global standards for AI development. It is also important that policymakers, technology developers and the public work together to create appropriate control mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of AI.

In addition, it is essential to continue research on the impact of AI on various aspects of society and on strategies to minimise the potential risks associated with the technology. In particular, the focus should be on developing tools that promote inclusivity and reduce social inequalities so that AI can be used as a vehicle for positive change. Only through the right combination of critique, collaboration, and public engagement is it possible to create artificial intelligence that will support the development of society as a whole, contributing to a just, sustainable and safe world.

In the spirit of emancipatory pedagogy, albeit with references to anti-pedagogic and punk resistance, this critique is an attempt to liberate from the dominance of technology and to encourage reflection on what values and goals should guide its development. Demands such as the right to audit algorithms, the development of ethical guidelines for the use of AI, and the democratisation of decision-making concerning its use are examples of attempts to regain control of the technology. These are steps to ensure that AI serves the public interest and not just corporate profits. And this is not highfalutin empty talk, especially if one looks at the transformation of OpenAI, the creator of GPT Chat, from a non-profit organisation to a company focused on profit (Reuters 2024b).

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Summary

Rage Against the Machine or Cooperation with the Machine: Resistance and Resilience in AI Governance

The article analyzes two attitudes towards artificial intelligence: resistance and cooperation. In the context of AI's rapid development, the author considers how citizens can participate in shaping technology to prevent negative outcomes associated with technological authoritarianism and lack of transparency. Contemporary initiatives expressing societal concerns are presented, along with actions aimed at responsible technology use. The article discusses

the role of technological education and legal regulations to ensure AI development serves the public good.

Keywords

artificial intelligence, technological resistance, AI cooperation, AI ethics, technological regulation, technological education, technological authoritarianism, responsible innovation