

Wired Next Fest Trentino: the empathy of algorithms

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Tonight the talk by Paolo Traverso and Paolo Benanti in Piazza Malfatti at Rovereto

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“There is a third way for Artificial Intelligence, besides that of the U.S. and China: the European way, in which also Fondazione Bruno Kessler is actively collaborating, and which does not only aim to make neural networks more powerful but also to take into account regulations and sociological aspects in order to be increasingly useful for the good of people.”

Paolo Traverso, Director of Strategy and Development at **Fondazione Bruno Kessler** – an Italian organization pioneering in research on Artificial Intelligence – spoke this evening in Piazza Malfatti at Rovereto at the **Wired Next Fest 2023**, the festival dedicated to innovation, technology, science and

culture. Discussing with **Paolo Benanti**, Professor of Technology Ethics at the Pontifical Gregorian University (participating virtually due to today's public transportation issues), and answering questions from Wired director Federico Ferrazza, Traverso thoroughly explored the topic of integrative Artificial Intelligence.

““We will need,” Traverso emphasized, “an Artificial Intelligence capable of learning from both data and models, and to fuse them together, as well as a system in which there is interaction between machines and people and in which the informed expertise of humans is critical. A classic example is the health care field, where being able to have billions of data is valuable but physicians' knowledge is essential. In Trentino we have artificial intelligence applications for healthcare.”

During the evening, space was also given to present the FAIR system initiative dedicated precisely to the field of integrative artificial intelligence: “This year, FBK has launched – together with CNR, which is the lead partner, and numerous universities and other national public and private partners – a new system initiative that is part of the PNRR-Next Generation EU program: the FAIR Foundation, an acronym that stands for Future Artificial Intelligence Research. Fondazione Bruno Kessler will have an important responsibility, based on research conducted over the past 35 years in various AI verticals: to coordinate and lead the Spoke dedicated specifically to integrative artificial intelligence. Our beacon will be, as always, to build first and foremost an AI that meets social rules and needs and is aimed primarily at the good of people.”

There were also many questions about ethics and ChatGPT. Paolo Benanti pointed out that to talk about ethics there needs to be an appropriate means to an appropriate end but in the case of ChatGPT, we lack the knowledge of the end: ChatGPT does not know where it is going. It is not meant to give answers but to entertain the user in a dialogue, line after line. Artificial intelligence should be treated with caution, as the pharmacist treats a drug since, at the wrong dose, it can become a poison.

“ChatGPT’s answers,” Traverso said, “are always very engaging however they also have limitations. I would say that ethics requires not only impartiality but also reliability. There are also other issues such as inclusiveness: as for statistics, it is as if minorities did not exist. In addition to these, there are the problems of social, cultural and gender biases. The system represents the biases of all the material with which it was trained. Finally, you also have to think about sustainability because you need enormous computational power to make it work.”

Paolo Traverso

Director of Strategy and Development at FBK, author and co-author of numerous scientific articles and two books on AI and Automatic Planning. He has directed the FBK ICT Research Center, is a EurAi Fellow, member of the Scientific Advisory Board of DFKI, Spoke Leader of the “FAIR – Future Artificial Intelligence Research” (PNRR) national project, coordinator of the “ICT-49 AIPlan4EU” EU project and FBK leader for the VISION, TAILOR and HumanE AI networks of excellence. He was Chair of the Strategic Committee of the EIT Digital Italian node.

Paolo Benanti, Professor of Ethics of Technologies at the Pontifical Gregorian University. Born in Rome in 1973, Paolo Benanti is a Franciscan of the Third Order Regular – TOR – and works on ethics, bioethics and ethics of technologies. In particular, his studies focus on the management of innovation: the Internet and the impact of the Digital Age, biotechnology for human improvement and biosafety, neuroscience and neurotechnology. As he writes, “I try to focus on the ethical and anthropological significance of technology for Homo sapiens: we are a species that has inhabited the world for 70,000 years, transforming it; the human condition is a techno-human condition....” At the Pontifical Gregorian University, he received his licentiate in 2008 and his doctorate in moral theology in 2012. The doctoral dissertation entitled “The Cyborg. Body and Corporeality in the Age of the Posthuman” won the Belarmino – Vedovato Prize. Since 2008 he has been a lecturer at the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Theological Institute of Assisi and the Pontifical Leonian College in Anagni. In addition to institutional courses in sexual morality and bioethics, he works on neuroethics, ethics of technologies, artificial intelligence and the posthuman. He served on the Artificial Intelligence Task Force to assist the Agency for Digital Italy. He is a corresponding member of the Pontifical Academy for Life with a particular mandate for the world of artificial intelligence. In late 2018, he was selected by the Ministry of Economic Development as a member of the group of thirty experts tasked at the national level with developing the national strategy on artificial intelligence and the national strategy on shared ledger and blockchain-based technologies.

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- Recording of the talk with the participation of Paolo Traverso:
<https://www.wired.it/video/watch/il-meglio-del-wired-next-fest-trentino-2023-empatia-algoritmi>

AUTHORS

- Viviana Lupi