

OPEN LETTER: AN INVITATION IN DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY

Maurício Garcia, November 28, 2026

Scenario

In a few years, less than ten, artificial intelligence will perform most of the tasks we do today. Agricultural and industrial production will be largely automated. Basic survival needs, such as food, health, and housing, will be met at an ever-decreasing cost. Much of the so-called "office work" will be replaced by workflows. Justice will be conducted by AI, from petitions to judgment. Autonomous vehicles will become more common.

The day will come when work will be redefined; it will cease to be an obligation and will become a choice. Those who work will do so out of curiosity or a desire to contribute, no longer out of necessity for survival. But, since work has always been linked to people's identity, it will be necessary to find purpose elsewhere. The question "what do you do?" will take on a different meaning. Perhaps some people will even pay to work.

What if work ceases to be the primary source of income, society will have to reorganize itself to define how people will access what they need. Alternatives include universal basic income, taxation on computing power, and AI dividends distributed to the population.

Art, sports, spirituality, curiosity, tourism, community life, meditation, and self-knowledge will become more necessary. Furthermore, the desire to go out and socialize will continue to exist. This need was acquired over thousands of years of evolution and will not be eliminated. However, there are evident risks, such as boredom, isolation, and the replacement of human relationships with artificial companions and chemical dependency.

Schools

Children will continue to go to school. There will be moments of socialization with peers, but instruction will be mediated by screens and AI. Teachers, as we know them today, will cease to exist. In their place, there will be human facilitators, responsible for integrating and supervising students, but with the support of information and scripts produced by AI.

Young people and teenagers will also continue to attend schools and colleges, with the same focus on socialization. However, the courses will be different from the current ones, since many professions that exist today will cease to exist. The focus of universities will no longer be on training for work, but on training for life in society. There too, professors will give way to mentors and, in some cases, may disappear completely. The greater the maturity of the students, the greater the possibility of AI replacing human supervision.

In higher education, this change will not occur equally across all courses. Those involving only mental activities, such as law and administration, will be the first to be impacted. Those requiring physical manipulation, such as nursing and physiotherapy, will come later. And within the same profession, there will be impacts at different paces. For example, in medicine, triage, anamnesis, interpretation of exams, diagnosis, and treatment will be done by AI. But the automation of the physical examination, including activities such as palpation, percussion, auscultation, and olfaction, will come later.

Companies

On another front, the school will assume a less visible role. It will be the place where, from an early age, those few who will be called to the world of work are identified, since only a tiny fraction of the population will be selected, either to supervise machines or to create new ones and improve them.

This fraction will be made up of individuals whom we currently classify as gifted or highly skilled. The more AI develops, the more rigorous this selection will be. In these individuals, mathematical and computational talent will be essential, but not sufficient. A holistic vision and the ability to connect knowledge from different areas, scenarios, and historical moments will be equally important. Only a few will have these combined capabilities.

In this way, companies will have fewer people working, with teams of people deeply knowledgeable in technology and society. A large part of the current leadership, from executives to board members, will be replaced by a new generation. It will no longer be possible to delegate technology and, at some point, many CTOs will wonder why they need a CEO.

Concentration

This selection will produce a new social stratification, based on cognitive and connective capacity. Origin, capital, and profession will lose the weight they have had until now. It will be a meritocracy taken to the extreme, potentially dystopian, with increasingly early diagnoses and forms of cognitive enhancement.

Furthermore, only two countries will dominate the technological and AI landscape: the USA and China. Although initiatives exist in other countries, none of them will be able to rival these two powers. And within these countries, a few companies will concentrate even more power.

These few companies will be the technological base of other industries, such as pharmaceuticals, agribusiness, financial services, media and communication, fuels, energy, and transportation. All these industries will depend on the infrastructure, models, and platforms of a handful of American and Chinese technology companies. Thus, a new layer of power will be formed above the traditional sectors, and whoever controls AI will dictate the terms for those who use it.

Information and Democracy

Nation-states tend to lose strength in the face of this concentration. Countries that do not produce cutting-edge AI will occupy the position of consumers of technology and suppliers of data, energy, minerals, and food. Society will need to strengthen its institutions and mechanisms to preserve its independence.

After all, if AI is present in education, justice, and access to information, whoever controls it will shape the very way people think. Democracy presupposes citizens capable of deliberating autonomously. When this deliberation is mediated by a few models whose criteria are not public, this autonomy can be compromised.

New role of education

Technology does not determine the future alone. It opens up possibilities, but the distribution of abundance, the limits of concentration, and the place reserved for human beings will depend on political choices. Education, which in the described scenario seems to lose its traditional function, may be precisely the space where these choices begin to be made. Educating for life in society means, above all, educating people capable of deciding what kind of society they want to build with AI, and not just adapting to the one that is handed to them.

This is why I decided to dedicate a good part of my time to training a new generation of teachers. Empowering them to use AI in their daily lives is just the starting point of this mission. The purpose is to prepare these new teachers to educate a youth capable of preserving one of society's most precious assets: democracy.

I invite all who share this thought to join this mission of building a new world, where the abundance produced by machines belongs to everyone and where decisions about the future remain in the hands of citizens capable of thinking for themselves.

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