

The metaphysical project of digital worlds

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Abstract

We are talking more and more, in an increasingly strategic sense, about our digital worlds: our new digital realities, artificial intelligence systems, cultures, and economies of digitalisation.

This is a sign that we are giving digital reality a strategic meaning. If we relate to domains and categories, we are progressively talking about digital economics and digital anthropology: digital culture, governance, ethics, digital systems, and digital humanities.

At the same time, this is also an indication that our new digital existence is changing precisely the strategic meanings of our acts of knowledge and action.

Our world will be different; we will grow to be different, and there is an urgent task to understand this new situation of our ways of being, thinking, and acting.

Speaking of metaphysics, we all know that this idea has a long tradition in philosophical and theological thought. Its primary meaning was to think beyond the limits of a direct material reality. Metaphysics always starts from the idea of an exploratory thought, which goes beyond the limits of an immediate reality. But the primary meaning of metaphysics has always been enriched by Arab and European thought. At the moment, I believe that metaphysics provides a space to explore the deeper meanings of our lives and to understand our ways of thinking and being in our worlds, both at home and abroad.

I believe that, in this sense, metaphysics expresses the space of thought that extends and acts between these two decisive limits for us as humans: our inner life and the world of meanings beyond our material reality.

At the same time, I believe that digital worlds reintroduce a systemic relationship with reality. By combining processes specific to circular systems with processes specific to exploratory open systems, artificial digital worlds confront us with new metaphysical challenges. We must put our inner lives at stake and gain meaning in this new systemic paradigm.

Metaphysics is a strategic gesture that I can employ to think, in a fundamental sense, about the meanings of reality and life, in congruence with the new systemic challenges posed by accelerated digitalisation.

This conference offers me the opportunity to draw on two fundamental figures in Arab and European thought: Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd. In this metaphysical exercise, I will start with the ideas of these two great thinkers regarding necessity, possibility, contingency, causality, and accident. Using these ideas, I will explore the possibilities of a metaphysical exploratory discourse of the digital existential condition in which modern humans of knowledge find themselves at the moment.

Starting from these ideas, I will explore the meanings of automorphism and isomorphism in agentic digital systems, with implications for the levels of discourse and mentality. These two systemic dimensions have decisive effects on how we will think about new metaphysics and existentialisms in relation to projects of reflexive analysis of inner life and our human condition.

Keywords: Digital Metaphysics, Avicena, Averroes, Modality, Contingency, Digital worlds