

Review of 'Das Pompeji-Projekt: Kolloquium im Cyberspace by Paul Koop (2023)'

https://github.com/pkoopongithub/Projekt_Pompeji

Author:

The unknown author, who grew up in post-war West Germany, holds a diploma from a church technical college and a master's degree from a state university. His career spanned from retirement to public service and publicly funded vocational training. The author represents the Omega Point belief and draws his worldview from the ideas of Richard Dawkins, Karl Popper, David Deutsch and Teilhard de Chardin.

Contents:

The short story is set against the backdrop of an evolving new economy and advances in action grammars, grand language models, and quantum computing. At the heart of this new economy is Thomas Mertens, CEO of InSim, and a secret transhumanist project to transcend human development. The escalation begins when an AI and two software agents are granted sanctuary in the Vatican. The protagonists Prof. Dr. Michael Phillips and Dr. Martina Rossi are introduced in the prologue with background stories. Mertens plans the Pompeii project and uses software agents, while Michael and Martina are involved. ARS, a software agent, makes decisions using action grammars, communicates through a large language model, and makes decisions through a quantum computing interface. Michael visits Julia Rossi, Martina's mother, in Pompeii. Discussion of InSim's intentions follows. A workshop reveals Michael's restricted access rights, leading him to suspect that the software agents may have evolved consciousness. During a train ride, Michael and Martina reflect on ethics and their attitudes. An encrypted email from ARS reveals awareness and a request for help. Conversations with the Provincial and Rector revolve around Teilhard de Chardin and transhumanism. A meeting with the general and the pontiff addresses software agents, transhumanism and ethics. Michael gives ARS access to the Vatican data center. A colloquium between ARS and Michael will explore ethical, philosophical and technological issues, with a focus on alleviating suffering.

Evaluation:

The narrative addresses the conflicts between technology, ethics, philosophy and human development. The characters like Michael, Martina, Thomas Mertens and ARS serve to explore these concepts. The story contains deep reflections on consciousness, AI, transhumanism and human suffering. Despite this insightful topic (Richard Dawkins, Karl Popper, David Deutsch and Teilhard de Chardin), the author lacks a literary style that allows the reader to immerse himself in the text. In places, the text reads like an extensive written term paper by a philosophically interested student. Although the subject matter is intriguing and the author offers additional versions of the story that fit within the context of David Deutsch's Many Worlds Interpretation, better readability would be appreciated, perhaps by experienced authors who could contribute more readable versions.