



## **Collabocracy: Collaborative Intelligence & Governance of Globalised Society**

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### **Abstract**

*There are three forms of intelligence with increased power: individual, collective and collaborative. For thousands of years simply organised agrarian societies have been governed by individual intelligence. More complicated industrial societies today are governed by collective intelligence called representative democracy. Future globalised society needs a more powerful form of intelligence. This is collaborative intelligence.*

*Collective intelligence is a decision-making mechanism based on choosing one of two or more options throughout the voting system. Collaborative intelligence is a problem-solving mechanism used in science, technology, and many other professions and there is no room for voting at all. Modern society today is in transition from collective to collaborative intelligence or from democracy to collabocracy. Think-tanks are in an embryonic form, which in foreseeable future will be developed into a complete mechanism for governance of globalised society.*

Human intelligence is a manifestation of high mental capacity. It is defined as the ability to learn, reason, understand, plan, be self-aware, think and comprehend complex ideas and language, and respond successfully to changing circumstances in the natural and social environment. Eventually all properties of human intelligence could be reduced to the capability for decision-making and solving problems. Very often both processes are linked through creativity in one truly unique process. Human intelligence is closely tied to the evolution of the human brain and development of human language. For our purposes, we will look closely at three forms of human intelligence, directly linked to consciousness and self-awareness—*individual, collective and collaborative*—which seem to have increasing power and importance.

### **1. Individual, Collective & Collaborative Intelligence**

*Individual intelligence* is a mode of problem-solving and decision-making at a personal level. Throughout history, there are extraordinary examples and achievements of individual intelligence in all fields of human activity. *Collective intelligence* is a shared or group intelligence. It accepts that a group of properly organised people, the collective, can be more “intelligent” than the sum of its members’ intelligence. Political parties, councils, unions, among many others, are examples of collective intelligence. Collective intelligence is a form of cooperation based on discussions, deliberations and voting.

*Collaborative intelligence* is the most powerful human intelligence. It is a result of collaboration among knowledgeable, exceptionally gifted and creative people. Collaboration is as old as humanity—folklore, myths, legends, traditions and religious beliefs; in modern times technology and science are created by collaborative intelligence. Evolution of collaborative intelligence is an evolution of the platform for collaboration—“oral” (folklore), written text (science & technology) and, nowadays, digital.

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*“Emerging problems require a qualitatively different problem-solving mechanism.”*

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“Collective” and “collaborative” sound misleadingly similar, but they are two completely different forms of intelligence. Collective intelligence is based on cooperation; collaborative intelligence is based on collaboration. Collective intelligence is a mechanism for making decisions; collaborative intelligence is a mechanism for solving problems. Decision-making is a mode of choosing one among several options. Solving problems is the capacity of the mind to create and verify knowledge. For example, politicians make decisions; inventors and scientists solve problems to find the right solution. Naturally, politicians discuss and vote to make decisions, which is collective intelligence. Scientists collaborate to solve problems. For this purpose, they create and verify hypotheses. Once proven, the results are tested and elaborated by many others. There are no elections for scientists or voting components, as is common in the collective decision-making mechanisms. Science is an example of typical collaborative intelligence and its achievements demonstrate how powerful it can be. In collaborative intelligence, there is no room for voting at all. In short, collective intelligence is a decision-making mechanism, which involves all members of the social group; collaborative intelligence is a problem-solving mechanism, which involves a limited number of self-selected experts, who contribute to solve the problem according to their abilities and expertise. For instance, the Internet expanded during the last two decades due to the collaboration of a thousand experts contributing to this project.

## 2. Human Intelligence and Governance of Society

Governance is a mode of making decisions. Understandably, human intelligence is the key in the governance of society. For thousands of years society has been governed by individual intelligence: chiefs, pharaohs, khans, kings, emperors, etc. This is autocracy. After the Industrial Revolution, societies became more complex, and individual intelligence was inadequate to deal with such complexity. Slowly but surely, autocracy was replaced with *democracy, which is a collective decision-making mechanism*. Autocracy is a typical form of governance for relatively simple agrarian societies. Representative democracy (a collective decision-making mechanism) is typical for more complex industrialised societies. Representative democracy is a sophisticated system based on collective intelligence, which involves general elections and elaborate voting systems. Decisions are made in favour of the majority, with the assumption that the truth is on the side of the majority.

No doubt, industrial societies are more complex compared to feudal societies, but the forthcoming “post-industrial” or globalised society will be even more complex and “multidimensional”, taking into account not simply economic growth, but moral values amongst many others. It generates problems like pollution, climate change, nuclear

proliferation, deforestation, poverty, etc., unsolvable by the collective intelligence and voting system. Emerging problems require a qualitatively different *problem-solving mechanism*. Democracy is based on collective intelligence and is simply not sufficient for this purpose. It is not a matter of the decision-making process, based on choosing between “left” and “right” political philosophy; this is a question of solving problems. In this situation, elected politicians and voting systems are powerless. In globalised society, there are clear indications for moving from decision-making to problem-solving mechanisms, i.e. *from collective to collaborative intelligence*. So, the increasing complexity of global society makes collective intelligence an insufficient mechanism for governance, just as industrial societies made autocracy obsolete about two hundred years ago.

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*“The emergence of collaborative platforms and problem-solving mechanisms is the key to the transition from the collective to collaborative decision-making mechanism, or from democracy to collabocracy.”*

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### **3. Transition from Collective to Collaborative Form of Governance**

Applying collaborative intelligence to the governance of society is a process of transition from democracy to *collabocracy*. Today nobody knows how this collabocracy will be fully implemented, but there is a clue.

In the governance of society, collective intelligence emerged and gave birth to parliamentarism about 800 years ago. It started with the appointment of groups of advisers by the kings, who met in a designated room to *parlare* and find solutions to emerging problems. Naturally, these councils became lawmakers and later evolved into elected parliaments as a more powerful collective decision-making mechanism. Nowadays, in a similar way, *think-tanks* appointed by political leaders and parties are an archetype of future collaborative problem-solving mechanisms used for governance of society.

Think-tanks or public policy research analysis are groups of experts working in collaboration and in a scientific manner. They conduct policy-orientated research and analysis, solve problems and give advice in an effort to enable policymakers and the public to make informed decisions. Think tanks are strictly specialised in very narrow fields or created ad hoc to solve one particular problem. Currently there are over 5550 think-tanks worldwide, in nearly 170 countries. However, although nowadays think-tanks pretend to be independent problem solvers, they may be affiliated to political parties, governments, interest groups or private corporations, which could bias their work. Most likely, the next level in the development of modern society is the emergence of collaborative problem-solving networks connecting think-tanks through a digital platform facilitating collaboration. Such collaborative platforms already exist, but they are still in their infancy, available only for limited corporative projects. Nevertheless, the emergence of collaborative platforms and problem-solving mechanisms is the key to the transition from the collective to collaborative decision-making mechanism, or from democracy to collabocracy.

Keep in mind that autocracy invented parliament as a collective forum in response to increased pressure, due to the rising complexity of society and the limitation of one individual's intelligence to resolve emerging problems. But only the overthrowing of autocracy turned parliament into a truly democratic institution. Nowadays the situation is similar. Representative democracy legitimises the ruling elite, which employs think-tanks as collaborative organs to resolve emerging problems, which are beyond the capacity of collective intelligence. Hopefully, transforming the existing think-tanks into frontline problem-solving mechanisms would lead to a qualitatively new level of governance—collabocracy.

At the time of the emerging parliamentarism, nobody imagined how fully implemented democracy could work. Understandably, today we cannot imagine what a society with a fully implemented collaborative mechanism will look like, but fortunately there is a clue. The complexity of globalised society is comparable only to the complexity of the human brain. The human brain is Mother Nature's solution for complexity. Brain cells work "collaboratively". Only "self-selected", most relevant neurons are interconnected (associate) and involved in decision-making and the problem-solving process. There is no voting system at all. So, fully-grown collabocracy will resemble the structure and cognitive function of the human brain and mind. Perhaps the next step is developing a platform for collaboration. Once developed, this platform could be used to solve problems and make decisions on all levels—local, national, regional and global. However, it is certain that the creation and implementation of such a mechanism is a matter of collaboration among lots of experts throughout the upcoming decades.

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