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Memory, Tradition and Artificial Intelligence: Towards an Ontology of Cultural Continuity

Contemporary discussions on artificial intelligence often focus on technological capabilities, ethical risks, or future social transformations. This paper approaches AI from a different perspective by examining it within the long history of human tradition and cultural memory.

The central thesis argues that tradition should not be understood merely as the preservation of customs or inherited knowledge. Rather, tradition represents a fundamental mode through which ordered structures preserve themselves through time. Biological inheritance, oral cultures, writing, canonical texts, printing, electronic media, and artificial intelligence can all be interpreted as successive forms of memory that enable the continuity of human communities.

The paper begins with an ontological reflection on life itself. Contemporary biology demonstrates that life is distinguished from non-life not by the chemical elements composing it, but by their highly organized dynamic structure. This insight provides a philosophical analogy for understanding tradition: just as living organisms preserve biological order through genetic memory, human cultures preserve symbolic order through cultural memory.

The study then follows the historical transformation of memory from myth and ritual to literacy and digital technologies. Myths are interpreted not as primitive explanations of nature but as early structures of collective memory. The invention of writing externalized memory; canonization stabilized it; printing democratized it; electronic media accelerated its circulation; and artificial intelligence introduces a new stage in which cultural memory becomes computationally accessible.

The presentation does not claim that artificial intelligence replaces human tradition. Instead, it argues that AI constitutes a new technological medium within the historical evolution of memory while leaving unresolved the uniquely human dimensions of meaning, responsibility, and moral judgment.

Consequently, the philosophy of AI should be understood not only as a philosophy of intelligent machines but also as a philosophy of the changing forms through which humanity preserves, reorganizes, and transmits its collective memory.