# MANKIND'S DILEMMAS, FROM THE AGE OF ORACLES TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Since ancient times, people have felt the need for a projection of their own force, an out of body experience of their creative intelligence to meet the solitary being and support him when he seems to fail in front of the challenges of the universe. This is how the projection of divinity appeared, on the one hand, which gives authenticity to the human self, and on the other hand, the "institution" of oracles, an external instance, meant to confirm or refute the hopes, fears and sometimes even initiatives of the communities that appealed to them. Relying on these "safety nets", humanity has come a long way, going through tumultuous eras in which spirituality has taken many forms: witchcraft, astrology, numerology, divination, etc. All these stages, even if they are still in the collective consciousness and may sometimes even be used today as consultative means, seem obsolete, outdated, because at present, humanity seems to have solved the problem related to its intrinsic need for unconditional support, creating a new out of body variant, a powerful and versatile alter-ego, Artificial Intelligence.

What was the path taken, whether or not the mind of the human individual has changed and his perception of his external projections and what Artificial Intelligence represents as a stage in becoming humanity, we will see in the article that follows.

## 1. Oracles and prophets, consultative authorities or domineering alter-egos?

The need of the human individual to permanently communicate with a higher entity to support and advise him has always been supplied, or perhaps exploited, by community leaders.

If we refer to ancient Greece, we must bear in mind that the time of the one prophet, who personally imposed on the community the laws transmitted by divinity, had passed, and Greece, the country of democracy,

had to find a solution that would respond to the rigors of its own population, so that the Greek leaders identified the solution of oracles, before which they did not present personally, but whose sentence was mediated by virgins,  under the influence of a magical drink.

But to understand whether oracles and prophets were a tool of support or manipulation, let's take a brief peek into the history of Greek oracles.

The most famous oracles were the Greek temples of Delphi, Phocis, Dodona in Epirus, Lebadea Boeotia and Tenor in Laconia.

Delphi was surrounded on three sides by precipices and placed at the base of Mount Parnassus. The upper part of the city was dominated by the Temple of Apollo, where there was a huge treasure, consisting of offerings of all the peoples of Greece and neighboring peoples. At the entrance to the temple, it read: "Let no one approach these places unless he has pure hands."

Inside the edifice, there was the statue of Apollo, made of solid gold, behind which opened the entrance of a crypt, in which this god made his predictions. From the writings of Plutarch, we learn of how the crypt was discovered: the goats wandering on the rocks of Mount Parnassus were seized with convulsive movements as soon as they approached the site of the crypt; So did shepherds or locals, who also shivered with chills, spoke in delirium, uttering strange words.

The priests consulted decided after these signs that the presence of a god who wanted to communicate with mortals should be recognized.

A virgin, with the sacred name of Pythia, began to descend once a month into the crypt to transmit the prophecies she had received. She wore lacquers on her head and a white woolen scarf on her forehead.

In the beginning, there was only one Pythia at Delphi; Later, three others were created, chosen from among the most beautiful faces of the most important families in the city.

Soon the young women were replaced by fifty-year-old prophetesses of a more obscure condition. They were very well guarded, being kept closed at all times.

Therefore, Pythia's condition was not modest, and she was far from the freedom to convey a personal message, or that was not agreed to by the rulers. However, Pythia's messages did not reach the people directly.

Pythia descended into the crypt and sat on a tripod, having previously been given a drink of water flowing inside the sanctuary and attributed

magical qualities. After a few moments, Pythia's cheeks flushed brightly, then suddenly faded, her body was seized with nervous throbbing; He began to let out long, jerky moans, his eyes became shiny, his mouth frothed, his hair rose on his head. Gradually, amid terrifying screams, Pythia drew bits of words, which the priests hurried to record in order to decode them.

Another great oracle of the Greeks, Trophonius, was in Boeotia, at the source of the Hercyn River, which forms numerous waterfalls in its fall. The name of the oracle was taken from the architect Trophonius who, together with his brother Agamed, had built the temple of Delphi. They were therefore no strangers to how the miracle of oracles worked, nor were they devoid of interest in the community.

Legend has it that after they finished the temple, they asked Apollo to offer them a reward; The god replied that they would receive it in seven days. After the seven days, the brothers fell asleep and never woke up. (or maybe they never showed themselves publicly again).

The cave where the oracle was located offered visitors terrifying surprises: it descended, to some depth, on a ladder; Then you had to slide, feet forward, through a long, very narrow tunnel to the bottom of the underground. On the way back, you were thrown upside down at the same speed.

This strange ritual took place during the night, after detailed preparations. The documents speak of a Theban named Tersidas who arrived to consult the oracle. He was first imprisoned for three days and three nights in a chapel dedicated to the goddess Fortuna, observing an absolute fast. Before he was admitted to the sanctuary, he was given to drink water taken from two springs: the first cup erased memories of the past, and the second prepared the spirit to keep in memory all that it would see and hear. He was then dressed in a woolen cassock and led with torches to the staircase leading down to the grotto. He walked out the next day, pale, dejected, recognizing no one.

*Photo: Oracle Trophonius*

There are many other descriptions of characters who ventured, or were assigned, to the knowledge of truth through the Greek oracles. They all ended tragically, after they had an initiation rites and going through the experience of consulting oracles. And yet, the human individual, both individually and collectively, tends to periodically replicate the same experiences, seeming to always seek answers outside his being, always trying to identify the universal algorithm that will transform him, to make him immortal and eternally victorious, like the absolute of the being he himself raised to the degree of divinity.

Thus, over the centuries, mankind turns to witch doctors, sorcerers or clergy, and then to psychologists, sociologists or consultants in all fields, in desperate search for absolute answers. Over time, the human individual becomes aware that the entire collective experience must be stored and that from this the longed-for answers can be drawn. This is how the Internet is born, the modern "oracle" that "knows everything about everything" and can be consulted without much initiatory preparation. And yet.... The lack of initiation of those who consult the Internet exposes them to dangers of

which they are not initiated, they are not aware. Humanity is again at an impasse, but, as usual, it is not abandoning the struggle. All it needs is the "magic liquor", the algorithm that thinks for itself, independently processes the stored data and simply offers the ideal solution. This is how Artificial Intelligence is born.

## 2. Artificial intelligence, the modern oracle and the trap of absolute freedom

Although we would be tempted to say that modern man is much more suspicious and difficult to manipulate, the experience of the emergence of AI and its widespread spread, as well as communication through social networks, seems to offer us a completely different perspective. Paradoxically, the modern individual is more credulous, easier to obey rules, accepts easier and faster patterns of thinking and communication imposed by others, which he takes over without thinking too much about the consequences.

Perhaps due to lack of initiation, perhaps due to an exaggerated desire for integration, which occurs much harder at the level of a very heterogeneous society, the human individual shows himself very willing to believe everything he is told and to do everything he is ordered. He begins to use the precious tool of AI, as a form of divination (guessing the future, the date of his death or lottery numbers) or as a simple, rudimentary tool that saves him from thinking independently (responds to so-called "challenges", mechanically imitating gestures or gesture sequences, distributes without selectivity certain images or texts,  It allies itself with initiatives about which it knows nothing and thus creates exacerbated and dangerous collective movements).

At the level of society, Artificial Intelligence meant discovering a tool with which they tried to mystify public speeches (processing the speaker's voice), verify the authenticity of certain information or even certain masterpieces (eg Raphael's paintings), or even relaxation (partner in online games).

What Artificial Intelligence actually is and how it works. AI has become an umbrella term for applications that perform complex tasks and previously required human input, such as communicating online with customers or playing chess. The term is often used interchangeably with its subdomains, which include machine learning (ML) and deep learning.

However, there are differences. For example, machine learning focuses on building systems that can learn or improve performance based on the data they process. It's important to note that while all machine learning systems are AI, not all AI is machine learning.

To get the full value out of AI, many companies are making significant investments in data science teams. Data science combines statistics, computing, and business knowledge to extract value from various data sources.

Here, according to the author of this article, comes the danger of uncontrolled use of Artificial Intelligence at the level of human society and here will prove their usefulness the national and international bodies that the authorities have already established.

Thus, if in the field of medicine artificial intelligence promises to solve important problems, such as home consultation of non-transportable patients, and for the HR sector this is a blessing (staff selection can be performed online, with the possibility of detecting certain hidden behaviors of the human subject), in other areas (advertising, military or even political or financial) the uncontrolled use of certain applications Artificially intelligent can pose a real danger to humanity and free will. Persuasion is the key word for these sectors, and artificial intelligence will not apply a fundamental human attribute that it will have to assume under supervision: ethics.

But will a technical system ever be able to assume values that strictly imply human character? For the scale of moral values to which humanity relates is, as we all know, built with the involvement of affectivity and empathy that human beings enjoy precisely because of the bit of divinity they contain in their intrinsic structure and not only thanks to their external projections.

## 3. Conclusions

As mentioned in the beginning of this article, humanity has manifested since ancient times an obvious tendency to create support instruments in its journey through the universe, represented by external projections of its own self and collective mind.

These tools, more or less mystical, have certainly played important roles in human evolution, sometimes substituting themselves for real decision-making bodies. If oracles or other forms of divination were occult

formulas, whose origin and functioning was not familiar to everyone and which implied the passage of initiatory stages before consultation, today we are faced with the emergence of forms of manifestation of the projection of the collective mind in a public space, with free access for the initiated and not only.

Here arises the risk of modern society failing in the use of self-created support systems: the fascination that the human individual manifests towards the new "form of divination" puts him in the condition of giving up the rigors of initiation and forgetting about the risks involved in circumventing certain ethical principles. Unfortunately, it seems that the human individual has evolved, becoming easier to manipulate and harder to train.

Here comes the role of authorities monitoring artificial intelligent systems, which will have to intervene to replace humanity's attributes that are not only related to intelligence but also integrity, empathy and good faith.