

Creative Disruption

Impact of AI on English Language and Literature Studies

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**Impact of AI on English
Language and Literature Studies**

Editors

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Creative Disruption:

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Preface

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a transformative force that redefines learners' perception, acquisition, and engagement with language, literature, and education. As the use of the AI accelerates, it will continue to challenge conventional pedagogies, literary interpretation, and even the very nature of human creativity. This edited volume, *Creative Disruption: Impact of AI on English Language and Literature Studies*, brings the diverse academic perspectives that critically investigates AI's role in reshaping the teaching and learning of English language and literature.

The volume explores the relationship between AI and human creativity, probing its profound impact on language acquisition, literature pedagogy, translation, and cultural interpretation. The contributors investigate AI's effect on re-learning human relationships, challenges and opportunities in translating poetry and prose, and its implications. It analyses the presence of AI in classrooms, its role in augmenting or diminishing creative writing, and its function as both a disruptive and enabling force in language and literary studies in English.

Educators, researchers, and literary scholars navigate this rapidly evolving digital era; the chapters in this volume provide quaint insights into the ethical, philosophical, and practical dimensions of AI in language and literature studies. It extends to the interplay of AI with poetry, storytelling, and authorship, questioning whether AI will serve as a collaborative tool or an existential challenge to human ingenuity. With topics ranging from AI-powered translation and conversational AI to meta-modernism and digital authorship, this volume presents a nuanced exploration of the promises as well as perils of AI in English language and literature studies.

Creative Disruption aims at provoking a critical and constructive dialogue on the 'future or fate' of English studies in the age of artificial intelligence. The questions are whether AI empowers human skills or thwarts it? Will it be instrumental in enhancing linguistic and literary

comprehension, or does it affect the human faculty reasoning and intellect? This volume addresses these pressing questions and serves as an academic resource for educators, researchers, learners, and literary enthusiasts. It offers a comprehensive overview of both the opportunities and challenges AI presents in language learning and literary scholarship.

Editors

Acknowledgements

Making the volume titled *Creative Disruption: Impact of AI on English Language and Literature Studies* has been a collaborative endeavor, and the editors extend heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed in making it a reality.

First and foremost, we express our deep gratitude to all the scholars, researchers, and academicians whose insightful and erudite contributions form the backbone of this volume. Their engagement, understanding and analysis of the intersections of Artificial Intelligence and the humanities has enriched the discourse and makes this volume a valuable resource for educators, learners, academicians and researchers of language and literature alike. Their commitment to scholarly inquiry and interdisciplinary approach has provided us with the necessary space and resources to bring this project to fruition. Their contribution in the ever-evolving field of Artificial Intelligence itself – a force that continues to challenge, inspire, and redefine the contours of literary studies and language pedagogy.

Our sincere thanks also go to our publisher, without whose unwavering support and effort ensured that this work reaches a wider academic audience. Their professionalism and dedication have been instrumental in shaping the final form of this book.

A special note of appreciation is due to our colleagues, friends, and families, whose patience, encouragement, and unwavering support stood as backbone at the various stages of editing and compilation. It is our expectation that this volume contributes constructively to the ongoing interchange of ideas on AI's impact on humanities in general and language and literature studies in particular.

Editors

Introduction

Shivaji Methe

Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a generative tool has become either a disruptive or constructive force in this dissemination of teaching learning pedagogy of English language and literature studies. It challenges pedagogical paradigms reshaping creative expression in writing, and offers new questions regarding the very definition of creativity in literature and authorship. *Creative Disruption: The Impact of AI on English Language and Literature Studies* is an exploration of the metamorphoses originated from the use of the AI. It employs discussion on epistemological and ontological shifts provoked by use of artificial intelligence in language acquisition, literary hermeneutics, translation studies, and post-humanist discourse.

The volume brings together scholars who examine the dialectal relationship between creativity and algorithms which determine whether AI serves as pedagogical assistance or it is thwarting human erudition. Integration of AI tools in education creates opportunities for enhancing teaching along with several conceptual uncertainties about its use. The chapters study the methods in which AI transforms the acquisition of language and syntactic structures and communicative competence procedures. “Impact of AI on Language Acquisition and a Way Ahead” by Rajeshwar Dhanpalwar cross-examines the implications of AI-enhanced language acquisition in education. Both Shabreen Sultana Shaik and Jayavelu Damodharakrishnan search potential of AI in improvising communicative competence in their chapters “Artificial Intelligence (AI) and English Language Learning: Empowering Communication Skills” and “Integrating AI Tools into the Classroom: Pedagogical Approaches for Teachers” respectively. “AI-enabled Teaching Learning” by Mayuri Kulkarni along with other authors scrutinises the way in which AI augments educational instruction techniques and “From Blackboards to Algorithms: An Educator’s Role in AI-Augmented Literature Pedagogy in Urban

Indian Classrooms” by Kranti Doibale assesses consequences of use of AI on knowledge acquisition in the classroom.

Literary translation involves linguistic fidelity as well as cultural equivalence in a balanced way which artificial intelligence tools fail to attain. The complexities of poetic syntax, intertextuality, allusions, and culturally embedded semiotics confront undefeatable challenges to empirical algorithms of AI. Chetna Kumari and Dharna Bhatt in “Navigating the Depths: Challenges and Limitations of AI in Translating Hindi Poetry” study the limitations of AI in interpreting and understanding the poetic intricacies. “Leveraging AI Tools in the Appreciation and Understanding of Poetry in English for Non-native Speakers” by Shivaji N. Londhe reconnoiters the potential of AI in understanding poetry and analysis while questioning its understanding of emotive nuances. “The Unfulfilled Task of the Translator: Artificial Intelligence and Translating Isaac Asimov into Marathi” by Kavita Patil gauges the level to which AI’s translational algorithms distort the semiotic integrity of literary texts. And, “Will Translators be Swapped by Artificial Intelligence Translation Apps?” by P. K. Gomathi cross-examines whether AI translation tools can efficiently supersede human translators in literary contexts.

The contemporary literary discourse is an ontological enquiry of creativity that constitutes the idea whether AI can authentically engage in it. Reconfiguration of creativity in the age of AI engages with post-humanist and meta-modernist perceptions. “The Machine and AI Versus the Human and Creative Writing” by Yamini Anish Shah examines whether AI-generated texts imply a radical extraction from anthropocentric creativity or merely a sophisticated mimicry of pre-existing literary forms. “Artificial Intelligence as a Phenomenon of Metamodernism” by Chemezova Ekaterina Rudolfovna locates AI-generated literature within the philosophical framework of meta-modernism, while “Teaching Posthumanism: The Idea of Beyond Human Depicted in Manjula Padmanabhan’s *Harvest*” by Debraj Moulick explores the intersection of AI, literature, and post-humanist thought.

The emergence of conversational AI and interactive bots has engendered profound shifts in human-computer interaction, necessitating a reconsideration of discourse, semiotics, and emotional intelligence. “Conversational AI: Transforming Human-Computer

Interaction and Language Education” by Shyam Chavda and Aaria Srivastav probes the role of AI in redefining language education through interaction. “Sophia is Calling! Are You Ready?” by Prajna Jagadev searches for avaricious ubiquity of AI in public life. “Re-learning Human Relationships through Artificial Intelligence” by Manisha Mishra analytically examines the influence of AI on interpersonal communication, deliberating its aptitude to develop or interrupt human relationships. “Self-Empowerment, Self-Preservation or Self-Destruction: An Analysis of Artificial Intelligence in Reel/Real Life” by Abhi Biswas provides a critical analysis of use of AI tools in media, balancing its effect on human creativity.

The volume enriches the discourse on influence AI in language, and literature studies. It holds a substantial academic deliberation for educators, researchers, and students. It engages a serious discussion on the evolving discourse of AI and the humanities by providing a critical framework to the pedagogues in integrating AI into language instruction while sustaining pedagogical precision. “AI and the Written Word: Transformations in English Language and Literature” by Udayan Chakraborty offers an analysis of impact of AI on textual creation, interpretive paradigms, and theoretical contexts to the literary scholars. “From Non Omnis Moriar to Dataism: How Literary Legacy Foretold AI Authorship” by Francesca Luppino challenges the position of AI in authorial production and legacy. AI is destined to move further ahead and the meeting point of computational linguistics, literary theory, and creative practice continue to be the site for rigorous academic research.

Future studies should be deeper to analyse the moral implications of literature generated through AI, exploring non-human authorship and intellectual rights. The place of AI in literary interpretation and hermeneutics is also in need of further investigation. AI can be used as an interpretative negotiator that can carry out independent literary analysis, or is it just a tool subservient to human intelligence and aids human interpretation. The limitations of AI in capturing affective nuances, cultural signifiers, and socio-linguistic complexities call for persistent engagement with theories of semiotics, narratology, and discourse analysis. The critical investigations of AI’s disruptive and generative capacities underwrite an urgent and ongoing dialogue on interplay of technology, language, and literature. This book is both a

theoretical inquiry and an applied investigation of the effect on linguistic and literary paradigms by which AI reconfigures the borders of human utterance. The tensions between human creativity and algorithmic generative AI, between creative autonomy and linguistic computation, form the basics of this discourse and make this book an indispensable resource for scholars in determining the ‘future or fate’ of English language and literature studies.

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CHAPTER 2

From *non omnis moriar* to Dataism. How Literary Legacy Anticipated AI Authorship

Dr. Francesca Luppino

Abstract

In Shakespeare's *Sonnets* poetry can crystallise the *fair friend's* beauty, preserving his immortality and superiority to the passing of time. This initial drive, throughout his sonnets, gradually becomes a resigned awareness that, speaking of posterity, readers are the only ones in real control. What makes literature immortal then? Authorship or *read* texts? Great authors gained immortal legacy thanks to a well-defined authorship associated to both identity and texts. However, in the digital AI era something has changed. Generative AI tools put the stress on literary performance, thus texts alone. These unauthentic texts are associated with digital ghosts of authorship which are subject to self-perpetuation (Lagerkvist 2014) and artistic appropriation (Schröter 2019) in terms of theft and calque, thus confirming the predominance of readers in shaping literary legacy. AI generated literature promises a software-based post mortality (Lagerkvist 2014) through computational tools which emulate literary styles and topics by recognising common etymons (Spitzer 1910) and identifying patterns (Haral 2023) in order to formulate unreleased contents.

The article contributes to outlining and defining authorial and performative legacy as literary phenomena that emerged much before the advent of AI but which AI literature itself has brought back to light. Furthermore, addressing the fields of AI, creative writing and literary preservation, the article points up differences and similarities between human-authored and machine-authored literature. The first part of the article analyses how authors e.g. William Shakespeare and Mark Strand inquired literary immortality in their texts, so as to define what authorial legacy is. The second part, instead, focuses on performative legacy by looking over some computational methods for generating emulative literary content in the context of poetry generation, e.g. Poem Generator, Compasses, Sudowrite and ChatGPT. From Horace's *non omnis moriar* to dataism (Lohr 2015), authorship has undergone significant transformations, not to mention the whole literary paradigm – and the reader's role with it – which has

been gradually eroding” since the prophecy of the author’s death (Barthes 1984) came true with the advent of AI and digital undead (Lehner 2019) authors vampirised (Mari 2004) through chatbots.

Keywords: Authorship, legacy, immortality, vampirism, AI-generated literature, Shakespeare

Introduction

Benjamin accurately describes the process of actualisation through mechanical reproduction, in which the “aura” (Benjamin 103) of the work, together with its own authenticity and originality, is duplicated as a reproduced object, entirely detached from its original context, thus made perpetually “useful” (Haxthausen 47) in any potential moment of reception. The mechanical reproduction of an artistic object should be understood as a “reduction in size” or a “miniaturisation” (Benjamin 523) which paradoxically enables an authentic engagement, thanks to a complete alignment with the new context and a profound understanding by the subject who is addressed as a “receiver in his own situation” (104). In contrast to Benjamin, Einstein emphasises the nature of “second technology” (107) associated with technical reproducibility, where the distance from nature and reality – which is then doubled, in a Platonic sense – raises the risk of an “illusion of the immortality of things” (Einstein 165). Reproduced objects cannot completely abandon their historical past to project themselves into an infinite present, since they exist and emerge as “artefacts of the past” (Lehner 478), bearing witness to a clearly forced rescue.

On the other hand, “technological immortality” (Platovnjak and Svetelj 982) could be understood as the only means of liberation from the Greek “*soma-sema*” (974), that is the material body seen as “the prison of the soul”: in the context of digital, as well as mechanical, reproduction, death would no longer represent an insurmountable limit to one’s artistic performativity. It represents a purely digital realm as a “software-based” (Lagerkvist 5) post-mortality where trace bodies which are inactive but present in the digital network are preserved and accumulated in enormous data archives which can be reprocessed, thus made alive again by algorithms. In the perspective of post-mortality, memory practices evolve through potentially endless “circulation of information” (Brubaker et al. 162), transforming traditional memory practice into a novel digital “self-perpetuation” (Lagerkvist 5). One can

reflect on how individual communicative structures of social personas, thus authorship, can survive their biological death through digital tools, especially AI, which miniaturise textual objects into replicable stylistic patterns. It is relevant to recognise “algorithmic perpetuation” (Lehner 479) as a mechanism of digital duplication which eternally traps an authentic object in the “repetition of a former present” (481), reduced in size and deprived of authenticity. At the same time, authors’ “communicative structures” (478), although collected and processed as “loose data”, primarily retain their performative nature by defining the abovementioned practices of “digital undead” (481) as means for escaping the dimension of oblivion, understood then as the “loss of information” (479).

In which terms do authors benefit from the algorithmic perpetuation of their texts? It is something we have been thinking about only since the 20th century and the explosion of mechanical reproduction systems which then evolved up to AI. Textual objects are reproduced endlessly through cheap methods which guarantee a certain circulation and repetition degree through which authors become immortal by virtue of their always renewed or undead digital traces. Focusing on two main case studies, that is William Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* and Mark Strand’s *The Monument*, how have these authors expressed their future absence in their texts? Which poetic strategies have they employed to anticipate their legacy during their lifetime and avoid the loss of information? How is it anticipatory related to the promise of immortality proposed by AI literature?

Non omnis moriar – long live readers

In poem 30, the third book of the *Odes*, Horace pictures lyrical verses as entities immune to the natural forces which doom monuments to decay. The Latin poet claims, as a central matter, not only the self-referential eternity of authorship but also of the literary permanence of verses themselves: neither “the rain” or “the southern wind” (Hor. Od. 3.30.3), nor the passing of time and seasons can corrupt the vitality of verses, which stand endure even more than bronze monuments. Consequently, as long as the poet and his verses will not “completely” die – “Non omnis moriar” (30.3.6) –, the poetic object will remain perpetually youthful over time thanks to the crystallising power of poetry. This power, far from resembling a process of

mummification, actively involves a diverse community of readers who do not act in isolation but across generations, thus forming a chain that transforms “documents of the day” into “timeless documents” (Aldrich 196) with universal value.

William Shakespeare revisits the *topos* of immortality in his *Sonnets*, along with “poignant meditations on Time” and on “the precariousness of poetry” (Sanesi, vii). Clear references to Horace appear in Sonnet 18, especially in the idea of eternal blooming through immortal verses, kept alive by future generations who, “so long as men can breathe or eyes can see” (18.13), will bring poetry – and thus the dedicatee – to life. Shakespeare describes monuments as “unswept stone[s]” (55.4) in order to emphasise their perishability. By contrast, verses can surpass death and oblivion by finding “room / even in the eyes of all posterity” (55.10-11).

Non-referential ‘this’

By writing “So long lives this and this gives life to thee” (18.14), Shakespeare invites the reader to “place [himself] imaginatively in a physical relation to the speaker”, thus putting himself “in the poem” (Perkins Wilder 503): the word *this* implies a shift in the reader’s gaze from spectator to direct participant in the text, acting as a “posthumous conductor” (Burke 159) of the fair youth’s posterity within a literary receptive context. The beauty crystallised in verses still requires active readers who maintain a vital and dynamic relationship with the text by continuously nourishing it with new interpretations across generations. The sonnet itself is immortalised through the “magic word” *this* (Kunin 98), creating a liminal space in a both a self-referential and meta-textual dynamic. In the first case, the poet serves as the preserver of the immortalised object, while in the second one, the verses themselves enact the *non omnis moriar* process through a primary “act of writing” fulfilled by an “act of reading” (98). This preservation is thus recognised as “unfair” (98), thus fragile and provisional, since it depends on a “biological reader” (Gil 132), a flesh-and-blood audience whose future continuity explicitly binds the verses – and thus authorial legacy – to public will. The deictic *this* defines itself as a “physical word on the page” identifying the material text without indicating “a specific incarnation of it” thus representing an immortal tool, capable of maintaining a stable reference beyond

textual mutations over time (Calhoun 70). The dedicatee, the poet, the verses, and the reader are then arranged as sequential elements in a circular scheme which graphically highlights their mutual complementarity and necessity. Just as the dedicatee is inevitably subject to poetic crystallisation, the poet, in turn, needs to transfer his authorship into the verses, which ultimately survive time solely through a reader – generic term for an ever-changing community – who imparts their “liveliness” (Perkins Wilder 478). If both the dedicatee and poet require verses that, in turn, require a literary reception community, then the reader, the final link, paradoxically becomes the essential element of the chain, as the ultimate receptor. The “non-referential” (Calhoun 70) *this* acts as a bridge which metaphorically brings the poet closer to the reader, who reads and holds *this* in his hands – the text –, thereby creating a “textual economy” (64) where the poet’s manuscripts are “systematically linked” to the reader’s reading device, whatever it may be. The irony lies in the paradoxical dynamic necessary for achieving artistic immortality, where the poet acknowledges the solution to textual perpetuation in the mere material economy of texts, which persists over time through reproduction while also recognising the reduction to which sonnets are inevitably subject. The physical reduction required for textual reproduction distances the reproduced object from the original experience, thus creating a “toxic” (Kunin 100) form which “risks failure” (103) since it relies on a reader community whose actions and reactions upon reception cannot be foreseen. The public role then “comes under intense scrutiny” (Perkins Wilder 505). The poet is troubled by the awareness that his verses represent nothing more than a cold and distant inscription of a beauty which lives outside of literary freezing, described as “a tomb \ which hides” (17.3-4) the authentic essence of the dedicatee. Poetry is then defined as a superstructure of actual reality, on which the poet works in terms of falsehood and exaggeration – “such heavenly touches ne’er touched earthly faces” (17.8). The ambivalence of the public is noteworthy, as it may elevate the verses to non-perishable traces of immortality, or relegate them to a heap of “papers yellowed with their age” (17.9) and “poet’s rage” (17.11) if not an “antique song” (17.12) that will eventually no longer be heard.

Reserve thy character

The sonnets derive their immortality from the “interactions between readers and poetry”, precisely because they represent “a distillation or an abbreviation” of the portrayed figure, whose represented image in terms of completeness can be reached solely through an “expansive, imaginative reading” (Perkins Wilder 485). In reference to sonnet 17 and the melancholic fracture between the poet’s certainties and the potentiality of his verses, the reader’s role becomes essential, precisely in his function of “physical extension” of the dedicatee’s “uninterrupted life” (505). Shakespeare employs the enigmatic expression “reserve thy character” (85.3): the verb *reserve* – literally *to save or to keep* – can broadly represent the concept of “keeping back for future use” (Burrow 550), while the noun *character* – from the Greek “engraving,” which in English means “inscription of greater permanence and significance” (Perkins Wilder 486) – indicates “the style of writing peculiar to any individual” (Burrow 550). This verse suggests that poetic refinement does not lie in the status of “medium for preserving human lives” but as a medium for preserving itself (Perkins Wilder 483). Perkins Wilder claims that the sonnet works like a stenography because it “distils or reduces lives to abstract, synecdochic, or concentrated forms”, an aspect which justifies all the reservations regarding the inability of the poetic vehicle, as a mere “static object” derived “from a mutable life” (487). Indeed, stenography “captures and reproduces” live things, thus emerging as a “recording technology” that is diametrically opposed to the nature of the event or known object, thus representing a model of “immortality in physical form” (489). Therefore, the poet strongly needs the reader’s participation, since he has the power to “reembody” the experience of the object described in the sonnet, “like actors realising a script” (489), thereby transforming the “dumb thoughts” (85.14) of the sonnet into living images that speak again and anew. Finally, as previously suggested, Shakespeare’s sonnets reveal a dynamic of awareness in relation to the “technological interventions” that poetry represents in relation to the dedicatee’s material reality, whereby “in saving something, we also lose something” (Perkins Wilder 505).

A purposeful way of being dead

In *The Monument* Mark Strand addresses a “hypothetical translator”, thus a citizen of a future civilisation (Carabba iii). This forward-looking perspective, together with its 52 “aphoristic-sections” (ii), define *The Monument* as a “meta-text” (Washbourne 117) that speaks of itself explicitly as a monument. In this sense, the author’s decision to step aside, choosing anonymity and avoiding biographical references, is significant as a strategy of “self-annihilation” (Carabba vi) thereby he can circumvent death and oblivion. As a consequence to the author’s metaphorical removal, the text is free to place its expectations not in the average reader, as in any conventional literary context, but rather in the translator – a specialised reader who becomes a co-conspirator in the entire poetic endeavour. This aspect raises the question of whether “priority”, understood as authorship and original ownership, or the “use” of contents – possibly decontextualised – actually holds greater significance (vii). Here, translation is applied in the specific sense of “translational immortality” (Washbourne 121), enabling a text to continue living in translated forms after the death of the original, yet this prompts a question about the status of translation as a strategy of true “immortality” or rather as “a purposeful way of being dead” for the work (Strand 7).

According to Strand, the act of translation is fundamental for preserving the life of a text and for the “betterment” of the original one (Washbourne 131). Washbourne likens this practice to the “dissemination” of “the relics of the saints” (126): the saint dies, but his relics keep his memory within the community, granting him potential immortality. In this dynamic of transubstantiation, the translated text assumes the emblematic role of “text of promise” (124), thus the only means available for both the work and authorship to seek immortality.

As previously mentioned, the author of *The Monument* recognises his authorship as precarious, and thus he must step aside, awaiting his literary resurrection through the translational process which, simultaneously, allows both the text and the translator “to exist” (Strand 10) as a new text and a new author. Strand’s model of authorship converges on the concept of extending life beyond death, such that a translation represents an ahistorical process that ensures

textual immortality, projected toward an unknown and undefined future.

From aphorism 38 onward, the author concludes that “neither” of the author and the translator has truly written the work but a “ghostly third who has taken up residence” in his “pen” (98). The Monument is then recognised in its independence from any original or future parenthood. Author and translator can finally reunite as part of a single future, through *The Monument*, which will perpetuate its message, transcending the authorship attributed to it, in an ahistorical and timeless context where identity is not a value but rather an imprisoning chain of obsession with finiteness and ownership. *The Monument* is then a text driven by the ambition to detach from its author, thus making itself immortal as it travels time addressing an “unknown receiver” (Washbourne 131).

The immortality project

The author enacts the self-sacrifice necessary toward his work to “travel into the future” (Strand 116), surpassing his own time, stripping himself of any name as a preliminary gesture for immortality. As the identity dissolves, *The Monument* transforms into a self-centred document which is paradoxical since it does not reveal a self, but rather “the absence of a self” (63). Despite voluntarily ceasing to be through anonymity, authorship still persists in the state of a “zero” value (116) that the reader community is invited to fill with interpretations. Ultimately, immortality is nothing but the “desire for another life” (11) or rather, an existential extension which requires the cessation of being in exchange for the promise of an expanded return to being, seemingly sacrificing individual identity to secure a place in the eternal realm. The author, in order to perpetuate himself, may choose either to reduce himself to a single “luminous moment” (8) by crystallising his work in a poetic instant, as in Shakespeare’s stenography, or to relinquish protagonism and let the work speak for itself. The author of *The Monument* wishes to assert his dignity of being “history” (11) rather than just a part of it, by formulating a veritable “immortality project” (Becker 26) in which poetic creation represents the creation of eternal meaning and, thus, an “heroic gesture” of competition against nature and death (Washbourne 127). In aphorism 15, the author warns his readers about “false monuments that call themselves *The Monument*”

(Strand 34): this warning could be associated to a concept reminiscent of digital non-death and false bodies perpetuated by AI. The oppressive and overly visible solidity of the immanent monument actually survives in a state of constant obscurity because the observer struggles to perceive what lies behind a mound of dead stone that repels all communicative or receptive attempts. Conversely, The Monument, despite representing absence and anonymity – thus indeed the ultimate metaphorical obscurity – carries the aim of communicating with anyone who addresses it, in any future context, for this is the very purpose for which it was created.

Authorship is dead

It is still essential to highlight how the network of algorithms and machine learning models enables AI to process vast amounts of data and generate creative literary content, increasingly blurring the line between human-authored and machine-authored works. As a direct consequence, the authorship of these works becomes ambiguous, thus requiring a clear “reassessment of the conventional understanding of authorship” (“Artificial Intelligence and Literature: The Death of the Author”) – what Roland Barthes called “the empire of the Author” (62) – no longer understood as an “exclusively human effort” (62) but as an equal collaboration between human and machine.

In this sense, the focus shifts from the concept of authorship to that of the creative process, thus emphasising the importance of blending human inputs with computational processes. Such a radical shift in perspective was originally proposed by Roland Barthes:

Bien que l'empire de l'Auteur soit encore très puissant (la nouvelle critique n'a fait bien souvent que le consolider), il va de soi que certains écrivains ont depuis longtemps déjà tenté de l'ébranler [...]; pour lui [Mallarmé], comme pour nous, c'est le langage qui parle, ce n'est pas l'auteur; écrire, c'est, à travers une impersonnalité préalable – que l'on ne saurait à aucun moment confondre avec l'objectivité castratrice du romancier réaliste – atteindre ce point où seul le langage agit, «performe», et non «moi». [...] l'auteur n'est jamais rien de plus que celui qui écrit, tout comme *je* n'est autre que celui qui dit *je*; le langage connaît un «sujet», non une «personne», et ce sujet, vide en dehors de l'énonciation même qui le définit, suffit à faire «tenir» le langage, c'est-à-dire à l'épuiser. [...] L'Auteur une fois éloigné, la prétention de «déchiffrer» un texte devient tout à fait inutile. Donner un Auteur à un texte, c'est imposer à ce texte un cran d'arrêt, c'est le pourvoir d'un signifié dernier, c'est fermer l'écriture. [...] le lecteur est l'espace même où s'inscrivent, sans qu'aucune ne se perde, toutes les citations dont est

faite une écriture ; l'unité d'un texte n'est pas dans son origine mais dans sa destination, mais cette destination ne peut plus être personnelle: le lecteur est un homme sans histoire, sans biographie, sans psychologie ; il est seulement ce *quelqu'un* qui tient ce rassemblée dans un même champ toutes les traces dont est constitué l'écrit. [...] pour rendre à l'écriture son avenir, il faut en renverser le mythe: la naissance du lecteur doit se payer de la mort de l'Auteur. (62-67)

Within the context of French structuralism and theories of textual reception, Barthes positions himself at the crossroads of biographism and reader-oriented theory. He defines the set of conventions and formalities associated with the literary-critical tradition, which places utmost importance on authorial identity through the expression “empire of the Author” (62), thereby marking its enduring stronghold, whose components and perspectives are gradually dismantled and reconfigured.

For Barthes, the author is nothing more than a “hollow subject” (63), depersonalised and defined solely by his enunciations – the literary material he produces. Building on this conception, language, rather than the author, emerges as the privileged element of the text, as it “acts in its own ‘performance’ and not in that of the ‘I’” (62). This dimension, developed through linguistic performativity, avoids “closing writing” (65) within the boundaries of mere authorial attribution. Instead, it defines a text as a network of “multiple writings” in “dialogue, parody, and contestation” (66) with one another, unified in the universal figure of the reader. According to Barthes, “the unity of a text” (66) lies not in its authorial origins but in its destination, the context in which the reader, exercising total interpretive freedom, receives its message.

The “death of the Author” exemplified by Strand is thus the price to “pay” for the “birth of the reader” finally recognised by Shakespeare (67). Barthes outlines the departure of the author’s authority over the interpretation of its own works: from the moment of publication, the work frees itself from its original constraints and intentions, becoming entirely available for the interpretive process guided by the receiving reader.

Both Strand’s and Shakespeare’s perspective aligns seamlessly with the literary products of generative AI, where attention shifts from the authorship of a text to its creative and, consequently, interpretive process. In the context of digital performativity, the user becomes an

active co-creator of the text alongside the computational system, thereby entirely dismantling traditional critical conventions of authorship. This projects the text into a dimension of potentially immortal digital perpetuation precisely through its detachment from traditional biographical authorship. It is possible then to enter a realm where authorship continues to exist but in a different, enhanced form, that is expanded and immortal. The abovementioned generative tools offer the ability to simulate and produce literary emulations in which the generated texts retain the stylistic markers of the reference author. These systems are designed to rapidly analyse vast amounts of data – both biographical and bibliographical in this case – so as to identify patterns or, more specifically, repetitions of stylistic markers and characteristics.

In the context of *Stilkritik*, Leo Spitzer's method emerges as a key approach, emphasising that a thorough reading of an author's texts entails a stylistic analysis of his lexical, syntactic, and rhythmic peculiarities. These are identified as deviations from "normal linguistic usage" and are interpreted as symptoms of an "unusual psychological state" (Spitzer 17). According to Spitzer, an author's "distinct linguistic expression" is a clue – if not an outright "mirror" – of a "particular state of mind" (17). Taking Spitzer's method as an example of a critical stance deeply attuned to an author's style, it is possible to revisit the discussion on simulating an author's writing in the dimension of immortal performativity through generative models. On one hand, Spitzer envisions the literary critic as both a deeply informed reader of an author's corpus and, subsequently, a linguist capable of identifying the stylistic markers of that author through prior bibliographic consultation. On the other hand, generative AI models, such as Cohere, Sudowrite and ChatGPT, work as systems capable of rapidly processing large data sets – such as an author's entire corpus – to identify specific patterns, such as stylistic peculiarities. These models then replicate such configurations in new combinations, generating texts that are formally similar yet potentially original.

Art-as-problem-solving

Hans Bajohr reflects on the concept of "art-as-creativity" which links the artistic object to the creative process, a notion he deems

reductionist because it conflates “artistic production” with “technical innovation” (266):

Art-as-creativity becomes something that can be schematised and ultimately be simulated by computers (Boden 2009, 2016). In both cases, however, it is anything but clear whether there is not something about the term ‘art’ that gets lost once it is equated with creativity. This identification is reductive, partly because it does not attempt to define any criterion that distinguishes the production of a work of art from a technical innovation or a particularly disruptive business strategy. Nor is it clear how creativity, which is often conceptualised as problem solving, actually relates to the aesthetic. At least since the 1960s, if not much earlier, creativity is largely detached from the concept of art and, more recently, literature (Goldsmith 2011) and is instead transferred to the ‘creative industry’ (Florida 2012) or weighs, as a ‘creativity dispositif’, on every neoliberal subject as the need to constantly prove one’s adaptability in the marketplace (Reckwitz 2018). Art, in any case, can hardly be reduced to the concept of creativity, nor creativity to art. (266)

Computational creativity in the literary field works through a process of elaboration, identification, combination, and ultimately simulation of existing literary products, treating them merely as systems of “problem-solving” (266) and distancing them from any sort of authentic aesthetic value. The AI-driven disposition toward creativity drags the concept of art into an extremely performative and reductionist perspective, shaped by a socio-economic transformation that views the utility of art in materialistic terms within the context of a “creative industry” (266). Nevertheless, it is remarkable how generative AI systems enhance artistic products by virtue of technical reproducibility and integration into the marketing ecosystems. Artistic objects, such as literary texts, once detached from traditional conceptions of authorship and their original context of production, are projected into new spaces of reception where they can perpetuate indefinitely, since conceived by individuals but created by entirely digital processes. AI tools redefine artistic immortality from a fundamentally static and decaying notion – that is ‘monumentality’, deemed materially useless – to a more dynamic and potential one – that is ‘performativity’. Here, the artistic object is always integrated into the present, emerging as continually “useful” (Haxthausen 47) to its recipient. This paradigmatic shift redirects attention away from individual authorship toward creative process as a dynamic and interactive collaboration, thus Shakespeare’s reader ecosystem and Strand’s translational immortality. The outcome, from a literary

perspective, is not the replication or duplication of the authors as such, but rather the replication or duplication of their works.

Generative AI models trained on extensive bibliographic archives can endlessly produce masterpieces, beyond the biological death of the authors whose works are part of the training data. However, AI must forgo the possibility of attaining its own recognised authorship from a strict aesthetic perspective: it cannot aspire to the status of an author. The tension between traditional and performative-digital authorship crystallises around the concept of immortality itself. In the former case, immortality is an extension of a monumental concept of authorship, where works endure through a formalised critical-aesthetic evaluation that functions analytically and interpretatively. In the latter, the perspective is one of purely artistic extension, detached from the original authorship of texts. These works perpetuate through a model of computational performativity, granting not the author with immortality but the *sense* of an author, that is the set of sensations and atmospheres his works convey. This innovative conception gives a valuable type of authority to an immortal duplicate, a facsimile which has freed itself from its mortal and historical past.

Conclusion

The models of problematic authorship explored in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* and in Strand's *The Monument* powerfully resonate in the age of Dataism and AI. Both authors anticipated a poetic approach which prioritises the endurance of the text over the ego of its author, shaping literary legacy related to authorship as a collaborative and interpretive act. Shakespeare, through the non-referential *this* and the stenographical practice of sonnets, consciously wrote an elegy to the reader. These two lyrical strategies serve to partially exclude the author in order to address directly the reader in the economy of texts, thus their perpetuation across time and space, that is their immortality. Strand brought this concept into practical application by picturing the annihilation of the authorial self as a purposeful way of being dead. The purpose is that of letting *The Monument* live autonomously, as a message which is translated and promulgated eternally. Both of them recognised the true vitality of literary works not in their creation but in their reception and transformation, by the community of readers.

In the realm of generative AI, this literary approach finds a complete realisation. AI-generated texts are unauthentic since even if they apparently emulate authorial stylistic etymons, their final products are ontologically detached from any authorial identity. AI tools apparently promote creativity over authorship by reducing art to a problem-solving system of numerical characters in sequence and gaps to fill, thus indirectly decluttering authorship to a rather self-centred and outdated practice. Beyond preconceptions, the artistic status of a work can also equate to the degree of “revolution” it represents, as a factor of “paradigm shift”: beyond their aesthetic characteristics, the products of digital performativity, much like Marcel Duchamp’s *ready-mades*, inevitably represent the stabilisation of a “new relationship with reality” (Gagliardi et al. 3). This involves a level of “provocation” which can result in a “horizon shift” eventually prompted by an initial “shock”, thus confirming the positive connotation of widespread “rejection” toward generative processes (Jauss 197). Even historical avant-gardes based poetic creation on the “playful and nihilistic spirit” (Linardaki 14) of randomness and recombination. This approach was profoundly subversive and, in some respects, overlaps with that provided by generative AI models, both methodologically – the practice of random syntactic and semantic recombination – and socially – the subversion of previous literary conventions and, more broadly, the artistic evaluative paradigm.

Generative AI is a chance to experience literature as a collective process of meaning-making where the hard line between creation and interpretation is dissolved. Algorithms work in service of immortality since they borrow lyrical voices to ultimately preserve them beyond the finitude of human-authored texts. Speaking of which, AI brought back to life the longstanding attempt to abstract authorship by a process of subsummation into the text itself which continues to live through translation, reinterpretation and emulation. By dismantling traditional notions of modern authorship, AI certainly echoes Shakespeare’s and Strand’s strategies, denying the static monumentality of texts but rather making them emerge as platforms of evolving dialogues. The author has died and the reader was born: this means that literature had just anticipated what computational tools lately reaffirmed, that is the immortality project will never come to an end, thus guarantying the immortality of literary texts, instead of their authors’.

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