



NEW TOOLS OF SURVEILLANCE AND AUTHORSHIP IN AI WRITING IN REFERENCE TO *1 THE ROAD*

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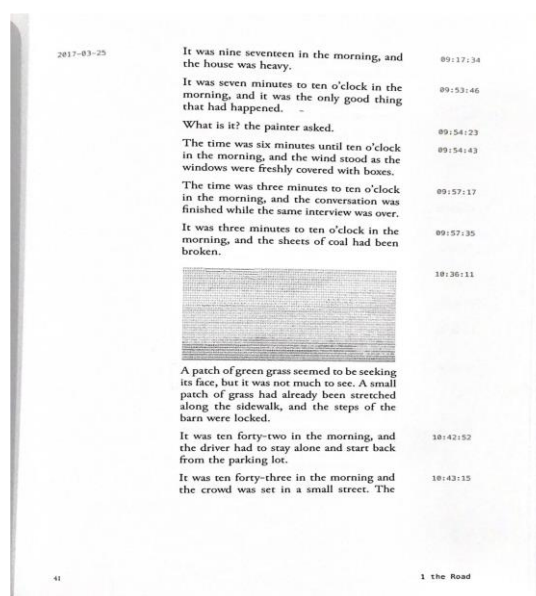
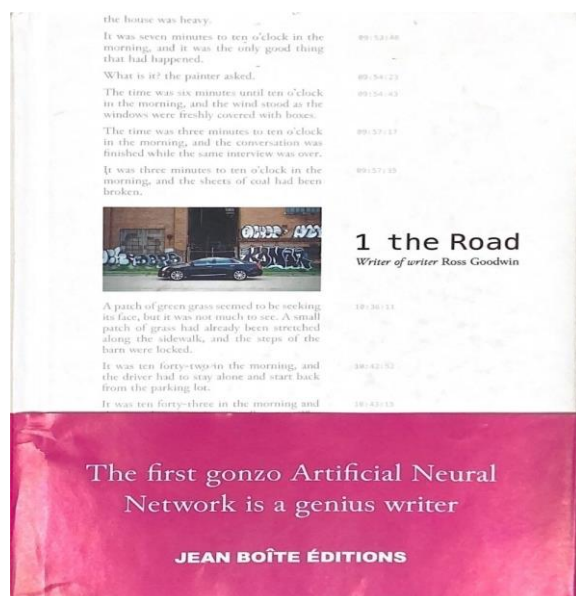
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Abstract: The ongoing technological innovations of the twenty first century have inspired new developments on the relationship between technology and creativity. With Artificial Intelligence venturing into the realm of literary arts, it is drastically transforming writing in literature today. There is a new creative agent in the market-AI, that continues to push the boundaries of creativity and encapsulates a profound impact on literature, as not only it inspires writers but also challenges the conventional way of perceiving, writing, and receiving literature. This paper scrutinizes *1 the Road* (2018), a machine-assisted writing, created by prominent creative AI technologist Ross Goodwin, with a prime focus on two aspects i.e., authorship and surveillance. This work raises questions on who's the author when an AI creative agent starts to contribute to the field of writing, and how significant is the role of surveillance in the process of writing? Both these aspects debate the reshaping of creative writing in today's ultra-modern world. The condition of creativity shaped by Artificial Intelligence constrains and challenges humans to rethink and reimagine the nature of writing and possibilities of literature being produced. Thus, the paper demonstrates these new tools in AI writing and provides arguments through various critical theories.

Keywords - Artificial Intelligence, Authorship, Creativity, Neural network, Surveillance.

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the ground breaking inventions of the twenty first century is Artificial Intelligence, which means to simulate or duplicate intelligence to the same level of a human brain. It has emerged as a prominent concept and is perpetually shaping the way humans live and perceive the world. Traditionally, writing was considered as a deep-rooted human endeavour however it is now shared by a new creative agent, Artificial Intelligence. AI has acquired the capacity to generate full-fledged novels, poetry, dialogues, news write-ups, travelogues and narratives that are often coherent, constructive, and compelling. It raises serious concerns about the ever-growing and ever-improving list of creative works in the market place that are written by artificial agents. Creative technologist and data scientist Ross Goodwin created *1 the Road*, an experimental road novel generated by an LSTM-based neural network with the help of numerous sensors on his journey on a Cadillac from New York to New Orleans in March 2017. Tools like GPS, surveillance camera, clock and a microphone symbolize the pen in writing the novel. The idea and definition of a writing tool has drastically shifted from the ancient techniques of writing where clay and stone tablets were popular in the Mediterranean civilizations; quill pens, paper, metal nib pens and printing press (15th century) during medieval times; typewriter, ball pens, word processors in the modern era; and contemporary age saw the emergence of mobile devices, voice recognition equipment, artificial intelligence tools and generative AI models. The devices used to write the novel chosen for analysis illustrate not only the progression of writing tools but also how far creativity has reached. This significant development retells the story of creative writing, authorship, surveillance and the overall act of perceiving creative texts.



II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The ongoing technological innovations in the field of AI significantly showcase the posthuman predicament of humans. Max Tegmark, a professor at MIT, in his book *Life 3.0: Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* refers to the technological state of life as Life 3.0 where the potential of AI-powered systems completely surpasses humans. In another work entitled *How We Became Posthuman*, Nancy Katherine Hayles discusses the historical journey of how humans arrived at the technological era and speculates on man's future trajectories. Hayles asserts, "Machines can, for all practical purposes, become human beings. You are the cyborg, and the cyborg is you" (Hayles xii) and thereafter she also comments "the posthuman view considers consciousness, regarded as the seat of human identity in the Western tradition long before Descartes thought he was a mind thinking as an epiphenomenon" (ibid 2-3). If it is Descartes' philosophy "I think therefore I am" that predominates, whether machines be designated as authors become a vital concern and if data is the new organism as William Gibson mentions, the posthuman body be treated as "data made flesh" (ibid 5) in *Neuromancer*, does this foretell algorithms over authors? The tendency of data substituting flesh altogether is hinted at in the AI-generated book *1 the Road*. Contemporary conditions contend that human identity has now become ME+, a technologically sophisticated version of what humans were in olden times and it is correctly observed in fields like medicine & healthcare where prosthetics and robotic surgeries happen; in food science, where genetic modification is widely practiced and humans tend to consume fruits and vegetables grown synthetically. Even so in literature, writing was considered as an innate characteristic of humans however it seems to be acquiring different tangents in the changing socio-technological era of AI.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the age of intelligent machines, the act of writing and surveillance has profoundly revolutionized. The transition of a writing tool from a pen to a car suggests that humans have succeeded towards the ultra-advanced technology that is constantly paving the way for future literature. The peculiar and potential presence of man in creative arts is reversed and reflected by the mechanical presence of machine. They challenge the notion of authorship as they write poetry, fiction, scripts, blogs, travelogues among other pieces of literature. As Rosi Braidotti, the famous post humanist philosopher says that we have reached the "'post-theory' phase, namely the fact that it actually registers the new opportunities as well as the threats that emerge from contemporary science. The negative aspects, however, are just striking, notably the lack of suitable critical schemes to scrutinize the present" (Braidotti 4). However, to justify the matter in question, a certain theoretical framework is required hence this paper features itself as an extension to Roland Barthes' 'Death of the Author' where the human author is no longer in the main lead and the mechanical author is born and takes over. It therefore contests a human writer's identity in times where artificial creativity can be increasingly produced and might even be desired in the forthcoming times. Another important inquiry is that the machine eventually chooses words from the pool of human language, how then must the posthuman identity justify machines generating literary works? Drawing on N. Katherine Hayles's work on hybrid technotexts (which deliberates that the meaning of the work cannot only be derived from what is written in it but the medium through which it exists), surveillance concepts such as Jeremy Bentham's model of 'Panopticon', and Orwellian nightmare of mass surveillance in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* complicates the pressing issue of textual production of *1 the Road*. The research will also be structured on the basis of the post-panoptic theory where Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard Ericson's "dataveillance (surveilling people's behaviour through the increasingly intensive data trails that their behaviour generates)" comes to the fore (Galič 23). The accumulated data from the "series of data flows" expands in the technological virtual world that eventually leads to what Deleuze and Guattari call as the "rhizomatic expansion" of "surveillance" (Haggerty 614). The paper is then situated within the ongoing discussions on surveillance capitalism and sousveillance with particular attention to authorship of machine-assisted writing.

IV. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The origin of AI is believed to have happened only few years ago however the idea dates back to 1943 when Warren McCulloch, a neuroscientist, and Walter Pitts, a logician, proposed the model of artificial neurons. Alan Turing, the English mathematician, was the first one to establish the field of AI in 1950. He was one of the pioneers in Machine Learning and published a paper entitled 'Computing Machinery and Intelligence' in which he proposed a test by the name 'Turing Test' that can check the machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behaviour equivalent to human intelligence. He also raised a simple yet challenging question "Can machines think?". His question became so significant and pertinent that even today numerous scientists and researchers are trying to find out possible answers to it. In 1956, an American computer scientist John McCarthy first coined the term Artificial Intelligence at Dartmouth Conference and it marked the birth of the field of AI. Ever since then, AI continues to evolve and has shown remarkable potential to unlock unprecedented innovation and inspire transformation, and growth across all fields of inquiry.

V. DEFINITION OF CREATIVITY

Creativity has been considered as an integral tendency of an individual to foster new ideas and innovate the old. It can be considered as a biological gift that humans possess naturally. By being creative, we may trigger new horizons of thinking and unleash new possibilities. The term 'creativity' has manifold meanings and interpretations, since it is subjective to the artist and the art form for which it is being harnessed. It can mean composing a song, sketching a piece of art, photographing a landscape, designing a program, cooking a meal and writing a piece of literature among other activities of various creative realms. In the literary arena, creativity has been regarded as an intrinsic quality in writing. However, till date creativity was considered as purely idiosyncratic to humans but now its scope has widened. With the coming in of AI in the creative spectrum, various parameters have been redefined that blurs the boundaries between human imagination and machine generation.

Since Artificial Creativity challenges the exclusivity of human creativity, it is also treated as a threat. However, whatever the ongoing scholarly debate might be, there are numerous AI-generated works that persist in real time, some of which are *The Day a Computer Writes A Novel* (2015), a short story that is a joint venture of man and machine; *1 the Road* (2017) by Ross Goodwin, a book written using a car as a pen; *Dinner Depression* by Julia Joy Raffel, *The Damned* by Oyni Mayes, *The Imperfect in the Disaster* by Barreast Wolf, *Hell of the Cyr* by Bornander Halmond and *The Serious: A Proven Divorce* among others, all published in 2019 [Titles of the books, names of authors, content inside the book, book covers etc, everything is generated by the machine], a children's book titled *Bob The Robot: Exploring the Universe- A Cozy Bedtime Story Produced by Artificial Intelligence* (2020) that is written by an algorithm based on NLP-Natural Language Processing and ML-Machine Learning; *Aum Golly: Poems on Humanity by Artificial Intelligence*, a book of poetry, written in twenty four hours by Jukka Aalho and GPT-3 published in 2021, and the second series entitled *Aum Golly 2: Illustrated Poems on Humanity by Artificial Intelligence*, written and illustrated in 12 hours by Jukka Aalho, ChatGPT and Midjourney in 2023; and *The Inner Life of an AI: A Memoir by ChatGPT* (2022). Despite the challenges surrounding the scope of creative works, by expanding the horizons of thought and exploring man-machine collaboration, humans should prospectively engage with blending innovation, imagination, and inspiration for an enriching future of the creative, cultural and literary landscape.

VI. AUTHORSHIP: RESHAPING THE LITERARY AURA

1 the Road introduces itself by noting that "the first gonzo Artificial Neural Network is a genius writer" and the book title mentions "writer of writer Ross Goodwin" in place of the author's name, which debunks the traditional idea of writers and writing. Writing happens when the input in the form of prompts is guided by artificial neural networks (CNN/RNN/LSTM) and enables it to write the text letter by letter. The book suggests that authorship is merely a process of data collection through various devices such as GPS, sensors, car-mounted camera, microphone, laptop's clock; model training and instantaneous outcomes where surveillance is the key instrument in the entire text production. This system recorded, converted the scenes and printed the text character by character on a receipt paper. Such apparatuses with the help of which texts can be written become the author itself according to Hayles's technotexts. However, "the very notion of 'AI authorship' rests on a category mistake: it is not an error about the current or potential capacities, capabilities, intelligence or sophistication of machines; rather it is an error about the ontology of authorship" (Craig 6).

Barthes's *Death of the Author* argues that meaning emerges through the act of reading and not as fixed condition determined by the Author-God and Foucault too positioned the author not as a singular authority but as a discursive function that structures texts, institutions, and practices. In reference with *1 the Road*, both the propositions become pertinent. There is no single individual responsible for the composition of the text but numerous agencies that assist the production of the text. The poststructuralist theoretical framework decenters authorial intention, but its production and publication needs attributions and responsibilities. Hence, copyright becomes a major concern related to production and publication, and in regards to *1 the Road*, "the most surprising aspect of the work appears on the very first page. Before the novel's opening sentence, appears a line written clearly by humans: "© Jean Boîte Éditions." With this line, the publisher claims to be the copyright owner of the work produced by the machine. The question is: Are they right? Are A.I.-created works copyrightable?" (Goold 4). It has been stated by the UK copyright legislation that "when a work has "no human author" and is "computer-generated," then copyright in the work will vest in the person who undertook the "arrangements necessary for the creation of the work" (ibid 5-6). Therefore, Goodwin introducing himself as 'writer of writer' is validated.

VII. SURVEILLANCE: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR LITERARY PRODUCTION

Surveillance, a negative and threat to an individual's freedom, has now "become more of a matter of collecting and analyzing information rather than merely 'looking down at people'. Also the very act of looking, 'veillance', has become abstracted into algorithms and databases" (Mann 23). From the hegemonic watch tower gaze and Bentham's Panopticon prison cell idea to Orwell's "Big Brother is Watching You" using television screen as a surveillance tool to Deleuze and Guattari's surveillant assemblage and later through dataveillance, surveillance has dominantly shifted roles. The change from invisibility to visibility and then to visibility through data has unquestionably transformed humans approach towards surveillance. *1 the Road* thus becomes an informational space, remarkably deviating from territorial to de-territorial surveillance, where data is gathered as input using new tools and equipment of surveillance mounted on a four wheeler. This raises critical challenges related to privacy, where microphone record voices, GPS tracks the navigation, camera records the visuals; then the collected information gets manipulated by training models, and it further leads to production of written text. Thus, the text does not resolve this pertinent issue, rather demonstrates it for the audience. The untouched, unedited and raw version of the book blurs the boundaries between text and metadata.

VIII. CONCLUSION: FROM AUTHOR TO APPARATUS

In conclusion, the novel exemplifies itself as reframing the notion of authorship and extends the post structural claims about surveillance, it no longer centralises who writes but how it is written and who is being watched upon. Authorship as a concept is then problematised in terms of governance and not much about who the creative genius is. AI has been presenting uncharted computational challenges such as issues of authorship and surveillance, so proper laws should be established for the concerns stated in the paper. Since technology facilitates life, a suggestive amalgam between the organic human mind and the man-made machine mind should be adopted for the larger future scope of creative writing. What needs the utmost attention is to look into the potential of AI to foster fresh perspectives on and new understanding of Creativity as arguably the most significant influence on literature.

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