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AI Authorship, Co-Creation, and Expanded Paratexts

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Abstract: The spurt of growth in Artificial Intelligence (AI) especially generative models like ChatGPT has brought about a revolutionary change in the way literary writing especially creative writing has panned out in the last few years. Human creativity and imagination often take a backseat in AI created writing to the point that such writings are no longer AI assisted writings but rather AI acts as a co-author. The creativity of human imagination is relegated to creating apt prompts for better writing. The overall eroding of originality is also followed by enlarged paratexts which provide essential clues regarding the process of co-creation, the reconfiguration of authorship, and the production of value. Despite this, the initial hype regarding AI has given way to certain reservations regarding creation of novel concepts and infusing emotional variations in works which are often seen to be the cornerstones of human work. While ethical concerns regarding usage of AI remains a fundamental issue in all writings including creative writings, the overfamiliarity of topics and treatment of it in AI assisted writings do raise questions regarding the future of such writings. The primary concern of this paper is therefore not regarding whether AI can or should be used in literary writings but rather more on the implications of a "post-author" era regarding who owns the text. An attempt is made in this paper to look into the concept of authorship being more of a range of activities which includes an amount of human intervention, creative control, and transformative effort.

Keywords: *Creative writing, AI, authorship, post-author, originality*

Writing in general and especially academic and creative writing has been characterized by rigorous human input and expertise. While creative writing depends largely on human imagination, academic writing includes extensive exploration of archives of texts along with exercising of the human imaginative and intellectual faculty. Whether individual or collective efforts of human writing, one of the distinguishing features of such works is the time and energy spent in writing which requires writing and rewriting multiple times to achieve a polished product. At the same time, such writings were produced over a period of time thereby intensifying the intrinsic value of the finished product. In the age of generative AI which depend on Large Language Models (LLM) to produce instantaneous writing in bulk form, writing in general can very soon lead to what has been predicted as “textpocalypse” by Matthew Kirschenbaum (n.p.).

The range and power of generative AI is immense and thus able to produce texts, images, and music that mimic human creativity thereby necessitating a re-evaluation of the concepts of authorship, originality, and the intrinsic value of cultural artifacts (Ergun 1). This marked shift is no longer just a technological marvel but a definite cultural and epistemological construct which brings to the fore critical questions pertaining to creativity, authorship, and the human imagination and emotions which forms the core of literary or academic writings (Begum 124). This technological evolution of writing per se has moved the focus from the creative or intellectual use of language by the author to a more technical skill of “prompt engineering” or the virtuosic ability to give apt inputs to produce more effective results termed as “promptology” (Setiawan et al. 352; Colella 408). This co-relation between a better prompt leading to the better production of written text paves the way for the development of new form of creation -- one that involves both human and AI creation -- and thereby the development of expanded paratexts which now form the basis of the text itself. Sadaf Begum argues that on one hand there is the poststructuralist concept of death of the author while on the other hand AI reconceptualises the notion of author adding another dimension to the subjective experience of the author vis-à-vis the stylistic formulation of the text (182). The dichotomy between the perceived author whose name appears in the written text and the latent co-author whose linguistic preferences determine the structure of the text along with the ability to browse and grasp the ideas from references available to it marks a new paradigm shift through which any written text is to be interpreted in the post-humanistic era. John Potts in the concluding lines of *The Near-Death of The Author* (2023) therefore identifies the author as someone who adapts and therefore survives rather than not exist at all following Barthesian idea of death of the author (173). Thus, traditionally accepted models and ideas of authorship stemming from the Romantic ideals of the solitary genius prove themselves very much inadequate in an age where algorithms not only co-create but also create content. This article therefore posits the view that AI redefines authorship as a continuum of human-AI interactions, emphasizing co-creation and expanded paratexts as pivotal concepts.

The emergence of ChatGPT into the public domain in late 2022, particularly in the academic and literary world, was not seen as a graded entry into the complex ecosphere of academic writings. Rather it was more in lines of the big bang theory where it “did not evolve – it convulsed” (Askari 2). The underlying fear that gripped the creative world in general and academia in particular is the apparent loss or in a more sinister manner the snatching away of creative power that has been the sole domain of human beings. The anxiety is justifiable to an extent in the overwhelming scenario of large-scale layoffs in corporate sectors where AI has efficiently replaced human intervention and labour. The inherent fear about the loss of human value especially in creative and academic writing conceptualises AI as an identity in itself which can replace human creativity effortlessly. However, the more important issue is not whether AI can write effectively but rather AI has the ability to take responsibility for what it has written? Askari argues that if a human being takes accountability of the writing then they are the undisputed author (4). This shift in the writing process from how any piece was written to who takes responsibility for what has been written is a defining moment in the imbroglio regarding authorship in the age of AI.

The central argument that this paper proposes is that instead of visualising AI as an eliminating of human authorship tool, authorship can rather be conceptualised more as a dispersed activity which includes editing, prompting, selecting and more importantly taking responsibility. The poststructuralist concept of ‘death of the author’ is considered to be inadequate in actually determining contemporary conditions and circumstances which determines what it means to be an author or even not to be one. As Ciorogar and Shapiro argue, the movement is towards “the overcoming of authorship” (18) to “(P)ost-authorship...(where) the ascension of the AI-author must be ransomed by the birth of post-writing” (35). Ciorogar and Shapiro’s argument thereby posit authorship as a shared collaboration between human and machine and is therefore hybrid in nature and is very much shaped by technology (18). This “algorithmic creativity” (Colella 5) of human mediated machine creation takes into cognizance the fact that AI writing is to be tampered with the ‘paratexts’ of human intervention to help manage the apparent alienity of AI writing.

This article will first do a historical analysis of the concept of author vis-à-vis AI authorship and then examine how algorithmic culture transforms authorship. The crux of the paper will be devoted to analysing the importance of paratexts in the age of AI co-creation with a case study to further illuminate this idea. Finally, the paper argues that in today’s world of AI assisted writings, authorship need to be reconceptualised from the standpoint of accountability and responsibility along with the capacity to navigate AI usage rather than in their creative abilities.

The Romantic Genius

Traditionally, the author is considered to be the beginning or origin of meaning in any text, a viewpoint emanating from theories of Enlightenment and Romanticism. The author's intent is very much rooted in the life experiences of the author and thus any explanation of the written work is sought through "the voice of a single person, the *author* 'confiding' in us" (Barthes 143). The Renaissance gave an impetus to this notion of author with the rise of print culture and intellectual property rights' emphasis of individual attribution of works. Foucault identifies this phenomenon in Western history as a "privileged moment of individualization" where personal identity was stamped on works marking them as owned property of the 'author'. An important aspect of collaborative creation where editing and publishing influences are of paramount necessity is often disregarded in the model of authorship being equivalent to ownership. Capitalistic fervour had a lot to do with named authors being attributed to works created where texts began to be increasingly conceived of as commodities having a perceived market value (Foucault 124). Traditionally therefore, individual or singular authorship gained prominence while social and material conditions of production were often ignored which in fact paved the way for ownership to be claimed. Eliot in his seminal essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" successfully argued that poets (authors) draw from a collective tradition and that "progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (55). However, authorship being singularly connected to works continued till poststructuralism dismantled this idea.

Barthes and the Death of the Author

Roland Barthes polemical pronouncing of the death of author thereby delimiting the text from the restrictive authority of the author and opening it to multiple interpretations and meanings. The text therefore does not originate from a single source -- the author -- but is rather "a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture" (Barthes 146). AI generated writing resonates very well with Barthes' statement as any AI output is an amalgamation of numerous sources available to it instantaneously. As Khasanah, Wei, and Rustiyana argue, any writing produced with the help of AI is visualised "as a hybrid interaction between human cognition and computational systems" (374). The author is thus reduced to scriptor who "no longer bears within him passions, humours, feelings, impressions, but rather this immense dictionary from which he draws a writing that can know no halt..." (Barthes 147). However, Barthes views are limited so far as production of AI assisted writings are concerned as his emphasis was more on the reading and interpretation of texts rather than on the writing process itself. His impassioned plea for "birth of the reader... at the cost of the death of the Author" (Barthes 148) is about a move away from the fixed meaning of text to interpretative freedom and concerns least about the material conditions of textual production – a given issue so far as AI assisted writing is concerned.

Foucault's Author-Function

Foucault, in response to Barthes, coined the term 'author-function' to emphasize that writing is a variable and complex function not fixed in its origin. Foucault argued that the "author" is not a person but a functional principle of discourse who performs diverse functions like classification of texts, establishes relationships between a body of works, aids legal and institutional appropriation of texts, and constructs authorial positions, a role which changes meaning with the change of time. The important questions that Foucault thinks will reimagine the future of writing where discourses will "unfold in a pervasive anonymity" include "What are the modes of existence of this discourse? Where has it been used, how can it circulate, and who can appropriate it for himself?" (Foucault 138). Foucault's questions in many ways anticipate debates surrounding data originating from AI, copyright infringement, and the ownership of machine-generated outputs. However, Foucault's author-function remains tethered to a humanist framework in which discourse originates from human subjects, even if those subjects are understood as positions rather than persons. Despite Foucault's futuristic concerns regarding author-function, the concept remains connected to human intervention where writing is mainly a human product. The 'human' author of Foucault might not be conceptualised as a person but rather as a position. Yet, authorial function is mainly human in nature unlike machines where the textual output is not subjective intention at all. They are unable to "guarantee or in some way authorize the meaning and the truth of what is said" (Coeckelbergh and Gunkel 80). This absence of subjective guarantee demands new theoretical resources.

Beyond Poststructuralism: The Overcoming of Authorship

A more nuanced concept of the relation between a designated author and AI generated writing comes from Ciorogar and Shapiro's concept of "the overcoming of authorship". As referred earlier, their argument understands writing in the present scenario as hybrid and moulded and shaped and moulded by technology. The role of the author is therefore neither totally done away with nor considered to be sacrosanct in itself. It is conceptualised more in a sublated state where its individual agency is both real and radically constrained. This state of the author functions at different levels. At the production level, a human prompt generates text more as a probability, a prediction rather than as causal effect where understanding between events is necessary to give rise to a logical output. At the circulation level, "platforms can curate...content with limited transparency or accountability" thereby effectively restricting what is visible and available (Carlon 703). At the level of circulation, whether writing is AI generated or not, audience perception of authorship is often based paratextual cues rather than an in-depth knowledge of the process of production of the text. The author-function therefore "is massively distributed across the humans, organisations, algorithms and technological systems that have contributed data" for the production of text (Goodfellow 10). Writing is thus no longer a singular

activity but more so a process of co-creation which demands attention not only to the text but also to the paratextual frames that make them legible as authored works.

Expanding Paratext Theory for the AI Age

Authorship thus existing in a dispersed state involving both human and non-human agents paves the way for paratextual elements where the dispersion is actually visible. Paratext as defined by Genette is “a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but of transaction” (Genette 2). Paratext, in the context of written text, includes all the peripheral elements surrounding the actual text -- titles, prefaces, covers, interviews, authorial commentary etc. Genette conceptualised paratext as the threshold which acts as a mediator between the centre and periphery of a text, a controlling mechanism which shapes reader interpretation of text. This ability to mould perceptions regarding the text, despite not created by the author, is what Genette believes the way in which paratext serves authorial intentions, it lays the foundation for “a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it” (Genette 2). AI generated writing problematizes this concept of paratext as authorial intention does not exist in such cases. Even so, it is precisely this absence of intention which makes them more decisive in providing the authorial framework which the text fails to provide.

The question of paratext gains prominence in the context of presentation and framing of text where machine generated text has no apparent relation to its production. Who or what is responsible for the paratextual framing? And in such a scenario, how do readers circumnavigate the concept of threshold where the threshold itself is probably the only site of human intervention? The importance of paratexts with reference to AI generated literature brings forth the idea that such works are inevitably accompanied by what Silvana Colella terms as “enlarged paratexts” (Colella 2). She asserts that their presence in the text is not merely to add ornamental value but rather more importantly to perform a more constitutive function where they “provide salient clues on the process of co-creation, the reconfiguration of authorship, and the production of value” (Colella 2).

There is a twofold function that these enlarged paratexts perform. Firstly, the issue of ethical transparency is addressed by “providing a distribution of responsibility, tracing the borders of human interventions vis-à-vis artificial language” (Colella 4) Secondly and perhaps more importantly they perform authorial identity by delineating the newly formed role of author as a prompter by “navigating an uncharted terrain by returning at times to the certainties of conventional authorship” (Colella 3).

Paratexts being enlarged in AI assisted literature is not accidental in nature but rather points to a particular dilemma related to the text. In isolation, the text offers very few clues about its mode of production or the distribution of agency that generated it. The basic predicament of AI generated text being essentially indistinguishable from human writing becomes all the more problematic without a paratextual framing. Readers are therefore continually confused in trying to discern the differences AI

writing and human writing. Thus the necessary differentiating ability is provided by paratexts which in effect perform an epistemological function.

Paratext however is not merely an informative tool but also a performative one. While disclosing the usage of AI in writing, paratext performs a more nuanced understanding of what involvement of AI actually construes. Varied models of authorship, interpretations of meaning and reader expectations are produced by varied paratextual strategies. Any text which prefaces human intervention in the form of prompting, selecting and editing gives rise to a reading and interpretation which includes authorial intention and discerning ability to choose out of various options available. On the other hand, a text prefaced as only AI output draws attention to the machine's abilities and restrictions. In both cases, paratext performs a crucial function of drawing attention to not only how a text is conceived by the reader but also to its method of production and its perception.

This expansion of paratext again problematises the question of boundaries and the relationship between paratext and text. If paratext is greater in length than the text then is it just supplementary and absolute in its identity? Or does it extend to becoming the central meaning making site? In AI assisted writings, these questions gain more importance where any text is created with very little human effort while the paratext is painstakingly brought into origin to bring to the fore human authorship and creative control. In such a scenario, the paratext no longer remains only a framing element but increasingly takes the shape of text itself thereby successfully imbuing the machine language with meaning and implications which it otherwise lacks.

Genette's framework bifurcates into two directions through the concept of "expanded paratext". Firstly, with respect to AI assisted writing, the paratextual elements are more wide-spread and focussed than compared to traditional literary output. Paratextuality defining and detailing how the actual process of machine writing takes place can be voluminous in length and can even outrival the actual text. Secondly, the framing of AI generated writing moves beyond the boundaries of the user interface and traditional paratextual elements like Promotional materials, author interviews, social media posts etc. all contribute to it.

Case Study in Co-Creation: The Performance of Authorship

A better understanding of the function of expanded paratexts can be achieved through specific examples of how it works out in AI-assisted literary production. In this context, I have chosen Stephen Marche's *Death of an Author* (2023) novella to highlight the relationship between paratextual strategies employed and the models of authorship they construct.

Marche's *Death of an Author* was published under a pseudonym "Aidan Marchine" and this work serves as a pertinent example of the relationship between authorship and human-AI collaboration. He

claims that the novella is “95 per cent AI-generated” (Marche 90), with it being described as “arguably the first halfway readable A.I. novel” (Garner n.p.) and “required reading for anyone who’s thinking about doing the same” (Comitta n.p.). The novelty factor notwithstanding, the novella illustrates how expanded paratexts in fact function as the main sites where human authorship wields power and the increasingly blurred boundaries of human-machine collaboration. Paratextual elements in the novella include afterword, interviews with Marche, marketing materials, and even the pseudonym by line “Aidan Marchine”, all of which form a threshold that readers have to cross in order to infuse meaning into the text which it intrinsically does not possess (Colella 3).

The title *Death of an Author* immediately refers to Roland Barthes’s 1967 essay of the same name, which famously proclaimed the “death” of the Author as the origin and guarantor of textual meaning. The intertextual nudge in the very title itself functions as Genette’s concept of titular paratext -- an approach which makes the reader beforehand approach the text through a poststructuralist lens. The dichotomy of course lies in the fact that Barthes’ intention was to free readers from the authority and restraints of authorship whereas Marche’s work focusses on machines’ ability to become authors.

Barthes’ concept of the author is someone steeped in capitalist ideology which prioritises individual agency and proprietary ownership. As an alternative to this concept, he put forward the idea of *scriptor* -- someone whose existence is strictly confined within the text and during the act of writing. Marche breaks free from Barthes’ metaphorical death of the author in unexpected but interesting ways. The plot concerns the literal murder and subsequent investigation of a famous writer, Peggy Firmin. However, the novella succinctly hints at literal death of the authorial figure itself -- the author being replaced or rather dispersed through human-machine collaboration -- thus effectively highlighting “What does it mean to be an ‘author’ anyway?” (Garner n.p.). The titular reference to Barthes also foregrounds the tensions in Marche’s work. Barthes main argument was to make the reader free from authorial constraints, to allow a text to be open for innumerable interpretations away from the bindings of a named author who restricts meaning. However, Marche’s paratextual efforts -- afterword, interviews, detailed explanations of the process of creation -- brings back authorial control. It tries to reign and direct the reader’s understanding of the text within the context of what Marche wants to reveal about the text. Marche guides interpretation, provides the “final signified” that Barthes sought to eliminate. The process is in direct contrast to the Barthesian implications of the title – bringing the author to the centre even as they announce his displacement.

Another obvious paratextual element is the authorial by line: “Aidan Marchine.” It is pseudonym -- portmanteau of “Marche” and “machine” -- which in itself is again AI generated (Alter n.p.). The choice of the name is interesting as it performs the complex function of assigning authorship -- part human (Marche) and part machine. At the same time, it maintains the conventional sense of a singular authorial persona thereby effecting clothing “the novelty... in a familiar garb” (Colella 2). The decision

to use a pseudonym again highlights Marche's own ambivalent relationship with the concept of authorship. Marche himself admitted that assigning authorial identity to him would be "inaccurate as a matter of fact" (qtd. in Alter n.p.) but at the same time asserted that he was "the creator of this work, 100 percent" (qtd. in Alter n.p.). This contradiction regarding authorship is the threshold that the pseudonym negotiates. "Aidan Marchine" is neither human nor machine -- it exists in a limbo navigating the undefined space where human-machine collaboration takes place.

The status of the author is further revealed, through Marche's statement, as someone who formulates the idea, leads the way from ideation to reality, and most importantly takes responsibility for the work. The author however is not someone who works towards the linguistic origin and texture of the text. The stylistic features of language, the actual words in itself takes its origin from the machine's statistical processing of its training data. Having said so, the author ultimately decides which words stay and which do not to form a meaningful text.

Marche adds to this idea in the afterword when he says, "If you make bad art with a new tool, you just haven't figured out how to use the tool yet" (Marche 93). The idea instantaneously relegates AI into the position of a tool which alike to usage of other tools requires precision, skill, discerning ability etc. Authorship is therefore more of the ability to use the tool -- AI -- with precise knowledge about its premium usage. Marche succinctly highlights the process of writing and maximum usage of AI's ability as, "What you need is to have it write something about a murder scene in the style of Chinese nature poetry, then make it active, then make it conversational, then Select All and put it in the style of Ernest Hemingway. That gets you something interesting" (Marche 89-90). The point of emphasis here shifts from how well Marche can write to how deftly he can use AI. Marche himself asserts that his writing is better than other similarly produced work as he possesses three qualities which differentiates him from others. He had a well sketched out plan regarding what he wanted to do, he is quite well versed in technology, and most importantly he knows what is considered to be good writing (Marche 91). His understanding of "good writing" however does not emanate from machines but from a rigorous knowledge and familiarity of earlier writings. Thus, he says:

Every producer becomes an archive: the larger the knowledge and the more coherent the understanding, the better the resulting work. The creator of meaningful literary AI art will be, in effect, a literary curator. That task will require more familiarity with the modes of literary style, not less. (Marche 91)

The afterword to the novella is where multiple paratextual elements are emphasized upon by Marche. It serves as "required reading for anyone who wants to think seriously about the future of LLM-assisted writing" (Comitta n.p.). The detailed afterword provides critical insights into the process of writing and the complex enmeshing of human and machine agency. Marche outlines that he used three

different AI programmes for his work. He initially used ChatGPT which provided him with the skeletal framework. He later transitioned to Sudowrite to add stylistic and structural features to the original framework and finally used Cohere to further finetune his project and to train the usage of prompts (Marche 90). Marche disclosing the process of writing is crucial as it lays bare the fact that LLMs by themselves cannot produce voluminous works. It is the human agency which works in a piecemeal manner to give rise to a coherent narrative. In invoking Moravec's paradox in the afterword, Marche categorically pinpoints the distribution of labour while writing the novella. Moravec's observes that machine can perform relatively challenging tasks like playing chess in an easier manner than humans while relatively simple tasks like perception or oriented movement are difficult for it to perform. This is probably the reason why the captcha feature in web pages asks human to click on certain aspects of the page to check whether its human or a bot. Marche says that the same rule applies to AI assisted writing too. The paradox therefore is that "writing ambitious or elegant prose is easy for A.I.s but difficult for humans, and vice versa when it comes to devising engaging plots" (Miller n.p.). The process of authorship, therefore, lies squarely at the feet of plotting, structuring, prompting, and curating rather than at sentence construction. Marche's theory regarding AI and the fearmongering regarding AI burns down to it being merely a tool to be used for a particular end in sight and thus he says, "The question we need to ask is not whether an AI can write...(but) to seek out what the unknown might be" (Marche 93).

Expanded Paratexts and the Performance of Co-Creation

The case study of *Death of an Author* suggests that expanded paratexts have several crucial and interrelated functions to perform. One of the first functions they perform is providing transparency to the process of production. It stresses that AI assisted writings need hypertrophied paratexts. In other words, such texts require extensive explanations to point out the site of human authorship, if any, that exists within the work. Readers should be made aware about the process of production of the text thereby vesting on them the authority to reject or accept its intrinsic value. A simple AI generated text might befuddle the reader into believing that the name associated with the text is the sole author and creator of the text. Paratexts like the afterword of Marche help in doing away this confusion and shed light on the process of collaboration. It is up to the reader to vest value on the text as a capable literary output or not. Paratexts thus become the sites through which the literary value of a text is determined. At the same time, the transparency that such extended paratexts provide helps in responding to the questions of ethics, deception and authenticity and thus helping readers pass informed judgements regarding the text.

Second, works like that of Marche shift attention to the fact that paratexts in the age of AI focus more on the production process and less on the biographical details of the author or their perceived intentions. The nuances of the types of tools used, the number and types of prompts employed to get

the desire results, and the sieving process used to get what the author wanted are both fascinating and crucial in understanding whether it is AI or human intervention which dominates writing. It is critical in configuring who wrests the actual power of writing -- AI or human.

Third, paratexts also shift attention to the authorial performance and identity. The text in itself might be machine generated thereby effacing the apparent role of the author. Interviews, afterword, preface etc. realign the focus back to the author in their attempt to defend and give meaning to the text. The survival of the author therefore depends not within the text per se but rather outside it. It is in the framing of the text and not the actual text itself. The author's identity changes to that of a curator, prompter, or editor whose creative judgement rather than creative writing prowess determine the finished product. This "performance" at least keeps the semblance of the author intact in an otherwise shifting cultural, authorial, and technological landscape.

Fourth, expanded paratexts engage in value production, infusing AI-generated text with significance it might otherwise lack. By framing the text as the outcome of a deliberate artistic process, by connecting it to literary traditions and contemporary debates, by positioning it within genres and categories that carry established value, the paratext works to elevate machine output to the status of literature. This function is particularly important given the ease with which AI can generate vast quantities of text; the paratext provides a mechanism for selecting, arranging, and valuing that otherwise undifferentiated mass.

Fifth, expanded paratexts take on the role of interpretive guidance helping readers in their approach towards a particular text. A preface, introduction or afterword delineating how the author processed the selection for the actual text draws the attention of the reader towards the authorial qualities which has led to this particular selection. Any paratext that say reflects on the ethical and technical aspects of AI generated writing will effectively guide the reader's attention toward those implications. Such paratexts eventually function as a "threshold" in Genette's sense, which foregrounds certain modes of engagement with the text and foreclosing others.

Finally, expanded paratexts also enable distributed allocation -- allocating the credit and responsibility among the various agents who have contributed to the process of writing. Paratexts establish the division of labour through specific task allocation -- human (prompting, selecting, editing, arranging) and machine (generating, varying, combining). This neat division also takes into consideration the legal, ethical, and evaluative ramifications of the generated text. It is one of the most crucial functions in our modern age writing where traditional single authorship no longer suffices the realities of textual production.

Co-creation as a concept provides the basis for understanding the functions of paratext. Co-creation conceptualises itself as a form of production where agency is not fixated on one particular factor but occurs in a dispersed form across humans and machines. Co-creation produces a conducive scenario where humans are not simply command giving function and machines made only to perform the same function. Rather it is a mutually symbiotic relationship where neither can produce alone in isolation. Humans in co-creative practice have moved away from actual writing of text to that of being a manager who performs the ultimate function of deciding what remains and what does not. The machine is not to imitate the human function but to merely generate based on the human function. The machine's function transcends the boundaries of human abilities and to explore and generate data.

Co-creation has an integral connection with paratext theory. While the text comes into being through a distributed agency, the paratext is the locus where the distribution is represented and negotiated. The paratext's function is not just to frame a pre-existing text but to be an active participant in the meaning making process. It performs a dual function of both revealing and blurring the boundaries between human and machine contributions. It at once points towards humans being the ultimate controlling authority so far as writing is concerned but also brings forth their dependence on machines in actual text generation. It performs the author as sovereign creator while also revealing that sovereignty to be exercised through submission to algorithmic processes.

Toward an Ecological Theory of AI Authorship

The broad trajectory from the Romantic notions of creator to Barthes' death of the author to the practice of co-creation examined here diversifies and delimits the concept of author. The author is not necessarily dead but has instead been diffused across networks of collaborators, platforms, paratexts and readers who form the conditions of textual production. Ciorogaru and Shapiro's concept of "overcoming of authorship" in effect crystallises the changing notion of authorship while at the same time steering clear of the nostalgia associated with it. Authorship is therefore no longer restricted but sublated to a larger mode of production which at once preserves the authorial identity but reconfigures the material conditions and significance of what it means to be an author. The author posits its identity as a far cry from the Romantic genius and as a product bound by ecologies of production, circulation, and reception. The resources to understand this ecological authorship is provided by paratext theory. In a scenario where the concept of authorship is no longer a fixed identity, paratexts provide space to understand the process of distribution -- the space which allows to look closely at the background of the creative process.

Paratext theory in the context of digital environments highlights the distinguishing contribution of platforms, algorithms, and user practices to the textual process of production. The figure of the author is thus dependent on understanding the networks within which texts are produced, circulated, and

interpreted---and to recognise that in those networks, the author survives, but never alone. The ultimate question of authorship vis-à-vis AI is not whether the survives the impact of AI but more importantly how they survive it. The survival of the author takes place as an accountable agent, as curatorial consciousness, as paratextual presence. The position of the author is corroborated through the choices made by them, the selection and the responsibilities assumed by them. AI therefore does not toll the death knell of the author but rather the overcoming of the notion of author -- a reconfiguration whereby the author is moulded into a new avatar which preserves authorial agency albeit in fundamentally altered conditions.

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