
THE DEATH OF THE AUTHOR AND THE BIRTH OF AI AS A SCRIPTOR

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Recent advances in Artificial Intelligence and machine learning prove that while in its earlier forms, computer technologies and artificial intelligence were mainly used as a tool to aid the production of an art work, it now possesses the ability/intelligence to create, and hence becomes eligible to be treated as an author, who might lay claims to agency and autonomy. Deriving from this point, this study aims to explore the position of AI as an author and its implications for literary studies.

The etymological source for the word author is located in the Roman word “auctor,” which meant the bearer of certain rights. Therefore, authorship has always been closely related to authority. With each new approach to literature, authorship and the position of the author were re-evaluated. While the author was sanctioned as the possessor of divine knowledge in Medieval literature, and his authority was assumed to be derived from God, with Renaissance individualism and Romanticism in the following centuries, the author was treated as the genius, who distinguished himself by his capacity to feel, think, imagine and create in an unprecedented manner. Author was dethroned as his reign as the sole authority over his work came to an end with theories that deemed the intentions of the author irrelevant and “declared “the death of the author”, finally replacing him with a scriptor, as opposed to the Author-God. In the light of these, this study discusses whether, AI, with its algorithm, hypertext, randomness and lack of origin, might be regarded as a scriptor in Barthesian terms or not.

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