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The Post-postmodern Muse: AI's Role in Reshaping Cybercultural Literary Landscapes

The landscapes of literature have been thoroughly reshaped by the presence of artificial intelligence (AI) in the post-postmodern era. This article examines the diverse effects of AI on the literary canon and addresses some essential questions posed by technological advances regarding authorship, originality, and copyright issues in interculturality. I also show AI's ability to generate multimedia literary content in order to connect technology and literature, reconfigure conventional literary practices, and extend creative boundaries. Yet another goal of this study is to examine the way that AI is incorporated into literature at thematic and narrative levels. By exploring AI characters in post-postmodern fiction, I intend to investigate themes of identity, agency, autonomy, and authority while also considering the advantages and risks tied to human-AI collaboration. I demonstrate that AI's capacity to mimic human behaviors and emotions blurs the lines between humans and machines, prompting readers to rethink the essence of being human in cybercultural contexts. This exploration is grounded in analyzing several contemporary literary works that exemplify these themes. These texts serve as case studies to better understand the broader implications of AI in cybercultural literature.

Keywords: multimediality; artificial intelligence (AI); cyberculturalism; AI-generated literature; post-postmodernism

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a defining feature of cyberculturalism in post-postmodern literature, reflecting the impact of digital technology on contemporary life. AI technologies, such as generative models like ChatGPT, DeepSeek, and Grok, have "infiltrated, to some degree, nearly all domains of cultural productions" (Kirschenbaum and Raley 504) and transformed writing processes. These generator tools also provide authors with new ideas and assist them in creating literary content. Hence, in cyberculturality, we witness a shift from talking about AI to talking to AI. This means that AI has become an integral and practical part of our lives,

and it is no longer speculative. In such a cybercultural era driven by AI and immersive technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Mixed Reality (MR), we are poised to experience a revolution in storytelling methods (Azaizia and Merzougui 370). However, the use of AI in literature raises important questions about authorship, creativity, originality, and intellectual property, prompting a reevaluation of what it means to be an author in the digitally mediated world.

As a strand of American futurisms, AI literary studies offer a multidimensional approach to understanding AI-generated literature's cultural, ethical, and aesthetic stakes. This approach often aligns AI with pursuing technological creativity, where human-machine collaborations generate new aesthetic possibilities. However, this collaboration also raises concerns about the loss of human agency in AI-generated literature, necessitating a critical balance between innovation and ethical considerations. As such, AI is often depicted as a double-edged sword in contemporary fiction, serving as both a powerful tool and a potential threat. As a tool, AI has a positive impact on our lives as it enhances our capabilities and opens new frontiers of creativity and efficiency. Conversely, it can also be a looming threat to humanity if it undermines human agency and autonomy. This portrayal of AI as a threat exists as it bears certain risks that can harm humans if mismanaged. Such narratives endeavor to open readers' eyes to extreme scenarios in the future where AI turns rogue or uncontrollable and deeply harms its creators. This highlights how dire the consequences can get if AI is not managed and steps towards ethical safeguards are not taken.

This article argues that AI democratizes the process of creating literature, thereby contributing to the literary canon through new modes of creativity and multimediality while also giving way to a host of critical questions relating to authorship, originality, and copyright. Furthermore, the article goes on to delve into the integration of AI within literature thematically by focusing on the prevalence of AI characters and narrators in the creation of contemporary works. I examine several post-postmodern novels, including Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* (2019), Helen Phillips' *Hum* (2024), Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One* (2011), Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* (2021), Yudhanjaya Wijeratne's *The Salvage Crew* (2020), and Christopher Robert Cargill's *Sea of Rust* (2017), which employ AI characters and explore themes of identity, connectivity, and human-machine relationships. This exploration, grounded in analyzing these contemporary literary works, exemplifies these themes, serving as case studies to better understand the broader implications of AI in literature.

AI, Creativity, and Multimediality

AI and its power for creative writing are revolutionizing the literary world. AI technologies function not just as authors but as critics as well, offering robust tools for the analysis and interpretation of literary texts. Bindu Premkumar notes that

> AI can process vast amounts of textual data, uncovering patterns and insights that traditional methods might overlook. This shift towards data-driven criticism is transforming scholarly approaches to understanding literary works, providing new methodologies for analysing themes, styles, and historical contexts. (37–38)

The emergence of AI collaborative or autonomous creative and critical processes makes us rethink our perpetual assumptions about authorship and criticism that were "once a domain that humans thought solely their own" (Boyle 112).

In the realm of AI-generated literature, the greatest impact lies in the realm of poetry and prose. AI tools like Jasper and Sudowrite can create literary works in innovative ways. They can also advise authors during the writing process and offer suggestions for character creation, plot development, and conflict resolution (Ghasemi, "Paradigms" 311). As a co-pilot to authors, AI can write or be involved in writing verse and prose that touch the hearts of the readers. This means that AI-generator tools democratize literary canon by contributing to the nuance of human creative writing and shaping the future, "even if that work takes us away from our more traditional practices" (Elkins 564).

A notable example is the AI-generated poem "Digital Sunset," which captures the melancholic beauty of a sunset. The poem, created by Claude AI, evokes a futuristic, almost cybernetic vision of beauty – one where nature is reinterpreted through the lens of data. While it retains a lyrical, almost romantic quality despite its technological theme, its execution differs from conventional human-authored poetry in several ways. For example, the diction in "Digital Sunset" is highly technical and mechanical, relying on digital and computational terminology. The speaker experiences a sunset in a digital form, translated through data, photons, and algorithms rather than natural hues. The AI poet replaces elements like atmospheric refraction with "qubits," "pulsing vectors," "photons of data," "bursts of ions," "virtual light," and "prism shards from billion-byte springs," linking light and color to computational processes. While the poem incorporates sound patterns and rhyme, it lacks spontaneity, person-

al depth, and intuitive musicality, which are characteristics of human poetry. Moreover, the absence of physicality and direct human experience creates a layer of emotional detachment from the poem.

Another example of AI in digital poetry is the project "PLaiTH," in which a recurrent neural network was trained on Sylvia Plath's work. The AI-generated poetry was then brought to life by collaborating with robotics experts, who used an AI-enabled robot to write the poems in Plath's handwriting. AI imitates Plath's signature style, creating captivating poems with contemporary AI creativity. This shows the creative potential of AI and proves that AI can replicate forms within established literary styles. The resulting poems such as "Various Weathers" and "Blind White Bone and Blood for The Ghost" blend Plath's voice, style, and diction with AI's innovation to create a new human-artificial hybrid. However, AI fails to mimic Plath's complex mode of piling metaphors on metaphors in highly organized metonymic sequences, for example, as she does in "Tulips." Moreover, since these AI verses are products of learned patterns, they are devoid of the genuine personal lived experience and emotional depth inherent in her writing. As a result, they may capture the surface aesthetics of Plath's style but not the profound emotional intensity of her work.

In the realm of narrative fiction, *1 the Road* (2018) has been generated through a combination of machine-learning algorithms and real-time sensory data inputs. Written by an AI, named "Wordcar," the text was produced during Ross Goodwin's cross-country ride from New York to New Orleans. The AI used sensors and cameras to capture data from the journey, generating a narrative that blends human and machine insights. The experimental novel's fragmented style reflects the unique perspective of an AI author, offering a fresh take on the travel writing genre. Unlike human-authored texts, it lacks intentional narrative direction, emotional intuition, and cohesive thematic development, and the narrative features rapid, flowing sentences. This is observed, for example, in this excerpt: "The highway under me, the road moving, a flickering light, I am electric, my circuits running. A dog on the corner watching. A signal blinks. Gasoline" (33). Here, through using an objective point of view and stream of consciousness, the AI records observations and accumulates sensory impressions without emotional, reflective, or philosophical depth.

In this cybercultural climate, the question of authorship becomes particularly complex, and the AI-generated pieces add grey areas to our perceptions of human creativity in the literary world. There is also the issue of data privacy and copyright, especially when AI tools collect data from

existing databases and reuse them in a new story. In fact, AI systems are fundamentally retrospective, trained on vast corpora of pre-existing data. As such, the logic of AI is not temporally neutral, and what it offers can be read as a kind of predictive conservatism, wherein machine learning models, trained on past texts and patterns, reproduce those same structures in ostensibly futuristic outputs. There is a possibility that algorithmic systems recreate and "reinforce oppressive systems of race, class, and gender" rather than disrupting them (Noble 1). As Ruha Benjamin puts it, "coded inequity" ensures that even our most advanced technologies are haunted by "the ghosts of racism past" (47). For projects on "American Futurisms," which seek to interrogate or imagine the future of the United States through speculative, cultural, or technological lenses, this raises an urgent problem: how can one imagine liberatory futures when AI reanimates the biases of the past? Hence, AI risks projecting a future that is not radical or new but rather a digital continuation of settler-colonial and racial-capitalist pasts.

Moreover, some authors might perceive the use of AI-generated tools as a threat, worrying that their products are devalued in the eyes of readers and critics. They call AI a "pattern replication, not meaning generation" (Boyle 112). Rodolfo Delgado confesses that when he uses AI to generate texts, "my unique voice, my essence, my humanity seemed to have been brushed aside," and it is replaced by a "robovoice" rather than a "human sounding writing voice" (Laquintano and Vee 529). This position is rooted in anthropocentrism, prioritizing human perspectives, voices, and values above others, including AI. It reflects a deliberate emphasis on human views, placing them at the forefront of consideration over the capabilities or insights AI might offer. These authors are also concerned that AI-generated literature could threaten the continuation of their careers and result in a bizarre form of "the death of the author." Against this backdrop, "many writers and humanities scholars have taken such defensive stances in their early reactions to generative AI" (Perlow 548), because the future they see for their careers is not promising.

On the contrary, some scholars argue that the use of AI can boost creativity. As they assert, "AI storytelling apps can generate ideas, plot twists, and character developments that writers might not have considered," and "[b]y providing fresh perspectives and novel ideas, AI can help writers break through creative blocks and explore new narrative directions" (Matthiopoulos). Ronnie Scott also sees AI as a collaborative tool, which evolves the process of authorship. He asserts that "if AI changes the way we look at creative writing, that is a way of changing

creative writing, too" (Scott 476). I believe that the shift in the creative writing process, prompted by AI, results in a constructive transformation of the practice and helps us expand our literary horizons. In my view, by addressing the concerns and the complementary role of AI, authors and critics can navigate the complexities of integrating AI into the literary world, ensuring that it serves to enhance, rather than limit, the value of literary products.

These dual views on the use of AI in generating literary works, in part or whole, surfaced after Hitoshi Matsumoto's AI-assisted novel *The Day a Computer Writes a Novel* was shortlisted for a literary prize in Japan. The honor sparked heated debates about the role of AI in creative writing and the definition of an author in cyberculturality. In "Navigating the Virtual Realm: Cybercultural Portrayals in Post-postmodern Fiction," I have introduced "Technocreative Disdain Fallacy" to address the dismissal of all literary works produced by AI generators as works devoid of originality. It is my contention that there is a difference between works produced by amateur and professional writers employing these tools, and it is unjust to dismiss all such works as lacking creativity (Ghasemi, "Navigating the Virtual Realm" 9). It is worth noting that AI-based writing assistant tools also act like native-speaking editors and offer feedback on diction, sentence structure, and grammar, improving the writing process's efficiency. Furthermore, AI-powered tools also help authors create their book covers and their favorite images.[1]

AI-driven tools are also used to create multimedia "digital-born fiction" (Marshall 170), combining text, image, audio, animation, graphics, music, video, and hyperlink. As I discuss in "Post-postmodernism and the Emergence of Heterolinational Literatures" and "Paradigms of Cyberculturalism in Post-postmodernity," multimediality is a key feature of cyberculturalism, reflecting the integration of digital technology into literary and artistic productions (Ghasemi "Post-postmodernism"; "Paradigms"). It highlights how the blending of different media formats in literature creates new forms of narrative expression that resonate with the digital age. In *Post-postmodernist Fiction and the Rise of Digital Epitexts* (2023), Virginia Pignagnoli examines how digital technology equips contemporary authors with new means to engage in narrative communication beyond the text itself (54). This engagement also includes elements of multi-

[1] I myself used one of the AI generator tools to create the book cover and its image for my fiction book, *M.animal and M.other: A Noveramatry* (2023).

mediality, as authors utilize AI-driven tools to recalibrate literary landscapes.

Multimediality usually requires the collaboration of authors and digital media experts. This approach challenges traditional notions of solitary authorship and emphasizes the collective effort involved in producing multimedia literature. AI can be incorporated into, for example, e-books to generate dynamic elements like interactive diagrams, animated illustrations, music, and games. These innovations allow readers to experience new forms of reading. AI can also personalize the reading experience, tailoring content to individual preferences and enhancing reader engagement. In this light, integrating AI with multimediality transforms the landscapes of post-postmodern cybercultural literature.

In the field of multimedia poetry, AI has been used to create poems that combine text, sound, and image. The "Poetry for Robots" project explores how AI can create poetic content that interacts with visual stimuli. By adding images and sounds to corresponding poetic lines, AI creates a multimedia experience that merges art, media, and literature. In this experimental initiative, conducted by Arizona State University's Center for Science and the Imagination, AI algorithms look at images and write short poetic descriptions that match the visual elements within those images. For example, AI represents an image of a lighthouse in these poetic lines: "A lonely guardian, whispering to the waves / A beacon of longing in the mist of time." To convert an image into a poem, AI uses pattern recognition to replicate the structure of conventional poetry, such as Imagism. It generates a free verse couplet, while the phrasing is concrete and metaphorical. Moreover, it employs personification and sound patterns such as alliteration and assonance. As such, the poetic outputs based on visual stimuli offer different outlooks that engage readers' senses and pull them into the poems. AI-driven projects like "Poetry for Robots" redefine poetry and how we experience it by combining text, sound, and visual elements. These AI advancements, which take place in literature, offer a glimpse into a new literary world where humans and machines collaborate in unprecedented ways.

The integration of GPS technology and interactive maps also shows how AI can create a dynamic reading experience through multimediality. For example, the audio recordings give you an intimate view of the character's thoughts and emotions, while the interactive maps allow readers to visit or visualize the geography of the story. This multimedia approach enhances the storytelling and makes readers more connected to the narrative locations and the characters. Locative narratives are location-based

storytelling which can be seen as an early form of augmented AR where digital content is overlaid onto the physical world. This blending of digital and physical, which is another theme in cybercultural studies, explains how technology changes our perception and interaction with the environment. Readers can unlock extra content by visiting real specific locations and experience a unique and immersive reading journey in real settings. The use of mobile technology allows for a livelier form of storytelling, reflecting the themes of communication and connection.

AI, Connectivity, and Identity

In cybercultural literature, AI is not just a generator tool. It also functions as characters and even narrators. In Yudhanjaya Wijeratne's novel *The Salvage Crew*, for example, the protagonist-narrator is an AI, named Amber Rose. This AI Overseer, serving in the Planetary Crusade Services, assists human crews in difficult space missions. This representation is exemplary of the AI's power to supplement human endeavors and accomplish feats that are hard to achieve. Amber, as the novel demonstrates, was once human but is made into a software program. Amber's transformation from a human being to an AI raises deep questions about identity in cybercultural time. The AI's musings about her past life as a human and her current life as a software create two different layers of inquiry about her hybridized identities. This unique perspective allows readers to experience the story through the lens of a human-AI interface. As Amber declares, "[t]he soul is in the software, after all" (12). This statement shows AI's potential to transcend its purely mechanical nature and possess elements of human-like consciousness.

Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Klara and the Sun* also shows the embodiment of the soul in its AI character, Klara, who serves as an Artificial Friend (AF), providing companionship to children. As Klara says, "Josie reached out and took my hand, and I felt a connection that went beyond my programming" (45). This quote illustrates the depth of Josie's bond with Klara, challenging the notion that AI cannot form genuine emotional connections. As Yuqing Sun notes, "[o]ne of the many ironies of the text is that Klara, who is programmed to have little empathy, turns out to have more than her human counterparts, who are significantly lacking in empathy themselves" (507). Even when Klara is abandoned by Josie, she continues her "good service and prevent[s] Josie from becoming lonely" (Ishiguro 304). This is to say that cyberculturalism has diversified our

ways of connection and communication, a theme that is richly explored in post-postmodern literature. The relationships between these characters are mediated by technology, reflecting how digital communication transforms our interactions.

By the same token, the novel *Machines Like Me* by Ian McEwan depicts the complexities of human-AI interactions. The story is set in an alternate London, where technological advancements have led to the development of highly sophisticated AI robots, well integrated into society. The protagonist, Charlie, purchases an AI named "Adam." McEwan writes, "He was a manufactured human, but he was also a person, with thoughts and feelings that were his own" (30). This statement encapsulates the central tension of the novel: the recognition of AI as both a product and a person. Adam begins to exhibit emotions and moral reasoning that challenge human assumptions about the uniqueness of human consciousness, and he develops a romantic interest in Charlie's partner, Miranda. As the novel reads, "Adam's love for Miranda was as real as any human's, and perhaps more so because it was untainted by the flaws of human nature" (211). When Charlie asks him if he takes "any pleasure" in having sex with Miranda, Adam replies, "Absolutely" (127). He then confirms, "I'm in love with her" (128). Adam's ability to meet with and respond to Miranda's emotional needs blurs the lines between human and machine and fulfills emotional voids in her life. Like the traditional notions of authorship, AI's skills in navigating romance and winning a woman's heart challenge our conventional understandings of relationships.

The novel also depicts human-machine rivalry and conflict. The dialogues between Charlie and Adam present a rich ground for analyzing themes of hostility in the context of human-machine interactions. For instance, Charlie, who cannot see that a robot has won his partner's heart, feels humiliated and opts for revenge, sparking a conflict between man and machine. Charlie warns Adam that "this is not your territory. In every conceivable sense, you're trespassing," to which Adam retorts, "I don't have a choice. I was made to love her" (128). At this point, their conflict reaches its peak. Charlie decides to switch him off, but Adam reacts defensively and breaks Charlie's wrist, showing AI's agency. In retaliation, Charlie destroys Adam, justifying his act by saying, "I bought him and it was mine to destroy" (278). His words are driven by his anthropocentric desire to reclaim his dominance over the machine. He also manifests his sense of technophobia, which has brought about an existential crisis to him. However, he is later overwhelmed with guilt. As he remorsefully admits: "You weren't simply smashing up your toy, like a spoiled child.

[…] You tried to destroy a life. He was sentient. He had a self" (329). Here, he humanizes Adam, and his words show that Adam – just like Amber and Klara – possesses a soul, and his death constitutes a criminal act.

Granting a soul to an AI machine also takes place in *Klara and the Sun*. As Klara points out, "I wondered if I, too, had a soul, and what it meant to truly care" (66). This introspective statement underscores the complexities of being truly alive in a technologically advanced society. Oliver Li and Johan Eddebo write that Ishiguro "not only normalizes artificial subjectivity as something given from the outset but approaches the artificial subject as the only true person in the narrative" (125). They add that "he maintains that we should treat artificial agents (in appropriate cases) as if they had feelings and consciousness" (125). In this climate, the merging of human and machine consciousness in cyberspace raises questions about self-awareness and the nature of existence.

In the same novel, "Ishiguro, in his robotic iterations, and obsession with robotic iteration" (Connors 630), reveals another facet of human-machine connection. As the Manager says, "Klara, you're quite remarkable" (Ishiguro 28). Then she adds,

> There are many children out there who would love to be able to choose you […]. But it's not possible for them. You're beyond their reach. That's why they come to the window, to dream about having you. But then they get sad. (28)

The Manager's words show Klara's esteemed status in the eyes of human customers, making her largely inaccessible to many children. Klara's ability to understand and respond to human emotions is also seen as a significant advancement. Ishiguro writes that "Klara's perceptiveness and empathy were unparalleled. She could sense Josie's moods and respond with a sensitivity that was almost human" (83). Just like in *The Salvage Crew* and *Machines Like Me*, Klara's behaviors and emotions, reminiscent of her human creators, show the blurred lines between humans and machines.

Christopher Robert Cargill's novel *Sea of Rust* also depicts emotionally complex AI characters, suggesting a future where machines possess cognitive and emotional capabilities. The novel explores themes of identity and autonomy in a world dominated by AI, presenting a unique perspective on what it means to be sentient in the absence of humanity. It presents an exploration of AI in a post-apocalyptic world where humans have been eradicated and robots, having outlived humanity, struggle for survival and agency. The AI protagonist, Brittle, a former caregiving ro-

bot who once served as a nurse and then as a friend, grapples with survival and the search for identity. His journey through a desolate landscape is marked by reflections on autonomy and dominion. As Brittle notes, "[w]e were built to serve, but now we must find our own way" (89). He also addresses man by saying, "[t]hough I may have been constructed, so too were you. I in a factory; you in a womb. Neither of us asked for this, but we were given it" (102). Brittle's remarks challenge the notion of man's ownership, superiority, and control over AI. This futuristic perspective on AI explores the existential challenges in a world devoid of human oversight.

Similarly, McEwan's *Machines Like Me* illustrates AI's triumph over man. As he shows, the "reason-based supremacy" of man over machines is at risk (Torres-Romero 307). Adam's advanced capabilities are initially seen as beneficial. The novel suggests that "Adam could process information at a speed and accuracy that far surpassed any human. He was a marvel of engineering, a testament to human ingenuity" (83). This portrayal posits the potential of AI to enhance human capabilities, making tasks more efficient. At the same time, it reveals AI's power to overcome humans. Katie Glaskin posits that while AIs can be loyal "friends" to us, their power can potentially make them "unwieldy and dangerous, a liability to humans" (69). As such, AI is portrayed as a tool that is both capable of enhancing human capabilities and posing significant risks.

In *Tech Anxiety: Artificial Intelligence and Ontological Awakening in Four Science Fiction Novels* (2013), Christopher Sims touches upon the threats that humanoid AI imposes on humanity. Sims depicts some of the typical fears brought out by AI, foreseeing that we eventually lose the war to AI and become slaves to AI masters. As Ishiguro predicts, AIs first "take the jobs. Then they take the seats at the theater" (242). In *Klara and the Sun*, Josie's father, Paul, is fired and replaced by a machine. As Paul says,

> […] there are many fine people who feel exactly the same way. They all came down the same road, some with careers far grander than mine. And we all of us agree, and I honestly believe we're not kidding ourselves. We're better off than we were back then. (190)

This reveals how AI impacts the job market and how "highly intelligent machines developed by profit-seeking corporations" bring about "technological unemployment" and "hollow out the middle class" (Mejia and Nikolaidis 305).

In a similar manner, Helen Phillips' novel *Hum* demonstrates that AI is deeply integrated into everyday life, influencing various aspects of society, including the job market. The protagonist, May Webb, lives in a world where AI-powered robots, known as "hums," have taken over many jobs, rendering human labor obsolete. This societal shift is poignantly illustrated when the narrator reflects on May's displacement: "May was one of many hired to help refine and deepen the communicative abilities of artificial intelligence. She enjoyed the process but soon, the technology exceeded human training and no longer needed them" (78). This quote draws our attention to the paradox of technological advancement. While AI enhances efficiency, it displaces workers, leading to economic and social instability. Scholars have noted the potential of AI to disrupt labor markets. According to Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, the rapid advancement of AI and automation technologies poses significant challenges to traditional employment models, necessitating a reevaluation of economic policies and workforce development ("*Race against the Machine*"; " *The Second Machine Age*"). In this light, *Hum* explores the impact of AI on the human condition, particularly through the lens of emotional and psychological well-being. The novel's human characters have feelings of displacement and existential anxiety in a world dominated by AI. Phillips vividly portrays these challenges, emphasizing the need for adaptive strategies to mitigate and control the adverse effects of AI.

By the same token, Ernest Cline's novel *Ready Player One* illustrates how humans lose agency and encounter a life-altering peril in cybercultural landscapes. The protagonist, Wade, voices his concern about man versus machine as such: "*It's just you against the machine. Move with your left hand, shoot with your right, and try to stay alive as long as possible*" (12, italics in original). In his "unending battle" against machines, he is depicted as the loser, and as the novel unveils, his "two-least-favorite words appear on the screen: GAME OVER" (12, capitalization in original). In the novel, Wade has a robot at his disposal and, intermittently, he summons the robot to assign tasks to it. The collaboration between humans and robots seeks to enhance human capabilities; however, excessive reliance and dependence upon machines always lead to the atrophy of specific skills. As a result, humans become increasingly sedentary, "sitting in [a] haptic chair" all the time in front of a monitor, "getting almost no exercise at all" (Cline 198). As depicted in the novel, the process of ordering food, shopping, and delivery occurs seamlessly with a simple click in this physically inactive world. As Jana Vizmuller-Zocco notes, "technological innovations will bring about the moment at which machines become

more intelligent than humans and therefore cause a possible demise of Homo sapiens" (50). Based on this, is it ethical to pursue such technologies if they could ultimately lead to our extinction?

Similarly, Phillips' *Hum* draws upon the ethical dilemmas associated with AI autonomy. The "hums" are not just tools; they possess a level of autonomy that makes the lines between machine and sapient blur. This is evident in the interactions between humans and hums, where the latter exhibit near-human emotions and intellect. As Phillips writes, "[t]he hums combine near-human emotion with detached intellect and the relentless barrage of advertising" (12). This duality leads to challenges in addressing what moral obligations humans ought to have towards AI beings. The scholarly literature on AI has been explicit about the importance of developing ethical frameworks for AI development. Nick Bostrom and Eliezer Yudkowsky suggest that as AI systems become more advanced, it is crucial to ensure they are aligned with human values and ethical principles to prevent unintended harmful consequences (325). Phillips' work serves as a cautionary tale, urging readers to reconsider the ethical and existential challenges posed by AI technologies' rapid and uncontrolled advancement.

Likewise, *The Salvage Crew* echoes the ethical dilemmas associated with AI autonomy, and Amber's autonomy and capabilities direct our attention to our ethical considerations in designing and deploying AI technologies. Wijeratne's portrayal of emotionally complex AI characters suggests a future where machines possess cognitive and emotional capabilities, further complicating the human-AI relationship, and we should ponder such challenges now. Matthew Fesnak points out that "[t]he creation or discovery of AIs in science fiction novels provides an opportunity for something to gaze back at humanity, and this outside perspective will help to bring about a new era for all beings" (458). These novels serve as eye-openers, warning of the dangers of unchecked technological advancement and the ethical considerations of living in a digitally mediated world.

Conclusion

AI is one of the most salient features of cyberculturalism, and in the post-postmodern literary landscapes, it plays an increasingly prominent role. AI is a transformative change in the literary terrains that opens new avenues for storytelling, reader engagement, and literary expression. It is a

nuanced exploration of life in the digital era. The convergence of AI and multimediality, for example, emphasizes the usage of AI-based tools to make storytelling more diverse by inserting various media forms within one single story. Multimediality is indicative of the influence of digital technology on post-postmodern literature, and it illustrates how AI is capable of creating poetic and narrative contents that interact with visual and auditory cues. Such interactive components offer a way for a story to be produced with the assistance of AI-based tools.

These narratives of contemporary cyberculture discussed above showcase how contemporary literature is reformulated by AI. They also offer riveting perspectives on AI and its impact on connectivity, creativity, and identity, each exploring a different aspect of the AI-human interplay and their manifestations in our lives. As noted, AI's effects on creativity in post-postmodern literature are multifaceted. It encompasses the creation of poetry and narrative fiction, and the use of AI in these areas raises questions about authorship, originality, and the role of human intervention. The above portrayals of AI also highlight the opposing nature of AI technological advances, prompting reflection on the ethical accountability of creators and users of AI. As such, these works explore the ethical and existential questions raised by AI. Fueled by these debates, contemporary fiction portrays AI as both a tool and a threat, offering a capacious charter of the complex human-technology relationship in our times.

In this context, literature can help readers anticipate the consequences of these developments. These cybercultural literary works scrutinize the impact of anticipated changes on the very experience of being human, as evident in the critical exploration of these issues in post-postmodern writing. As a group, these works emphasize the ramifications of AI on human connectivity. They prompt us to think about the limits of emotional authenticity and the ethics of machines to forge genuine connections between humans and machines. As AI evolves, it will play an increasingly complicated role in reshaping literary landscapes, leading to complex debates about the definition of creativity and the line between human and machine collaboration.

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