



Editor's Note

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Greetings and a very warm welcome to the 4th volume of *Intersections*.

In a largely digital and Artificial Intelligence-driven world, it is needless to say, technology occupies a core space and that every socio-cultural formation is either born out of it, transformed by it or annihilated by it. However, it should not be forgotten that technology is not peculiar to the 21st century and that it has been an immense shaping force ever since stone tools were made in the prehistoric era. Cultural discourses have continued to co-evolve with technology through the epochs. What is of particular consequence is the fact that the relationship between cultural products, literary forms, and technology have now become a more complex engagement involving layered perception, communication, reflection, interrogation and intervention than ever.

This volume throws up an opportunity for critical inquiry into the problems engendered by the recursive dialogue between culture and technology of which literature is often the medium. Media, according to Marshall MacLuhan, is the extension of man. The medium is the message which in its turn both regulates human experience and inscribes human identity. Here literature plays a crucial role in mediating experiences, in representing, critiquing and resisting existing and new technological paradigms, and in creating new imaginaries that foresee an alternate future in a highly technologized universe.

Literature and technology have been in an avidly dialogic relationship since the earliest rumblings in linguistic and literary activities. The volume opens with two articles that are cautionary in spirit. Sonal's article "The Fallacy of Advancement: Ray Bradbury's "The Pedestrian" and "Bright Phoenix" calls for balancing technological progress with humanistic values, warning against uncritical reliance on technology. The dystopian narratives emphasize the need for vigilance against the societal dangers of unchecked technological and media dominance. Another by Triasha Ghoshal titled " 'I understand you and it will forever bring me sadness that you do not understand me' - Emotion and Morality in Artificial Intelligence" raises the extremely pertinent issues of morality and emotion that work at the interfaces of AI-human relationships. The author uses two films – *her* by Spike Jonze and *T.I.M.* by Spencer Brown as texts in her essay, and advocates coexistence of humans and AI, and emphasizes the need to instill moral principles in artificial systems to prevent unintended consequences that indiscriminate and unabated use of AI technology is liable to precipitate.

The article titled "Always Late Capitalism: Quantity not Quality in the Age of Contentification" by Richard Snowden-Leak is an admonishment of the internet, which, initially seen as a space of freedom, has become a realm of constant surveillance and self-exploitation, as exemplified by platforms like Twitch and TikTok. The contentified self is always engaged in a cycle of performance for an audience, where meaning is found in consumption and perception at the



expense of a profound sense of isolation and alienation. It produces a culture where individuals are perpetually racing against time, unable to find true fulfillment.

Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* explores the intersection of humanity and artificial intelligence, delving into the ethical and emotional complexities of human-AI relationships. Klara's journey reveals the limitations of AI in comprehending human emotions, highlighting the irreplaceable essence of human relationships and individuality. In the essay "Disrupting the Algorithm A Literary Exploration of Human-Machine Interaction in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*", Sreya Mukherjee shows how through moments of emotional disconnect and uncanny interactions, Ishiguro challenges the belief that human intelligence and emotions can be codified into algorithms.

With the dissolution of a man-machine bipolar world, posthumanist identities shaped by technological augmentation and virtual environments prompt us to reconsider the creation of narratives. There are two articles in this volume which draw our attention to Donna Haraway's concept of the "cyborg" which raises relevant questions about the role of artificial intelligence in literary production and whether a "human" author is always essential to the creative process. The essay "Cybernetic and Cyborg Shifts of Authorship in 21st Century Literature : Interpretive Analysis of Tzvetta Sofronieva's *Multiverse* and Sasha Stiles' *Technelegy*" by J Spagnolo explores the evolving concept of authorship in the digital age, particularly through the lens of artificial intelligence (AI) and its interaction with human creativity. Drawing on the works of poets Sasha Stiles and Tzvetta Sofronieva it examines the shifting boundaries between human and machine authorship. While Stiles highlights the emotional and existential possibilities of digital augmentation, viewing technology as an extension of human identity and consciousness. Sofronieva, by contrast, takes a critical stance, portraying machines as intrusive forces that disrupt human agency. Klara, the protagonist in Ishiguro's novel, asserts authenticity by being the AI narrator and by 'othering' the human.

Manisha Bhattacharya's article " 'AIs are gonna look back on us the same way we look at fossil skeletons...all set for extinction': Analyzing the (Dis)Embodied Ava in *Ex Machina* (2014), a 'Fembot' and Sex-bot in Making" is a further intervention in the discourses on power, subjectivity, and desire in a posthuman world. She uses posthuman philosophy and Lacan's theories of 'non-existent sexual relations' and symbolic castration' to highlight the ambiguous nature of human interaction with AI.

"The New Faustian Bargain: Technoscientific Capitalism and the Posthuman Condition in Mark Ravenhill's *Faust is Dead*" by Arnab Sengupta explores Mark Ravenhill's *Faust is Dead* through the lens of critical posthumanism and technoscientific capitalism, drawing on theorists like Stefan Herbrechter, Donna Haraway, and Arthur Kroker. It examines how technology and consumerism reshape human identity, subjectivity, and physical embodiment, leading to existential crises in a posthuman world.

Tungabhadra Banerjee examines the ecocritical dimensions of Satyajit Ray's *Professor Shonku* stories, which subvert colonial scientific narratives through postcolonial science fiction in the



article “Of Robots And Unicorns: An Ecocritical Study of Postcolonial Science Fiction in Satyajit Ray’s *Professor Shonku* Stories”. Professor Shonku, a postcolonial scientist, harmonizes Western scientific methods with indigenous knowledge, promoting a deep respect for nature. Ms Banerjee explores how these stories challenge the anthropocentrism of colonial scientific progress and try to re-evaluate the mysteries of the natural world.

Debanjana Banerjee’s essay titled “Beyond Humanity: Exploring Automatons, Robots, and Cyborgs in the Tapestry of Science Fiction Cinema” examines the evolving portrayal of automatons, robots, and cyborgs in science fiction cinema, from Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927) to contemporary works like *Blade Runner 2049* and *Ex Machina*. These artificial beings serve as powerful tools for exploring humanity’s fears, aspirations, and ethical dilemmas about technology and identity.

Ankita Ghosh has chosen cyberpunk Japanese animations *Ergo Proxy* and *Psycho-Pass* to explore the “existential psychosis” in a posthuman world. She contends that liquid modernity, posthumanism and biotechnology have converged to expose human aspirations, greed, fears and anxieties. Her article, “Posthumanism and Biopunk in Cyberpunk Japanese Animation – *Psycho-Pass* and *Ergo Proxy*” with graphic representations of the animations, is an interesting inclusion

I invite all readers to engage actively in an exploration of the crucial and dynamic intersections of the closely intertwined domains of literature, culture and technology and interrogate their implications in an intensely mediated world.