

Artificial Intelligence Literaturised in Jose Saramago's Novels: An Endorsement of Creativity, Rationality and Magic Realism

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Abstract

Apparently, there is no connection between artificial intelligence and literature, but at closer scrutiny, it is discernibly clear that a link-up is quite possible in a harmonious manner because both the subjects do have commonalities dotting them one end to the next. Literature is a journey through the trajectories or pathways of imagination, illusion, fantasy, and dreamlike situations. The world of artificial intelligence does have virtual realities taking place in an imaginative plain. Artificial intelligence is a repetitive, perennial and a crucial current topic in science fiction, whether unworldly, stressing the capacity advantages, or dystopian, emphasizing the possible risks and insecurities. The belief of machines with human-like intelligence dates lower back to the talented writer Samuel Butler's 1872 novel Erewhon. Buoyant or positive perceptions of the destiny of artificial intelligence are feasible in science fiction. The artificial intelligence facilitates the quick and robust operational efficiency of the world and literature fulfills this role through its crucial ingredient imagination running riot to beautify the world. The literary works of Jose Saramago do subliminate in their scope the role of artificial intelligence fair and square. John McCarthy, the founder of the idea of Artificial Intelligence, conveys the idea that 'Artificial Intelligence is the technology and designing of making sensible and brilliant machines, particularly intelligent packages'. For me, Jose Saramago acts as an intelligent machine to check and reformulate the fundamental ethical values which are considered as universal, secular and scientific. His Scepticism goes beyond all pessimistic worldviews and his humanistic ideology surpasses all notions of illogical and unreasonable thought patterns. Through this paper, I intend to present his literary contributions packed with ecstasy, prophetic pronouncements and visionary ability. I call his intelligence as artificial intelligence that represents his ideology, prophetic activity, and reasoning power.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Psychoanalysis, Dissociation of Sensibility, Ideology*



1. Introduction

Jose Saramago is a Portuguese novelist, essayist, Poet and dramatist noted for his intelligent commentaries, moral outlook, and postmodern techniques like fragmentation, fabulation, parody and magic realism. The alienation of the individual is the crux of his writings. Moreover, he has combined myths, the history of his own country and surrealist imagination with the accompaniment of machine-like intelligence. He got Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998 soon after the publication of his novel *Blindness*. In every feeling, he is a self-made man or self-sufficient guy. He had gone through the oppressive rule of Salazar and shared the countrywide revel in of heroic struggle for justice and peace against untruly lifestyles and corruption of the authorities. There is an extraordinary intelligence conveyed in his writings. He expresses the groaning of humanity through magic realist techniques and he intertwines mythology, history, philosophy and theology in his novels especially *The Cave*, *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* and *The Double*. Saramago's vision of the contemporary world realities and his belief in the ability of human reason to struggle and survive in the attack of ignorance is a typical expression of his artificial intelligence capability. He declares in an interview on 19 July 2001 to the *London Daily Telegraph* about the review of his novel *The Cave*: "The world today behaves like a madhouse. The worst of it is that the values we had more or less defined, taught, learned are thought of as archaic and ridiculous. The human being should be the absolute priority" (Austin, Paige). Obviously, he is a sensitive soul, a brave man and an intelligent guy with machine-like promptness and accuracy and he has vision, insight, and integrity in expressing his thoughts and that makes him different from other writers. He says in the Novel *The Stone Raft*: "...As in all situations of this kind, everything depends on one's sensibility" (20).

2. Review of Saramago's Novels on The Basis of Artificial Intelligence

The novel titled *Blindness* delineated by Jose Saramago can be judiciously dovetailed with artificial intelligence in the sense that the world of artificial intelligence is all about something hidden in the virtual world which is not easy to detect or to pinpoint. The general blindness so synonymous with the novel *Blindness* is a typical scenario so present in the world of artificial intelligence wherein anything can be virtually produced and sold all throughout the world even fake and paid news. Virtual reality is subtly associated with imagination and dream, likewise, literature does have imagination following the footsteps of artificial intelligence. Anything is possible through artificial intelligence and likewise, anything is possible through putting together an established and consciously put together blindness which serves the interests of all stakeholders in connection with the novel. The Issue of vision is more accurately explored and explained in the dystopian novel *Blindness*. Here the concept is graphically and epistemologically described in an intelligent manner. The spread of blindness as a contagious disease in the novel *Blindness* is a product of his artificial intelligence. Look at the end lines in the novel *Blindness*:

Then she lifted her head up to the sky and saw everything white. It is my turn, she thought. Fear made her quickly lower her eyes. The City was still there. (309)

Saramago scripted a sequel to this novel titled *Seeing*. The novel titled *Seeing* is yet another example of how artificial intelligence oriented dimensionalities are reiterated through the novel. Seeing is believing but whatever that is seen cannot be believed in the world of artificial intelligence because it is transitory in nature in every sense of the term. In the novel the manipulation of the election process using artificial intelligence which is the hallmark of how the mandate of the electorates can be turned and twisted to serve the interests of a chosen and powerful section of the population of a country. The surveillance mechanism so installed in the present-day society driven by artificial intelligence is an encroachment upon the privacy of an individual; likewise, the world of literature does have the mechanism of censorship to silence the critics swirling around. The functional modality employed by artificial intelligence and literature is almost the same to a large degree. Saramago explores an intelligent idea in *Seeing* like other novels. This is also an example of his use of artificial intelligence in a different way. Let us go through the following lines in the novel *Seeing*:

The minds of human beings are not always entirely at one with the world in which they live, some people have trouble adjusting to reality; basically, they are just weak, confused spirits who use words, sometimes very skilfully, to justify their cowardice... (119)

The novel titled *The Double* is a fantasized literary piece wherein dream-like assumption gets top priority. The identical personalities vie for supremacy here. Likewise in the world of artificial intelligence many apps and sites turn up claiming to represent the interests of the wider world but in actual sense, they do bark at the wrong trees. The Double game of dubious nature played by artificial intelligence does get much traction in the novelistic scheme of things.

The novel titled *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ* does have a high amount of artificial intelligence in its narrative style, tone, and tenor. The novel highlights Christ's existential struggle with the ways of the world. The post-truths and new normalities sort of argument used in the novel by reformulating Christ's life and career is a contribution arising out of artificial intelligence solely because artificial intelligence grows through destruction or it is all about reconstruction through deconstruction.

So, there is no ambiguity whatsoever that artificial intelligence does have an inextricably intertwined relationship with literature. In fact, both go hand in hand and also both use imagination to its feverish pitch. Saramago adapts another version of thought from the Book of Ecclesiastes, a book from the Bible. "There is a time for eating and a time for fasting, a time for sinning and a time for being afraid, a time for living and a time for dying". (Ecclesiastes 3/1-3) His adaptation of narrative thoughts shows his love for a secular, rational and humanistic philosophy of life. For him, the eternal flow of life is the beginning of our life. We need to proceed according to the laws of nature. Seasons may change and repeat but take a definite flow of human consciousness. Look at these lines from *The Gospel According to Jesus Christ*:

There will be a time to laugh and rejoice but not just yet as surely as one day follows another, one season another, and the best lesson of all comes from the book of Ecclesiastes where it is written, there is nothing better for a man in this world than that he should eat, drink and be merry even as he labors. For God gives to the man who is virtuous in His eyes wisdom and knowledge and Joy... there is time for eating and a time for fasting, a time

for sinning and a time for being afraid, a time for living and a time for dying. (132, 231)

The Novel *The Cave* emphasizes the principle or notion of 'Going back to the beginning'. In other words, it stresses the idea of 'going back to the Foundation'. In the novel, the father figure, Cipriano Algor, asks a relevant question to his daughter Marta while giving shape and form to a human figure in clay. "Where do we begin he asked, where you always have to begin, in the beginning, replied Marta" (53). Through the concept 'Let us begin at the beginning' Saramago tries to reiterate or repeat the concept of active and energetic involvement after a stipulated period of inactivity and passivity. Here Saramago attacks artificiality and duplicity and he demands naturality and spontaneity. For him, a simple beginning is the countdown of a huge end.

3. The Fundamental Features Arising Out of the Relationship Between Literature and Artificial Intelligence

In the present world, artificial intelligence dominates the scene like never before. It has gone into all walks of life influencing them in multiple degrees from one end to the next. Our life has been taken over by the presence of it in each and every moment. The thinkers have tried their level best to establish a connection between artificial intelligence and literature. Over the years these attempts have accomplished partial success one way or the other. But, today, it has been conclusively proven that there are certain features common to these two subject areas or branches of knowledge they are as follows,

1.Virtual Reality as the Offspring of Imagination.

Imagination is an outer layer of virtual reality in many ways than one. Virtual reality is always in the realm of supposition whatever that is projected there does have a short-lived value and can disappear from the scene like never before. Likewise, imagination does have a free reign within the conscious mind and can also be presented in an inflated manner at will. The imaginative mind conjures up images which are beautiful and attractive but far from reality to a large extent. Likewise, virtual reality creates a world of illusions which would allow people to live in a make-belief world, subtly one of the crucial ingredients associated with the imaginative power play.

2. Aspirational Rise and Artificial Intelligence.

In the world of literature, the thought processes attain a higher pitch one way or the other; these aspirated and highly appreciated contemplations are incorporated into the forefront of literature. Likewise, the world of artificial intelligence is a foray towards catching up with the attached intelligence only brought into prevalence through the cyber world.

3. Linked Up Realities Through the Domain of Dissociation of Sensibilities.

In the world of literature, an issue can be looked at various perspectives and angles. This is possible because of the open-ended nature of literary imagination running the show. There is an amount of consistency in inconsistency in the world of literature. Likewise, the artificial intelligence resorts to an act of resuscitation of the smooth functioning of this world by introducing what is dissociated as associated one way or the other, although that is only attained through machines having the intelligence of mechanical pedigree and patterned streamlining.

4. Psychoanalysis and Artificial Intelligence.

Artificial intelligence delves deep into what is at stake or it is the mechanical way of reading the minds of the people so that catering to their manifold interests is quite possible. It is a conscious disguise employed within artificial intelligence. Even, there is unconscious disguise in the form of latent content within the format of artificial intelligence which helps it in capturing the imagination of the people. In the same process is carried within the field of literature as well by the men and women of letters. In the field of literature, the manifest content is consciously employed to evoke the right impact and the latent content is unconsciously inserted to make literature a mind-reading graph.

5. Oft-repeated Ideas Are formatted in the Fields of Artificial Intelligence and Literature.

In the field of artificial intelligence, trillions of data are used to ensure various logical orders and formatting. Many identical artificial intelligence inputs are used to create platforms of homogenous nature. The same process becomes a tried and tested methodology in the field of literature as well wherein the letters are placed in thematic order to formulate different genres of literature. Even twenty-six letters are good enough in the field of English literature to generate that vast storehouse of knowledge in the world in the forms of physical and online libraries.

6. Artificial and Creative: Two Sides of the Same Coin.

Artificial intelligence is a manufactured and engineered intelligence framework. It does have terminology and methodology through which it proceeds slowly but surely. Those trajectories make it so compact and well-versed. The consolidated structure it does have makes it so systematic, measured and pin-pointed. Likewise, literature also does have such patterns of construction when it comes to different genres of literature. The grammar, syntax, semiotics, phonological and morphological aspects of a language play important roles in the making or unmaking of various genres of literature many ways than one.

4. Conclusion

Padre Manuel Velho has written thought-provoking lines and those lines emphasize the vision and philosophy of Jose Saramago, the prominent Portuguese writer. Look at his lines:

A man was on his way to
The gallows when he met
Another, who asked him:
where are you going, my
friend? And the Condemned
man replied: I m not going
anywhere. They are taking
me by force. (Translated by Giovanni Pontiero)

There is a rationalist ideology and humanistic vision reflected all through his novels. As he mentions in the novel *Blindness*, “If you can see, look. If you can look, observe”, the attitude is the thematic question he introduces everywhere. For him, only a rationalistic sight and a humanistic exposition can save the world. He showed a lot of courage by writing about religious and secular topics loaded and pregnant with dogmatic versions of truth and assumptions. I suppose Literature is the most illuminated and enlightened way of exposing civilization. In other words, it is a substitute for life. Jose Saramago, the most gifted writer, explores the possibilities and opportunities of literature with much artificial intelligence. There is no doubt about it.

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