

Logos, AI, Homos: A Conversation with Paul Allen Miller

Bennett Yu-Hsiang Fu

Paul Allen Miller is Carolina Distinguished Professor at the University of South Carolina. He was Vice Provost for International Affairs from 2014 to 2020. He has held visiting appointments at University of the Ruhr, Paris 13, and Beijing Language and Cultural University. His teaching and research interests are theory, Latin literature, ancient philosophy, and classical reception. He is editor emeritus of *Transactions of the American Philological Association*. He is the author of *Lyric Texts and Lyric Consciousness* (1994), *Latin Erotic Elegy* (2002), *Subjecting Verses* (2004), *Latin Verse Satire* (2005), *Postmodern Spiritual Practices* (2007), *Plato's Apology of Socrates* (2010) with Charles Platter, *A Tibullus Reader* (2013), *Diotima at the Barricades: French Feminists Read Plato* (2015), and *Horace* (2019). His latest book is *Foucault's Seminars on Antiquity: Learning to Speak the Truth* from Bloomsbury (2021).

Albert Camus once said: “L'école prépare les enfants à vivre dans un monde qui n'existe pas” (School prepares children to live in a world that does not exist). This prescient insight, conceived in today's epistemological context, points poignantly to certain dilemmas faced by teachers and students in the age of AI. While educators attempt to instill the knowledge they deem “utile” to students, the classroom has morphed into a totally different site of knowledge production and dissemination. Higher education institutions are *UN*-preparing us for a tumultuous world of existential and non-existential incongruities, created and entrenched by AI starting to outgrow its inventors à la the monster in *Frankenstein*. That is, even if the

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Bennett Yu-Hsiang FU, Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, National Taiwan University, Taiwan

teachers prepare the students for this “brave new world,” the world is evolving so rapidly on a daily basis that it may not exist in ten or twenty years. AI, new media, and new technologies (e.g., ChatGPT) have the potential to shift the centers of cognitive acquisition and epistemological formation.

For the *homo sapiens* that can “think” to “be” (the Cartesian “I think, therefore I am”), *logos* (i.e., reasoning) remains a major identifier for human beings. As such, in this interview, a continuing dialogue from the Leading-Edge Lecture hosted in March 2023 at NTU, Professor Paul Allen Miller (hereafter Allen) proffers old but golden insights as reminders for the academic community. He commences with two key moments in the history of Western reason, the Socratic and the Ciceronian, to illustrate what makes life livable. He begins with what he calls *rhetorical reason*, whereby a *rhetor* as speaker deploys *logos* as reason to communicate with others to reach the consensus. In conjunction with the other two Aristotelian rhetorical appeals, *ethos* and *pathos*, he elaborates on how these rhetorical appeals can still enlighten us in the face of AI’s gradual dehumanization of *homos*. The conversation then delves deeper into the way the *logos-ethos-pathos* triumvirate can harness teachers and students to “relevance” in today’s world: how should we or how can we use these rhetorical appeals to persuade students to engage with texts, discover truth, and explore the relationship between reading and living a good life? In his “Introduction” to *Digitalizing the Global Text: Philosophy, Literature, and Culture* (2019), as Allen himself writes,

The neoliberal university, also, has its ideal of the perfect fungibility of knowledge and experience. From teaching evaluations, to assessment, to value added, the outcomes produced by courses as diverse as Biology, Accounting, and Modern French Literature should be quantifiable in comparable if not identical ways and a rubric produced in which each could be evaluated along a range of identical terms. (3)

This statement underlines the continuing relevance of *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*—as practitioners of the humanities seek their footing amidst shifting paradigms of knowledge creation and acquisition. Finally, the interview ponders the future of the humanities for both teachers and students, concluding with a witty wordplay on *à-venir* (which means “future to come” in French and serves as a cornerstone of Jacques Derrida’s spectral ontology). Allen proposes the notion that the good life is ideally one of full awareness of choices to be made, moments to be realized, and desires to be reasoned. To live in the symbiosis of AI and HI (human intelligence), we still need *humanity/humanities* that actually engages

humans on the level of affect and emotion while using AI as a tool of facilitation and fabrication.

Bennett Yu-Hsiang Fu: This is a continuing conversation from the Leading-Edge Lecture 33 on March 14, 2023, hosted by the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at NTU. Allen’s talk was entitled “In the Beginning was the *Logos*: Reason and Revolution.” With the new revolution of AI that concerns us, we would like to situate *logos* in conjunction with AI and human beings. Allen, before that, could you give us the gist of the talk so that we can start from there?

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Paul Allen Miller: Thank you for inviting me, and I’m very happy to be giving this interview. I started off with a quotation from Jacques Derrida, who said that “before being reined in and tamed by the *kosmos* and order of truth, *logos* is a wild creature, an ambiguous animality” (*Dissemination* 116). What Derrida means is that what we think of as *logos*—as argument, as speech—was not necessarily a very orderly thing. It could be very creative and open. But as civilization progressed, particularly Western civilization, it increasingly came to mean a certain kind of narrow reason, and it lost its wildness and its ambiguous animality.

So, the talk itself started with a quotation from Socrates in the *Apology* written by Plato, which reads:

I say that this is the greatest good for a human being, each day for arguments and words (*logous*) to be made about excellence. And the other things about which you hear me conversing, examining myself and others, and that the unexamined life is not livable for a human being. (38a8)

This is a foundational moment for the Western philosophical tradition because what it really says is that to be human is to investigate yourself, to be self-conscious, and the way you do that is through speech. But it doesn’t say that reason is simply a kind of algorithm, an equation or a logic problem. *Logos* is a very broad word that can mean everything from a simple speech to even a poem. Eventually it becomes narrowed down, but the real implication here is that what makes us human is our ability to examine each other through language. Obviously, Socratic reason is no longer our reason. Ours has become somewhat impoverished. We tend to identify reason with quantitative reasoning or with rigorous symbolic logic. This clearly has implications for things like artificial intelligence, which is very good at taking certain kinds of logical formulas and implementing them. But is that really what it means to be human? The *logoi*—I think the plural is important, Socrates uses it in the plural—

for which Socrates is in fact willing to give his life, because he's on trial for his life, aren't limited to the post-Cartesian and scientific rationality that is common in the neoliberal world—the objective, the repeatable, and the quantifiable.

What I did in the talk as a whole is I tried to look at two key moments in the history of Western reason, the Socratic and the Ciceronian, Cicero being a famous orator and philosopher from ancient Rome. Now, what Socrates states makes life livable is an endless multiplication of discourses, a kind of infinity of making that endows existence with meaning in an unending and provisional way. He even imagined that he is going to continue his dialogic interactions with others in the underworld after death, so there is no possibility of him remaining silent. We can hope to transcend our individual lives into this infinity of testing, both testing ourselves but also others in the face of unreasoning power. Socrates was in fact ultimately put to death, and everyone who read this dialogue knew that fact.

So, what I'm advocating here is what I call *rhetorical reason*. That is to say, a reason that in some ways blurs the lines between philosophy and rhetoric, between reason and persuasion. Traditionally, a *rhetor* is a speaker, and what he speaks are *logoi*. The act of addressing others and trying to get consensus are in fact what *logos* is ultimately about.

Cicero wrote a book called *De Oratore*. It is a mainstay of rhetoric classes around the world still to this very day. But the interesting thing is he advances a kind of original *logos*, which has a Latin counterpart in *ratio*, from where we get “ratio,” in which truth, persuasion, philosophy, rhetoric, designation, and affect coincide. Rather than saying there's reason on one side and emotion on the other, or there's human experience on one side, and there's scientific objectivity on the other, Cicero argues that they should be viewed as ultimately one thing or at least complementary. So, he tries to elaborate, and I think Socrates tries to elaborate, what I might call a middle space between pure reason—mathematical reason, the reason of someone like Kant or Descartes—and actual human existence, a state of affect and emotion in which contingent but plausible arguments are imagined, made, and then countered. Other people have their arguments about matters that, while not reducible to universal reason, participate in chains of argument and reasoning, forms of conversation, and moments of exchange. This is a space that I want to defend. There is a need to defend this middle space, because I would argue that if we want to continue to live together as human beings, if we want to come to arrangements that make possible our continued survival in the face of pandemic disease, climatic catastrophe, and even ethnic and cultural genocide, only an expanded version of rationality, one that allows us to reason about the local, the

unrepeatable, the fragile, and the unique will be adequate when we need reason to resist the brutal logic of commodification and homogenization.

BF: I'm particularly intrigued by what you call "rhetorical reason," but now I would like to return to Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals—*logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. When you talk about *logos* of rationality, and since one of the focuses of our interview today is about AI, I have in mind two other missing discourses, especially in an age where AI gradually dehumanizes *homos*. How would you bring the other two discourses into play in the codes of rationality?

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AM: Traditionally, in Aristotelian rhetoric, *ethos* is the projection of a self. The speaker wants to project a self that the listeners will find trustworthy and therefore persuasive. *Pathos* on the other hand designates the emotions that you want to arouse, so *pathos* comes from the same word as passion. It's what's experienced. It deals with the emotions that are aroused in the audience as a kind of passive sufferer or bearer of the discourse. So, *ethos* is active, and *pathos* is more passive. Interestingly, the word *ethos* is related to the notion of a habit of the self—what we do on a regular basis, and we get ethics from that. If I want to project to you a speaker who is persuasive in some ways, I'm going to project to you a speaker that you think is moral in a certain way, right? There's a fundamental relationship between ethics and the projection of a self. In fact, someone like Michel Foucault, who is very concerned with ethics at the end of his life, Greek ethics in particular, sees ethics as a kind of self-relation. I take myself as an object of labor, an object of work, and I fashion myself into what I would like to be, and then I am able to project that self to others. To the extent that I can do that authentically, I will persuade others and they will experience certain kinds of emotions, *pathos*, as a result of that. In some ways all three are related, *logos* being the arguments, *ethos* being the self that is projected and makes those arguments trustable and relatable, and *pathos* being the effect on the audience in terms of arousing certain emotions that lead to conviction.

BF: That's a very good summary of the three appeals. I'm thinking about recent events, not only in Taiwan but globally, where we have seen numerous scandals involving politicians. Many of these scandals are related, at least in Taiwan, to ethics (*ethos*), such as plagiarism, corruption, and so forth. It brings me back to what you called "should we do this" and "can we do it." Could you elaborate on these notions, which I find quite constructive?

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AM: The ethical question is “should we do this?” or “is it ethical to do this?” But the question, and this comes up in AI all the time, but also in other fields that are essentially forms of engineering, is “can we do this?”—do we have the technology to do this? That’s not the same thing as the question of “is this a wise idea?,” “should we do this?,” or “are we going to be the kind of selves we want to be if we do this?” It is where *ethos* and ethics meet, because ethics is in some ways a question of “are you the kind of subject that you want to be?” Let’s think about this. If I could create a kind of AI that would learn (we already have this kind of self-learning AI, although it is in fact simply a bit of code, a set of operations which you have coded to perform certain operations), if you make it capable of gathering information and building that into its code, if you write the code so that it can alter itself as it learns, which is possible, where do the limits come? Where does AI ask itself “should I do this?” or “what kind of self will I be if I do this?” AI does not have self-consciousness. It can learn in the sense that it can potentially rewrite its own code based on what it encounters. It can have higher-level commands and lower-level commands. If the higher-level command is you must always maximize profits, then the lower-level command may be rewritten as the machine learns. So, if I am creating a robot or a kind of bot on the internet, and the purpose of this bot is to trade stocks and to make the highest level of return possible, there are many ways it could do that. Of course, the standard way we think about it—and we have machine trading right now on stock markets—is simply to look at small variations in price and maximize that. Another way you can maximize your stock value is by having your competitors’ become worthless. Now, we know that all of our power grid is on the internet, right? And we also know that other countries are routinely looking at embedding software within the grid that could potentially allow them to shut down that grid. This is what they call information technology warfare. We create a bot, and its only and ultimate prime directive is to maximize profits. If it gathers information that, if it causes a nuclear plant in Michigan to shut down, the stock price that it’s watching will go up, why would it stop? It doesn’t have an ethical sense. It doesn’t have a sense of self.

BF: In other words, if *ethos* and *logos* can be artificially generated to manipulate people, like someone using AI to do fraud or to scam, and if people simply believe in these artificial discourses, how can we give *pathos* a new definition in our curriculum or education for students to still remain rational and human in the age of dehumanization?

AM: You’re right. This is probably the single most important question we’re facing in the humanities right now—Are we still relevant? Do we still have a role? I think

the way we have to think about this is that the kind of codes human beings create are in fact always invested with emotion and *pathos*. We need to see *pathos* not as something that's ancillary or something that's a flaw. Sometimes in the pursuit of scientific objectivity, we see *pathos*, emotion, or affect as something that we need to eliminate because it clouds the purity of reason. In fact, I would want to argue that reason cannot found itself. Reason is a chain of reasonings, but the assumptions from which it begins are not inherent within reason itself. That's what I mean when I say reason can't found itself. The primacy has to be on actual human experience, and that's what *pathos* ultimately means, to experience or to undergo. What we are really looking for is, or what I'm advocating here is, making sure that human experience actually remains central, rather than being something that we need to segregate off. To be formulaic in Aristotelian terms, I would want to argue that we want *logos* to be the instrument of *pathos* rather than *pathos* be the instrument of *logos*.

BF: That's an excellent point, which leads to the next question about relevance. As teachers or students of the humanities, we have been grappling with this word in defense of our work. How can we use *logos* or rhetoric to persuade students to read the texts or the classics in order to discover truth, especially in an age where truth is becoming increasingly indiscernible due to AI? What's the relevance of teaching classics or literary texts in today's classroom?

AM: It's certainly a real challenge because there was a time when this was self-evident, and we didn't really need to justify ourselves. In some ways we all got a little bit too comfortable with that. But I think what we need to see is that in a world where machines can do a lot of basic processing and calculation, what we need people trained to do is, I'm certainly not the only person who says this, to be creative, to think critically, and not simply to operationally repeat coded repetitive movements, because the machines can do that and they can do it faster and better than we can. What they can't do is tell you why you should do that. They may have goals in the sense that we tell them X is the prime directive, but they don't necessarily formulate their own goals. It's hard to really see how they could except as a derivative of their original program. A lot of things that were done manually or repetitively by human beings may become obsolete. I would argue that, in the fifth industrial revolution, what we really need are humans who are capable of empathy, creativity, and thinking about things that are unrepeatable. I like to make this distinction between the repeatable and the unrepeatable as kinds of knowledge. Sciences look for repeatable knowledge. They want something that is replicable, which is right, and I have no quarrel with that. If I take a drug, I want to know it's

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going to work every time, not just occasionally. If I'm driving across a bridge, I want to know that the engineers' calculations are replicable, that it's not just a one-off thing that I happen to be able to get over the bridge without it collapsing. In daily life, there are all sorts of good reasons to have this kind of repeatable knowledge, but that is precisely the kind of knowledge that you can reduce to an algorithm.

BF: I can think of two real-life scenarios emblematic of the way AI is affecting our daily life. Scenario One: at the very beginning of this semester, I asked my engineering students to conduct in-class discussions, and then we used ChatGPT to compare the results. They were on their own for one hour of discussion, and then within a second, ChatGPT generated a fully narrated script. The engineering students felt threatened, in a way that their career might be replaced by AI. The second scenario, which I read about in the news yesterday, took place at the Sony World Photography Awards, hosted by the World Photography Organization. The winner, Boris Eldagsen, refused to accept the award, confessing that the work was created by AI! We are living in a dire situation where discerning what is true or false, human or non-human, is becoming increasingly difficult. In other words, we are living in a very blurry zone with technological invasion. What is your take on this?

AM: In many ways, this is what is being discussed today in terms of the posthuman. Right? There was this wonderful phrase that Sigmund Freud uses in *Civilization and Its Discontents*. So in 1931, almost a hundred years ago now, Freud says "man is a prosthetic god" (92). He is talking about all the things we do to extend our reach. We have cars because we don't walk fast enough. We have eyeglasses, we have telescopes, we have microscopes, we have calculators, and we have computers. For a long time, the lines between human capacity and technical capacity have been blurred. You could go as far back as ancient scrolls, right? How do we increase our memory beyond what we can memorize? We write stuff down! But we've never been at a state until recently where it seemed that the prostheses, the things that we adopt to extend our capabilities, threaten to reprogram us. That's what the posthuman is about. There was a book written recently, and I can't remember by whom it was, but it was basically making the argument that wheat domesticated human beings rather than the other way around. Are we in control? Are we actually the center of the universe? Certainly, since Copernicus, we've known physically that we weren't, but in fact, we tend to live as if we were. There is something healthy about this posthuman moment because it's revealing a certain way in which we have always been determined by our environment, at least as much as we are determining it.

BF: Or are we creating what Victor Frankenstein does, right? We now live with the creature we created.

AM: This is also what the idea of the Anthropocene is about, right?

BF: Right. And it brings me back to the book you edited, *Digitalizing the Global Texts*. The book took shape with our joint conference in 2016, and all the selected articles were published in 2020. It was right before the pandemic, and in hindsight, a certain kind of prophetic idea seems to have been envisioned in the book. Can you talk about the experience and also the future research directions for humanities studies?

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AM: That's a very interesting collection. In some ways, it is very symptomatic of a certain time. In the early 2010s, there was a tremendous amount of talk about globalization on the one hand, as an economic and cultural phenomenon. And there was also a lot of talk in universities about digital humanities. There's a certain way in which those two phenomena are related to each other. The possibility of true globalization depends on the digitalization of knowledge. Thomas Friedman wrote a famous book called *The World Is Flat*, which is about the way in which digitalization puts us all on a very similar plane. I just read a column by him. He was recently in Beijing, and he encountered a scholar there who asked him whether he thinks the world is still flat. And he said it's flatter than ever! But one of the concerns of our book was there's a lot of resistance to globalization. How do we have a kind of internationalization that doesn't completely flatten things out? How do we have an authentic culture that doesn't just become about exchange value, commodification, or a series of ones and zeros where one side tries to accumulate more than the other? Globalization has many positive benefits in terms of people getting to know each other and experiencing cultures more broadly. I probably would've never come to Taiwan if not for globalization. But I wonder, if we don't want to think about a distinction between globalization as the digitalization of the world and the flattening of the world, versus internationalization, versus a kind of exchange that happens between groups of people who maintain their identities, we still have to experience the particularity of our individual places and cultures. What makes internationalization exciting is precisely not the fact that I can go to the mall in Taipei or elsewhere in the world and go to the same H&M. What makes it interesting is what I can experience in Taipei that I can't experience in Moscow, what I can experience in Moscow that I can't experience in Paris, and how all those things make me a richer human being. That I don't believe can be digitalized.

BF: Right. Your actual intention is that “regional” difference.

AM: The reason we travel hopefully is to experience the Other, right? And that’s what the humanities as an imaginative experience really offers. It is this encounter with an otherness that helps us, and we must also change ourselves. This is what I think the future of the humanities has to offer, but it’s also what we can offer your engineering students, what we can offer everyone, because there’s a certain level on which if you just go home at the end of the day after you’ve been engineering code all day long, and then you eat your KFC and you wear the clothes you bought at H&M, you watch the movie that everybody watches everywhere, then at what point is your life meaningful, and at what point is it just a kind of machinic repetition of a system?

BF: I particularly like a sentence you write in the “Introduction” to this book:

The global and the digital go hand in hand, with the rational reduction of the phenomenal world to a set of interchangeable units of ones and zeros, which is both the predicate of global capitalism and sorts ill with a revanchist dedication to the local and particular. The neoliberal university, also, has as its ideal the perfect fungibility of knowledge and experience. From teaching evaluations, to assessment, to value added, the outcomes produced by courses as diverse as Biology, Accounting, and Modern French Literature should be quantifiable in comparable if not identical ways and a rubric produced in which each could be evaluated along a range of identical terms. (3)

This statement perpetuates the relevance, the signifying chain, and the justification we have been discussing.

AM: One of the things I was concerned about there, and I don’t know whether this is the case in Taiwan or not, but in the United States increasingly we are asked to assess higher education, higher education courses, majors, etc., in terms of learning outcomes. The assumption is in fact that you can assess electrical engineering, Romantic poetry, art history, etc., all in terms of certain kinds of quantifiable means. Knowledge in all these courses can be reduced to a universal equivalent that is the same in all of them, which I think is just fundamentally wrong. But I also think what it does is that it reduces knowledge to a commodity.

BF: Ironically, like when we met each other, we were both Vice President for International Affairs at the university, a position to comply with these policies because of the HEI ranking. The university ranking is based on all these quantifiable rubrics. You reach this and then it pushes you to strive for the top two hundred or top one hundred. We have to fulfill all these requirements. In other words, higher education institutions now also become the corporate embodiments, or culprits, of these quantifications and measurements.

AM: I'm all in favor of evaluating what we're doing. Going back to Socrates at the very beginning, he's always asking questions, right? But we have to be very careful that the way we evaluate what we're doing doesn't determine what we do. We start teaching certain things in certain ways because they produce the kinds of results that the assessment is looking for rather than assessing what we're actually doing. I'll never forget once my provost, whom I will not name, and I were talking about the rankings. Instead of saying we need to improve our research, we need to improve our teaching, or we need to think about what the students are actually learning, she said "Allen, you need to study that algorithm." So, the question wasn't about the substance of what we were doing. The question was about the formula of the ranking system.

BF: Aren't we all suffering from that? As a teacher now, we also have to fulfill all these requirements or measurements from the university. But why do we comply with all these? It probably leads to our last question. In your talk, I love your word-play on *à-venir*, which means "future" in French but also holds significance in Derrida's lexicon. Can you talk about the future of the humanities for teachers and students? I know this is hard to answer. In ten years or twenty years, how will we validate our role as teachers or students? And eventually that points to the ultimate question: What is a good life? What kind of self do we want to be?

AM: Those are no small questions.

BF: Yeah, I am asking very difficult questions, but these questions are simply our launch pad especially for the journal. We ask big questions that do not require immediate or definite answers, but they are worth deeper reflections and further pursuits.

AM: Let me take the notion of *à-venir* and work from there. Derrida first elaborates this notion of *à-venir* in his book *Specters of Marx*, which is his reading of Karl

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Marx. He starts off with this line from “The Communist Manifesto”—“There is a specter haunting Europe, the specter of communism” (2). What is this specter here? What does it mean? This concept comes up again also in *The Politics of Friendship*, which was published the year after. If we think about what a present is, a present is a kind of moment that is constituted by a past. You were asking earlier why we should read the classics. Why should we study all this ancient stuff? Well, our present only exists to the extent that it comes from multiple and complex pasts, but those multiple and complex pasts in turn foreshadow what is to come. The present always exists as this sort of complex, conflicting moment, a past by which we are haunted as if there were a ghost or a specter. In Marx’s “Communist Manifesto,” the specter is the past of class struggle. But we can think about it more ontologically. It’s just that past of conflicting values, ideas, and forces that has led to a present. But that present is already forecasting what is to come, which of course is the point of the specter. That’s why Derrida focuses on that spectral figure, because it simultaneously embodies a present, which is the product of a past, but which also makes possible a future. You can’t really think about the present, where we are now, without imagining what the future can be. There are obviously constraints and those constraints come from the past. So, what should the humanities do? What is the role of the humanities to come? I would say it is understanding how our present has been constituted by the past, so that we can then have an enlightened conception of what is in fact to come. We can make choices about that. We will have enough information and enough understanding so that we won’t simply repeat the past blindly.

As for what is the good life, I would think the good life is a life in which you feel you have some control over your life, that you have enough self-consciousness as Socrates would say, and that you are making arguments, discourses, and stories (*logos*) about your life that make you conscious of your existence. This is not just something you do by yourself. Socrates is very clear about this. This is something you do with others, right? You both test others and are tested yourself in this moment, and you determine what you think is excellent. What you think is something you should strive for. The good life is ideally a life of full awareness in which you are making these kinds of choices, and then not having these choices made for you, which of course means you have to understand the past, how that has constituted your present, and then what you desire and what you can make in the world to come.

Sophia Yashih Liu: May I jump in to ask a final question as the editor of the journal? Allen, how do you see the role of academic journals in the humanities in the

age of generative AI? What suggestions would you offer regarding the function, development, or purpose of academic journals in the humanities?

AM: I think we live increasingly in a world where a lot of basic research can be done by AI. It's not always very good, but it will get better. A friend of mine recently detected that a student had turned in a paper that was apparently generated by ChatGPT. One of the ways he knew is because it was a paper on a poem he assigned in class, and the paper featured quotations that weren't actually from the poem, which is not a mistake that a human being would make, but somehow AI can scrape this stuff off the web. But that's going to be correctable. AI will get better at that. So, I think what we are looking for is increasingly interpretive work that looks at texts and tells us why they're meaningful for our existence, which is not something that I think AI can do, even as it improves. I would hope that journals in the future will, particularly in the humanities, concentrate on why it's important to read these texts, how we can create new dialogues between humans and texts that really allow us to take control of our future, to reflect and to become fully self-conscious.

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BF: Or maybe a dialogue like what we are having now. I think face-to-face, human-to-human talks might also take a new direction.

AM: I think that's right. It was precisely this kind of face-to-face dialogue that, going back to the very beginning, Socrates is really all about, wandering the streets of Athens, coming up to people and asking them what justice is or what beauty is. It obviously annoyed some people because it ultimately got him killed, but this is not something that can be done simply through a kind of repetition. One of the things that you find in Plato's texts is a real suspicion of writing, which is ironic because Plato is one of the greatest writers in the history of Western philosophy. But what he's worried about is that there is a kind of reduction of knowledge to a formula as opposed to the kind of interaction that you can have with another human being, or that I would say, you can have with a text, but you have to have it in a very specific way. It's not just the memorization and the repetition of the text.

BF: Moreover, what ChatGPT is doing is actually even more advanced—to the extent that we cannot even distinguish what is generated by the author or what is by the machine. If the editors are not cautious or discerning enough, that might become another Sokal Affair. This is also the danger of publications. Allen and I have noticed a drastic decrease in the production of monographs or books because

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people simply either don't have time or find it irrelevant to write a book anymore. If AI can generate content so easily, then what new topics—with the assistance of AI—should I focus on and struggle with?

SL: One thing that journals should consider is how to approach the use of generative AI. While we may experience challenges or convenience with this technology, it's important to think about how academic journals should perceive its function. What percentage of generative AI usage should be acceptable? 0%, 10%, 20%, or more? Some teachers also consider using AI as a teaching tool. In the end, should we have a zero-tolerance policy for generative AI in academic journal production, or should we adopt a more open-minded approach in certain circumstances?

AM: Yeah, I'm going to suggest that you probably can't take the 0% stance. If I use Google to search for information, and I put that in my paper, is that 0%? At what point does using an electronic tool to help me find information that I use in my paper cross that line? If you're saying zero, that's a pretty strict threshold that I'm not sure any of us can actually adhere to anymore. I'm going to emphasize *pathos* here. I'm going to say what we want is something that actually engages human beings on the level of affect and emotion. If AI could be a tool that helps us do that, I'm okay with that, as long as it remains the tool and we're not the tool for it.

BF: In conclusion, our discussion leads us to the importance of human intelligence, or HI. We have to rely on ourselves, believing that humans are and should be the thinking subjectivity. AI as artificial intelligence is simply a facilitator, a helper that reminds us of our identity as *homo sapiens*, the being that can think, differentiate, feel, relate, and generate.

AM: One way we might summarize this is “Better HI than H&M.”

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