Editorial: Digital Humanities and Interdisciplinary Scholarship

Since the inception of the African Electronic Literature Alliance & African Diasporic Electronic Literature (AELA & ADELI) by Yohanna Joseph Waliya in 2021 under the aegis of the Electronic Literature Organization, and in collaboration with Prof. Richard Ajah of the University of Uyo, Nigeria, Prof. Mourad El Fhali and Prof. Abdelmoumin El Azouzi of the Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco, and Prof. Tunde Ope-Davies of the University of Lagos, Nigeria, this movement continues to create an avenue via its African Electronic Literature International Workshop and Conference (AELAIWC). This initiative has been supported by different academic institutions in Africa such as University of Lagos, University of Uyo, University of Calabar and Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco, providing a platform through which African scholars across the globe have been trained on the basics of digital literary scholarship and practices in order to position the future of the humanities scholarship in Africa. In other words, AELAIWC provides capacity building forum to the young African scholars by teaching digital research methodology and computational analysis in all fields of the humanities especially literature and language. Thus, the birth of African modern interdisciplinary scholarship in Digital Humanities is evident. Furthermore, computational interception in the humanities now tilts towards the unification of the whole humanities under the umbrella of what is popularly known today as Digital Humanities, fostering collaborative and interdisciplinary research. This is a sort of returning to the philosophy of the medieval period whereby all disciplines fed from the same philosophical tools and institutions.

Hence, this Volume 1 Issue Number 2 of MADSEJ centres on the Digital Humanities and interdisciplinary scholarship in Africa. It contains a peer-review collection of the major discussions at the AELAIWC2023 and few works from other reputable experts in electronic literature and its subgenres.

In this volume, Caitlin Fisher, a distinguished professor at the York University, Canada and the present President of Electronic Literature Organization, who was the AELAIWC2023 Keynote Speaker II, argues that Western narrative traditions are epistemologically challenged by spatial and immersive storytelling vis-à-vis African narratives. Her article presents the successful African XR projects, including Joel Kachi Benson's award-winning *Daughters of Chibok* and constructive initiatives from Black Rhino and Electric South. Despite the strides of the African immersive storytelling at global scale, it remained inaccessible to the readers because of the socioeconomic gab in the African society and the unaffordability of the VR lenses. Her discussion explores the meeting point of the XR with Internet of Things (IoT) and AI. At the end, Caitlin's paper proposes generally that distinct experimentation is essential for the advancement of immersive storytelling medium particularly cropping more African oral storytelling traditions into participatory practices. This will make future immersive storytelling more Afro-centric globally, facilitating the export of African culture and civilisations.

In his paper, Benharrousse of the American University in Cairo, Egypt, engages the readers with the digital capitalist market value of digital cultural productions and the neoliberal structures that resist the emergence of the electronic literature as a counter-market practice within digital culture. Therefore, the author raises the question of theorising digital literary market value and political engagement in the electronic literature. Funkhouser concerns himself with presenting the comprehensive overview of digital poetry evolution from the late 1950s to the trending AR poetry applications. He establishes the fact that digital tools have redefined poetic practices and poetics synchronically and diachronically in this digiral era.

Teaching electronic litearature to the Gen Z has taken a new dimension whereby teachers of literature must recognise the trending digital tools and provide literary teaching techniques that match with this generation. These are the preoccupations of Bassey and Larsen's paper. They lay emphasis on the obtainable digital tools within the locality of the institution particularly in Nigeria as a starting point to encourage the use of technologies as pedagogical tools.

As for John and Awelewa, they take the readers to the diasporic Nigerian writers-Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Ben Okri who have enjoyed the privileges of the digital technology to horn their influence in the global literary landscape. Their research reveals that digital data visualization offers new knowledge patterns into the intersection of migration and literary recognition as contributions to Nigerian by extension African digital literary studies.

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