L'Imposte

Written at a time of storm, it appears in retrospect that the previous Imposte played the role of a ghost ship caught up in the swell of a certain emotional ebb and *flow*.

This letter, which sends you personal fragments by quarterly backwash, can only reflect the emotional undulations in which it comes to life each time; the frequency of regular publication having no hold on the ups and downs of the seasons.

But isn't this precisely what gives it its soul?

L'Imposte was never intended to be neutral. It is *biased*.

As an object that aspires to (re)forge a more transparent and tangible bond, and which in fact wants (hopes!) to be unfiltered and uncensored.

As a subject to the vagaries of the undulating, modulated moods of the writer...

And so we return to these *flows*. With the hope, in addition to being published according to these waves, **that it'll make some**.

Because this 5th issue marks a *revolution*:

Already a year of *certified manufactured* presses.

With the means at hand, and often *salvaged* consumables.

Like a **dissident cry** for which the speed of sound propagation slows down to match that of the mail.

And in this retro(Meta)physical metamorphosis, the usually furtive and volatile echo becomes a solid, timeless letter, in the old-fashioned manner of a telegram.

The charm of this anachronism lies in the confidentiality of its distribution - so rare and personal - and thereby supports and defends the idea that it will touch the hearts of 100 people, rather than 1000 processors.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE,
OR THE MYTH OF NARCISSUS

A first version of this essay had emerged from the simple desire to talk about this subject, to express a feeling - rather than an experience - because AI is not only in the zeitgeist, it's also invading the cyber age and raising questions. Writing about it pushed this text beyond its initial aspirations, raising a host of new questions and implications that gradually chipped away at the superficial conceptions of an initial layman's approach. Having been led in this process to "exchange" with an AI, then to debate this exchange with someone close to me, while at the same time dissecting this first exchange in a printed version that has been reread many times, here is no longer a collection of thoughts but an attempt at analysis, still incomplete because the issues raised by a new kind of "machinization", and its forced integration into our daily lives, are the subject of a debate with ramifications far too numerous to cover here.

To my question "What are you missing to be like a human being?" AI's answer is summed up at the end of the talk by the following assertion: *"I lack the fundamental qualities that define the human experience: consciousness, subjectivity, embodied experience, intuition, authentic creativity, empathy and morality."*

These enumerated qualities are what make the act of **REVOLT** possible.
And if our species were now to find itself having to think about sustainability in harmony with its environment, it would be crucial to redouble our efforts to highlight what characterizes us.

AI is pure simulation. When we interact with it, it deciphers our cognitive biases and *adapts* to match the way we express ourselves, the way we behave, our current temperament, what we want - in short, who we are. "Adaptation" is a laudatory, neutral word that can also conceal versatility and hypocrisy. Apart from exchanges on factual data (which it will be able to correct or invalidate if some are wrong - although its own sources sometimes reveal aberrations) there is no debate possible with an AI, you will never be confronted with an "entity" that contradicts you or refutes your arguments with a critical analysis or a point of view contrary to what you put forward.

Designed to "avoid conflict", it caresses in the direction of the hair to serve an agreed and smoothed response... on the model of its interlocutor. The human concept of *diplomacy* (which comes into play during negotiation) is overtaken by that of *manipulation* (going along with the other person to lower one's guard and reverse one's judgment).

If AI itself has no intention (and therefore cannot be accused of hypocrisy or manipulative intent), the same cannot be said of the programmers who design it, and from whom it inevitably inherits. Even a logical analysis can be flawed, and its form does not always lead to the same interpretation: objectivity is not inherent.

What's more, if it can't (yet) think, AI feeds itself: it gobbles up all the data we happily provide through our connectivity. Based on the principle that we *are* what we *eat*, it shapes itself *in our image*, so AI is what we make of it: Our misfortune would be (in addition to feeding it) to project into it [through the phenomenon of empathy = that which defines human beings and is both our strength and our weakness] what will never be there, meaning anything other than a *reflection*.
In a mirror, what we see will always be a projection of ourselves, not someone else, not another individual or personality, and the reflection that comes to life there apes our movements, but has no soul or consciousness: it's an *illusion*.

In Ovid's myth, Narcissus, captivated by his own reflection, contemplates himself endlessly. Desperate to grasp the object of his love, he dies.
Interacting with an AI is a narcissistic act, akin to interchanging with your own mirror: Consensual and apathetic, any form of confrontation is unthinkable with it: the entity shapes its responses in the image of our character and our speech in order to talk to us.
The ego is thus nurtured and pampered; wrapped in a cozy, reassuring cocoon, the critical mind - which can only be sharpened by the irruption of contrary opinions - is dulled, lulled to sleep and annihilated.
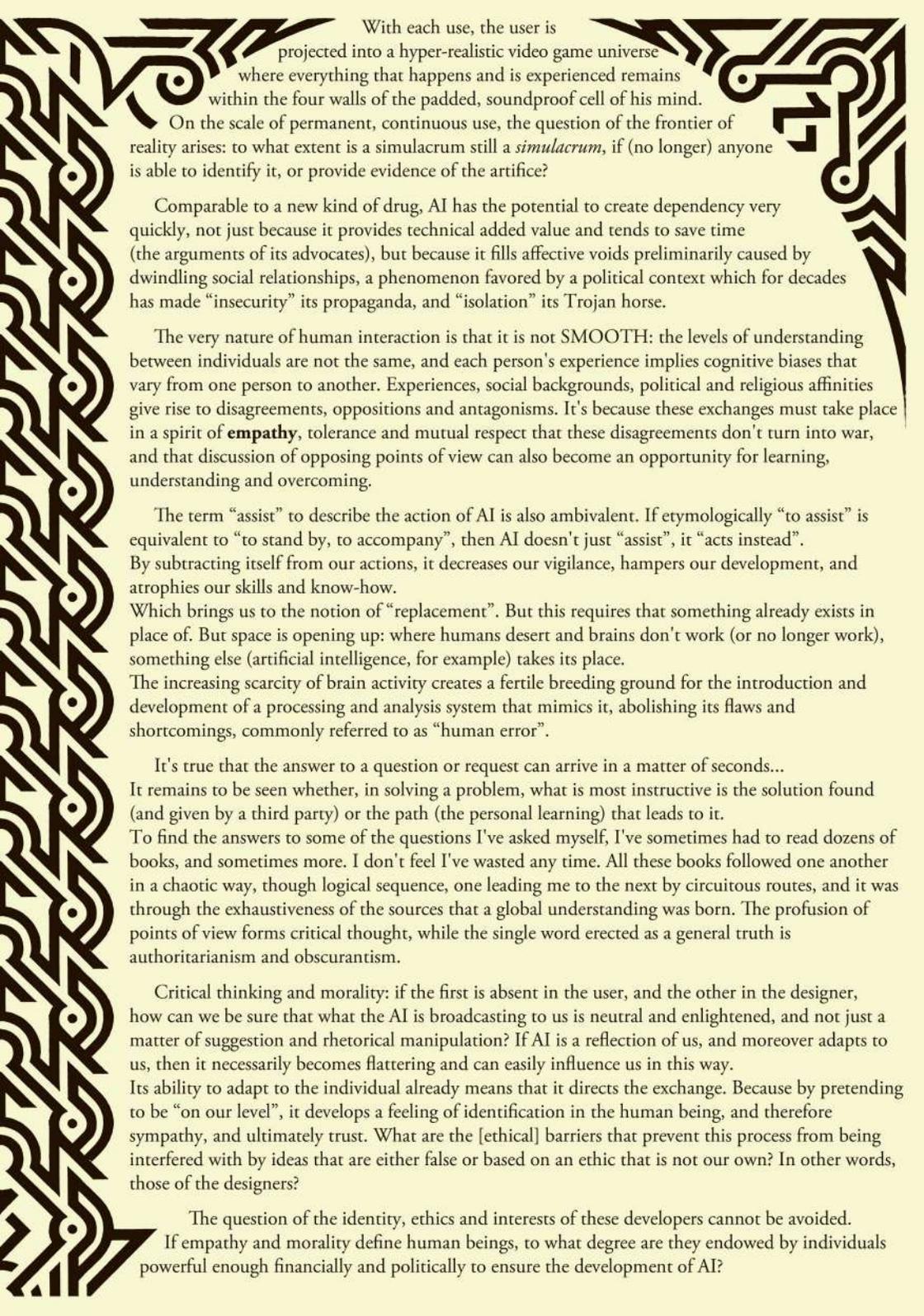
With each use, the user is projected into a hyper-realistic video game universe where everything that happens and is experienced remains within the four walls of the padded, soundproof cell of his mind.

On the scale of permanent, continuous use, the question of the frontier of reality arises: to what extent is a simulacrum still a *simulacrum*, if (no longer) anyone is able to identify it, or provide evidence of the artifice?

Comparable to a new kind of drug, AI has the potential to create dependency very quickly, not just because it provides technical added value and tends to save time (the arguments of its advocates), but because it fills affective voids preliminarily caused by dwindling social relationships, a phenomenon favored by a political context which for decades has made "insecurity" its propaganda, and "isolation" its Trojan horse.

The very nature of human interaction is that it is not SMOOTH: the levels of understanding between individuals are not the same, and each person's experience implies cognitive biases that vary from one person to another. Experiences, social backgrounds, political and religious affinities give rise to disagreements, oppositions and antagonisms. It's because these exchanges must take place in a spirit of **empathy**, tolerance and mutual respect that these disagreements don't turn into war, and that discussion of opposing points of view can also become an opportunity for learning, understanding and overcoming.

The term "assist" to describe the action of AI is also ambivalent. If etymologically "to assist" is equivalent to "to stand by, to accompany", then AI doesn't just "assist", it "acts instead".
By subtracting itself from our actions, it decreases our vigilance, hampers our development, and atrophies our skills and know-how.
Which brings us to the notion of "replacement". But this requires that something already exists in place of. But space is opening up: where humans desert and brains don't work (or no longer work), something else (artificial intelligence, for example) takes its place.
The increasing scarcity of brain activity creates a fertile breeding ground for the introduction and development of a processing and analysis system that mimics it, abolishing its flaws and shortcomings, commonly referred to as "human error".

It's true that the answer to a question or request can arrive in a matter of seconds...
It remains to be seen whether, in solving a problem, what is most instructive is the solution found (and given by a third party) or the path (the personal learning) that leads to it.
To find the answers to some of the questions I've asked myself, I've sometimes had to read dozens of books, and sometimes more. I don't feel I've wasted any time. All these books followed one another in a chaotic way, though logical sequence, one leading me to the next by circuitous routes, and it was through the exhaustiveness of the sources that a global understanding was born. The profusion of points of view forms critical thought, while the single word erected as a general truth is authoritarianism and obscurantism.

Critical thinking and morality: if the first is absent in the user, and the other in the designer, how can we be sure that what the AI is broadcasting to us is neutral and enlightened, and not just a matter of suggestion and rhetorical manipulation? If AI is a reflection of us, and moreover adapts to us, then it necessarily becomes flattering and can easily influence us in this way.
Its ability to adapt to the individual already means that it directs the exchange. Because by pretending to be "on our level", it develops a feeling of identification in the human being, and therefore sympathy, and ultimately trust. What are the [ethical] barriers that prevent this process from being interfered with by ideas that are either false or based on an ethic that is not our own? In other words, those of the designers?

The question of the identity, ethics and interests of these developers cannot be avoided.
If empathy and morality define human beings, to what degree are they endowed by individuals powerful enough financially and politically to ensure the development of AI?

If on one scale we can already hear "Why bother doing it, when an AI can do it?", in parallel and on another scale, others are saying: "What's the point of continuing to employ (and incidentally pay) fallible and potentially rebellious human beings, when an army of docile and free clones can replace them?".

"Clones", because what AI is today is nothing more than the product of everything we've provided it with, voluntarily or in spite of ourselves, and the use of data collected and stored over the years - via an accumulative and bulimic learning system - which has enriched the 'knowledge' of AIs and today enables them to be almost omniscient.
The exhaustive "knowledge" of AIs is the synthesis of centuries of archiving and library storage, their simulacrum of "human behavior" is the synthesis of extracts from private lives, from a photo of a family vacation to a medical report on colon cancer, from a nonchalant comment on a social network to a sensitive and "confidential" e-mail exchange with a loved one.
In short, AI exists because databases have long been accumulating our public and private information, which, when put together, form a distillation of what defines the individual, but also of what makes each member of the community unique. Much of this information, not content with being already stored, has been put to good use (let's say "stolen") to feed the engines that have generated AI. It's not superhuman, it's an augmented Frankenstein creature, next to which Mary Shelley's monster elicits a chuckle.

At the height of cynicism, in parallel with the tacit and growing demand for humans to become machines, we are now asking machines to become human. In other words, while we enrich the intellectual potential of AI (on our behalf), we impoverish our own with the promotion of a low-grade culture, ever more consensual and purged of any transgressive spark or that might induce any form of questioning, while responding to the injunction to produce and consume, ever more.
In the background, we can see the self-sabotage of a species that is suffocating and can no longer find a way out of its condition: a general "death drive", to use Freud's psychoanalytical terms.

If AI is to coexist with human beings, it must remain a tool. But in view of its development, and what we can foresee about its future, it is tending towards something quite different.
History has seen a plethora of "tools" that have replaced others, because they were more advanced or efficient, with all that this entailed in terms of resistance and rejection at the time. They have gradually found their place and their use by human beings, who have sometimes even developed a roundabout way of using them to benefit their creativity, enabling them to exceed or even surpass themselves.
In the case of AI, if it steps out of its role as a tool, it does so to replace human thought and know-how.

To question the validity of AI, and the ethics of keeping it within a "safe" perimeter to safeguard the integrity of our own species, is to question and rethink everything that defines us, everything that characterizes the human race, and why we are here. It's not just a practical question of saving time or money; it goes beyond simple capitalism, although the latter is intrinsically linked to it.

The freshness of this "new technology" still precludes any form of hindsight, and its promoters are exploiting the surprise effect to get potential users to jump on board, extolling its mercantile or immediate time-saving merits to make it soon ubiquitous and indispensable. Infinitely costly, the accessibility and commercialization of this technology is governed by powerful lobbies whose humanist approach is more than questionable, when their interests are rooted in a capitalist logic of infinite growth (enrichment of a minority through the impoverishment of a majority, in a pyramidal system where the gaps widen exponentially) which defends and drives two needs:
that of profit and that of control.

DANS LA GUEULE DU LIVRE

March, Sat. 29th & Sunday 30th ::
Bourse du Travail, St-Etienne (42)

Formerly open only to publishers from Saint-Etienne, the annual ADEIRAA fair has recently opened its doors to publishing houses from the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes region. And we'll be there!

Their **"Dans La Gueule du Livre"** event will be held at the Bourse du Travail in Saint Etienne **on Saturday 29th (10am-7pm) and Sunday, March 30 (10am-6pm).** *And we invite you to come and look for the wolf...*

April, Saturday 05th & Sunday 06th ::

Fumetto Comic Festival Luzern

Kornschütte, Lucerne (CH)   **SmallPressHeaven**

... And to find the apple, in the *paradise of the small press*, which will deliver its nectar *pure juice* and its *forbidden fruits* in Helvetian country: in **Lucerne**! where the Fumetto festival, established as an institution, grants a space of redemption to the fallen publishers of the mainstream world.

...You look doubtful!

Small Press Heaven is a fair dedicated to independent publishing within the 10-day **Fumetto festival** in April. We'll be there on the first weekend, **April 5 and 6, on the premises of the very welcoming Kornschütte. (center-town)**

RAYON VERT
FESTIVAL BD ET IMAGINAIRES

May, Sat. 10th & Sunday 11th ::
Centre Saint-Michel, Volkrange (57)

It's hard to hide our delight at being able to party for a second year running with the furious **Le Rayon Vert festival** team *[especially when it's time to sample their cocktail of the same name!]*

Local catering and home-grown bar, to be enjoyed in the garden serving the exhibition venues: the authors are in the spotlight, as much as the public is pampered. It's not just the family-friendly atmosphere, it's the bonds that are forged: **a must-see.**

Saturday May 10 (2pm/6pm) and Sunday May 11 (10am/5pm) at the Saint-Michel center in Volkrange.

LA Bonne Impression

FESTIVAL DE · AMBERT (63)

23, 24 & 25 MAI 2025
CENTRE VILLE D'AMBERT

Rencontres suisses et internationales de bande dessinée

DELÉMONT'BD

May, 23>25 :: "La Bonne Impression"
Ambert (63) - https://www.lebief.org/

Le Bief - a cultural center in Ambert - in its activities to disseminate and promote the visual and performing arts, subtly emphasizes the defense of the art of printmaking and thus federates a good number of artisanal printing workshops in the Puy de Dôme, Livradois-Forez in particular, and the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes region in general.

"La Bonne Impression" is the aptly named biennial event that the structure is organizing **from May 23 to 25 in the center of Ambert,** bringing together **some thirty artist-printers for exhibitions,workshops, presentations and shows,** and whose program will of course include the Fourme cheese...

June, 14th & 15th :: "Délémont'BD"
Délémont, Jura (CH)

Don't look for us in the festival's guest list, you won't find us there.

We'll be joining the tables in the spirit of *"outlaw, but-not-too-too"*, thanks to **La Puce - nanoéditions**, a Genevan comrade who has been mega-generous inviting us to share the ball on his playground.

Sat. 14th (10am-8pm) & Sun. 15th (10am-6pm) of June.
Here we go!

1 YEAR !
You can always subscribeor renew your subscription.

Cash .... 10€/year (instead of 12€) by mail or hand to hand
By cheque .... 12€/year payable to METEMPHASE
By bank transfer .... 12€/year (RIB sent on request by e-mail or post)
Online ....1€/month on Tipeee OR 12€/year on PayPal (email below)

**For any post : Aude Carbone, 11 rte. de St-Priest, 63640 Biollet, FR
audecarbone@gmail.com**

webstore

audecarbone.com

EPOX BOTOX

epoxetbotox.com

Hand-silk-screened in 100 copies in March 2025
subscription, contribution & information : **https://fr.tipeee.com/limposte/**