

NARRATIVES OF SOCIETY :
A CROSS-
DISCIPLINARY
LITERARY INQUIRY

EDITORS
DR HAWAIBAM LOIYUMBA
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Narratives of Society: A Cross-Disciplinary Literary Inquiry
Edited by: Dr Hawaibam Loiyumba, Dr Abul Foyes Md Malik

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Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Visual Storytelling: Exploration of Synthetic Media and Synthetic Realities with Reference to *Nagaland_talks*

Tsutipang Jamir

Introduction

The phenomenon as we know it Artificial Intelligence (AI) is burgeoning worldwide. Much as a phenomenon, it is a technology which has altered and is altering the way we interact, communicate, associate and evolve as a society. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been a significant prerequisite and a crucial driver of innovation in the digital age. With this evident advancement also arises new challenges, opportunities, possibilities that are pertinent and paramount in understanding and navigating the world around us. Terms such as ‘Deepfake’ ‘ChatGPT’ ‘Open AI’ ‘AI- generated art’ ‘Voice Cloning’ are synonymous with the ongoing digital ecosystem (Leiker 2). These technologies have brought about a plethora of experiences such as AI-empowered content generation and generation of video, text and other content. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is closely associated with the emergence and the progress of Web 3.0. The growth of the web can be classified into three major stages, which are, Web 1.0, Web 2.0, and Web 3.0. In the recent years, Web 3.0 is still evolving however, many of web 3.0 features are implemented and utilised in digital technologies. Web 3.0 is characterised by the incorporation of semantic web, blockchain technology, metaverse, personalisation, digital economies. In recent years, Contents over the internet are mostly AI generated and experts estimate that as much as 90% online content may be synthetically generated by 2026. This paper attempts to understand the nature and characteristics of Synthetic Media and the opportunities and challenges associated with AI Generated Content. It seeks to understand and explore the fabric and materiality of synthetic content by considering *Nagaland_talks*, an AI driven Instagram platform featuring computer generated produce.

AI Visual Storytelling

Storytelling has been an integral facet of human lives since the beginning of human civilisation. Storytelling is a way to express, communicate one's ideas and beliefs, and to share values, information and also history. The prospect of telling stories has been structurally reshaped with the assistance of technology. Digital storytelling can be understood as an act of combining digital content such as images and multimedia elements. It has made content more immersive and interactive through sounds, music, dynamic visuals, depth in visual quality (Somvanshi 65). Through digital media platforms they play a significant role in enhancing communication through text, images, and moving images. Over the years, storytelling has progressed through different configurations. The medium of visual storytelling has evolved with the advancements in AI tools like Midjourney, DALL-E, stable diffusion, which has made possible for creators to produce hyper-realistic images, hyper-realistic media manipulation. (Han and Chi 470). Narrative Visual Storytelling has proven to be beneficial and effective by evoking a high level of engagement, experience and comprehension.

imagineif.in is an Instagram account which narrates historical events by re-envisioning it through AI generated visuals. Similarly, Instagram handles like, *pastlooksindia*, *Satpal.with.mic*, *soltini_with_mic*, *katha_ai* feature AI-powered content produced for entertainment, infotainment, and education. With text-to-video generating AI tools, it becomes efficient for bringing any idea to life.

Synthetic Media in Visual Storytelling

Synthetic Media

Synthetic Media is a fusion of two words, 'Synthetic' and 'Media'. "The term synthetic media refers to all forms of media that have been created or modified using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning technologies. These digital applications facilitate the production of synthetic content that appears real to the average person" (Roumpies et al. 431). Synthetic Media refers to those outputs that are not produced naturally. It refers to the content generated wholly or partly by artificial intelligence and machine learning models. This type of content or production can be images, audio or video content, which are manipulated and artificially generated. Synthetic media, as media content, is created using Artificial Intelligence and deep learning technologies. This creation expands to text-to-speech, text-to-image or text-to-video outputs. The prevalence of synthetic media is exponentially increasing and it has set its marks on social platforms such as Twitter, Youtube, and Instagram, among

others. Synthetic media is used in entertainment, education, journalism, commerce and advertising.

Nature of Synthetic Media

Synthetic Media is not without human intervention, although minimal, it is generated through the prompts of humans. Synthetic media produces realistic media outputs and mimics the fabric of reality and authentic content, which often blurs the line between reality and what is not real. Deepfakes are produced and shared and have established their place on social media platforms. Deepfakes are videos generated through AI and deep learning models that can create fakes videos with swapped faces, cloned voices, manipulated facial expressions, mouth movements that closely resemble real ones. Deepfakes employ sophisticated artificial intelligence to closely mimic the appearance and sound of human faces and voices, achieving a high level of realism (George and George 58). Other classification of synthetic media, which are common place are synthetic text, which are AI generated text, resembling characteristics like it is written by humans. The production of synthetic content is fairly undemanding. It becomes cost effective and time saving for creators to share their narrative and to impact wider audience such as through text-to-speech systems that produce human like synthetic voices for voice over, narration, announcements. Systems like this offer, flexibility and personalisation to make it accurate and as authentic as it can be, making it accessible and dependent. The nature and characteristics of Synthetic media expands to its fluidity. It expands to generate multiple media formats including, written text, images, videos, recordings and more. It produces realistic content which appears authentic as being created by humans. This is further extended through semi- synthetic media which, blends perfectly with the real captured inputs like face swap of a different person in a video actually captured with another real human.

Opportunities and Challenges

The presence of synthetic media content is widespread, especially across digital social media platforms. Users are increasingly exposed to these contents which are highly realistic and at times misleading as well (Corsi et al. 2024). These contents differ over various multiple platforms. For example, across X (formerly Twitter), the presence of synthetic media is mostly image based (Corsi et al. 2024) while synthetic media on platforms like You tube features video-based content with AI voice over. In the context of Instagram presence of synthetic media such as images, generative artificial intelligence videos and deepfakes are dominant. The development and creation of synthetic media ushers in numerous opportunities and challenges.

According to the (DRCF, Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum, 3-4) some of these opportunities and risks can be formulated in the following:

- **Creative digital content production:** Through AI, synthetic media can be used to produce engaging and immersive creative production with cost-effective measures within lesser time frame.
- **Personalisation:** Machine learning in web 3.0 allows users to personalise, modify and create results which are suitable for individual needs. This ushers in more control and empowerment.
- **Synthetic avatars:** AI generated avatars are lifelike and can most accurately replicate human movements, gestures and expressions. Synthetic avatars are cost-efficient, fast, enhance personalisation and possess multilingual capabilities. Synthetic avatars are useful in virtual customer service, educational content, journalism and entertainment.
- **Virtual reality:** Virtual reality creates synthetic reality and simulated environments that provide immersive learning, enhance engagement and risk free practice for medical operations and procedures

Along with the opportunities and benefits of synthetic media, it also invites significant dangers. Synthetic media realities can pose potential dangers, including concerns like misinformation, privacy breaches, and ethical dilemmas (Filho and Rocha 2)

- **Copyright infringement:** One of the most critical challenges in the digital age is the law of copyrights. Copyright laws were originally designed to protect works created by human authors and offer limited applicability to outputs generated by AI. As a result, the reproduction of distinct artistic styles by AI tools currently falls outside the bounds of existing legal protections. (Deckker and Sumanasekara 2). A recent example can be the case of Hayao Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli art style which went viral on social media.
- **Disinformation:** Much as the digital age is known as the 'Information Age' scholars have declared this as the 'age of disinformation' (Weikmann and Lecheler 1). Disinformation can be present in the form of text or visual. Forms of textual as well as the visual disinformation are manipulated to varying levels which can lead to misperception, loss of trust, mistaking real for fake.
- **Detrimental/ illegal content creation:** On the other spectrum of creative synthetic content lies the presence of illegal or harmful content. Synthetic media could pose a threat in the mass creation of misleading and fake contents. This outputs, without proper

detection modules can harm, tamper the reputation of individuals or society at large.

- **Inaccuracies and no transparency:** Synthetic media tend to be inaccurate with its production and results if one does not fully understand, thus creating inaccuracies which will lead to loss of trust in the media.
- **Consumer deception:** Misleading synthetic content—such as false ads, endorsements, or products—poses risks to consumer trust and market stability, and may fall foul of existing consumer laws.

Exploration of Synthetic content and realities in *Nagaland_talks*

Nagaland_talks is an Instagram account that features synthetic media content based on the Naga community. The channel produces a synthetic podcast show under the nomenclature ‘Tribal tea talks’ Their first video was posted on 16th June, 2025. In rapid succession and within a time frame of less than a month, it gained 13.5k followers.

An AI generated Gorilla character, named Tovi, is the host of the show who can speak Nagamese- a creole language formed from Indo-Aryan Assamese and local dialects. Machine learning models such as Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs) have made possible for creation of realistic synthetic outputs in complex degree resulting in realistic moving images, cloning of voices, enhanced animations (Leiker et al. 2). Synthetic media involves training and data collection that helps in generating and upscaling representations. The characters in the videos, are hyper-realistic, resembling the Sino-Mongoloid and Tibeto- Burma facial features.

At present *Nagaland_talks* have 28 video posts. These synthetic visual contents explore the cultural exhibits and communication featuring the attributes of the different tribes of Nagaland. It uses humour, sarcasm, satirical entertainment, offering insight into the local context, which can mislead viewers if there is a lack of background information. The content mostly reaffirms the stereotypical status quo, however, the audience is intrigued as they are presented with something relatable, appealing to them.

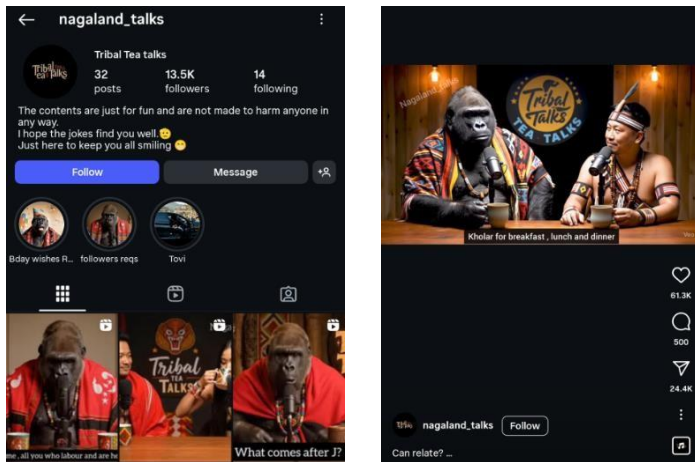


Figure: Screenshots from *Nagaland_talks* displaying synthetic Media content

“Synthetic realities” refer to digitally constructed or enhanced environments made possible through the application of artificial intelligence techniques (Filho and Rocha 1). The interaction between technology and humans has become second nature with dependency of human on technological determinism. Synthetic media creates synthetic reality, which becomes a kind of reality for the audience. It brings along a distinct synthetic realm with its distinct real-like characteristics which impacts our physical realities and tailors the physicality of our social interactions. The critique and the implications of synthetic and AI-generated content are ubiquitous, particularly with concerns to authenticity, ownership, bias and ethical dilemmas. The characteristics of synthetic media are all-encompassing in the contents and production of *Nagaland_talks*. From realistic looks to apparel, sound design, speech, movements, and facial expressions, all represent a kind of reality which goes on to reflect the power and dynamics of synthetic media interaction.

Conclusion

The rise of synthetic media, powered by artificial intelligence (AI), has transformed visual storytelling, offering unprecedented opportunities for creativity, accessibility, and cultural representation while simultaneously posing growing ethical and societal challenges. Platforms like *Nagaland_talks* exemplify how AI-generated content

can engage audiences through hyper-realistic avatars, culturally relevant narratives, and immersive digital experiences. By leveraging AI tools such as Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs) and voice cloning, creators can produce content that resonates with local communities, preserving linguistic and cultural elements in innovative ways.

However, the proliferation of synthetic media also raises critical concerns. The blurred line between reality and AI-generated content risks misinformation, misrepresentation, and loss of authenticity. Issues such as copyright infringement, deepfake manipulation, and algorithmic biases further complicate the ethical landscape. In the case of *Nagaland_talks*, while the content reinforces cultural familiarity through humour and satire, it also runs the risk of perpetuating stereotypes if not carefully curated.

As AI continues to evolve within Web 3.0's decentralized and personalized digital ecosystem, the need for regulatory frameworks, transparency, and ethical guidelines becomes paramount. Ensuring that synthetic media serves as a tool for empowerment—rather than deception—requires collaboration between technologists, policymakers, and stakeholders. The future of AI-driven storytelling must balance innovation with responsibility, fostering authenticity. Furthermore, the emphasis on media literacy and education will help people in navigating through responsibly and to understand the world of synthetic media.

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