



Re-thinking Heteroglossia through the Lens of AI

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to rethink Mikhail Bakhtin's construct of the literary text, its intertextuality and examine the notion of creativity in the technological world dominated by Artificial Intelligence. The research focuses on Bakhtin's idea of heteroglossia structuring a literary text in such a way that the originality of the work and individual distinctiveness of the author are called into question. No literary work, as Bakhtin would argue in the book chapter titled "Discourse in the Novel", stands isolated, and is independent in nature. Rather, he expounds that a text embodies many utterances, words, phrases and structures that have already occurred by countless people in countless times and places. The research question posed is, therefore, whether AI generated texts are also heteroglossic, given that the texts get generated by the chat bots through complex algorithms over a huge data base. A secondary question is whether Bakhtin knew that his theorization of heteroglossia would be a posthumanist proposition which is similar to what a chat bot does.

INTRODUCTION

Humanity has suffered greatest onslaught on various non-science discipline because of artificial intelligence. Like all others, we are faced with the problem of how to deal with it; whether to dismiss it altogether or bring it to our use. The basic premises of humanism have been the fundamental idea of a unified subject vested with reason and imagination, cognitive capabilities, and sensibility. If we categorize reason in the sense Immanuel Kant does, then artificial intelligence has no practical reason



which means, it doesn't have a conscious or feelings. Or we can say that it has "instrumental reason" geared towards specific tasks.

As the students of literature, we wanted to interact with a chatbot, Chat GPT and asked it if it had qualities and features that might characterize it as human. Its answer was "no". It denied itself as a unified self that is capable of autonomy, independence, and imagination. We asked it if it was original and it defined it as we quote "my creations can feel original, but they aren't original in the same way human creation is". This is a classic post-humanist statement and from here we wish to begin our exploration of certain fundamental notions about the text and discourse as Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian formalist has discussed in his book *The Dialogic Imagination* and we are also reminded of Michel Foucault's "What is an Author" and Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author". We would also quote a few lines from T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Re-thinking Heteroglossia Through The Lens of AI – is our research topic. And here in this particular research paper, we have applied the qualitative methodology technique. Firstly, we have applied the primary sources to create our research paper and the primary sources are – Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*, Roland Barthes's *Death of an Author*, Michel Foucault's *What is an Author*, T.S. Eliot's *Tradition and the Individual Talent* and Julia Kristeva's *Desire in Language*. From these primary sources, we have gathered significant information and quotations. Along with the primary sources, we have applied the secondary sources – a research article and some pivotal information from suitable websites. From the secondary sources, we have completed the key argument on our topic.

So here is an explanation on the methodology of the research.

Main Text

What qualifies a work of art to be "creative"? The idea of the authenticity of a literary creation has been a debatable topic since classical antiquity. Readership enforces the primacy of "individuality" to evaluate a work. The more the present work stands unique in comparison to the contemporary texts and to the texts that were created prior to it, the more it is celebrated. In the era of neo-technologies, the subject of art and authorship has gained significant attention with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI). The technological advancement of AI has enabled it to create artistic pieces ranging from painting, poetry, essays, to interpreting and analyzing databases. One of the groundbreaking developments in the present day high-tech vested technological world is the emergence and rapid proliferation of artificial intelligence



(AI). With its potential to artificially construct images that resembles a never-existed entity, AI has altered many facets of creativity and provided new aspects to determine aesthetics in art.

Art imitates life. The imitation incorporated in the works of art must be aesthetically beautiful and appealing. The passage of time ensures a constant change in the various circles of life be it personal, social, political, religious, or economical. These continual variations alter the way author and creators perceive, interpret, and represent reality in the works of art. For instance, in the subject of English literature, the literary texts created from the period of the Anglo-Saxon to the Postmodern period, depict life and the realities of its own time in different modes and methods that results in the different forms and dynamics of work. These slow alterations give rise to the awareness of tradition. However, during the time of examining a writing carefully, we tend to discharge the implication of tradition. The worth of the presence of tradition in a work is often explored by its absence. If we consider T.S. Eliot's argument, the tendency to find the "peculiar essence" (Eliot, 1919) of the creator that "least resembles anyone else" (Eliot, 1919) fails to provide the authentic artistic quality of the text. Thus, a writing work must possess a substantial congruency with other artistic works, that are either contemporary to it or were written by the pre-existing dead poets. Eliot's propositions reinforce the conforming quality of a literary text as one of the embellishments of a praiseworthy creator.

However, such an obsession regarding the isolated property of a text is called into question with Mikhail Bakhtin's knowledge of "heteroglossia" (1975). The term "heteroglossia" refers to the co-existence of multiple linguistic varieties, styles of discourse, and several points of view which are different from each other within a single language. Bakhtin's perception of heteroglossia expounds that a text cannot be independent because it has co-relations with other texts and social contexts, creating a formal dynamic and dialogic relationships amongst them. Therefore, we are compelled to re-evaluate our conception of regarding whether a piece of work is worthy to be deemed as creative or not, solely depending on how individual it is in its construct. As Eliot has elaborated, "no art has its complete meaning alone" (Eliot, 1919), similarly, the heteroglossic nature of an artistic creation negates the possibility of a truly differentiated individuality in its fabrication.

The heteroglossic nature of any creative writing can be furthered upon by Roland Barthes' call to disjoin the author from the text, emphasizing the multiplicity of meanings and voices rather than a single authoritative tone. Barthes echoes Bakhtin's notion that every text is inherently dialogic, involving a complex interrelation of voices, none of which is definitive. Our long-held belief of determining worth to a creative piece based on its insulating and alienating properties are fragmented by the conception of



heteroglossia. The author who claims to showcase the “internal thing” (Barthes,1967) as an act of self-expression is an outcome of the already-existing multiple discourses erected by many other creators.

The paradigm shifts in the modern world inflected by post-structural theorisation has attributed meaning to a text based on its conforming qualities. Within a linguistic framework, creativity of an art, lies in its worth of being intertextual in nature (Julia Kristeva,1981). No text exists in entirety but carries a free play of multiplicity of voices that is shaped by the social, cultural, and traditional forces. It resists a meaning which is single and authoritative in tone, allowing instead for dialogue and heterogeneity of thought. The very employment of a variety of techniques in enriching the excellence of a literary text such as allusions, symbols, collages, and so on, give way to the text to echo the voices that are formed by other authors. The very art of shaping association between entities that are present in multiple texts creates a continuous loop of citation where the question of isolating properties slowly fades away.

The significance of the intertextual nature of a work can also be emphasized by Michel Foucault’s essay “What is an Author” (1969) where he elaborates the inter-relational aspects carried out by a text. Traditional literary criticism often treats the author as a significant figure in order to create meaning. Foucault challenges the authoritative voice of the creator by arguing that the author is a construct of culture and tradition who has the pivotal role to regulate discourse. The meaning constituted by the text is dynamic in nature and is always related to social and dialogic interpretations. We might claim to uphold the place of the author at a “transdiscursive position” (Foucault,1969) where the creative entitlement of an author is designated primary and secondary positions. For instance, an author might be positioned as a primary creator for producing a genre-specific text such as writing a novel. However, the creators who deal with interdisciplinary subjects are often pushed to the status of being a secondary creator. For example, Jane Austen is the primary author of her novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. But, authors like Anne Radcliffe not only wrote novels such as *The Mysteries of Udolpho* but paved the way for the emergence of a new literary sub-genre, Gothic Romances during the first-half of the nineteenth century. Similarly, marxist critics and feminist critics such as Terry Eagleton (*Marxism and Literary Criticism*, 1976) or Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*, 1949) wrote books and formed ideas based on a certain subject of interest, but they were not the primary creators who brought the subjects into their very lively existence. The secondary creators fashioned works of art based on an existing plane of thought, where they added their own interpretations in the exploration of the prevailing discourses.



Based on the explanation above, the aim of this research is to scrutinize and re-think our preoccupations on the credibility of a work of art to be deemed as creative, and to figure out if the texts produced by AI algorithms are heteroglossic in nature.

CONCLUSION

Creativity in a work of art refers to the styles, ideas, and approaches that are original, imaginative, and unique. A creative work of art is a fresh and clear visualization of the new ways of thinking or presenting subjects which shows familiarity. It may combine different materials through unexpected ways to offer a clear and fresh perspective that involves the audience. The heteroglossic nature of a literary text negates any possibility of absolute individualism in its construct. With the question of intertextuality embedded in the narrative of any work of art, we, for once, might assume the very nature of the texts produced by AI algorithms to be heteroglossic. To enquire our curiosity, a detailed analysis was carried out which involved interrogating an AI chatbot, Chat GPT, about its own interpretations regarding whether it considered itself as an autonomous entity capable of formulating works that can be called original and creative. Its answer was “no”. Chat GPT denied itself as a unified self that is capable of autonomy, independence, and imagination. It defines itself as we quote, “my creations can feel original, but they aren’t original in the same way human creation is”.

Beautiful things in the world are portrayed in the area of aesthetics. Creativity in a work of art can be seen in the use of the language, the structures, and in the themes that it seeks to illustrate. However, creativity in the works generated with the help of artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the capability of technology to produce ideas and works that are nearly similar to human creativity in terms of aesthetics and artistic quality. Artificial intelligence (AI) gathers information in new ways to create astonishing outcomes. Chat GPT elaborated that it is capable of generating and brainstorming novel ideas but they are done through a "pattern-based" medium (Chat GPT, 2025). To form ideas, it gathers data and information from a vast number of texts that are available on the internet. AI chatbots tend to merge and integrate information from various sources to frame a specific knowledge. Often, instead of producing new ideas from a primary source, it happens to imitate the existing knowledge and incorporates them into its own narrative. One of the major conflicts revolving around the intensive use of AI in the fields of arts and aesthetics is the question of originality. The replication of data, information, and creativity from various sources leads to the occurrence of plagiarism. The work materials and sources used by AI to generate texts are frequently ignored and stripped off of their credibility and ownership. Such an imitation inevitably leads to a threat to the intellectual property rights of the authors.



The goal of this research is to represent the significant use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the areas of art and criticism. Humans are possessed with a subconscious mind which enables them to carry feelings and emotions. The quality of being rational and reasonable helps human form values and meanings, by which they lead their life. Machine-based AI lacks a subconscious mechanism. It has no sentiments or concerns through which it will form knowledge. AI chatbots are insensible unlike humans, therefore they are devoid of an active experience to create original ideas. They remain a passive spectator to human's passionate and emotional encounters. Machine made algorithms are deprived of spontaneous insight due to which they are unenabled to create from scratch and cease to be called as innovative. Creators such as poets have the capacity to produce knowledge out of a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth, 1798) which they inherit from their surroundings and lived experiences. AI, on the other hand, carry no intrinsic motivation to create, thus they don't have any desire for such an emotional fulfilment.

With the constant expansion of technology in the present world, it still remains a debatable topic whether artificial intelligence (AI) can truly be creative or it just mimics human creativity. We can say that the notion of creativity which involves artificial intelligence's presence is more like a miscellaneous remix of technology and human intellect. One of the supreme reasons we cannot evaluate AI to be innovative because it is dependent on humans. Creativity which is generated by AI chatbots are oriented towards a specific goal, which is totally based on prompts ordered by humans. That is to say, without a command, chatbots and machine-based algorithms can create nothing. Unlike the independent and autonomous human intellect that has its solitary agency, AI fails to govern itself completely on its own and operates depending on an external control. The process of creation through AI is made effective only when "humans guide the process" (Chat GPT,2025).

In the era of neo-technologies, the subject of art and authorship has gained significant attention with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI). The technological advancement of AI has enabled it to create artistic pieces ranging from painting, poetry, essays to interpreting and analyzing databases. One of the groundbreaking developments in the modern digital era is the emergence and rapid proliferation of AI. With its potential to artificially construct images that resembles a never-existed entity, AI has altered many facets of creativity and provided new aspects to determine aesthetics in art. Creativity in artificial intelligence refers to the capability of technology to produce new and original ideas and works similar to human creativity. Artificial intelligence is used to operate creativity in fields like art, writing, design, and music. It can gather information in new ways to create astonishing outcomes. However, debates continue on the fact whether AI can truly be creative or or they try to impersonate humans. This research aims to



determine the collision of the use of artificial intelligence in the landscape of art and aesthetics and speculate from the points of view of the philosophers and critics, the criteria for a work of art to be called true, creative, and authentic.

The entry of non-human works of art into the art market has blazed argument to define art and the pivotal role of artificial intelligence (AI) in artistic creation. In the modern technological era, people especially artists, need to modify the expeditious development of technology, one of which is using artificial intelligence (AI) to support their performance in creating works of art. In the past, making of works of art involved traditional and conventional methods with lots of equipment to enhance its artistic quality. Now with the help of artificial intelligence (AI), computer technology, and algorithms, most of the productions are quick and more pragmatic in their makings. Despite the controversy of the pros and cons of AI assistance in the production of knowledge, digital media and technology have become significant platforms for artistic expression and aesthetic experience. There are concerns about artificial intelligence (AI) which has the capability to replace human artists by producing soul-less works of art. Therefore, it is crucial to enquire whether the idea that a literary text is creative or not depends largely on the skill and technique used in its production. The heteroglossic assumption refutes the possibility of a text being individualistically unique since all text contain a substantial amount of intertextuality within their framework. AI chatbots gather information from various existing sources to construct a text, thus negating the possibility of an individuality in its essence. However, one cannot argue the machine generated texts to be creative because creativity is an independent ability that humans are capable with. AI can only do so after receiving a command from its master, human. Apart from lacking emotional intelligence and human experience, AI creates out of technical accumulation of data that resonates with the question posed to it. It is in short of awareness and subjective understanding and endeavors to use calculative data and machine-made algorithms to function.

A secondary assumption that intrigues us from Bakhtin's discourse on heteroglossia is, whether he was aware of the posthumanist implications of the intertextual and dialogic nature of a text. Bakhtin's discourse on the heteroglossic nature of a literary text reveals himself as a posthumanist as he challenges the cultural and traditional humanist notion of a singular and authorial voice. In his *The Dialogic Imagination*, Bakhtin gives us the idea of heteroglossia – the coexistence of multiple voices, multiple languages and their meanings, and multiple ideas within a particular text. Bakhtin's posthumanism critiques humanism and its rationality, as humanism has a coherent subjectivity that proposes human being as the center of wisdom and worth. Moreover, Bakhtin's perception on the dialogic nature of a



literary work and its language echoes posthumanist viewpoint which is concerned with the rejection of essentialist identities.

Humanism as a philosophical ideology revolves around the idea of absolute supremacy attributed to humans. The Middle Age in England was suffused in the theocentric belief. The faith of God as the center of the entire universe, truth, and meaning filled the minds of people. Humanism as a novel perspective gained widespread recognition during the period of Renaissance. It aimed to distinguish the faith of common people from theocentrism. It championed the dominance of human free will over fate, where the concept of fate handed over the agency to God or a similar divine-like figure. During the age of Enlightenment, the world was undergoing massive scientific and technological changes. Humanism under the discourse of Enlightenment, acknowledged the primacy of reason and rationality that uplifted the position of human beings than other species.

Posthumanism, on the contrary, refers to the shift in the anthropocentric belief that focused on the domination and supremacy of humans. Developed during the late twentieth century and expanded in the twenty-first century, posthumanism refers to the viewpoint that challenged the humanist belief by highlighting the interrelated connections between organisms and systems. It analyzed relationships between human beings, nature and natural agents, complex systems, and other presupposed inferior entities to deconstruct the idea of a human-centered universe. In the present world, the anti-human exceptionalism of posthumanism focuses on removing human beings from the authorial role of dictating meaning and value to others and intended to equate the boundaries present between humans and non-human entities such as tools and devices powered by technology. As an outlook, posthumanism questioned the Euro-centric discourse of evaluating humans as omnipotent and their rationality as the supreme driving force in attributing meaning to entities.

We might argue, Mikhail Bakhtin's discourse on the heteroglossic nature of a literary text essentially poses itself as a true posthumanist assumption. Bakhtin's discourse on the dialogic and intertextual nature of a literary text challenges the cultural and traditional humanist notion of a singular and authorial voice. In his *The Dialogic Imagination*, Bakhtin gives us the idea of heteroglossia – the coexistence of multiple voices, multiple ideas, multiple languages and its multiple meanings within a particular text. It inhibits the possibility of an isolated voice in the construct of language in a work of art and highlights the presence of a variety of voices that converse with each other and participate in the action of attributing meaning to the text. Posthumanist critics argue that humans and technology are not alien to each other, but they develop mutually. The betterment in the modern technological tools such as complex machines,



AI algorithms, and in an extension, the constructing and manufacturing of humanoid robots, not only contribute to the development of science but also refine the lives of humans. With better machinery, livelihood gets better too. For instance, the introduction of AI in the fields of arts and aesthetics, combines the effort of both humans and machines. The joined forces give birth to novel and advanced creations. Such a presence of hybridity in the works of art take us back to Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia where creativity is evaluated by the presence of multiple voices and ideas. This multiplicity of voices and meanings as propounded by Bakhtin, problematizes the notion of an individual authorial self. Similarly, posthumanist ideology seeks to remove the singular authoritative agency of humans, rejecting anthropocentrism. The two seemingly dissimilar yet comparable concepts of heteroglossia and posthumanism reject the possibility of a dominant individual entity. They refute the primacy of an isolated and independent authoritative voice, that is, a singular narrative utterance or solitary source of creation, as analyzed in the discourse of heteroglossia.

Philosophers and authors often have the ability to sense conflicts that might arise in the near-coming future. The heteroglossic nature of a work of art, though not explicitly, does reflect the posthumanist notion of criticizing humans as the center of wisdom, worth, and creation by negating the presence of a reliable yet unattached authoritative voice. The present day works of art often include AI assistance which resonates with the posthumanist condition of fusing human and non-human forces. In conclusion, we might assume that Bakhtin, by his theorization of heteroglossia, carried a posthumanist attitude.

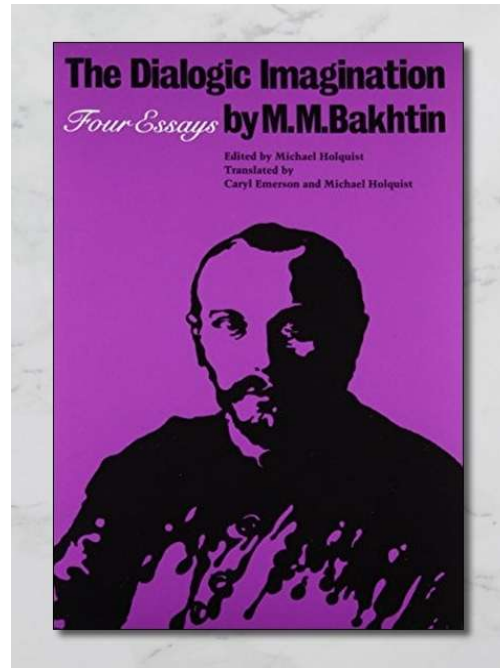
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APPENDIX



Mikhail Bakhtin,(1895-1975)The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin (1981)

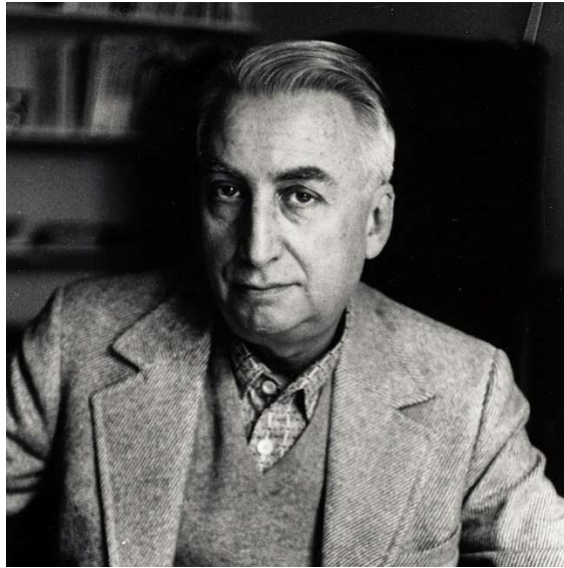
noun

/,he-tə-rō-'glä-sē-ə, -'glò-/

heteroglossia

a diversity of voices, styles of discourse, or points of view in a literary work and especially a novel

Bakhtin's "Heteroglossia"

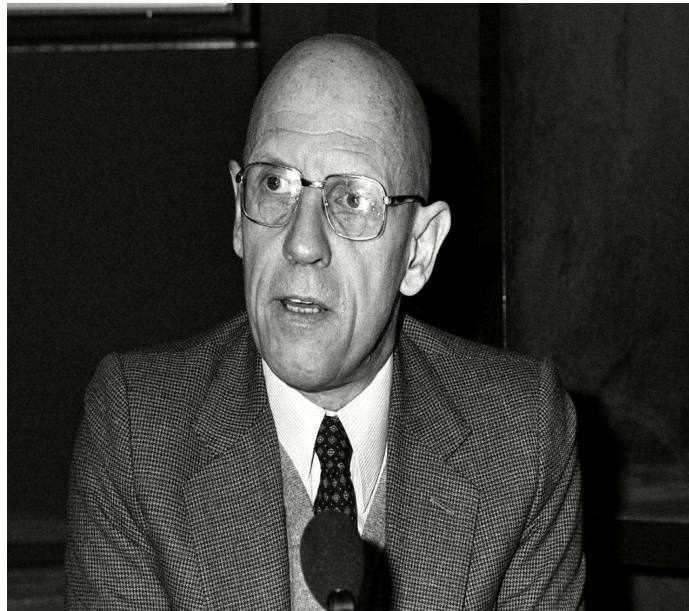


Roland Barthes (1915 – 1980)

The Death of the Author

Roland Barthes

“Death Of the Author”(1967)



Michel Foucault (1926 – 1984)



Michel Foucault

1969

What is an Author?

In proposing this slightly odd question, I am conscious of the need for an explanation. To this day, the 'author' remains an open question both with respect to its general function within discourse and in my own writings; that is, this question permits me to return to certain aspects of my own work which now appear ill-advised and misleading. In this regard, I wish to propose a necessary criticism and reevaluation.

For instance, my objective in *The Order of Things* had been to analyse verbal clusters as discursive layers which fall outside the familiar categories of a book, a work, or an author. But while I considered 'natural history,' the 'analysis of wealth,' and 'political economy' in general terms, I neglected a similar analysis of the author and his works; it is perhaps due to this omission that I employed the names of authors throughout this book in a naive and often crude fashion. I spoke of Buffon, Cuvier, Ricardo, and others as well, but failed to realize that I had allowed their names to function ambiguously. This has proved an embarrassment to me in that my oversight has served to raise two pertinent objections.

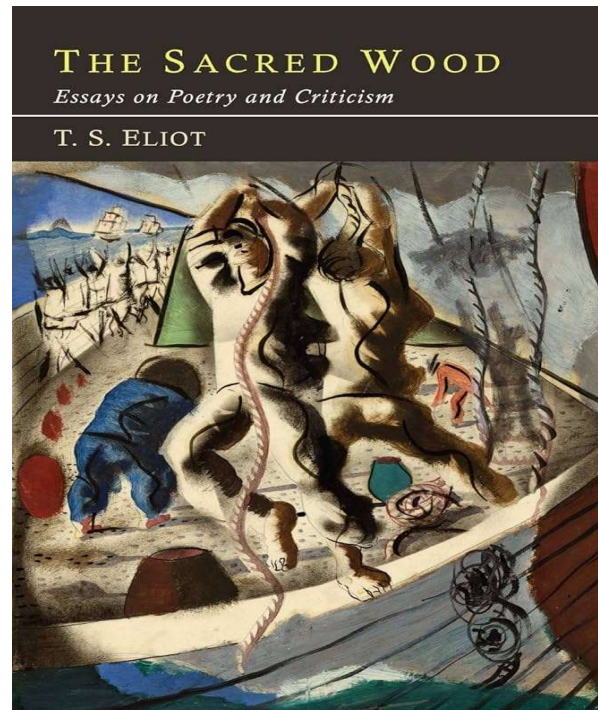
It was argued that I had not properly described Buffon or his work and that my handling of Marx was pitifully inadequate in terms of the totality of his thought.¹ Although these objections were obviously justified, they ignored the task I had set myself: I had no intention of describing Buffon or Marx or of reproducing their statements or implicit meanings, but, simply stated, I wanted to locate the rules that formed a certain number of concepts and theoretical relationships in their works.² In addition, it was argued that I had created monstrous families by bringing together names as disparate as Buffon and Linnaeus or in placing Cuvier next to Darwin in defiance of the most readily observable family resemblances and natural ties.³ This objection also seems inappropriate since I had never tried to establish a genealogical table of exceptional individuals, nor was I concerned in forming an intellectual daguerreotype of the scholar or naturalist of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In fact, I had no intention of forming any family, whether holy or perverse. On the contrary, I wanted to determine—a much more modest task—the functional conditions of specific discursive practices.

MICHEL FOUCAULT 299

“What is an Author” (1969)



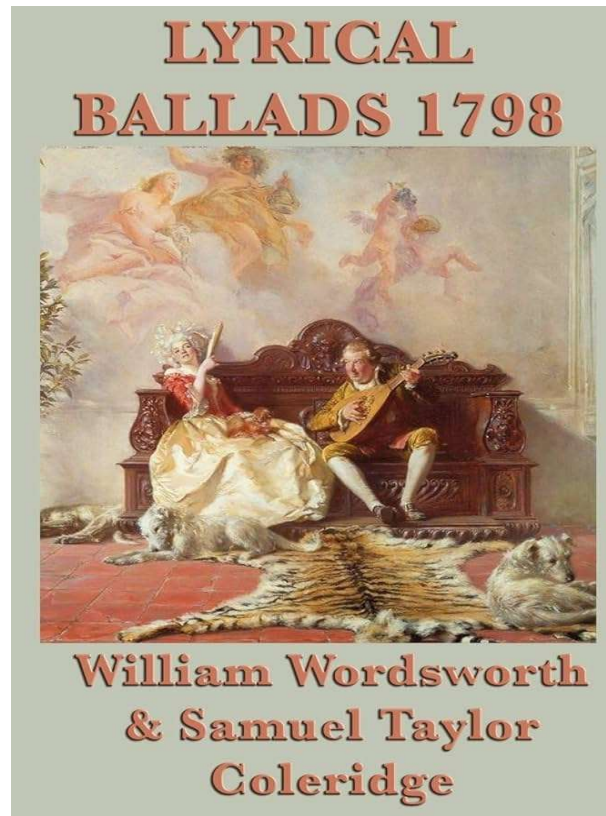
T.S Eliot (1888 – 1965)



“Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1919)



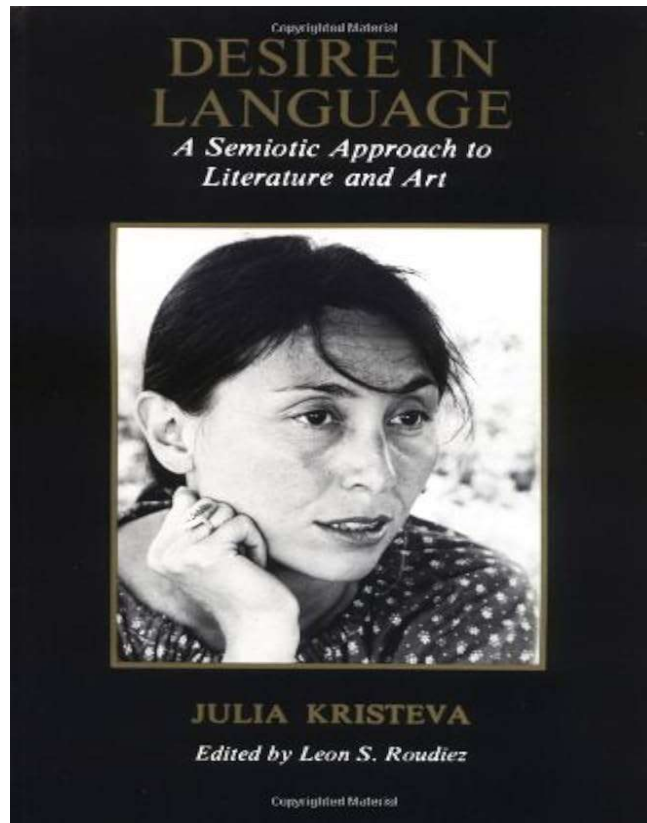
William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850)



Lyrical Ballads (1798)



Julia Kristeva (1941 - Since Now)



Desire in Language (1969)





Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804)



Artificial Intelligence

