

A Critique of Foucault's Conception and Predictions of the Author-Function

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/tp.v6i1.3>

Thought and Practice: A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya (PAK)

New Series, Vol.6 No.1, June 2014, pp.9-24

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<http://ajol.info/index.php/tp/index>

ISSN: 2076-7714

Abstract

In this paper, we appraise the thoughts of Foucault on the relationship between the author, work, and text, and the future of that relationship. In Foucault's view, the text points to an author who is anterior to it, but this relationship is more complex than 'traditionally' understood because of the asymmetrical relationship between the concepts of author/writer and text/work. Although the author-function entails a form of individualization of text and ideas, Foucault argues that this has varied across disciplines, cultures, and time. In any case, the author-function determines the process of authentication, mode of circulation, and valorization. From the analysis of the relationship between the author and text in the premodern and modern eras, Foucault extrapolates that in the postmodern era the author-function will be transformed and diminished because language assumes the dominant role of determining the form and content of viable discourse. Foucault's conception of the author-function is post-modernist and consequently eschews the author-figure, grand narratives, progressive and systematic evaluation of texts, values and ideology, and temporality. However, contemporary trends in the understanding of the author-function do not fully bear out his predictions. Besides, intellectual property rights are more institutionalized and the boundary between authorized and unauthorized valorization and modification is intensely contested. The contestations are over valuable creations and, whether originating from an author or authors, this affirms the viability of projects such as Sage Philosophy.

Key Words

Author-function, work, text, discourse, postmodernism, valorization

Introduction

The structuralist position that the significance and location of things is a function of the larger structure within which they are located and Saussure's distinction between *parole* and *langue* laid the foundation for theoretical re-conception of language. The view that "language does not reflect or refer to a reality, but creates it", and the view that meaning is the outcome of relations between signifiers formed the basis of Barthes' thoughts on the Author. In "The Death of the Author", Barthes argues that "Analysis of text needs to explore writing and

writing structures rather than a speaking voice, a self", and this is justified because "The Author dies in the moment of writing". The essence of that purported death is captured in the following quotation:

Who is speaking thus? Is it the hero of the story...? Is it the individual Balzac...? Is it Balzac the author...? Is it Universal wisdom? Romantic psychology? We shall never know, for the good reason that writing [*écriture*] is the destruction of every voice, of every origin. Writing is the neutral, that composite, that oblique space where our subject slips away, the [photographic] negative where every identity is lost, starting with the identity of the very body which writes (Barthes 1968, 2).

In this paper, we appraise the thoughts of Foucault on how the Author has functioned in the past in relation to work, text, valorization and discourse. We set out with an exposition of Foucault's conception of the author. Thereafter, we look at contemporary trends in the operation of the author. Our thesis is that Foucault's conception of the author is circumscribed by postmodernist aversion for the author-figure, grand narratives, progressive and systematic evaluation of texts, values and ideology, and temporality.

Foucault's Conception of the Author

Generally, Foucault is in concurrence with Saussure's conception of language and Barthes' conception of the Author: at that moment in the history of discourse, writing had freed itself from the dimension of expression and hence the tyranny of the author. However, Foucault transcends both in emphasizing the significance of historical social reality in understanding language and the Author.

However, Foucault attributes the freedom of writing of text to a new conception of language which did not have a place for substantial interlocutors but only for a writing 'I', which is an instance that ceases in the moment of writing. Foucault uses this Barthesian position to foreground his concern about the author function in the transformed circumstances of discourse. Conceived as interplay of signs, writing does not need any external reference and the text is a game with the capacity to transcend the rules of grammar and the set limits. As Wilson (2004, 341) points out, the death or elimination of the Author goes hand in hand with the elimination of the Critic and the book, and the replacement of these with scriptor, reader, and text.

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Nevertheless, Foucault's analysis focuses on the author-function in discourse at various levels and in diverse moments in the history of human civilization. His contention is that the author's function is that of authorizing a unique form of discourse, its mode of circulation and valorization. That function and fortunes of the author have also varied with respect to disciplines and society. In the realm of fiction, Foucault contends that in the modern setting, the act of writing is linked to death and this is contrary to the situation in *Thousand and One Night* in which Scheherazade engages in narration in order to keep death a bay. The questions that arise at this point are: how does the death of author arise generally, and how do Flaubert, Proust, and Kafka, invite death in their acts of writing?

First, Foucault is of the view that "we find the link between writing and death manifested in the total effacement of the individual characteristics of the writer; the quibbling and confrontations that a writer generates between himself and his text cancel out the signs of his particular individuality" (Foucault 1969, 4). Thus, Albert Camus, discoursing on the writing subject Sade, observes that "A character is never the writer who created him. However, there are occasions when a writer is all his characters simultaneously" (Camus 1984, 33)." This view of the writing subject reaffirms the Barthesian view, but instead of embracing his skepticism, postulates multiple identities or hybrids. We do not agree with Foucault about the use of contrivances to negate the author's particular identity. Rather, the contrivances enable the author to express the complex and elusive realities of the self, which ordinary discourse cannot accommodate. To illustrate this point, let us briefly try to respond to the question, "Who are you?" We might be able to respond easily in terms of our profession, ancestry, and such social constructs, but beyond the obvious elements of ourselves we would generally be uncertain.

Yet Foucault is primarily concerned with the author-function, and not just any writing. Key to determining the author-function is a host of questions that Foucault poses: "What, in short, is the strange unit designated by the term, work? What is necessary to its composition, if a work is not something written by a person called an 'author'?" (Foucault 1969, 4). These questions lead Foucault to the conclusion that the word 'work' and the unity that it designates are as problematic as the status of the author's individuality. In modern usage, writing transposes the empirical characteristics of the author into a transcendental anonymity, which I think is the equivalent of the Omniscient Author. Is the homogeneity of a 'work' real or is it fictitious? In the same tenor, is the author a composite being with features or do the critics

generate the entity? Foucault argues that in modern discourse, the perceptible features of the author are effaced through critical and religious strategies (Foucault 1969, 5), which are in forms of the positioning of text features in the prevailing discourse rather than in the author. He argues: "In granting a primordial status to writing, do we not, in effect, simply reinscribe in transcendental terms the theological affirmations of its sacred origin or a critical belief in its creative nature?" (Foucault 1969, 5). In so doing, the myth of originality is affirmed and sustained, notwithstanding the fact that writing is the outcome of the discourse in which it is located. Wilson shares this position and asserts that "..., in harmony with the arguments of *Les Mots et le Choses* and of the forthcoming *L'Archeologie du savoir*, the apparent sovereignty of authors concealed the real source of authority, namely discourse itself" (Wilson 2004, 342). Gutting asserts the reversal of positions that entails the disappearance of the author and the significance of the text in the following words:

In this sense, language is a truth unto itself, speaking nothing other than its own meaning. This is the realm of "pure literature", evoked by Mallarmé when he answered Nietzsche's (genealogical) question, "Who is speaking?" with, "Language itself" . . . Literature is literally nothing but language—or rather many languages, speaking for and of themselves (Gutting 2013).

In view of the situation of authorship in discourse, the question of what an author is and therefore issues of the criteria of attribution and valorization require attention. One criterion for attribution and valorization is the author's name. The question is how would the author's name function in this process? The orthodox manner is that of author citation against the text. We use the author's proper name, and other details of publication - date, publisher, ISBN and so forth. Foucault thinks that a proper name (alone) is inappropriate because "the link between a proper name and the individual being named and the link between the author's name and that which it names are not isomorphous and do not function in the same way ..." (Foucault 1969, 6). He argues that a proper name is a description of what might turn out to be non-existent. This issue was at some point addressed by Spinoza, when he pointed out the gap between asserting the existence of a person and attributing to that person a certain status. The fact is that there could be many people who share a proper name with an author. Hence Foucault's assertion that "The proper name and the author's name are situated between the two poles of description and designation" (Foucault 1969, 5).

The author's name functions in ways that are significantly different from the manner proper names function. Foucault illustrates his view of the difficulties involved in handling the

author's name using Shakespeare's *Sonnets* and Bacon's *Organon*. Foucault points out that it is logically and empirically easy to deny the existence of somebody like Pierre Dupont, but problematic to deny the historical existence of an author. Denial of Shakespeare or Homer would prompt us to seek to determine the authorship of various works, because by virtue of the works being existent there must have been an author. Foucault examines the relationship between the author's name and a proper name in detail, but the examples of Bacon and Shakespeare as authors and Pierre Dupont as a non-author suffice to illustrate the function of the author name in modern and even pre-modern society.

In modern society, an author's name performs specific roles with regard to narrative discourse. The author's name "is not simply an element of speech (as a subject, a complement, or even element that can be replaced by a pronoun or parts of speech). Its presence is functional in that it serves as a means of classification. A name can group together a number of texts and thus differentiate them from others. A name also establishes different forms of relationship among texts" (Foucault 1969, 6). It is for this reason that author name "establishes a relationship among texts, which could be characterized in terms of homogeneity, filiation, authentication of texts, reciprocal explication, or concomitant utilization" (Foucault 1969, 6).

In the process of interacting with a specific text, we are aware of its author; if we are sensitive, and, particularly in respect of works of art, we know or even sense when we are no longer dealing with the author's text. We are able to do this because there is a link between the author and the text in terms of concerns, idiom, phrasing, and ideological slanting.

Apart from spelling out the author function, Foucault distinguishes between discourses that are endowed with author-function and those that are deprived of it. In this respect, he argues that author-function discourses have the characteristics of arising from the legal necessity of society holding individuals responsible for subversive or criminal statements or discourses, and therefore it is a function that applies only to originators of unique discourse. The second characteristic of the author-function is that it is irrelevant to some discourses in certain historical settings, and, even when it is relevant, it is neither universal nor constant. Thus Foucault observes:

Even within our own civilization, the same types of texts have not always required authors; there was a time when those texts which we now call literary

(...) were accepted, circulated, and valorized without any question about the identity of their author. Their anonymity was ignored because their real or supposed age was a sufficient guarantee of their authenticity. Texts that we now call scientific (...) were only considered truth during the Middle Ages if the name of the author was indicated (ibid. pp.6-7).

The author-function does not develop spontaneously, but rather is a construct of the critics, who attribute to him motive, creative power, design, and milieu. Foucault cites Saint Jerome's criteria, which mainly revolve around constancy of quality, style, and thought. In modern discourse, literary critics still treat authors in line with Saint Jerome's criteria (Foucault 1969, 8). Wilson interprets this characterization to imply a distinction between the author of a text and the historical individual who wrote the text, because the former is an outcome of interpretative construction (Wilson 2004, 350). Wilson illustrates this distinction well using John Locke who has various authorial identities, among them political philosopher and philosopher of knowledge, and correctly observes that in this characterization, the link between the author and text has been severed (Wilson 2004, 350).

Moreover, the author-function is not a pure and simple reconstruction made second-hand from a text given as passive material. The text contains a number of signs referring to the author - such as personal pronouns, adverbs of time and place, and verb conjugation. Some authors have no author-function, and therefore those aspects have no role. In this respect, a distinction between author, writer, and fictitious speaker is vital.

Jerome's and critics' criteria for determining authorship of texts serve to demonstrate Foucault's argument that author-function is a construct and it is circumscribed by legal attributions which do not recognize the plural selves that feature in discourses. Wilson argues that although Foucault uses Jerome and Mallarme to argue his thesis that the author-function is set to disappear in postmodern society, the result affirms the reality of the author-function (Wilson 2004, 360). The author-function effects the dispersion of various simultaneous selves in a composite entity that is the work, and so instead of murmurs of anonymous egos, we have a particular author announcing the death of the author.

Having laid out the author-function in relation to texts, Foucault brings up the phenomenon of "authors" of theory, tradition, and disciplines, which he considers to be a category above that of authors of particular texts. He argues that these authors are in a trans-discursive

position and he includes Homer, Aristotle, the Church Fathers and the Hippocratic tradition in this category (Foucault 1969, 10).

The third category of “authors” that Foucault brings to our attention is that of “producers of possibilities and rules for formation of other texts”. He calls these founders of discursivity, and includes in this category Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx. In Foucault’s view, Freud did not just author some texts, but provided indications that enabled other people to understand the human unconscious, subconscious, and ego better. Marx founded the ideas that would enable subsequent generations to discourse the subject of political economy, and re-think the concept and institutions of justice (Foucault 1969, 10-11). Wilson (2004) and Burke (2010) have raised objections to this third category. Wilson (2004, 342) objects to this extension of the author-function because, in his view, Foucault did not “concretely demonstrate” the manner in which the author-function could be applied to the enigmatic discourses of Freud and Marx. On the other hand, Burke (2010) conceives the inclusion to be *aporia* because the special status of initiators of discursive practices contradicts the very notion of sovereignty of discourse.

Although the ranking of discursive “authors” appears to be higher than that of authors of texts, Foucault brings up the counter-example of authors of texts in whose footsteps subsequent authors tread, such as Ann Radcliffe and the Gothic horror novel. Foucault points out that in this counter-example, it has to be noted that the impact is from subsequent generations imitating Radcliffe’s themes and plot. The authors are Gothic by virtue of manifesting features similar to Radcliffe’s *The Castles of Athlin and Danbayne* (Foucault 1969, 11).

The last category of “authors” that Foucault considers is that of founders of science, such as Galileo, Cuvier, and Saussure. In this respect, the founders’ insight could be little, but be of enormous value in establishing a discipline. We note that it is possible for the founder’s contribution “to be marred by intuition and empirical bias” (Foucault 1969, 11) and therefore be in need of reformulation. We also note that the germinal idea’s discursive potential is usually explored and harnessed after being advanced.

Important for us is that Foucault draws a number of conclusions from his searching reflections on the “What is an Author?” First, he concludes that in his exposition he has

expanded discursivity in order to account for other relevant realities. Underlying the expansion is the insight that discursivity is a set of primary coordinates that enable us to understand many aspects of our existence. Secondly, he draws the conclusion that the modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation of discourses vary with each culture and are modified within each. The author-function enables us to understand this reality. Thirdly, he concludes that “clearly, in undertaking an internal and architectonic analysis of a work (whether it be a literary text, a philosophical system, or a scientific work) and in delimiting psychological and biographical references, suspicions arise concerning the absolute nature and creative role of the subject (Foucault 1969, 13). More appropriately, discourse should focus on “subject’s points of insertion, modes of functioning, and systems of dependencies.” In this respect the relevant question should be the manner and conditions in which a “subject can appear in the order of discourse, and his/her place and relevant rules of engagement” (Foucault 1969, 14).

Based on these conclusions, Foucault predicts a post-modernist reversal of the traditional idea of the author as genius creating ideas/meanings, to “author as a functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses” (Foucault 1969, 14). At the outset of the 21st century, Gertzler affirms Foucault’s view when he asserts that in the Modern Age, language has become an authority unto itself: even the author becomes a “function” of discourse, dissolving into the text writing itself (Gertzler 2001, 21). Thus Foucault predicts a radical change of author-function, whereby it becomes a device for discourse and its life is determined by *discours*. In Wilson’s view, Foucault’s analysis and predictions reflect an eschatology in which he foretells the death of the author-function and maps out its aftermath (Wilson 2004, 358).

The prediction of a post-modernist reversal of the traditional idea of the author as genius to one of the author as a functional principle hinges on the development of a future in which readers and “authors” are post-modern in their manner of “creating” and consuming texts. The prediction assumes a future in which other traditions of textual handling will be marginal or non-existent. As a prelude to stating our position on these predictions, we proceed to look at contemporary trends in author-function, text circulation and valorization.

Contemporary Trends in Author-function, Text Circulation and Valorization

Contemporary trends in the conceptualization of the author-function do not fully bear out Foucault's predictions, and this is partly because Foucault's deconstructionism is simply one of the isms of postmodernism, and the other isms arise from reservations about the deconstructionist conception of the author-text relationship. D'haen lends credence to our immediate contention in his assertion that "...the literary establishment generally felt postmodernism is too short on social relevance and commitment and to be long on linguistic and other gamesmanship" (D'haen 1997, 20). Indeed, linguistic and other forms of gamesmanship are the hallmarks of deconstructionism as evidenced in the excessive use of irony and parody in post-modernist texts.

Foucault's conclusions arise directly from his analysis of the history of European institutions, and against a backdrop of the world wars, the civil rights movement in the US, the American experience in Vietnam, and the generational transition. However, the diminished stature of the author has precedence and in the framework of Foucault's thoughts, the author does not cease to exist but is conceived on dispersal terms. In fact, the essence of Foucault's conception of the future of the author is the metaphysical position that denies a definite and settled identity to human beings. It is in the same breath that this metaphysical view denies the fixed notion of fatherhood, motherhood, gender, and vocation. If the aim of advancing this view is liberation, as Siegle (1983, 127) argues, then we must interrogate the value of such "liberation", more so in view of the contrary sense of enslavement that some postmodern people experience. The liberation of language from the author simply mirrors the fact that to the postmodern mind there are no "real" issues. The aspects of life that were considered germane in modern and premodern eras suffered the blows of the world wars, the Vietnam experience, and disillusionment with progress and prosperity.

However, that is all true about the Western Anglophone societies. In African philosophy, in the last quarter of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st, trends point in the direction of author-function activation and sustenance. To this extent Foucault is correct to argue that "as a privileged moment in the individualization in the history of ideas, knowledge, and literature, or in the history of philosophy and science, the question of the author demands a more direct response" (Foucault 1969, 2). Yet, in the case of discourse in most parts of

Africa, Foucault's analysis of modern Anglophone is only valuable in its assertion of the inconstancy of the author function. Whereas in the pre-literate Africa issues of authorship hardly arose, in contemporary Africa an amalgam of issues on text-author relationship has been at the center of philosophizing and literature. The foremost question that Placide Tempels, Horton, Wiredu, Oruka, Masolo, Presbey, and many other philosophers deal with is that of the source of ideas that constitute African philosophy. Intrinsic to the exercise is the distinction between author and writer. The currency of the individualization of African discourse using the writer-author distinction defies Foucault's prediction, at least with respect to the last quarter of the 20th century and the first quarter of the 21st.

In particular, Oruka (1991), Presbey (2002) and Kresse (2007) have undertaken research that must be cognizant of the distinction between the many voices of the sages and the authors. The degree of cognizance, in the course of doing and presenting their findings, is the source of recurrent questions about their methodology and writer-author distinction, just as in all oral literature and oral history textual presentation. This is because the author is the point of reference in discourse, circulation and valorization of the text; and yet as Siegle (1983) argues, this is more pronounced in contemporary works of fiction in which the reader encounters multiple voices. Writers (sages and griots) furnish the researcher and potential author with materials, which the latter transforms into the mode that bears the author-function. In this realm of authorship, the verbatim text proffered by the sage will vary, depending on the attention of the field researcher, and the linguistic competence and diligence of the author, and this definitely introduces textual instability (Egan 2008,3).¹ Most crucial in the realm of textual construction is the role of the transcriber, translator, compositor, and author.

We are in accord with Stygall (1994), that the development of philosophy bears the imprints of the authors of the resulting discursivity, as evident in the development of Sage philosophy. Foucault's view that the author-function does not have a future in the postmodern world is based on a circumscribed attribution, and as Burke argues, "once we get past the pugilistic glamour of its formulation [it] is surely better read as a reconstruction of the way the author functions" (Burke 1992, 7). Foucault's view is a reflection of the deconstructionists'

¹ The reader interested in detailed observations on textual instability can see Egan (2008) "Foucault's Epistemic Shift and Verbatim Repetition in Shakespeare", in Meek, R *et. al.* eds.

indifference to authors and explicit meaning, and a tendency to “tune into the language speaking itself, listening for the unheard, the ungraspable - that which is there and yet is not there, lost in that space between the signified and the signifier”(Gentzler 2001, 152). In African academies, where the materials of sage philosophy and oral literature research are transformed into texts, the author function necessarily becomes activated. Yet in most cases, the author-function is most extensively used without the property right in form of royalties. It is also in the academies that the most focused and systematic discourses take place and where possible convergence of discourses on an idea or a principle of one author or multiple authors take place, transforming it into the germinal material for trans-discursive activities.

Stygall is right in his assertion that the author-function is very much relevant in the discourses that arise and unfold in the world of academia (Stygall 1994, 321). The relevance is underlined by the fact that unacknowledged use of authored material is punished through low scoring at undergraduate level of study and denial of degree award at graduate level. The author-function is not just visible in “basic writing”; it is key to research in the humanities and even the social sciences in which discourse starts from the insights and applications of theories and perspectives developed so far and moves to make observations on the adequacy of the works analyzed and to draw specific conclusions. The conclusions could be in form of principles or suggestions of remedial strategies that boast the relevance of a theory (Situma 2011), and that is the essence of journal articles. Stygall rightly observes that the author-function is crucial to basic academic writing, and regulates the ranking of teachers in colleges (Stygall 1994, 325).

Moreover, while Foucault advanced his position at a time when the future of property rights and by implication author-function was in question because of the socialist/communist ideology and its dominance in the East and even some parts of Africa and Latin America, that is no longer the situation. There is, in other words, the ideological dimension in the vicissitudes of the author. The socialist (communist/communitarian) ideology conceives the individual and individual creations as the outcome of the society and, therefore, there should be as minimal restrictions on the productions of individuals - whether as authors, inventors, or manufacturers. This is in contrast to the capitalist ideology in which the concept and reality of property is central to all production. Besides, whereas strict observance of the author-function in societies in which the rule of law is yet to take root is still marginal and haphazard, most of such societies are fast modernizing, and concomitant with modernity is

progressive movement from what Lessig calls bad piracy to good piracy (Lessig 2004). The pertinence of the author-function is evident in the operation of copyrights protection organizations such as the Music Copyright Society of Kenya and KOPIKEN.

Then there is the widespread phenomenon of book launches, reading sessions, and book promotion tours. The author-function, in my view, is not disappearing but becoming more public. Technology has been a contributory factor to this, as is evident in the phenomenon of digital platforms where readers and potential readers interact in virtual space, and book launches are televised in real time. Through such channels, the author-function in the construction, valorization and circulation of texts is significantly enhanced, but also given extra space in which transformations of various kinds could be effected. In this respect, the future of the text-author function is evident in the tentative exploration of Latchaw *et. al.*, which they assert in the abstract of their research in the following words:

Foucault explained that traditionally, authors have provided particular functions: to classify texts, to establish relationships among texts within their sociocultural contexts, and to identify bodies of work. However the roles of authors, as demonstrated in Web culture, are shifting dramatically, thereby enabling new functions to emerge. The emerging innovative methods of text distribution and attribution are challenging the way knowledge itself is produced and distributed within particular disciplines. We meet this challenge by drawing on the interdisciplinary work of Steven Harnad (psychology), Bernard Hibbitts (law), Deborah Halbert (law), and Paul Ginsparg (physics) to examine a new authoring in which a fluid archive is drawing “author and reader communities—together” (...). We retheorize the relationship between authors and publishers to set the stage for collaboration and negotiation (Latchaw *et. al.*, 1998, 1).

Yet it is a fact that the function of authorship, particularly in the realm of inventions, is no longer the straightforward act of a singular mind. Philip (2005, 202 ff.) documents this trend well by showing the disputes among the corporate authors of electronic texts. These cases demonstrate the concerns of corporate authors, rather than the death of the author. In cases where written texts bearing the author's name are transformed into electronic text (e-book) and made available to readers unconditionally, it is true that the author-function is *tampered with*, but it does not thereby disappear; and the individual making such an undertaking knows that it amounts to transgression of the copyright law. The pervasiveness of such transgressive practices does mean that the author-function faces unprecedented threat. Perhaps what needs to be recognized is the role of technology in intensifying the threat that piracy poses to the

author-function and the complications that the same technology raises in the context of the liberal notion of the free market (Lessig 2004, 77).

Discourse on any text, theory, and invention has one or two names as the reference point. I think this is partly because of the pervasiveness of capitalism and its logic. Within that logic, the act of authoring a text is an act of investment and so is the process of production and valorization of the resulting text. In the contemporary world, publishing houses occasionally contract individuals to write texts, which thereafter become the absolute property of the publisher. Even in such cases, it is a misconception to assert the death or disappearance of the author on the grounds that the author-function is embedded in the publisher.

We also witness different dynamics at play in the transformation of novels and plays into movies and dramatic productions. The particular transformations could be minor or major², and in the latter case, the resulting texts are radically different from the original works. Nevertheless, the author-function does not disappear but acquires plural lives, albeit of diminished visibility.³

Conclusion

We concur with Foucault that the author-function is not constant in all societies and at all times. However, in view of contemporary forms and issues of the author-function, his prediction of a future in which the author-function is irrelevant is as good as the Marxist prediction of a future in which capital effaces the industrialist and entrepreneur. Nevertheless, Marx posited the end of capital and the realization of a world in which human relations are free from the commoditization of their productions. Predictions of the end of the world as we know it are bountiful, and they arise from a 'particular' reading of history. There is the evidence that the author-function will oscillate between being impersonal, as it is in the world of technology where its exterior is nobody but corporations, and multiple authors but still

² See Egan, *ibid*, p.11 on the closer reading of various versions of Shakespeare's texts on minor and major differences that texts could acquire in the process of varied degrees of handling.

³ The tension between the author and the adaptor of the text for movie and theatre, and the radical transformations that could arise is presented in Elmer Rice's narrative *The Show Must Go On* (1950), Victor Gollancz Ltd., London.

with an originator. The originator is still the author, and the multiple 'authors' are mimics or derivatives from the author. The conceptual advantage of using the terms mimics and derivatives is that we are in a position to account for the distances of the multiple 'authors'.

Nevertheless, even as we thus conclude, we are cognizant of the fact that our immediate conclusion applies more to the authorship of works of fiction, and less to the authorship of autobiographies and other texts. In any case, as evident from the broader examination of the author-function, the world of discourse and the world at large, is gravely concerned about criminal machinations that strangle/violate the author-function. According to Philip (2004), in the Western sphere and increasingly in countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, manufacturers and legislators are determined to ensure that the strangulation of the author-function is checked. In other words, Foucault's prediction of the demise of the author-function has not come true. Instead, the author-function has assumed forms that enhance its valorization, and the contestations over ownership of valuable creations offers a justification for projects such as Sage Philosophy.

The significant development in the history of the author-function is that in postmodernism, and in the postmodern culture that reigns in Western Europe, the traditional figure and function of the author is eschewed.⁴ Although Foucault celebrates the elevation of language and discourse over the author, this development mirrors the elevation of capital over the entrepreneur in the realm of economy. The view that "production of anything - from commodities to literary texts - is no longer conceived as structured around individual consciousness, but rather around the age, or according to Foucault, the discourse of the age, which actually creates the individual" (Gentzler 2001, 151), echoes our view that discourse is shaped by the dynamics of capital.

⁴ The reader can see Siegle, Robert (1983: 132) for a similar rebuttal of Fowles' preference of the existential perspective over other perspectives.

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