

**Postmodernism in Literature**  
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**Lecture - 04**  
**Week - 02**  
**What is an Author?**

Hello, everyone welcome to today's session of the NPTEL course Postmodernism in Literature. In last couple of sessions we had been looking at the essay the death of the author and we saw how this essay is seen as one of the seminal essays which inaugurated the idea of challenging the author and also, how it becomes important in our understanding of post structuralist as well as post modernist frame works of understanding literature culture and also the reading of texts in general.

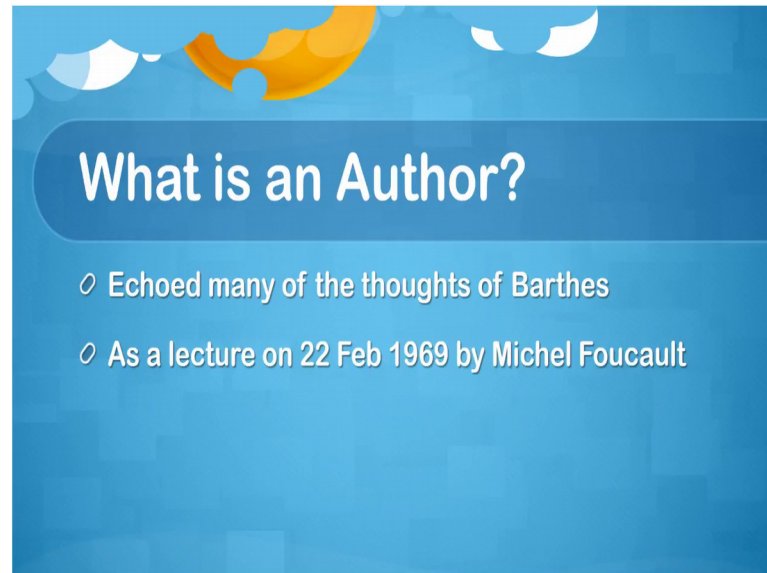
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In Barthes essay the death of the author; we also saw how by relegating the author to the background by completely removing the author, by pronouncing the death of the author, the interpretation, the text ownership was given to the reader. Text became really interpretations in the hands of readers totally devoid of any authorial intervention, totally devoid of any single meaning given to the text by the author; and we also realized towards the end of the essay that the essay death of the author cannot be written an

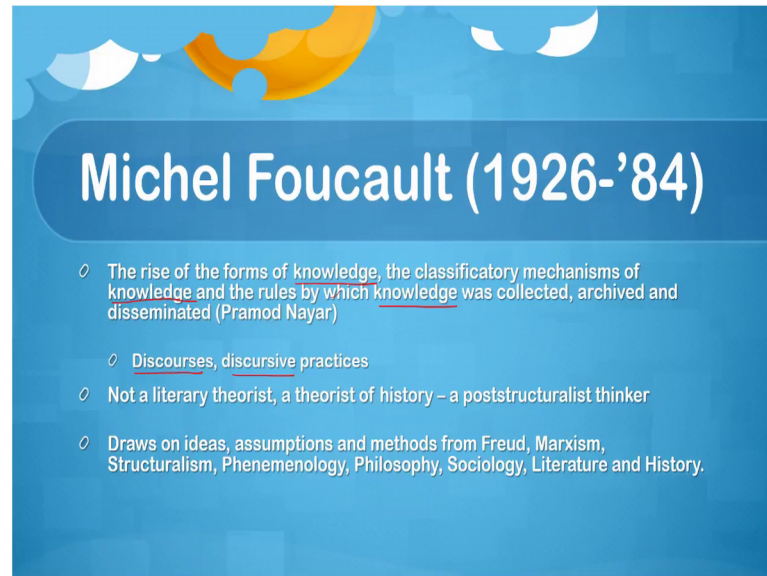
isolation, but it needs to be understood in connection with an essay that followed the one by Michel Foucault entitled what is an author.

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And this essay, what is an author by Michel Foucault; it also echoes a number of thoughts already articulated by Barthes it is also a continuation of a certain intellectual tradition which has been challenging the authority of the author. And this essay was written delivered as a lecture on 22nd February 1969 and now number of translations and a number of interpretations of the text is available now. Foucault himself had also published revised version of the lecture in French.

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## Michel Foucault (1926-'84)

- The rise of the forms of knowledge, the classificatory mechanisms of knowledge and the rules by which knowledge was collected, archived and disseminated (Pramod Nayar)
- Discourses, discursive practices
- Not a literary theorist, a theorist of history – a poststructuralist thinker
- Draws on ideas, assumptions and methods from Freud, Marxism, Structuralism, Phenomenology, Philosophy, Sociology, Literature and History.

And Michel Foucault was a theorist who lived from 1926 to 1984 in the words of Pramod Nayar; one of the commentaries of literary criticism he acknowledges that acknowledges that Foucault was the person engaged with the rise of the forms of knowledge the classificatory mechanisms of knowledge and the rules by which knowledge was collected, archived and disseminated. Here, we can see that Foucault's primary concerns was with the aspects of knowledge. And, this he achieves by engaging with some with something that he identifies as discourses and discursive practices and without going into the details of this which we shall do in one of the later sessions.

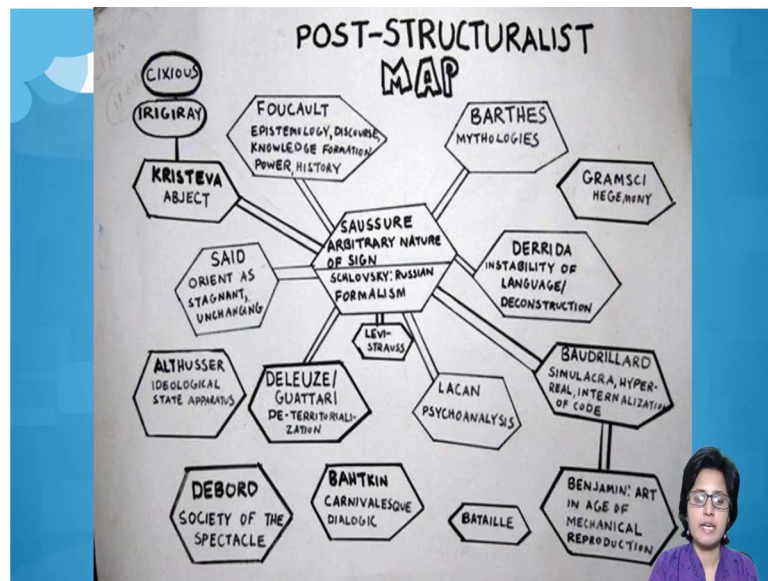
It is also important to remember that Foucault like Barthes was not a literary theorist. In fact, he could be considered as a theorist of history and also as a poststructuralist thinker and when we try to talk about Foucault it is again difficult to delimit him to a particular school of thought, because Foucault himself became the inaugural figure of a school of thought or by himself and nevertheless it is a important to note that he draws a number of ideas assumptions and methods from a range of thinkers and a range of schools of thought say from Freud Marxism, structuralism, phenomenology, philosophy, sociology, literature and history.

So, it is very difficult to very difficult to only identify Foucault as a poststructuralist thinker, but we would also eventually highlight that the ideas of Foucault; the ways in

which he revolutionized the systems of knowledge and systems of thought it also became an underlying principle and understanding postmodernism itself.

In last few sessions we had been focusing on the poststructuralism moment and also been trying to also been trying to highlight the connection between the poststructuralism and the fundamental ideas of postmodernism.

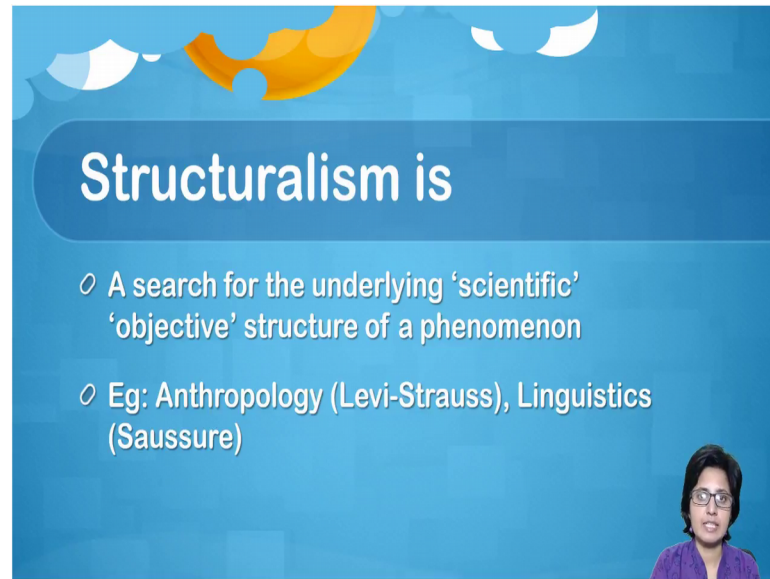
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Here, it is also very important to keep in mind the fact that much of postmodernism can be understood only if we begin with the poststructuralist moment only if we try to map, how post structuralism had been shaping up after structuralism and also how a range of theorist range of researchers associated with post structuralism also had become quiet seminan in laying the foundations of postmodern thinking.

So, many of the many of the thinkers many of the theorist who feature in the poststructuralist map also become quite significant theorist of the postmodern also have become significant theorist of the post modernism.

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## Structuralism is

- A search for the underlying 'scientific' 'objective' structure of a phenomenon
- Eg: Anthropology (Levi-Strauss), Linguistics (Saussure)

So, without going into the details of any particular figure now; let me try and give you a brief sense of what in details to move away from structuralism to towards poststructuralism, which in turn had also become seminal in our understanding of postmodernism.

So, structuralism is inherently a search for the underlying scientific objective structure of a phenomenon. For example, Levi-Strauss an anthropology and Saussure in linguistics have try to locate the structures which are important in understanding; the the features of language the connection between the signified and the un signified. So, all of those things and the departure from those fundamental structures had let to the emergence of poststructuralist thinking.

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## Poststructuralism

- There is no fixed structure 'behind' cultural phenomena
- Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida
- A major theoretical school in the Pomo age
- In conflict with Marxism, Feminism and Postcolonialism – but also gets combined with them
- Range of influence from arts, politics to popular culture

And poststructuralism on the other hand has no fixed structures 'behind' cultural phenomena, and this is exemplified in the works of Foucault, Deleuze and Derrida; as we would see and this also could be considered as major theoretical school in the postmodern age; though technically we can say the poststructuralism is in stuck conflict with Marxism, feminism and postcolonialism, but it would also be difficult to understand poststructuralism totally in isolation with these leading phenomena, because they also the understanding poststructuralism also combine with these aspects with which it in some ways is in conflict with as well.

And the range of influence of poststructuralism could be from anything from arts and politics throughout the popular culture that we see in and around as in the contemporary.

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Structuralists	Post Structuralists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Parallels/Echoes ✓</li><li>Balances ✓</li><li>Reflections/Repetitions ✓</li><li>Symmetry ✓</li><li>Contrasts ✓</li><li>Patterns ✓</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contradictions/Paradoxes ✓</li><li>Shifts/Breaks in ✓</li><li>Tone, Viewpoint, Tense, Time, Person, Attitude ✓</li><li>Conflicts, Absences/omissions ✓</li><li>Linguistic quirks ✓</li><li>Aporia ✓</li></ul>
<b>Textual Unity and balance</b>	<b>Textual Disunity</b>

More culture-specific, greater attention to contextualisation

Role of language and textuality

And when we try to understand structuralism and poststructuralism within the sphere of a text within the sphere of literary criticism it is also important to see what the structuralists and the poststructuralist seek to locate in a text. So, to provide a very minimal understanding of the differences between structuralists mode of a critical approach and the poststructuralist mode of critical approach. Let us quickly take a look at some of the things that structuralists look for and some of the things the post structuralism in the contrary look form.

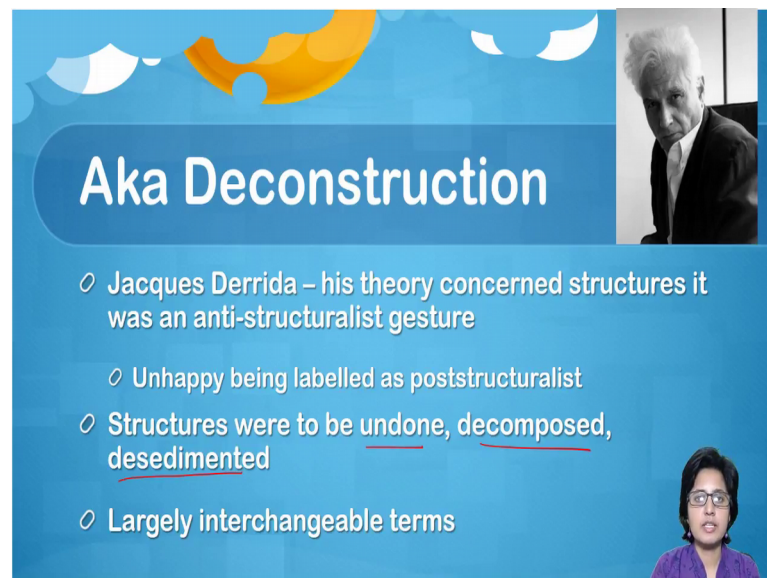
Structuralist basically argue for a kind of textual unity. So, in mo most of their approaches; we can find a method or methodology which eventually leads to the location of textual unity and balance; this includes a range of things such as parallels and echoes or balances in a text the location of reflections and repetitions and the and the identification of symmetry, of contrasts, patterns, basically they look for structure which would help them beset the text understand the text in particular ways.

On the other hand poststructuralism celebrates textual disunity. So, in that process they will be looking for contradictions and paradoxes, which rather than becoming inconveniences become a starting point for undertaking a poststructuralist approach. They also look for shifts and breaks, in tone, viewpoint, tense, time person and attitude the they are also seeking conflicts absences and omissions for linguistic quirks for aporia

in order to find the sense of meaning; more importantly the poststructuralist approaches more culture specific and they also give a greater attention to contextualisation.

And there is also a very deliberate highlighting of the role of language and textuality. So, in order to be able to understand; how practically this is done? How poststructuralist; how poststructuralist are unable to identify these particular inconveniences within the space of a text; it is also important to take a look at in other term deconstruction.

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## Aka Deconstruction

- Jacques Derrida – his theory concerned structures it was an anti-structuralist gesture
- Unhappy being labelled as poststructuralist
- Structures were to be undone, decomposed, desedimented
- Largely interchangeable terms

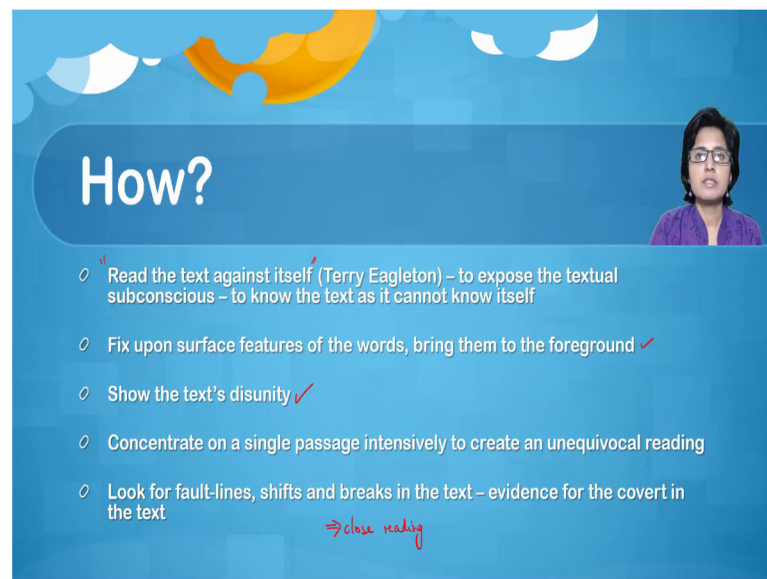
And this was a term put forward by Jacques Derrida and his theory concerns structures, but nevertheless it was an anti structuralists gesture. So, there is an inherent paradox in the ways the construction is defined.

Nevertheless, it is also important to remember that poststructuralism and deconstruction are perhaps interchangeable terms, when I say this I also mean that there is a perhaps when we try to approach a text through the poststructuralist method when we try to analyse the text through the poststructuralist methodology. We are eventually trying to do a deconstruction of the text and this term deconstruction came into being after Derrida started using it for a specific kind of a approach towards particular text, because he was also unhappy being label as a poststructuralist, because he also believe that he engage primarily with structures though his arguments was a structures were to be undone decomposed and desedimented.



So, here we also find certain sorts of ideas, which are which also are part of the postmodernist tendencies where the structures are not something to be believed in, but the structures are something to be something to be used in order to move away from them in order to move towards a more inconvenient reading, which would also open up the text for alternate possibilities for alternate meaning making processes. So, how do the poststructuralist; employ the methods of deconstruction while they access a text.

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## How?

- Read the text against itself (Terry Eagleton) – to expose the textual subconscious – to know the text as it cannot know itself
- Fix upon surface features of the words, bring them to the foreground ✓
- Show the text's disunity ✓
- Concentrate on a single passage intensively to create an unequivocal reading
- Look for fault-lines, shifts and breaks in the text – evidence for the covert in the text  
⇒ close reading

So, in order to answer this question how this entire process is being done within the space of a text we would begin by looking at a term a phrase used by Terry Eagleton where he says it is important to read the text against the text itself. Eagleton's phrase also became immensely popular in talking about the constructive methods and he also argue that the idea of the construction or the idea of the poststructuralist approach is to expose the textual subconscious. In other in other words this is this becomes important because the text cannot know itself. So, we make an attempt to know the text; by re-reading or unpacking the subconscious or what is not presented in a word form.

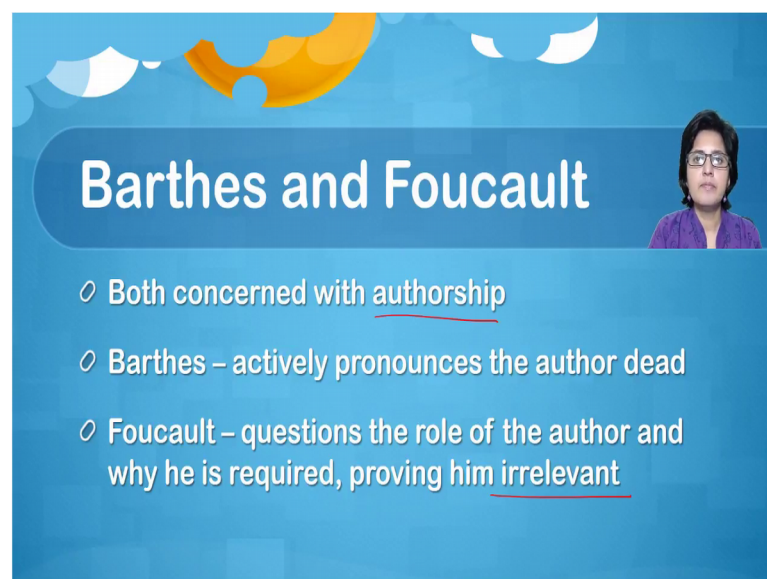
And secondly, there is a; there is an attempt being made to fix upon the surface features of the words and to bring them to the foreground by focusing on language by focusing on structure by, but by reading against them. So, this also a kind of practice, which has now come to be known as reading against the grain and this process also exposes the text

disunity; which eventually becomes all the more useful all the more fruitful in applying the deconstructive methods.

And here we also find the practically the literary critics would be concentrating on a single passage intensively; intensively to create an unequivocal meaning and they also look for fault lines shifts and breaks in the text and also for a number of evidences for the covert in the text. So, basically this also leads to a kind of close reading.

So, poststructuralism deconstruction when it is employed within the space of a literary text it also employs the techniques of close reading, which we shall be taking a closer look at in one of the later sessions; when we when we closely engage with particular literary text as part of our discussions on post modernism. This understanding of the shift from structuralism towards a poststructuralist method and also towards the deconstructive methods of understanding a text also becomes important in locating our understanding of postmodernism in literature.

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## Barthes and Foucault

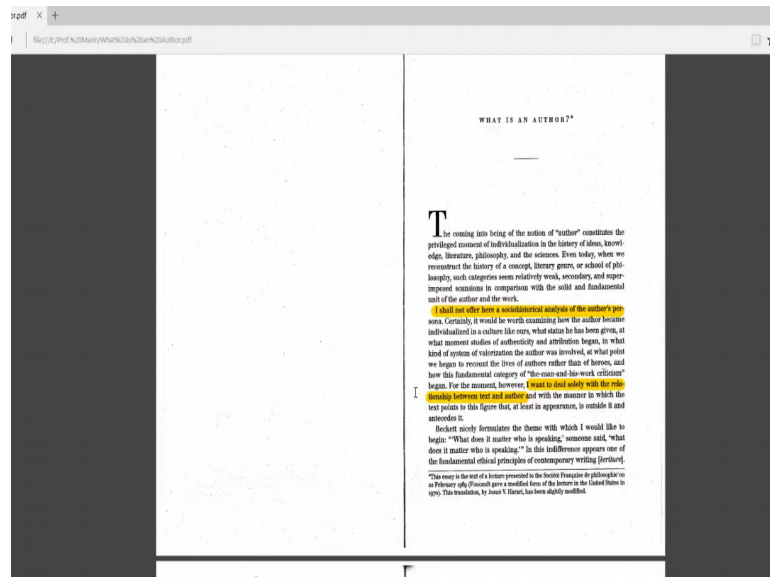
- Both concerned with authorship
- Barthes – actively pronounces the author dead
- Foucault – questions the role of the author and why he is required, proving him irrelevant

Coming back to the discussion of Foucault's; what is an author it is important to remember that the the both the essays by Barthes and Foucault's death of the author and what is an author both are concerned with authorship and there is hardly any debate about the primary theme of both of these essays, but the, but they also are different in particular ways; when Barthes pronounces actively pronounces the author dead Foucault

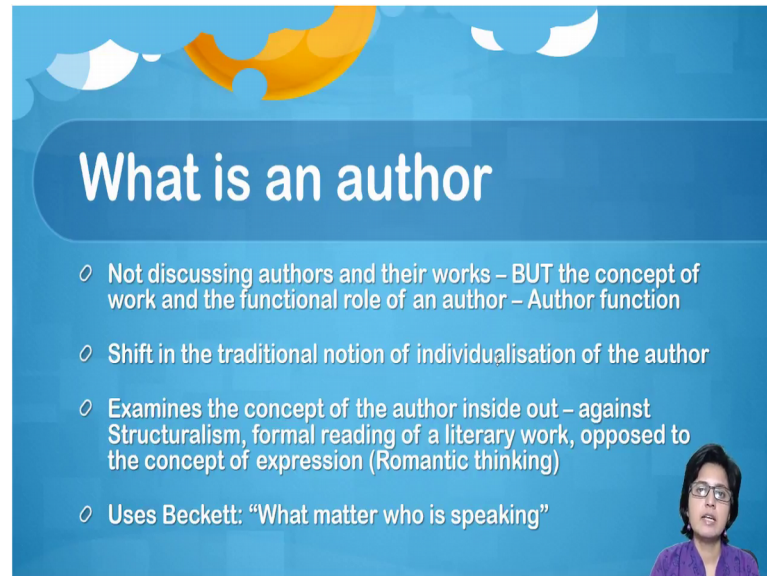
questions the role of the author and questions, why? The authors figure is required within the space of a text and eventually proves him irrelevant.

So, both of them eventually arguing pretty much the same thing the the death of the author or as Foucault uses the disappearance of the author from literature from the space of a text, but the method through which they do this is systematic in two different ways, they both arrive at the same end through different routes through different kinds of arguments. And compare to Barthes essay, which is very short Foucault's is a fairly long essay and there are number of translations available as well.

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## What is an author

- Not discussing authors and their works – BUT the concept of work and the functional role of an author – Author function
- Shift in the traditional notion of individualisation of the author
- Examines the concept of the author inside out – against Structuralism, formal reading of a literary work, opposed to the concept of expression (Romantic thinking)
- Uses Beckett: “What matter who is speaking”

In the essay what is an author Foucault's concerns is not with authors and their works, but he is more interested in the concept of work and the functional role of an author which he designated as the author function that also forms the cracks of this essay; and he also like, Barthes focuses on this shift in the traditional notion of individualisation of author which also becomes a basic premise for the understanding of both of these essays.

And, Foucault's essay examines the concept of the author inside out he does; if we may say an unpacking of the idea of the author the function of the author and this this this unpacking is done against structuralism against the traditional formal reading of a literary work and he is totally oppose to the concept of expression which was dominant in the romantic which was dominant during the romantic period.

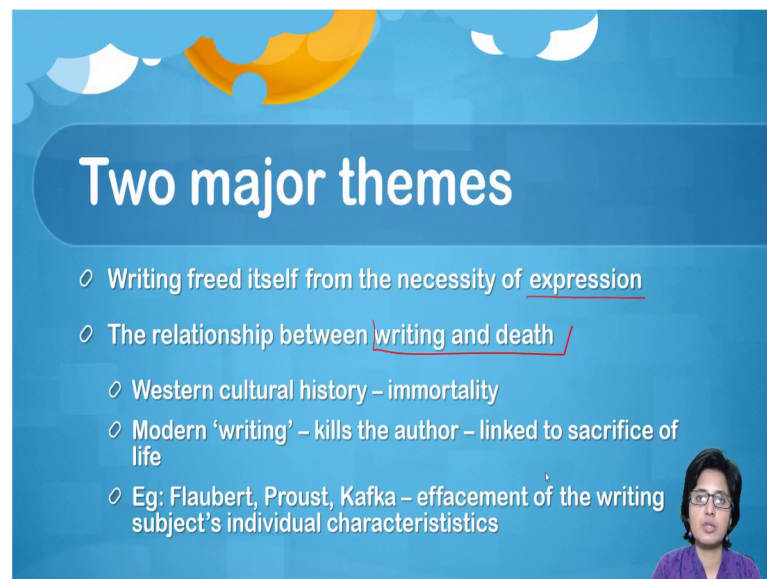
He also uses an oft quoted expression from Samuel Beckett a modernist playwright what matter who is speaking and then uses this is an entry point to talk about the various aspects of author and the authors function. When the essay begins Foucault gives us a very brief overview of the coming into being of the notion of the author, but also tells us that his intention is not to offer a sociohistorical analysis of the authors persona and then he moves on to highlight moves on to state; the primary objective of his works that; he wants to deal solely with the relationship between text and author.

So, this is what this essay entirely talks about the relationship between the text and the author; what happens to the author in the contemporary, when the ideas of text and the

ideas of author had then undergoing a radical change. And this he proposes to do in a particular way to in his own words with the manner and in which the text points to this figure that at least in appearance is outside it and antecedes it.

So, here he is drawing our attention to some of the traditional conceptions about the author and the traditional ways in which the author is located outside the text and also in antecedence to it, but; however, eventually we would also see that Foucault's essay moves away from this traditional assumption and totally challenges the frame works within which the traditional assumptions have been built with it and he also very effectively uses becket's question right at the outset what does it matter who is speaking someone said what does it matter who is speaking and he says that it is in this indifference about the author authorial voice that our understanding of the fundamental principles of writing relies and here he also begins to locate two major themes of contemporary writing.

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**Two major themes**

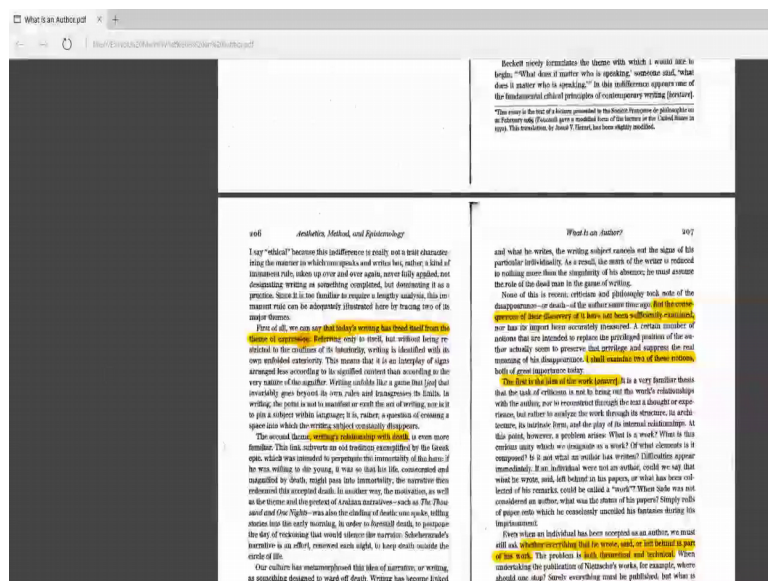
- Writing freed itself from the necessity of expression
- The relationship between writing and death
- Western cultural history – immortality
- Modern 'writing' – kills the author – linked to sacrifice of life
- Eg: Flaubert, Proust, Kafka – effacement of the writing subject's individual characteristics

Firstly, he says that in the contemporary writing has freed itself from the necessity of expression. So, here there is a very succeed way by which he removes the text from the author by removing the elements of expression from the idea of writing itself. And secondly, he engages with the idea when the relationship between writing and death he also discusses this quite at length giving it a more historical perspective he talks about how in the western cultural history writing had always been associated with the

immortality he gives the examples of the ancient Greek masters he also then compares the traditional western notion of the of the act of writing being associated with immortality and then he also goes on to contrast the idea of modern writing with that of the traditional, western, cultural history where the idea of writing was always associated with immortality.

He says that in modern writing perhaps the intention is to kill the author, because the process of writing is also linked to sacrifice of life and he gives the examples of Flaubert, Proust and Kafka who according to him had successfully faced the writing subjects individual characteristics; and it is very useful to remember that these same examples and these same imitates were used by Barthes; so this connection also provides us a useful enter point to talk about the various ways in which the author had been relegated into the background.

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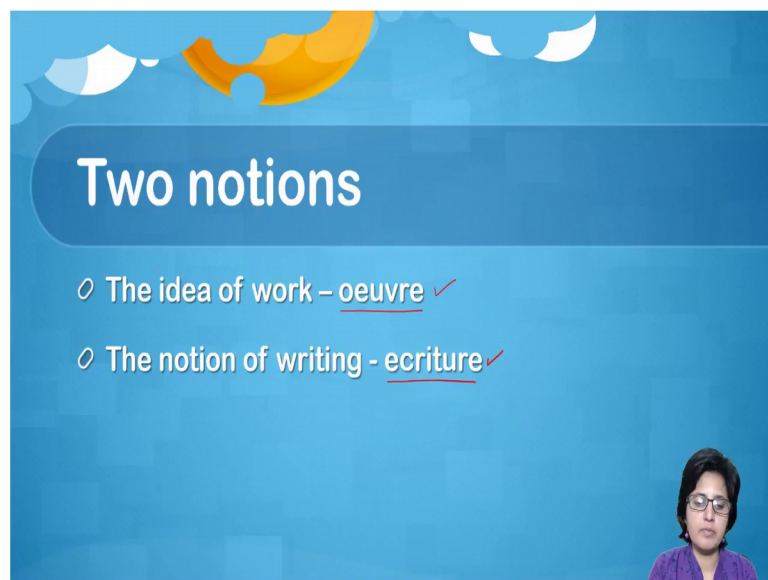
If we take a look at Foucault's essay, he may also realise that Foucault's is in some way or the other trying to draw our attention to the existing writings.

The existing theories about the death of the author or the disappearance of the author and trying to tell us how his essay departs from this? How his essay takes off from where perhaps Barthes had left it. For example, to in his own words he talks about none of this is recent criticism and philosophy took note of the disappearance or death of the author

some time ago, but the consequences of its discovery have not been sufficiently examined.

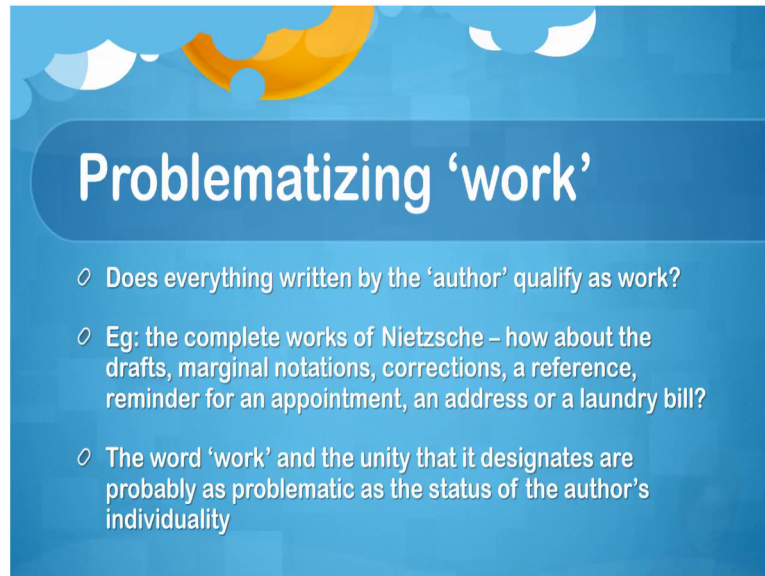
So, this is the starting point this is the entry point towards Foucault's discussions about the author. Here he is drawing attention to the fact that they are already familiar with the death of the disappearance of the author, but what happens after this seems to be primarily concerned of Foucault's essay, because in this context that Foucault's seems to examine two major notions which we shall be taking a look at shortly.

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So, in order to engage with the consequences and the implications of the death or the disappearance of the author; Foucault draws our attention to two major notions the first one being the idea of the work; which he designates as oeuvre it could also mean the entire body of the work that the writer has produced and he engages secondly, with the notion of writing which for which he uses this French term ecriture. Interestingly, Foucault does not use the term le ecriture which is more feminine in nature and within these two works within these two notions he tries to situate the significance of many of the things that he proposes to discuss in connection with the author.

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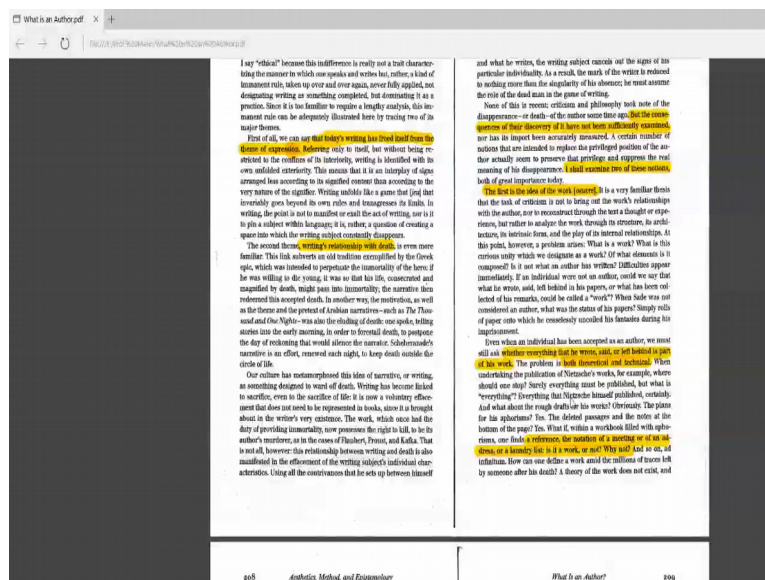


## Problematizing 'work'

- Does everything written by the 'author' qualify as work?
- Eg: the complete works of Nietzsche – how about the drafts, marginal notations, corrections, a reference, reminder for an appointment, an address or a laundry bill?
- The word 'work' and the unity that it designates are probably as problematic as the status of the author's individuality

When he talks about the notion of work he begins by problematising the idea of work and he also tells us that just like the; the idea of the author has been problematised it is more it is equally important to problematise the idea of work itself.

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I say "ethereal" because this indifference is really not a trait characterizing the manner in which one speaks and writes but, rather, a kind of transcendent rule, taken up by one and over again, never fully applied, not designating writing as something completed, but deconstructing it as a process. Since it is too familiar to require a lengthy analysis, this important rule can be adequately illustrated here by tracing two of its major themes.

First of all, we can say that today's writing has freed itself from the **fetters of exteriority**. Intended only to read, but without being reduced to the nullities of its interiority, writing is identified with its own enfolded exteriority. This means that it is an interplay of signs arranged less according to its signified content than according to the very nature of the signifier. Writing unfolds like a game that [not that] inevitably goes beyond its own rules and transgresses its limits. In writing, the point is not to manifest or enact the act of writing, nor is it to pin a subject within language; it is, rather, a question of creating a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears.

The second theme **writing's relationship with death** is even more familiar. This link subverts an old tradition exemplified by the Greek epic, which was intended to perpetuate the immortality of the hero if he was willing to die young; it was so that his life, consecrated and magnified by death, might pass into immortality; the narrative thus redeemed this accepted death. In another way, the motivation, as well as the theme and the general of certain narratives—such as *The Thousand and One Nights*—was also the eluding of death: one spoke, telling stories into the early morning, in order to forestall death, to postpone the day of rebelling that would silence the narrative. Shakespeare's narrative is an effort, renewed each night, to keep death outside the circle of life.

Our culture has metamorphosed this idea of sacrifice, or writing, as something designed to ward off death. Writing has become linked to sacrifice, even to the sacrifice of life: it is now a voluntary effacement that does not need to be represented in books, since it is brought about in the writer's very existence. The work, which once had the duty of providing immortality, now possesses the right to kill, to be its author's murderer, as in the case of Nabokov, Proust, and Kafka. That is not all, however: the relationship between writing and death is also manifested in the effacement of the writing subject's individual characteristics. Using all the conventions that he sets up between himself

and what he writes, the writing subject cancels out the signs of his particular individuality. As a result, the mark of the writer is reduced to nothing more than the emptiness of his absence; he must assume the role of the dead man in the game of writing.

None of this is recent; critics and philologists took note of the disappearance—or death—of the author some time ago. **But the entire question of their discovery of it has not been sufficiently examined, nor has its impact been accurately measured.** A certain number of notions that are intended to replace the privileged position of the author actually seem to preserve that privilege, and express the real meaning of his disappearance. **I shall examine two of these notions, both of great importance today.**

**The first is the idea of the work (oeuvre).** It is a very familiar thesis that the task of criticism is not to bring out the work's relationship with the author, nor to reconstruct through the text the thought or experience, but rather to analyze the work through its structure, its architecture, its intrinsic form, and the play of its internal relationships. At this point, however, a problem arises: What is a work? What is this curious unity which we designate as a work? Of what elements is it composed? Is it not what an author has written? Difficulties appear immediately. If an individual were not an author, could we not find what he wrote, said, left behind in his papers, or what has been collected of his remarks, could he not be called a "work"? When Baudrillard considered an author, what was the status of his papers? Simply piles of paper onto which he occasionally scrawled his fantasies during his ingenuities.

Even when an individual has been accepted as an author, we must still ask **whether everything that he wrote, said, or left behind is part of his work.** The problem is both theoretical and technical. When considering the publication of Nietzsche's works, for example, where should one stop? Surely everything must be published, but what is "everything"? Is everything that Nietzsche himself published, certainly, and what about the rough drafts in his notes? (I forget.) The plans for his aphorisms? Yes. The deleted passages and the notes at the bottom of the page? Yes. What if within a notebook filled with aphorisms, one finds a reference, the outline of a message or a paragraph, **drawn, or a laundry list, to a work, or not? Why not?** And so on, ad infinitum. How can one define a work amid the millions of traces left by someone after his death? A theory of the work does not exist, and

When he seeks to problematise the idea of work he gives us a particular examples and in his own words, even when an individual has been accepted as an author we must still ask whether everything that he wrote said or left behind is part of his work here he is asking a seemingly simple question; what is work? What constitutes work rather? And he says



this is both the theoretical and technical problem and he goes on to give an example of Nietzsche's works and leads us with the series of questions about what exactly could be designated.

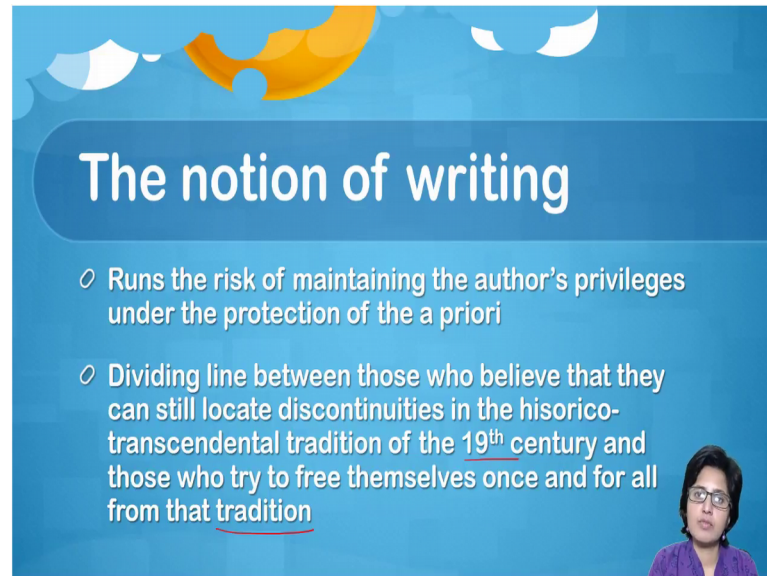
What exactly can qualify as Nietzsche's works proper; and he asks these questions is it everything that Nietzsche himself published and what about the rough drafts for his works. The plans for his aphorism, the deleted passages and notes at the bottom of the page, if we answer an affirmative to all of these questions; now Foucault has another set of questions to ask us in connection with whether those sort of things would be considered as part of Nietzsche's work.

For example, what if within a workbook filled with aphorisms one finds a reference the notation of a meeting or of an address or a laundry list is it a work or not why not. So, by problematising this he is also giving us a way a technique in order to engage with the familiar things by asking such inconvenient questions which would also help us to look for the possible answers in perhaps unlikely places.

So, here we can even say that Foucault is beginning to deconstruct the idea of work; in order to be able to engage with the author in a much different way than commonsense has been then common sense had created the author to be and he says these sort of works these sort of questions could perhaps go on and sums up that passage by saying it is not enough to declare that we should do without the writer or the author and study the work itself.


The word work and the unity that it designates are probably as problematic as the status of the author's individuality. So, here we can even say that Foucault is taking a few steps more from Barthes text from Barthes work the death of the author by problematising not just the idea of the author, but also engaging with what exactly the work is how what constitutes work; what kind of work is really qualified; what kind of writing; what kind of product gets qualified as a work.

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The notion of writing

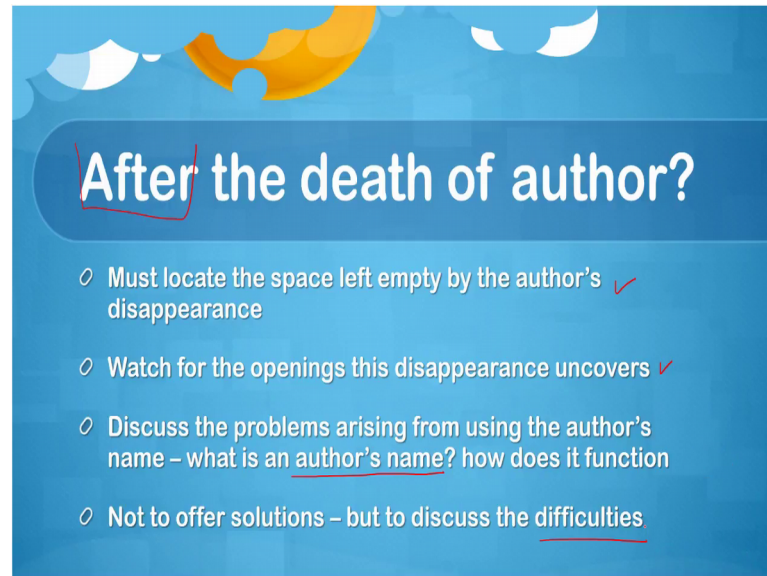
- Runs the risk of maintaining the author's privileges under the protection of the a priori
- Dividing line between those who believe that they can still locate discontinuities in the hisorico-transcendental tradition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and those who try to free themselves once and for all from that tradition



Secondly he deals with a notion of writing and when he talks about the notion of writing he also tells us that it runs the risk of maintaining the author's privileges under the protection of the a priori. He also tells us about a dividing line that access between those who believe that they can still locate discontinuities in the hisorico-transcendental tradition of the 19th century and those who try to free themselves once and all from that tradition do exists.

So, it is within such inherent contradictions within these inherent shifts in understanding within these paradoxes about the understanding of text and writing that; Foucault tries to engage with the question of the author and all of these elements according to him is rather quite interconnected, and it is also instrumental in providing a more fruitful analysis of all of these common plays terms.

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## After the death of author?

- Must locate the space left empty by the author's disappearance ✓
- Watch for the openings this disappearance uncovers ✓
- Discuss the problems arising from using the author's name – what is an author's name? how does it function
- Not to offer solutions – but to discuss the difficulties

And now we move on to the major part of the essay the cracks of the essay what is an author? Here Foucault is drawing our attention to what happens after the death of the author. We did look at some of the implications of the death of the author when we when we were discussing Barthes essay, but here Foucault is drawing Foucault is drawing a more focused attention from our (Refer Time: 23:22) what exactly happens right after the death of the author in his own words he says it is not enough; however, to repeat the empty affirmation that the author has disappeared for the same reason; it is not enough to keep repeating that god and man had died a common death instead we must locate the space left empty by the authors disappearance follow the distribution of gaps and breaches and watch for the openings this disappearance uncovers.

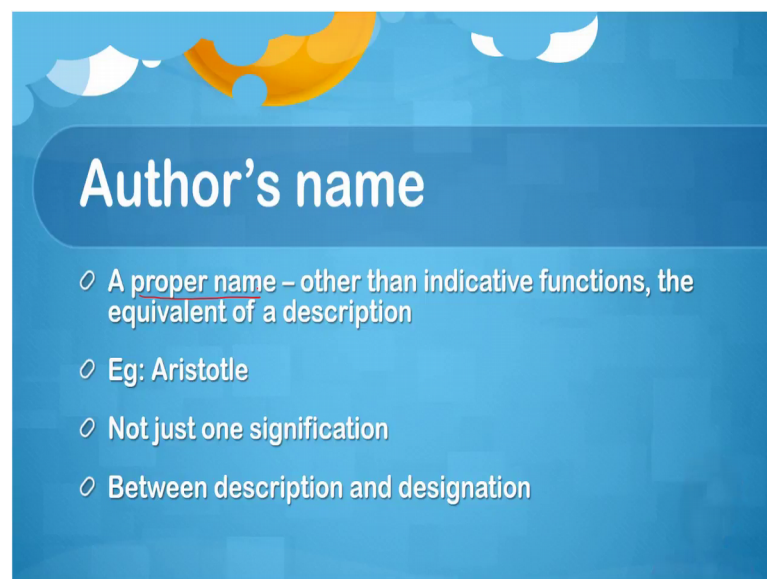
So, though even though the starting point of Foucault's essays about the disappearance or death of the author he is more concerned not with this act of disappearance not with act of death, but with the space or with the openings and the gaps which are left open after the disappearance of the author and this is here Foucault also drawing our attention to the fact that there are certain other things to be uncovered after the death of the author or after the disappearance of the author as he puts it. So, Foucault wants us to do a series of things after having pronouncing the death of the author yeah.

Firstly, we must locate the space left empty by the authors disappearance this is also with the with the with the conviction that; there is a particular space that the author had been

occupying and perhaps; there are many things there are many subtexts there are many sub-conscious elements which are which have been lying underneath. Secondly, to watch for the openings that this disappearance uncovers and, then we move on to discuss something very important about the about the problems arising from using the authors name and he tells us about the authors name and how it functions and in this connection he also tells us that his intention is to not to offer solutions, but to discuss the difficulties.

So, we too have a rather challenging task ahead considering that Foucault's attempt is not to Foucault's intention is not to give a solutions to this questions; what is an author; rather he tries to problematic it he also tries to engage with this question from multiple angles and also discuss the various difficulties, which are inherent in this idea of the author and in the discussions about; what happens after the death of the author.

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And in this connection the first and foremost thing that he highlights is the presence of an author's name as a proper name, because the first and foremost the authors name is also almost always a proper name for example, a name like Aristotle which has more functions other than merely indicative functions also equivalent of a description in in Foucault's own words when one says Aristotle one employs the word; that is the equivalent of one or a series of definite description such as the author of the analytics the founder of ontology and so, forth.

One cannot stop there; however, because a proper name does not have just one signification and he goes on to say the proper name and the authors name are situated between the two poles of description and designation they must have a certain link with what they name, but one that is neither entirely in the mode of designation nor in that of description it must be a specific link.

Here, it is also useful for us to locate the ways in which Foucault is building up his argument the way he pays attention to details and also how he deconstructs those details, how he reads the text against itself and challenges the common sense understandings to lead us to a totally different idea totally different opposing rather a contrasting idea; which would challenge not just the existing idea, but also the existing paradox the existing schools of thought the existing practices of literary criticism itself having said that, he also draws our attention to talk about the various complexities involved even within the idea of the authors name as just a proper name to read Foucaults own words.

If I discover that Shakespeare was not born in the house, we visit today this is a modification that; obviously, will not alter the functioning of the authors name, but if we prove that Shakespeare did not write those sonnets, which pass for his that would constitute a significant change and affect the manner in, which authors name functions if we prove that Shakespeare wrote bacons organon by showing that the same author wrote both the works of bacon and those of Shakespeare that would be a third type of change that would be entirely modify the functioning of the authors name the authors name is not therefore, just a proper name like the rest.

So, here as a first step Foucault is differentiate differentiating between the authors name from the other proper names there the authors name is not like any other proper name and here he is also in his own words talking about the paradoxical singularity of the authors name and then highlights the fact that the authors name unlike an any other proper name it performs a certain role with regard to narrative discourse assuring a classificatory function.

So, what makes an author's name different from any other proper name is that; there are particular functions assign to sit. There are particular roles that these authors name perform the sort of roles that, we do not expect any other proper name to perform and here in continuation with the way in which he problematise the idea of work he further

complicates and problematise. The idea of the author the idea of the authors name and goes on to argue and quick categorically state that in a civilization like our own there are a number of discourses endowed with the author function while others are deprived of it.

So, here we enter our critical point in this essay where he begins to talk about the functions of the author or the author function and here he also gives a simple examples to show how the author function differ author function could be differentiated from the other proper names. For example, a private letter may well have a signer it does not have an author a contract may well have a guarantor it does not have an author an anonymous text posted on a wall probably has an editor, but not an author the author function is therefore, characteristic of the mode of existence circulation and functioning of certain discourses within a society.

Here we notices how Foucault begins to unpack the idea of the author and locates particular functions with regard to the role he performs in different contexts in different societies, how that is related to circulation how that is related to mode of existence it is materiality and how it is varies from culture to culture.

So, as we begin to wind up the essay for today it is also important to draw attention to the ways in which Foucault takes off from Barthes essay takes off from the traditional assumptions of the author and moves away from the things that traditionally have been associated with the author to unpack the common sense associated with the author to talk about particular functions related to the author or associated with the author.

So, in the next session we shall be continuing to take a look at this essay taking a look at how the author function is a getting employed and how Foucault uses this to poststructuralist as well as postmodernist ends which would also become handy in our in our understanding of postmodernism in literature. In general, I also encourage you to take the look at the original version of the essay and also use this lecture as a corollary to your original understanding.

Thank you for listening and I look forward to seeing you in the next session.