
Roland Barthes' Literary Text and Interpretation (The Death of the Author)

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ABSTRACT

The philosophy of hermeneutics and theories of reception have several theses in order to own the text and make it in the possession of the recipient. Roland Barthes resolved the situation when he killed the author, removing his authority and influence that prevented the presence of the actual reader and the act of reading. The article "The death of the author" has had a great impact on the field of linguistics and theories of criticism by explicitly calling for the destruction of the priesthood or myth of the author, and although the author is dead, this does not prevent his presence in the text, in one form or another, but this time as a guest, no less and no more.

Keywords

Hermeneutics-author-reader-Roland Barthes-Death-destruction

Introduction

In classical traditional critical studies, the author enjoyed great authority, and the relationship between the text and its owner remained intimate, until some studies went so far as to give him the status of sanctification, and the reading of the text was subject to his authority, especially in its early stages, as he is the producer of meaning, the creator of the discourse, and its true owner, and thus he is a mirror of his text in many ways: Most of the critical approaches were mainly focused on the author for a long time, as the centre of the creative process, to establish and consolidate what was known in the minds of the author's authority as one of the most important critical theses that remained dominant, so the critical approaches at the time took it as a path for critics to the text and understand its significance, because of its paramount importance in interpreting the literary work, and therefore the artistic work remained in the classical critical theories contingent on the presence of its creator: The author is the only way to clarify the work except through the author's personality and life, so any attempt to study a literary work that does not take into account the author is doomed to failure.

Thus, the author remained a point of intersection, around which a range of critical studies

represented in historical, psychological and social approaches, mainly emanating from the spirit of positivist, Freudian and Marxist philosophy. At the beginning of the twentieth century, new critical schools emerged, such as structuralism, which called for focusing on the language of the text and the reader, while isolating the author, who no longer has the authority to dominate the meanings and connotations of the text, as Roland Barthes announced the death of the author: The birth of the reader must be at the expense of the death of the author. This was considered a shift and a breakdown of the centrality of the author, or the authority of the author, and its transition to the centrality of the text, or the authority of the text. Structuralism identified its analytical paths by treating the internal script at the expense of the contextual exterior, with the intention of revealing semantic spaces of meaning that are not held back by authorial withdrawal or riddled with cultural and environmental clouds.

Barthes saw the author's authority as the dominant text, preventing the freedom of linguistic analysis and the exploration of semantics. **La mort de l'auteur et l'apparition du lecteur** (The Death of the Author and the Appearance of the Reader) emphasizes the significant and founding contribution of the critic Roland Barthes to the debate on the author, but also identifies some of

the more problematic elements of his theory. After this reflection, which moves gradually from the author to the reader?

In "La mort de l'auteur" (The Death of the Author), he first cites authors who have themselves pointed to the absurdity of the author as the basis of the meaning of a literary work: Mallarmé, Proust, Valéry and the Surrealists.

Barthes refuses to see the author as the producer of a text and a character in the story. Barthes does not see the presence of the author as an obstacle to a correct historical-psychological interpretation, but he does see it as an obstacle to a free interpretation by the reader, saying: "The birth of the reader must be paid for by the death of the author"; it is the reader who is responsible for the meaning of the text.

This study raises a number of questions: What are the epistemological backgrounds that contributed to the emergence of the idea of the death of the author? What have critical studies benefited from this issue at the theoretical and applied levels? Did the theory of the death of the author come to solve the issue of the text and its connotations, or did it add to its problematization?

This is what we will try to uncover through this study, which does not aim to win the victory of one side over the other or to judge opinions and correct people and wrong others, but our aim is to approach the death of the author, which has been attracted by two trends of rejection and acceptance, and to reach a conscious reading that we benefit from in order to gain more insight in the field of hermeneutics.

1- Epistemological background of the term "author's death"

It is already known that the idea of the "death of the author" The first signs of it appeared with Russian formalism in the nineteenth century and spread strongly in the twentieth century with structuralism, whose proponents assert that the author is dead. Roland Barthes decisively defined the structuralist view when he argued in a 1968 essay that writers have nothing but the ability to mix, remix and reassemble pre-existing writings" (Selden, 1998, pp. 87-88), and the term "the death of the author" goes back to Roland Barthes' term "the death of the author" has philosophical,

critical and literary roots, which we will try to present below:

1.1-Philosophical backgrounds:

The term "death of the author" was associated with Nietzsche first proclaimed the "death of God" in the context of Europe's revolt against the Church This statement found wide resonance among European critics who longed to destroy the occultist tendency in interpreting texts and make room for human intellectual abilities.

-Nietzsche and the Death of God:

Friedrich Nietzsche declared One hundred and thirty-six years ago, Friedrich Nietzsche declared "the death of God", one of the best-known phrases in philosophical circles, and some critics and thinkers consider it to be the precursor to the idea of "the death of the author", Nietzsche formulated this phrase in his book "Fun Science Nietzsche was an atheist, and he did not mean that there is a God who has died in the literal sense, but that our idea of God has died, as we are separated from the reality of this world, that is, from the fact that a God created it, and this corresponds to the idea of Barthes There is a close relationship between what Nietzsche did in the field of metaphysics in the field of metaphysics and Barthes' in the field of text.

Nietzsche did not separate between the presence of metaphysics and the language used, Nietzsche found that there are forces behind the process of meaning production. Nietzsche found that there are forces behind the production of meaning. Through his history of metaphysics, Nietzsche wants to find the structure of values that governed this history, the structure that set meanings, gave names, shaped and coloured the world, so that language itself becomes an act of power issued by the hegemon and the naming strategy becomes a strategy of domination and control, as Nietzsche says: "The master's right to name goes so far that the origin of language can be regarded as an act of power by those who dominate, those who say so-and-so, who attach to a subject and an action a certain word, and you own it" (Ben Abdelali, 1991, pp. 147-148).

In this way, Nietzsche saw that language is the stronghold of metaphysics, in fact, Barthes has

only finalised what Nietzsche did The death of the author is the same as the death of God.

-Karl Marx:

Marx contributed to the process of alienating the author in his search for the structures of society, which are distributed between superstructures and sub-structures that are connected by class relations governed by inevitable law, and these relations, in Marx's view, put the author in the vessel of an economic, political and social structure that makes him unsure of his influence and makes him a participant in the structure, i.e. makes the writer unsure of himself about what he may have issued in his letter, thus integrating his work into the economic, political and social life that is related to his era, which negates the role, thought and status of the writer in his work "The 'Marxists' have ignored the structural level of knowledge and sometimes even obscured it from view over a long period, for example, they often studied external perceptions without first going through the internal analysis of the structure of the studied work" (Garaudy, 1979, p. 25), and this confirms their words and ideas about neglecting the role and work of the author. Barthes was influenced by this, as he believes that any product is essentially not a direct result of the creativity and imagination of its owner, as it is the product of many environmental factors, so the author is only a component of the creative work.

-Sigmund Freud:

For Freud, consciousness is a place where meanings are formed, and that the self is not confined to the individual ego but to the symbolic structure that organises the group. In doing so, he rejected the individual and glorified the group, "Freud showed that consciousness is a symptom and that it is a place where consciousness is a symptom and that it is the locus of meaning. He also discovered in the human being a subjective sphere beyond individual organisation, and Kahn made it clear that The self is not subjective to itself, i.e. the domain of the ego, but the self is not confined to the ego, but is the symbolic structure that organises the whole" (Ben Abdelali, 1991, p. 119). For Barthes He has linked the creativity of the individual to the collective, i.e. creativity is derived from the

collective and not just from the individual self, and this negates the status of the writer in favour of the collective.

1-2-Literary backgrounds:

One of the epistemological backgrounds of the term 'author's death' We also find literary backgrounds. We find the first prophet, Marcel Proust, who objected to linking authors' works to their biographies and wanted to confuse the writer's relationship with his characters: 'Despite the psychological nature of his so-called analyses, he seems to have taken it upon himself to relentlessly confuse the relationship between the writer and his characters. He did not make the narrator the one who saw or felt, not even the one who writes, but the one who will write' (Barthes, 1993, p. 83), i.e. he made the author a weak character in the literary work, the narrator or the writer has no relationship with his literary works, i.e. he writes only for the sake of writing 'the young man with the story - that is to say, the young man with the story. He wants to write, but he can't, and the story ends when writing becomes possible' (Barthes, *The Hissing of Language*, 1999, p. 83), and this creates confusion between the author and his characters.

As for Brecht, the author is reduced to a statuette in the theatre of literature. The alienation of the author, we can speak here with Brecht of a real alienation. The author continues to be reduced to a statuette placed at the far end of the literary scene, not a historical event or a mere act of writing, it transforms the modern text from bottom to top, or we can also say, and this is the same thing, that the text is to be made and read in such a way that the author is absent from it at all levels. From now on it is read in such a way that the author is absent at all levels' (Barthes, 1999, p. 79), meaning that when reading any literary work, no matter what it is, the focus should be solely on that work without looking at or even thinking about its author, i.e. the author or writer, when his work is published, is completely removed and becomes as if he has nothing to do with that work.

Surrealism is a contemporary trend in art and literature that goes beyond reality and relies especially on highlighting the unconscious. This movement contributed to the de-sanctification of the image of the author since it advocated the

principle of multiple writing at the level of authorship. Surrealism tried to destabilise this concept by violating the horizon of the recipient by a sudden departure from the expected meanings, allowing the hand to write as fast as the head can think, which was called automatic writing, and then called for multi-author writing, thus contributing to the de-sanctification of the image of the author. (Barthes, 1993, p. 82).

Symbolism: Symbolism has played a major role in the death of the author, participating in the de-sanctification of the author and ceaselessly recommending the sudden disappointment of expected meaning (Salloum, 1997, pp. 35-37).

Realism and author-neutrality: It means presenting and analysing according to the reality of the character and the nature of things objectively and not according to the author's beliefs and political, religious, temperamental, intellectual or value positions. The author is an honest witness who gives his testimony according to the logic of events and the principle of causality and necessity, not as he wishes and desires.

The French poet Valéry (1871-1945), who claimed that the author is a meaningless detail, was one of the first theorists to advocate for the death of the author and insisted on it in more than one statement. Later, a number of French theorists came later, including: Gérard Genet, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and Claude Lévi-Strauss (Murtad, 2002, p. 215). Valéry wanted to soften Mallarmé's theory after he was taken over by ego-psychology, but he never stopped questioning and ridiculing the author.

One of the positions that encouraged Barthes to declare the death of the author, calling for the emergence of a new criticism and an approach to archaeology that does away with the futile search for the author's intentions, was Vladimir Propp. Vladimir Propp took the initiative to analyse the fairy tale, without his lack of knowledge of the author affecting his findings. Claude Lévi-Strauss is another who has tackled the same topic who studied works that are essentially authorless, without compromising the essence of Grimas's analysis, which is based on an active approach, taking into account neither the author nor the reader (Al-Qadi, 2010, p. 365).

1-3-Critical backgrounds:

There are many European critics who preceded Barthes with the notion of the 'death of the author' in their thoughts and writings, first and foremost the French writer Mallarmé who had the vision of replacing the author with language, in addition to the efforts of de Saussure who, like Mallarmé, advocated the importance of language at the expense of the author, 'Barthes benefited from the efforts of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. The best way to approach this text is to start from its linguistic source, that is, from its internal structure' (Meftah, 2000, p. 229). Russian formalism was the first to exclude and isolate the author and look for order and secondary structures behind the difference above the textual surface, and one of its most important opinions that led to the death of the author. Russian formalism emphasises that a work of art does not fully conform to the mental structure of the author or the recipient. Thus, Russian formalism started from its call for the independence of the poetic word as a self-contained object, and ended with the independence of the literary work from the psychology of its author on the one hand, and from the social subject to which it refers with its own tools and procedures on the other hand (Fadl, 1998, p. 65). Structuralists believe that there is no reference to the text except the text itself, and in its language without an external link, and this isolation may hide some facts that help to understand and illuminate the text, and there is no doubt that the death of the author coincided with the death of man and the death of the self, as this death came as a result of the scientific structuralist method, and the emergence of intertextuality was among the reasons and reasons that led Roland Barthes to say that the author is dead, as a creative text of any kind is the product of a pre-existing compound, and it is this compound that makes and generates the text from it, and this was emphasised by Barthes through his study of Marcel Proust.

Barthes was also greatly influenced by Sartrean existentialism, which left a deep impact on him, as existentialism believes in the human individual and his ability to constantly change and escape from the grip of the past or from any final

emphasis imposed by others, as existence precedes essence according to the famous Sartrean formula, as we are not expected to turn into essence until we actually die, so Barthes, like Sartre, sees the essence as the ideology that feeds the towers in the bourgeois universe, as existentialism places the fluidity of existence against the rigidity of death. In addition to all these critical views, Barthes was influenced by Michel Foucault who came up with an important study titled 'What is the Author?' in 1969, as well as Umberto Eco, who wrote a study on the 'model author'. There are many opinions and multiple studies about the text, the reader and the author that we cannot recall in this study, which had a major role in the emergence of the term 'the death of the author'.

2 -The death of the author:

In 1967, Roland Barthes, a French literary theorist, published an essay entitled *The Death of the Author* in the American magazine *Aspen*. In this essay, he presented a new approach to the interpretation of literary works that necessitated a redefinition of the author's role in the creation of a text. At that point in history, the so-called author of a text was seen as the ultimate authority on his or her writings. According to the structuralism perspective that represented the status quo at the time, to maximize understanding of a text, a reader not only had to analyse the text well, but also had to be aware of the author's intentions in creating the text. With his essay, Barthes challenged the doctrine of the all-powerful literary creator. According to Barthes, the creator of a text should not be viewed with the kind of structuralism that prevailed in the literary milieu of the time. Instead of referring to the creator of a text as "the author", Barthes preferred the word "scripter", which for him had a different definition.

According to Barthes' definition, unlike the author, the writer has no control or power of influence over how his or her text is perceived by readers. In *The Death of the Author*, Barthes states: "Once the author is removed from power, the possibility of decoding a text becomes futile. Attributing an author to a text imposes limits on the written word. The written word becomes

closed and takes on a final and inflexible meaning".

Once a text is officially published and read by someone other than the author, it loses the original meaning intended by the author.

Each reading of a text is unique because of the distinct interpretation that results. Each time an individual reads a text, they interpret it in a slightly different way because of their constantly evolving human experience. Barthes chose to abandon the term "author" in order to eliminate the tyranny that the author holds over his works. In the English language, the word "author" suggests a power structure between the creator and his text. The author dominates the literary text.

"La mort de l'auteur" is an article first published in English under the title "The Death of the Author (en)", *Aspen Magazine*, no. 5/6, 1967, and then in French in 1968 in issue no. 5 of the journal *Mantéia*, based in Marseille and close to Tel Quel. Later the article was collected in *Le bruissement de la langue. Essais critiques IV* (Barthes, *Le bruissement de la langue, Essais critiques 4*, 1984).

Combined with Foucault's lecture "What is an author?", published in July 1969 (reprinted in Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, tome 1, 2001), Barthes's article was a bombshell. Until their publication, much later and in posthumous collections, these two texts were for a long time widely photocopied by students and used by teachers, becoming in a way the credo of French post-structuralism (Fabula Website, *Death and resurrection of the author/ Introduction*).

The two texts gained their popularity above all through their opposition to two nineteenth-century authors, Gustave Lanson and Sainte-Beuve, the dominant critics in French literary studies, who attached great importance to knowledge of the author in judging a work. For Barthes, however, "the author is dead": he asserts that "the birth of the reader must be paid for by the death of the author". His idea is that the author must give way to the reader, who rewrites the text for himself (since then, it has been said that he has his own reading of it, an expression denounced by Thierry Maulnier): the author is no longer the sole guarantor of the meaning of his work. Barthes

points out that the traditional approach to literary criticism raises a complex problem: how can we know precisely what the author's intention is? His answer is that we can't. He gives the example of Honoré de Balzac's *Sarrasine*, in which a man mistakes a castrato for a woman and falls in love with her. When the character (*Sarrasine*) raves about the woman he believes to be the very image of femininity, Barthes challenges readers to work out who is talking about what: Balzac or his character. (Barthes, *S/Z, La casuistique du discours*, 1976, pp 134-135)

So, according to Barthes, when an author was once "consecrated", all his or her writings automatically became a work, including correspondence, drafts and so on. Once the author is dead, a piece of writing becomes a work (or 'text' in our case) if its content conforms to the idea we have of the author. Many executors have burnt the correspondence of famous writers, thinking that it might tarnish the image of the deceased. They have done so either on their own initiative or at the author's request (de Korwin-piotrowska, 1933, p82). The question of the place to be given to the author is one of the most controversial in literary studies. Talking about the author and the nature and function of the notion of the author in literary studies, in literary criticism, in literary history, in the teaching of literature, in research on literature, means theorising about literature and appreciating the positions held by theorists throughout the history of lit From Aristotle to the concept of hybridity, the idea of the author has always been present, despite the resistance of certain critics; Barthes marked a very important stage in the development of literary theories in the sense that he made an epistemological break with internationalist studies, which emphasized the preponderance of the author in hermeneutic work. In place of the author as the producing and explanatory principle of literature, "Barthes substitutes the impersonal and anonymous language gradually claimed as the exclusive material of literature. The break he made gave a new impetus to literary progress by giving a qualitative boost to literary studies that enabled other thinkers, such as Foucault and Derrida, to deepen their critical horizons" (samiky, May 2014, p 04).

Understanding what Barthes meant by the death of the author makes it possible to situate his conceptual framework in the critical genealogy of contemporary thinkers. "It is almost impossible to envisage a study of structuralism, post-structuralism or interpretive pluralism without going through Barthes and his theoretical arsenal. Thanks to the concept of the death of the author, Foucault's author-function, Derrida's concept of writing and the concept of provisionality of the post-structuralists and post-modernists have come into being (samiky, 2014, p 05)". Contrary to auctorial internationalism, the new criticism has called the position of the author into question: "The artist's intention plays no role in the interpretation of the work (Irvin, 2007, p251) ".

The new criticism denounces the idea that the author's intention determines the meaning of the work. It is opposed to literature considered in relation to its author, or as an expression of its author. This was the position of Roland Barthes, who opposed the descendants of Charles Augustin, Sainte-Beuve, Gustav Lanson, François Rabelais and André Gide. It is also in line with the avant-garde literature of Samuel Beckett and Maurice Blanchot, who two decades ago decreed the disappearance of the author, and defined writing by the absence of the author, by the neutral.

"As an institution, the author is dead... but in the text, in a certain way, I desire the author: I need his figure... just as he needs mine" (Barthes, *le bruissement de la langue*, 1984,p66). The author as creative and interpretative authority is replaced by language: impersonal and anonymous, "Writing is that neutral, that composite, and that oblique where our subject flees, the black and white where all identity is lost, starting with that of the body that writes"(Barthes, 1984, p 63). Barthes also reserves a place for intertextuality in his text. Indeed, the author is no more than a handyman who assembles thousands of different pieces into a whole, "The text is a fabric of quotations"(Barthes, 1984, p67); the author invents nothing himself, he is not original.

Barthes does not fixate on the presence of the author as an obstacle to correct historical-psychological interpretation (on Racine), but he

does see it as an obstacle to free interpretation by the reader.

"To give a text an author is to impose a stop to that text, it is the power of a final signified, it I and (Barthes, 1984, p 68) " at the end of the story: "The birth of the reader must be paid for by the death of the author ". It is the reader who is responsible for the meaning of the text. Barthes therefore argues for an interpretation that can be completed in a new way each time, after each new reading and in each new period. Reading a text is not an act of consumption (readable text), but of creation (scriptable text). The reader 'creates' the text from the text itself. Let us specify, however, that what dies of this author is his authority: but it is only this authority, as we shall see later and through the theory of the text. It is impossible to make reading a full act without the authority that claimed to govern it falling away. This is nothing new, since Valéry was already reacting against the temptation to make the signatory the work. For Roland Barthes, the unity of discourse is similarly undermined; the death of the author reveals, "The total being of writing", that is to say, the "nature" of the text, which is made up of "multiple writings, coming from several cultures and entering into dialogue with each other, into contestation". The first meaning of the word "author", the one who is the first cause, who is at the origin, is thus shattered. For Barthes, this killing is above all an analysis of the social form of the author. Roland Barthes is relentless in his pursuit of the negative, until the unity of the author is revealed as a duality, and what appeared to be united is no longer so: the writer and the writer, the writer and the critic, the author and the reader, even if he has some difficulty in abandoning the desire for unity. In turn, he proposed writing, the text and the reader as the new unit. A few years later, he would introduce the figure of the amateur, a posture of practitioner that is impossible today because writing is "confined to a caste of technicians (writers, professors, intellectuals, etc.) (Barthes, *Théorie du texte*, encyclopedie)".

The death of the author is seen by Barthes as the act of giving the reader back his or her place: "Mallarmé's entire poetics consists in doing away with the author in favour of writing (which is, as

we shall see, giving the reader back his or her place)" (Barthes, *oeuvres complètes*, 2002, p41). "Giving the reader his or her place", in other words, allowing the text to be fully actualised each time it is read; it is (phantasmatically) turning the text entirely towards what Barthes will call scriptible in S/Z. Thus, for Barthes, "the reader is the very space in which all the quotations of which a piece of writing is made are inscribed, without any of them being lost; the unity of a text is not in its origin but in its destination" (Barthes, *oeuvres complètes*, 2002, p45). Through the death of the Author, Barthes seeks to turn the text entirely towards its reading, towards what is actualised in it, escaping the historicity of its origin.

Thus, when Barthes decreed the death of the Author, he was not seeking to - or, more precisely, his primary aim was not to - accompany the literary avant-gardes but, on the contrary, to reflect on the reception of classical texts. He did not want to think about the production of contemporary works, but about the reading of past works. For Barthes, "the removal of the Author [...] transforms the modern text from top to bottom (or - which is the same thing - the text is henceforth made and read in such a way that in it, at all its levels, the author is absent)"(Barthes, 2002, p42). In this quotation, as is often the case with Barthes, the essential point is made in passing, in the interstices of the sentence: the parenthesis, far from repeating "the same thing", reveals the real purpose of the destitution of the author (Martin, 1993, p 23). The important thing is not that the modern text is written without any origin, but that the classical text can be read as if freed from the weight of its history and written with each reading. To give reading back its future," Barthes writes in the conclusion of his article, "we must overturn the myth: the birth of the reader must be paid for by the death of the Author (Barthes, 2002, p45). This reader has been equated with the reader as an object of critical study, but it is primarily the reader in the most banal sense that is at issue here. Through his article, Barthes aims to change the way readers as a whole approach the work.

S/Z is therefore a "retreat" from the theses defended by *Tel Quel*. He explains this in an

interview with André Bourin: "Tel Quel," he writes, "has always had a radical position on literature that is not part of the limit-text, and this position means that 99% of our literature is completely insignificant in historical terms". And when the journalist asks him what he makes of the readers of these 'proscribed' texts, he replies: "As far as I'm concerned (perhaps you'll think this is really a paradoxical proposition on my part), I think I'm entirely on the side of the reader" (Barthes, 2002, p644-645). Barthes is not interested in describing what might be described as 'marginal' literature; what interests him is not so much the avant-garde as the classic texts, those read by the 'naïve' reader. In fact, Barthes refers to S/Z as an "ecumenical" book (Barthes, 2002, p 645), an attempt to bring together all readings.

3-Barthes on literary criticism:

According to Barthes, reading should reveal symbols that lead to the coexistence of meanings - this decoding gave rise to the new criticism. It is opposed to more academic criticism, which claims to explain the work through its relationship to the outside world, thanks to the author's life and historical context.

Written in 1963, "sur Racine" is part of this quest to explain works from the inside in order to discover their signifying structure. In the third part of (sur Racine), entitled "History and Literature", Barthes looks at the parallel relationship between Racine's work, historical facts and the extrinsic aspects of the work. In this section, Barthes asks how far we can go to stop signification and return the work to external reality: "If the work signifies the world, at what level of the world can we stop signification? (Barthes, *Histoire et littérature: à propos de Racine*, 1963, p532) " Centering the explanatory work of reading on the biography of the author, the context of the work or the historical facts to which it refers leaves certain parts of the work undeciphered because they do not correspond to any real event: "...what is to be done with the parts of the work that are not said to signify? (Barthes, 1963,p 532) " The infinite richness of the work lies in its autonomy and its signifying structure, which rejects all ideological determinism.

The work must not be limited to a translation of a historical or psychological meaning. In order for

criticism to be objective and impersonal, the work of interpretation is supposed to be "...a general movement that consists in opening up the work, not as the effect of a cause, but as the signifier of a signified" (Barthes, 1963, p525). The work cannot have only one meaning, because the writer has set out "...to multiply meanings without filling or closing them, and uses language to constitute a world that is emphatically signifying, but ultimately never signified (Barthes, 1964, p111)." Contrary to the old critique, critical language, according to Barthes, must speak neither of the world, nor of the relationship of the work to the world, nor that of the work to the author in order to reproduce a truth. What Barthes inaugurates is an approach that returns the text of the work to its literality. Unlike Sainte-Beuve, who postulates that the work can only be understood in the light of its relationship with the author's psychology, morals and mores, Barthes inaugurates the textuality of the work and celebrates its autonomy. Sainte-Beuve refuses to accept that the work can have aesthetic autonomy, because it is only ever understood in relation to an exteriority. The being of literature, according to Barthes, is not an analogical translation of the author's sensibility and passions, and is in no way a representation of historical facts.

The centre of the work lies in a functional network of figures that can only be grasped in the interiority of the work: Internal language refers to itself in a continuous process of signification. So for Barthes, criticism should have no other purpose than to update a work using a new language. It is neither demonstration nor discovery, but rewriting. When he says that "criticism is not a translation, but a periphrase", he means that the critic, who is not a judge, a scholar or a scientist, but a writer, must restore not the message of the work, but its logic; his success will be measured by his ability to recreate the symbolic fabric of the text in his own language. A year after the publication of *Essais critiques* and two years after that of *Sur Racine*, Barthes was the subject of vehement criticism by Raymond Picard, a traditional Racinean and professor at the Sorbonne.

"This new conception of the institutionalized author aroused the wrath of critics, more precisely

of a Sorbonne professor, Raymond Picard. In 1965, the man responsible for the edition of Racine in the Pleiades' published a pamphlet in response: *New criticism, new imposture*. Picard criticized the Barthesian analyses, denouncing the lack of scientificity in the text. (Panet et Barthes's, 2010, p05) For Picard, the text can never be scientific and the method Barthes uses is unverifiable. He described the new critique as "dangerous" on several occasions.

For Barthes, the symbol is a plurality of meanings and the symbolic language to which literary works belong is a plural language. Unlike the old critics, Barthes stipulates that the aim of criticism is to explore the signifying structure of language: "The work thus becomes the repository of an immense, incessant investigation of words (Barthes, *Critique et vérité*, 1966, p47)."

The object of criticism is thus language itself; what it seeks is the elucidation of the profound world of language.

Conclusion

The central point of the concept of the author's death revolves around the notion of auctorial intention: what responsibility should we grant to the author in the interpretation of his text? In this article, "The essentially verbal condition of literature (Barthes, *The death of author*, p 62)" becomes the defining characteristic of modernity. Literature is no longer linked to an author as its origin, but to language itself: "It is language that speaks, not the author" (*The death of author*, p 63); once the author loses his voice, writing appears as a neutral space, and enunciation becomes a function of language, because it is conceived as an empty process.

The death of the author as authority eliminates any original relationship between the author as ultimate authority and the text. The text relies solely on itself for its meaning, for even if other texts weave it together, it cannot borrow its meaning from any other textual instance. Barthes distances the author from the field of reading and interpretation. He buries the author and rejects the idea that he is the ultimate authority on his writings. For him, "...the explanation of the work (which) is always sought on the side of the one who produced it" (Barthes, *The death of author*, p 62).

Humanity is going through dangerous references, such as the death of the author, the death of the human being, the death of language, the death of literature ... Therefore, this study invites researchers to further research and excavation of the roots and backgrounds from which the 'death of the author' was launched, which seems to have existed, but Barthes presented it in a new form through which he broke the relationship between writing and readers and between the sender of the text and its recipient. Finally, we wonder whether Barthes was able to present a true, non-contradictory vision of the death of the author in light of his recognition that his texts are disjointed, and whether the slogan "I read, therefore I exist" was enough to build a theory that does not recognise anything outside the text. Then how did Barthes remove the author from the triad (author, text and reader) to become a linear continuation of a text and a reader? We hope that students of this quote will find answers to these questions that we have modestly tried to address.

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