

Barthes: “The Death of the Author” (1968)

Writing = “neutral, composite, oblique space” – subject / identity “slips away” (142)

- admire performance (“mastery of narrative code”) rather than Author-genius

[Historical / tradition : Capitalist positivism → importance of Author] (143)

- language / writing = *impersonality* (not “objectivity”), performed. (Mallarmé)

- Proust: (concern) “inexorably blurring” writer / character relation (144)

- Surrealist “desacrilization” of Author figure, *e.g.* automatic writing; (“jolt” to expectations)

(linguistic) Author as the “instance writing” // “I” : “instance saying” (not subject but function) (145)

≠ antecedent relation; rather, “scriptor” born *simultaneously* with text.

- “no other time of enunciation” : text = “eternally written here and now”

* “pure gesture of inscription” – “traces field without origin” (other than lang.) (146)

- lang. “calls into question all origins” – ceaselessly

Text as “multi-dimensional space” with variety of writing (“blend and clash”) (146)

- “tissue of quotations” from “innumerable centres of culture”

- “tissue of signs” → “imitation that is lost, infinitely deferred” (147)

Scriptor has “immense dictionary” of imitative gestures / quotations (all are culture)

Criticism: seeks to “discover” Author (and Meaning) concealed “beneath” work

- text “explained” by *deciphered* “secret” (No)

* multiplicity / refusal : “everything is to be disentangled, yet nothing deciphered” ←

Refusal as “anti-theological” (refuse *fixed meaning* // refuse reason, science, law, God)

“Total existence of writing” : text = multiple writings, cultures, relations (148)

- “point of focus” = *reader* (not Author) : “unity” not in origin but “destination”

- reader = simply “someone” that “holds together fields of traces”

→ Birth of the reader must be at cost of the death of the Author.