



The Intertextual Reconsideration: The Text, an Intertextual Reader, and the Social Function of the Author

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Abstract: *Intertextuality gained momentum in the late 1960s, with its founder, Julia Kristeva, claiming that a literary text was a conglomeration of various texts embedded in its structural fabric. Since then, it has become a colossal term with its widespread currency among the international academia and literary theorists, and critics. This paper is an effort to build a comprehensive view to understand intertextuality in conjunction with the social function of the author, and the role of an intertextual reader, and literary text. The stance of intertextuality challenges the author-centric notions of authority while increasing the visibility and position of the reader. The biggest question is whether a reader can comprehend the potential meaning. While an ongoing debate of hermeneutics paradox, this article delves into highlighting a balanced position of the author-text-reader dynamics from a socio-cultural perspective. Another issue this paper discusses is a more balanced author position.*

Keywords: *Intertextuality, Comprehensive, Reader, Author, Literary Text, Socio-cultural perspective.*

1. INTRODUCTION: The transitions in literary periods have witnessed major theoretical changes, one such worth mentioning is from Structuralism to Poststructuralism, causing the reformation in critical tradition, Kristeva's theory of intertextuality has become ultra-popular for its widespread use among the literary academia of all time. She drew inspiration from Bakhtin's dialogism and Saussure's structuralism to build upon her legacy concept. The idea of Kristeva, even when borrowed, differs from her predecessor as she focuses on a bigger picture of a text absorbing other texts, and not just the dialogic exchange of words. Intertextuality proposes a network of literary dialogue from past to present, existing between literary texts. Language has no absolutes, as it runs through a continuum of creation like a universe functioning on its own, the very cosmos of which is always in motion with the change of each historical epoch. Even when highly riddled, a literary text with its copious fundamentals embedded in linguistics becomes subjected to the multivalence at the same level as the language in use. Intertextuality views all texts as a cosmos where everything collides to form a newer substance, but from the basic matter that makes up the existing textual cosmos, the connection of the past and the present shall always overlap. The biggest shift brought by post-structural thought (especially reader-response theories) is a displaced author. The importance of this paper lies in showing some equilibrium between author-text- reader dynamics and highlighting the social function of the author.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: Julia Kristeva overthrew the tradition of critical analysis and theorized intertextuality, thus challenging the old ways of criticism. This poststructuralist term brought light upon the reader, unleashing their potential in co-creating meaning. It overthrew the previously accepted notions of readership and authorship. Noelle McAfee's book *Julia Kristeva* charts almost all the major key terms in Kristeva's intertextual vocabulary and is an important work of the seminal ideas on intertextuality. Roland Barthes's seminal essay *The Death of the Author* (1977) transformed the role of the reader by granting them full control over a text's reconstruction by deciphering its meaning. The focal point is on finding meaning produced by the act of reading. Michele Foucault asserted the idea of authorship as more of a social function than individual, limiting the capacity of the author within generational discourse. Harold Bloom declared a focus on strong reading for interpretation. Wolfgang Iser favours the reader over the author in



solidifying the meaning, yet substantiates the author's position concerning literary text, while Rosenblatt focuses on the reader and reading.

The contemporary scholars have expounded on the position of an implied author for any textual strategy. Jonathan Culler suggests that intertextuality should be considered from pragmatic and logical perspectives. Douglas Hartman re-examines the changing concepts of reader, author, and text and their association within postmodern theories. Ott and Walker suggest the use of intertextuality as an audience-oriented and two-pronged approach: textual strategy (author's role) and a tool for analysis. Eugene Williamson reconnects Plato's term "Eidos" with archetypes of Jung and Frye, looking for a plausible connection. William Nelles does his best to clarify the position of the implied reader and the author concerning each other. All theorists have believed that the author's presence within a literary text is essential, as their continuous discussion over a text and its structure throws hints at the authors' presence along with the newfound position of the reader.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES: The focus of this article is to find a balance in the position of the author and the reader and reconsidering author's social function, while examining the literary essays on reader-response theory. Some areas of discussion regarding finding this are post-structural theory on intertextuality, literary text and the author, the reader, and the dynamics of the Author-Text-Reader from a post-structural angle presenting our views over it.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: The methodology used is descriptive in nature and the method is a thematic analysis of literary theories and suggestions from the post-structural literary experts. The effort is to find a balanced view regarding the position of the author and the reader as being the two poles of understanding a literary text. As intertextuality is a widely accepted term in literary, non-literary, and global domains, therefore, the endeavour is also to bring to light the position of the author as it has long been diminished, in conjunction with the importance of the powerful intertextual reader, without whom any theory on reader-response remains incomplete.

5. INTERTEXTUALITY AND DIALOGISM

Intertextuality has revolutionized the path of literary analysis by creating a new avenue for contemporary criticism. It helped to break away from the romanticized view of traditional criticism, a classical dictator of literary evaluation in the past. In the 1920's with the beginning of dialogism in the *Problems of Dostoevsky* (1984), a newer tendency to critical evaluation was already formed. Kristeva set out to venture on her project of intertextuality in the 1960s. She is credited for introducing Mikhail Bakhtin to the French academic society through her essay, "Word, Dialogue and Novel". For dialogism and intertextuality are both the sides of the same coin, for their emphasis on the linguistic connections among the texts in a broader cultural framework. A fraction of difference setting them apart is while Bakhtin sees the individual's dialogue, Kristeva sees a linguistic text in the dialogue. Kristeva sees meaning in a dynamic process where the older connections must first be addressed to unleash the meaning in a literary text.

Mikhail Bakhtin has already sketched out how Dostoevsky's novels were permeated with independent voices that forcibly diminished the author's voice. Bakhtin saw how Dostoevsky's characters displayed individualism and polemicized their opinions. His characters were marked by their independence for self-assertive eccentricities, living and breathing, showing the possibility of building the narrative in the image of the real world. Dostoevsky's polyvalent novels unleashed the possibility for the ethereal appeal of modern works, attaching aesthetic and literary value to modern novels (Bakhtin 5). Intertextuality is influenced by the context of polyphony (an array of voices in a text) and building a network of multiple connections that can be traced in the symphony of narration within a fictional space. Despite the poet being diminished from Plato's Republic (as poets were the highest authority on literary matters, disliked for eccentricities), it is interesting to note that Bakhtin uses the name of the author "Dostoevsky" to draw attention to dialogism, thereby allowing the privilege of identity to the novelist. The parallel with Plato is to highlight the fact that the displacement of the author is not a question of the present but a continuation of the past in the present. But why, even after being decentred, the author's position has been a topic of discussion for many theorists and critics, has piqued our interest in reconsidering the author's position by analysing the post structural stance and the opinions of some contemporary theorists.

Bakhtin's obsession with the fundamentals of dialogism can be traced in his 1984 essay, where he suggests the central idea permeating dialogic discourse relates to linguistic exchange among characters, making multiple voices audible, with no particular voice domineering over others. For Bakhtin, the dialogic discourse undercuts the possibility of a decisive discourse but produces an unfinalized situation open to interpretation. This resonates with the functionality of



Kristeva's intertextuality as influenced by the dialogic discourse. She borrows the idea of dialogic discourse and offers her view about the interplay of semiotic and symbolic in the discourse of linguistic aspect. According to Kristeva, language is a social exercise that necessitates the two constituents, semiotic and symbolic, which then combine in different ways to form discourse types and signifying practices (Kristeva 134). Kristeva suggests that language as a symbolic order is more than a means of common communication. It has another side, the 'semiotic', filled with heterogeneous communication of the unconscious processes. Therefore, the production of meaning can never be finalized in language. This can be understood through poetic language, which is full of unstructured semiotic possibility (*ibid.* 134).

As Noelle McAfee in her work, *Julia Kristeva* (2015) affirms, Kristeva was among those who formulated a type of post-structuralism. Kristeva's efforts seemed to have been overshadowed behind a more influential member of her circle, Jacques Derrida, who changed the structuralist approach and created the path for 'deconstruction' as a new way to study language. For Kristeva, making the structure dynamic was more important, and to achieve this task, she highlighted two aspects of the system, namely the unconscious presence of the subject and the symbolic order (*ibid.* 7). Kristeva demonstrates that literary texts are constituted by *genotext* and *phenotext*, within their structure. The referential terms *genotext* and *phenotext* were coined by Kristeva in her seminal study of *avant-garde* poetry, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, written in 1974. The terms serve as a way of analyzing literary texts. McAfee writes that the difference between *genotext* and *phenotext* could be traced through the difference between symbolic and semiotic. The *genotext* traverses between the realms of the unconscious to the conscious text, challenging the potential meaning of the text. The *phenotext* is the grammatical structure of the language (*ibid.* 24). The *genotext* manifests itself in the *phenotext*, destabilizing the production of meaning. This manifestation of *genotext* is what calls for attention, as Kristeva suggests that it is the semiotic chora of the writer which manifests in the symbolic, the language of the literary work, thus focusing attention on the unstructured creative capabilities of the author in writing. Hence, the textual signs are a vindication of their presence in a literary text.

The discourse of the text from Plato to contemporary times percolates with hints of intertextual connections. Plato's 'theory on mimesis' could be taken as an indirect commentary on intertextuality. Plato's idea of *mimesis* runs deep in his Socratic dialogues. Eugene Williamson writes about Plato's 'eidos'. Thus, *eidos* is a common term for multiplicity of objects, usually the original object of which others are copies (Angeles, cited in Williamson 96). Kristeva's views on text and intertextuality can be juxtaposed to Plato's idea of forms, "Eidos", as they are perfect, eternal forms, and their essence is shared by multiple copies in this world, never perfect, always malleable to the conditions of the changing world. Similarly, intertextuality can be seen as the sharing of forms and contents, which themselves are pre-existing. Intertextuality manifests in various ways, of which literary allusions, pastiche, parody, and quotations are some explicit elements. From a surface level, the 'theory of forms' to some extent stands in alignment with intertextuality. We can say that a text, when seen from an intertextual view, is not limited to a source but moves its boundary to other sources.

Intertextuality sounds simple, but it has an intricate framework. The problem arises at what level we study intertextuality within a text to understand it. The experts have suggested that the scope of study be at the broadest level of rhetorical framework and how it connects to texts outside, also including how it embodies the socio-cultural framework. But the very discussion on any scope of study is a fine way to delimit any term, theory, or even a subject. It is important to acknowledge that intertextuality as a critical lens theorizes the way imaginative literature needs to be understood. Modern fiction exhibited innovative and creative methods of narration. The novelists like Faulkner, Woolf, Joyce, and others often wrote fragmented and at times poetic narratives. The lyrical and at times zigzag storytelling was a fresh start in narration, displaying the psyche of the characters and their voices echoing strongly their internal thoughts. Therefore, intertextuality could be seen as one of the many answers to the problem of analysing modern novels. In the twentieth century, the possibility of innovation shown by the avant-garde writers forged the way for innovative criticism, of which intertextuality can be seen as an integral part. Literary censure had to undergo a massive transformation, and Kristeva can be seen as one of the harbingers of this new momentum, along with other poststructuralists like Derrida, Foucault, Barthes, and so on.

5.1 The Intertextual Reader

Who is an intertextual reader? It is an interesting question that piqued our interest. Here, we would like to revisit the opinion of Roland Barthes, who strongly believed that the reader was the new normal in deciphering the codes of a novel and that the author's position regarding artistic meaning no longer existed. The gradual movement of the modern



novel into public production made the buyer (reader) of the commodity powerful, for they were meant to re-construct the text and diffuse a new meaning based on their experience. The author's role as its sole creator had been marginalized to a simplified role of a producer to be left at the mercy of its consumers' attention. Thus, the reader was the one breathing meaning and life into a literary text. The intertextual reader is not a new term but just a revision based on the concept of the active reader. The intertextual reader is not a superior term either, as it is foregrounded in the concept of the active reader laid by Barthes, who wittingly engages with a literary text and can identify and concretize the intertextual markers within a text, to understand the profound and comprehensive meaning(s) a text holds. An intertextual reader not simply reconciles but reckons about a literary text. They are the types of reader who can recognize the connections of a literary text as relying upon other texts, leading them to explore the web of connections to reach at the potential meaning.

According to Jonathan Culler, intertextuality studies the broad intertext existing in any text, and one should avoid the risk of running into source influence every time, for such an approach can lead to the possible risk of being derailed from the course of literary action. Culler suggests that an approach to identify broad intertext is essential, for the risk of shadowing the aspect of intertext to sources is allayed, which otherwise will ruin the balance of intended references by diverting it to mere source criticism. Culler suggests two presuppositions to be understood in this regard regarding intertextuality. First, there are logical presuppositions that are embedded within the text, and second, pragmatics is the reader's broad contextual and cultural knowledge. He suggests these approaches based on readers' specific presuppositions, wherein the reader can identify the intertextual markers, whether rhetorical or pragmatic, from their social capability to understand the specific ideas and culture prevalent within the text's structure (Culler 95). It's like understanding the broader cultural and literary conventions prevalent. For Culler, the reader's background matters as the reader is the potential channel through which the real production of meaning shall take place. But the trick here is to understand how well placed the intertextual references as it is the author in the first place who puts them.

Hence, the role of the reader and the reader's participation in understanding intertextuality becomes essential along with the author's use of it. The strategic part played by the author becomes latent as soon as the literary text reaches its desired reader, for its interpretation becomes a process defined necessarily by an intertextual reader who now participates in producing meaning(s). The willing reader is expected to make associations with intertextual dimensions in a text and to decode the universal themes, symbols, characters, and passing references as put deliberately or accidentally by the author. So, does this hint at the problematic nature of intertextuality? According to Harold Bloom, just as strong criticism doesn't establish any solid fact, similarly, strong poetry doesn't establish any poetic facts. The only poetic fact is the strong reading, as suggested by Bloom (Bloom 6). Again, a strong reading depends on how well the engagement level of any text will be as it is a factor majorly resting in the hands of its compiler or an author.

Bloom inverts the very idea of control or authority of the poet over poetry. He opines that a strong reading assists in evaluating poetry. He navigates the charted territory of the purpose of reading as an in-depth understanding of the overall content of any poem, thereby producing meaning. Bloom also rejects the idea of a poem establishing any objective truth by itself, as he emphasizes that it is only by the act of insightful and deep engagement by a reader, a poem is truly interpreted. He further says that the endurance of a poem is a test against time and changing culture, as only those poems have survived that have been most powerfully interpreted by the readers. Thus, Bloom suggests that the reader not only shapes the meaning of a poem but also ensures the continuity of the literary canon with active participation in reading. Any poem or story can only be influential or become part of the literary tradition through strong and sustained interpretations by readers (*ibid.*). But is it justified to say that the reader has truly comprehended the literary text while reading and arrived at the potential meaning. We need to understand that even a strong act of reading is prone to failure as no one can truly comprehend complete textual meaning as intertextuality denies any universal stables. It rather opens avenues of multivalence and difference of opinion.

Iser discusses and divides the concept of the reader into an actual and an implied reader. The implied reader is the one who goes with the flow of the text, whereas the actual reader actively engages and brings their experiences while reading any text. Ott and Walker have viewed intertextuality in a broader framework as a literary strategy employed in text and a tool for interpretation. They cite Barthes' idea that for a text, the destination is more important than its origin, supporting the reader-oriented view. According to Ott & Walker, as Barthes says, "intertextuality exists as a textual infinitude," and readers draw potential meaning out of the existing inferences (cited in Ott & Walker 430). They focus on media studies and intertextual practices within it and explain the use of intertextual strategies like pastiche, parodic allusion, creative appropriation (inclusion of an original copy of any text), and self-reflexivity, prompting audience



response. These intertextual modes also overlap with stylistic devices that have been long used in literature and are flexible enough to be incorporated in film and television (*ibid.* 435-438). According to Hartman, the reader constructing meaning is a consequence of the intertextual dimensions of a literary text as they adapt, borrow, and modify texts in their minds. This is done intentionally by all the readers to find and build textual connections, consequentially moving towards the meaning. Hartman cites Pearson and Tierney (1984), who suggest interpretation to be a process of mentally forming an inner text (cited in Hartman 298). Thus, an intertextual reader is the one who can lean into the experiences of a literary text, but for any interpretive process to happen, the arrangement of the textual strategy matters. A textual strategy is the function of an author compiler, who places it in such a manner that grabs the attention of the readers.

5.2 The Social Function of the Author and the Literary Text

Julia Kristeva suggests that a text forms inherent connections to previously written texts. She borrows this idea from Saussure and builds intertextuality by stating it as a literary network within the text with others, establishing the relation between 'text A to text B, C, D, E, and so on. In the late 1960s, the transitioning phase made the stance of structuralism obsolete by the emergence of post-structural dichotomy, which asserted the dynamism and flexibility of language, outlining it to be inherently in the process of change as per the cultural and socio-political revolution of the times. Intertextuality makes a text grow out of its proportion as it opens the way to build multiple meanings from the presence of signifiers. While theorizing intertextuality, Kristeva uses Plato's term *Chora* from *Timaeus*, and incorporates it while addressing her concept of the semiotic *chora*. For Plato, *Chora* is more of an indestructible space that is not easily apprehended by logical reasoning but requires an unconventional approach, for it can't be perceived by ordinary senses. Kristeva manipulates the use of the term and establishes it as not just a mere space but also as a possibility of unconscious activity. She associates it with the unconscious potential of the poets of the twentieth century, stating that the semiotic always surfaces and manifests itself in the symbolic, and aligns it with the modern novelists.

The borrowing of idea and exchange of ideas is a common happening within the literary world. But we need to remember that to what level and extent does this borrowing take place. As soon as an author borrows from another author, not only they open an intertextual dimension but also establish the relevance of the text and up to a certain extent their relevance in acting as compilers of literary strategy. The exchange of ideas holds socio-cultural and historical relevance as it promotes preservation of literary knowledge and uninterrupted flow of the past literary traditions into the present by ensuring their eternal continuity. With the advent of constantly finding innovative escapes from fear of past influences, the writers in the modern and postmodern eras tended to revolutionize the narrative and infused it with a riddled poetic flow like the thoughts freely running in our minds. Therefore, finding and integrating new approaches to criticism became integral. The older ways of storytelling stood extant in the face of the contemporary writings of the 20th century. The narrator was anonymous, and the reader felt the ambiguity of voices dispersed throughout the novel. Barthes' influential idea on Balzac's story "*Sarrasine*" points out that the speaker's identity gets lost in writing, and one shall never know with clarity who the speaker is. Is it the author, or is it the hero, or someone anonymous? With his focus on the intransitive narration, Barthes explores the ambiguity of the voices in Balzac's story.

According to Barthes, the meaning is no longer subjected to the linearity of narration but is subjected to the understanding of the double-voiced discourse in twentieth-century novels. The death of the author within the context of a literary text was due to the free flow of thoughtful narration by treating language as a social act, had become seamless in the modern novel. Barthes notes that the author's voice becomes extinct as soon as the narration displays subjectivity, rendering the writing self-referential (Barthes 142). This displacement of the author is a causal effect of the intransitive narration, introduced as a technique used in the modern novels, and thereafter. Thus, Barthes' affirmation about the use of indirect narration, causing the free play of the voices in fiction and their ambiguity, is what diminishes the authorial objectivity and removes the identity of the author from the imaginative novel.

The use of language (intransitively) in narration was a monumental change brought in by the *avant-garde* novelists who innovated writing styles to break away from the traditional forms. These authors shifted and adapted more unconventional strategies to write contemporary fiction. The intransitive narration moves away from any direct representation to presenting before the readers the unstructured effects of structured writing; thus, the process of meaning creation shifted with the play of language in symbolic order; the structure, the sound, and its associations became sudden highlights. The words, phrases, and sentences no longer sounding straightforward, conveyed a sense of intertextual unconsciousness even to the readers. The sense of the meaning could only be derived from understanding the unconscious intertextual markers of the modern novel. Therefore, the idea that the 'author was the originator' of the



meaning became obsolete. The literary text becomes free-flowing, directed towards the reader, free from any authorial bounds. The subject, object, and action ceased to exist as they were substituted by the symbolic play of language with its thrust on the reader's experience. The displacement of the author is, therefore, a causal effect of the intransitive choice of narration employed as a technique. We need to note that this choice of indirect narration was made by the authors and not the text or the autonomous language or can we truly believe that the author is a neutral entity and a literary text is not ideologically grounded. There exists no neutrality in reading, as it reflects various stances and various perspectives.

Michel Foucault makes a bold move in reassessing the position of the author concerning text, as he finds himself guilty of referencing the respective authors in his work *The Order of Things* (1970). In his essay 'What is an author?', recalling Buffon, Curvier, Ricardo, and others as names functioning ambiguously and later appearing misleading to certain aspects of his work. Foucault highlights the idea that the speaker does not matter (Foucault 205). We see how Foucault, commenting on the writing of his times, proclaims that the writing in his times had moved beyond the theme of the interior landscape (of the author) and has switched to the nitty-gritty of the language system, where the signifier is more important than the signified. This shifts the focus from the narrator to the character. Therefore, what matters is speech and writing above anything else, marking its superiority over the users. Foucault considers that the writing in contemporary times stands free from the subjectivity of the author's expression and inclines towards the changing dynamics of language structures. He suggests writing as primarily referring to be self-referential. The modern writing recreates its death repeatedly, as it was visible in the different novels of the twentieth century and beyond (*ibid.* 206). To consider another aspect, Foucault compares writing with death. He recounts how narratives in *Greek* epics immortalized heroes by making them prey to early graves. In contrast to the epic stands the Scheherazade's tale from *Arabian Nights*. Her nightly tales are used as a strategy to forestall her death. But this metamorphosis of the narrative to postpone or even stay put from death is no longer applicable to modern writing (*ibid.* 207). It will not be preposterous to say that Foucault points out the mortal fatality of the author's demise in modernist writing, as it became more independent and detached from the author by leaning more towards its rules of structural constitution by pushing its boundaries. Hence, the author moves outside the space of textual writing into an anonymous state. But was this overthrowing truly anonymous for the authors, is what we shall be reconsider

The movement of the author to an anonymous position is not a far-fetched idea but relatable to many previously written literary texts, where the author's identity had stood contested. The paradigmatic shift in the author's position from an anonymous state to his metaphorical death has been well debated in the past. But we would like to draw a little attention to the idea of associations of the author and their literary works. When we speak of the poem *The Wasteland*, we immediately think of Mr. Eliot, or utter the word *Daffodils*, and our thoughts take us to Mr. Wordsworth. But when we come across an undesignated poem, we are immediately drawn to the context of the words, phrases, and sentences, and not the author. And then our vision grows to draw the most common of inferences from the poets in past. The linguistic visuals of the poem guide the reader to draw and connect references outside. The author becomes a ghost and no longer matters as long as the visuals, the imagery, and the symbolic elements can control and guide our response. The text provokes our thoughts, and this is what transports the mind to the closest and most familiar literary resemblances of the previous poetry. This thoughtful cascade of connections also hints at how the author has a vigilant role to craft the tapestry of words in every poem, in every text, that should transfer the reader to another world of familiar voices, opening the channel to what we know and what all existed before. Yet to understand or interpret an unnamed poem we resort to draw inferences from the known poems and poets of similar themes and styles. But the pertinent point to be noted here will be that even when a poem is anonymous, some human agent was involved in conceiving and then producing it, therefore, even when unassigned it was penned down by a man or a woman, whose identity doesn't matter, but what matters most is the way they have structured it for the act of interpretation and not to forget the dependency of its meaning is upon the blueprint or its structural strategy as conceived and represented by the poet.

Foucault has highlighted the author's role and has defended the author's diminished position. He points out the author's social function in doing so. He has given a functional direction to author's role irrespective of the autonomy of language. He believes that ruling out an author completely from any text is difficult for all texts bear names of the author irrespective of their metaphorical deaths. All texts possess some or the other distinctive style that can never be overruled, therefore, it becomes impossible that an author can be disassociated from the texts they write. Moreover, the texts always bear some signs that represent the author. For him, the first person pronoun (the pronoun "I") is like a distant alter ego, and the function of the author is operational from a distance within the divide, or the "*scission*" (Foucault 215). We can see how Foucault's idea aligns with what Kristeva has already offered while discussing the concept of thetic phase (a



phase where unconscious enters into the conscious) in poets. His idea is that the author's function is not a simple task that can be directly associated with a text, as the text will always show signs of the author's presence.

The moment Foucault uses the terms 'text', 'signs', and 'author', he makes his argument vulnerable to the debate associated with these signifiers. The 'signs' refer to the linguistic signs, along with the signifier and the signified. All signs possess an arbitrary relation to each other, and from a post-structural view, they are deferential and deferred at the same time. Foucault has associated the use of the pronoun 'I' with a fictive character, a fictional 'alter-ego' of the author. The term alter ego stands for a second self, a dark side to the personality in psychology. Even when it borders on internal subjectivity, as a signifier, it possesses a pluralistic character. In *Latin*, it means 'Second I', which could have multiple usages and meanings. Let us consider a simple example, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) where Hyde represents the alter ego as symbolically bad and Jekyll as good. This example automatically draws one to the oppositional controversy of the language. This term is not without problems, as it could be a possible topic of rigorous debate. The alter ego creates distance. By putting the author's function in 'the scission', it means a possible gap that exists between the real writer and the narrator, and a move towards an ambiguous space, which appears to be a space of creative energy. The 'scission', in some ways, could be influenced and equated to Kristeva's 'thetic moment' where the semiotic enters the symbolic, manifesting its creative forces and undermining the authority of the established order (symbolic) by disrupting the stable linguistic elements. According to Berta & Saiz, the alter ego causes fear as it means loss of identity, dissociation with oneself for the psychotic, and opens up creativity for the creative person. They suggest that a creative person uses their alter ego for the dialectic discussion over fear or madness (Berta et al. SIV55).

Thus, Foucault's use of the term 'alter ego' is a hint at the author's presence, his creativity, his experimentation with the linguistic possibilities in a literary text, which is assigned to him as a part of his function. This function is what is clearly called "social," as authors cannot create their work in a vacuum. They borrow ideas already existing within a vast socio-cultural network of which they themselves are the living part along with the dead authors. Thus, the author has a social function to perform; this function is transmission, preservation, and transference of knowledge through generations. They ensure this by immortalizing their works through various mediums such as writing, sculpting, drawing, painting, music, etc. By recording their artwork, they are able to capture the audience through generational passage. Moreover, any work of art, for example, a literary novel or a poem holds the power to sway the emotions of its reader and allow them the chance to reach a pinnacle of joy that results in what we call the feeling of aesthetic pleasure in literary domain. To a certain extent, the author's hand in creating such sublime works that lead to higher emotions can't be ignored. We need to understand that the most important function of any author is their contribution in transference of knowledge of tradition and its preservation.

6. The Dynamics of the Author-the Text- the Reader

According to Wolfgang Iser, there are two approaches to the study of literary work, which he calls two poles: aesthetic and artistic. The artistic is concerned with the produced text, and the aesthetic is actualizing the meaning of the literary text (Iser 106). Iser positions the literary text between the author and the reader for its realization, as little can be deciphered by a lopsided positioning of any literary work. He suggested that in a society, dyadic interactions formed communication gaps, which in turn were the basis for all interpretations, and that texts were not solely capable of it; the text itself couldn't inform the readers, the accuracy of interpretation done by them (*ibid.* 109). He further suggested that literary works have a unique potential to communicate through implicit and explicit ways. It is here that the reader acts as a mediator, trying to reveal the hidden intent of the ongoing action of the story. Therefore, it is a text controlling the interpretive process. For him, the fictitious reader is powerless but activated in the moments of reading. He connects the textual gaps to the reader's realization of meaning, thus fortuitously empowering the author, who constructs them, bringing the textual structure alive in a reader's mind (*ibid.* 113).

Louise M. Rosenblatt proclaims how the slogan "art's for art's sake" seeks the autonomy translated into self-governing literary works. She also points out that the post-structural attention to the readers is not new. According to Rosenblatt, even Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Shelley, and many others have incidentally thought of readers and readership; otherwise, the desperate outrage on censorship over poetry demonstrates their concerns for the respective audiences. They mostly emphasized the technique and forgot to consider the power of readership and their experiences. But their anxieties do testify to the concern for readership (Rosenblatt 3). Rosenblatt records the interpretive response to a familiar quatrain by Robert Frost, but unfamiliar to the readers, and by analysing their responses, concludes that the reading of any literary text is simultaneously related to a reader's prior knowledge and life experiences. It is the textual matter that guides the



reader's attention and acts as a stimulus to regenerate the prior symbolic experiences in the imagination of the reader. She further states that a text is a collection of literary signs that are verbal symbols filled with the potentiality of multiple meanings (*ibid.* 14). So, for her, literary works intrinsically suggest imaginary readers. But who places the imaginary reader? is a question which should be further examined. It can't be denied that the written words within text are indicators of the writer's intention, but never the meaning. It is the reader who falls back upon prior experiences to generate, at times, a desired or some new response. The text serves as a guiding light to the reader's response. The author's role is a transactional process where he codifies the structure for a reader to decode its events and incidents. The author is an undoubtful compiler and arranger of his literary text.

Some clarification upon the historical ambiguity towards the author's position and the evasiveness of the reader as overlapping has been provided by William Nelles. For Nelle implied author 'means' and the implied reader 'interprets'. Nelle informs that the attempts of previous theorists on terminology related to the authors don't necessarily validate the worldview about the author, as he finds it biased. He suggests that the reader is the one who relates completely to the author; therefore, the "implied author" is constructed consistently within a literary text, as every ambiguity displayed in the textual structure is implicated by them (Nelle 22-24). For intertextuality to exist, both a reader and an author have a part to play. It is a reader who unveils the codes within a story. It becomes pertinent that the author's hold must be far and wide in the field of literature to build an intertextual text, and the reader's grasp need not necessarily be intellectually huge to make connections. The author should be a good reader himself to create nuances of intertextuality so that the associations derived are natural in the reading process. The author's role in creating intertextual instances is crucial. For the readers, the rule remains the same; their experiences and range of reading can aid them in aesthetically gorging on the targeted literary text. It's important that the author creates relevant allusions handed down from generations for the reader to comprehend; otherwise, it will exist only among the critics, authors, poets, reviewers, literature students, and the academia of its time, limiting the scope of its character.

The dynamics of the author, the text, and the reader in understanding interpretation as independent of the authors background is understandable, but can't be a strong factor to dismiss their position or their social function. We can say that the textual intent is the dialogue with the other texts; the author's role is a skilful employment of a linear or a non-linear narrative framed intricately to put the reader into action; and the reader's intent is the way they will approach and generate a situational response according to their experience. The author's social function is evident as an arranger of a literary text. They have to compile the texts in the best possible manner if a text is to be deciphered by an intertextual reader. We can not assume any context be neutral as it is charged with the philosophy of the writers mind who composes it and therefore the role of a writer, or an author of a literary text as a compiler can't be denied.

7. CONCLUSION: Umberto Eco, in an introduction to *The Role of the Reader*, manifests the idea of "how to produce the texts by reading them" (Eco 3). Eco mentions how Baudelaire's essay "*Les Chats*" talks about an empirical reader for the "actualization of the text" (*ibid.* 4). According to Baudelaire, the text is never explicit but is a complex way of demonstrating intertextual competence. The poet builds the semantic association by creating an intertextual network that automatically arouses readers' response; this complex semantic association is a generative strategy employed by the author. Eco suggests that all authors presuppose model readers for their content, as the reader has to comply with the text and not vice-versa, and even an open text is closed for interpretation (*ibid.* 10). He cites Wittgenstein to demonstrate that self-defining pronouns, whether explicitly or implicitly used, point towards the textual strategies used by the author and the model reader, re-actualizing the author's philosophical style. Despite their diminished position, it can't be denied that the author is the arranger of the words in a literary text, and even with no power, their role as a compiler of the text in the real world becomes quite significant. The writer and the reader are bound to the linguistic exchange of ideas. The writer's use of free play of language in a literary text is what binds the reader's attention to the text. Post-structuralists view texts as potential spaces of meaning. It is the job of an intertextual reader to participate in the meaning-building process. The process of interpretation may or may not be fully realized, as it is dependent upon the linguistic constraints of any reader and also the time and experience invested in reading. The reader's interpretive position is highly determined by the interest and knowledge of the reader. A reader who is not exposed to a literary background may not fully recognize or appreciate the complexities of literary intertextuality compared to those who are engaged in literary reading. Yet it can't be denied that the common reader has some potential, as all readers belong to a certain literary era and are blessed with the experiences gathered from their socio-cultural backgrounds.

Another noteworthy point is to understand the role of the existing linguistic power structures in the interpretive process. The possibility of a significantly different variety of readers can't be denied. The possibility of differences in the degree



of opinions and the variety of perspectives on a similar issue is also an acceptable fact. Therefore, the position of the meaning in any literary text remains unstable. The meaning could be seen from various perspectives, such as social, political, theological, philosophical, historical, contemporary, and cultural. The role of the reader in interpretation is highly subjective, encompassing their knowledge of the particular subjects and presence of mind, something more for psychology to answer. To conclude, the position of the reader, even when highly subjective, makes it clear that the meaning resides with the reader and not with the author. The social role of the author in transference and preservation of knowledge can't be denied. The meaning is fluid and constructed by the reader, yet dependent upon the linguistic and cultural context incorporated by the author within a literary text. Despite the negation of the author's power over a literary text, we can say that intertextuality positively reshapes the author's role. It empowers the author to experiment with linguistic possibilities in the most creative ways by incorporating intertexts in the form of allusions, parodies, pastiches, quotations, and so on. It shields the author's position from any discrepancy that they might otherwise face if they were to control the meaning of their work. Kristeva's move from intertextuality to transposition demonstrates the possibility of moving away from any closed-off critical systems herself. The shift in the position of the author with a focus on the reader could be seen as an uplifting strategic move towards the author's position, freeing them from the matters of interpretation, where the reader is dependent on the textual strategy as crafted by the author for meaning formation, the author freely engages with the language and writing of the text to generate the reader's response.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS: The position of the author-text-reader is not limited to this descriptive study that presents a literary critical perspective based on the thematic analysis of post-structural stance on literary theory and criticism. This study recommends for a broader approach in such topics which are not limited to just theoretical literary underpinnings, but could include case studies as well. This study may further benefit from multidisciplinary approaches such as a psychology or a Marxist approach or a more trending theme of digital intertextuality that can be undertaken to add more comprehensiveness to the topic in future.

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