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What is an author now? Discourse analysis applied to the idea of an author

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to discuss and shed light on the following questions: What is an author? Is it a person who writes? Or, is it, in information, an iconic taxonomic designation (some might say a “classification”) for a group of writings that are recognized by the public in some particular way? What does it mean when a search engine, or catalog, asks a user to enter the name of an author? And how does that accord with the manner in which the data have been entered in association with the names of the entities identified with the concept of authorship?

Design/methodology/approach – The authors use several cases as bases of phenomenological discourse analysis, combining as best the authors can components of eidetic bracketing (a Husserlian technique for isolating noetic reduction) with Foucauldian discourse analysis. The two approaches are not sympathetic or together cogent, so the authors present them instead as alternative explanations alongside empirical evidence. In this way the authors are able to isolate components of iconic “authorship” and then subsequently engage them in discourse.

Findings – An “author” is an iconic name associated with a class of works. An “author” is a role in public discourse between a set of works and the culture that consumes them. An “author” is a role in cultural sublimation, or a power broker in deabstemiation. An “author” is last, if ever, a person responsible for the intellectual content of a published work. The library catalog’s attribution of “author” is at odds with the Foucauldian discursive comprehension of the role of an “author.”

Originality/value – One of the main assets of this paper is the combination of Foucauldian discourse analysis with phenomenological analysis for the study of the “author.” The authors turned to Foucauldian discourse analysis to discover the loci of power in the interactions of the public with the named authorial entities. The authors also looked to phenomenological analysis to consider the lived experience of users who encounter the same named authorial entities. The study of the “author” in this combined way facilitated the revelation of new aspects of the role of authorship in search engines and library catalogs.

Keywords Search engines, Catalogues, Epistemology, Postmodernism

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction: just what is an author?

We begin with a question, just what is an author? Is it a person who writes? Or, is it, in information, an iconic taxonomic designation (some might say a “classification”) for a group of writings that are recognized by the public in some particular way? Barthes’s (1968) “The Death of the Author” and Foucault’s (1984) response, “What is an Author,” are considered pivotal moments that dismantled the authority of the author-figure. Foucault’s view of the author function will be discussed in detail later, but it is instructive to briefly review relevant developments in Western literature and literary criticism that led up to the exchange between Barthes and Foucault. Generally, and



perhaps simplistically, a long line stretches from Aristotle to the twentieth century, during which it would appear that unity existed among the major approaches to literary criticism that offered a combination of contextually-based analyses: social, historical, biographical, and the content based: morality and psychology of characters and, of course, author. These approaches typically relied on author intention and biography to critique text, which lent credence to the concept of the author-as-authority. Though the primacy of the author has persisted, a few schools of thought rejected any consideration of the author in favor of the work or the reader or a combination. Aristotle's *Poetics*, a response to Plato's *Republic*, set the stage for the opposition of author or authority to work or words and eventually led to the twentieth-century context in which Foucault attempted to break down the opposition by drawing out the complexity and interrelationship of both "author" and "work." These work- and reader-driven movements had a range of goals, from professionalizing the act of criticism to making the analysis of literary works seem scientific (i.e. formal, rigorous, and synthetic), to acknowledging the reader's role in the act of reading; the author's role or function is a central theme in each.

1.1 *Writers' conceits: examples of examples of how the authorship role changed*

Writers, too, have sought to hide or destabilize their authorial roles for a range of reasons, many of them commercial or political, such as "evading retribution for adopting an unpopular line; exacting retribution from others; avoiding the overuse of a single persona; coyness; true diffidence; shame (e.g. academics writing pulp fiction); gender; emolument; safety" (Henige, 2009, p. 33). However, some had academic or theological reasons for transferring the authority elsewhere. One often-used conceit is the "found object." For example, Tolkien proclaimed himself a mere translator of the "*Red Book of Westmarch*" – Bilbo Baggins's diary – which became the *Lord of the Rings* cycle (1954-1956). Another similar device is the channeling of the divine, such as Milton as the prophet in *Paradise Lost*, or any number of works labeled as "spirit writings" in twentieth-century North American library catalogs. Philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, writing in the mid-nineteenth century, published under multiple pseudonyms and used tricks he called "indirect communication" to transfer the "author" of the reading experience to the reader. He simultaneously published works from jarringly different perspectives on the same topic, aiming to "sever the reliance of the reader on the authority of the author and on the received wisdom of the community. The reader was to be forced to take individual responsibility for knowing who s/he is and for knowing where s/he stands on the existential, ethical and religious issues raised in the texts" (McDonald, 2012). In the cases of Tolkien and Milton and others like them, the authority is transferred to an external source, with the writer as a conduit for a greater authority. Kierkegaard, however, wanted the reader to shed contextual bias to objectively analyze the issue at hand.

1.2 *Criticism*

Several critical viewpoints competed through the twentieth century. Extrinsic considerations of authorship such as history, biography, and politics were wholly rejected by the Formalist movement early in the century. Formalists disregarded all but the work itself and concentrated on the poetic form, grammar, and structure, analyzed through close readings of texts. A constellation of early-to-mid-century writers and critics now loosely called a subgroup of Formalists emerged called the "New Critics."

The group drew its name from a 1941 book by John Crowe Ransom entitled *The New Criticism*, but little commonality held the group together, other than a de-emphasis of the author in favor of the work. The New Critics were responding to such legacies as Wordsworth's (poetry is "emotion recollected in tranquility") or Freud's early work (writers rely on childhood fantasies) that attach importance to the psychology of the author. T.S. Eliot is often included as a New Critic, though mostly in influence. In 1920, he argued for "objectivity" in criticism, thus making it a more "scientific" analysis of the words on the page. Similar to academic or scientific work, he insisted that the poet know, understand, and sacrifice the self to the full poetic tradition, and that each poem should acknowledge and position itself within that history. The work itself and its relationship to the poetic tradition was crucial: "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (Eliot, 1920, p. 433). Eliot acknowledged objections that his "doctrine requires a ridiculous amount of erudition (pedantry)," yet just as in academic or scientific work, the previous work must be visited and known in order to position one's own work. In sum, what Eliot proposes is that each work (not author) fits into and changes the knowledge structure of the existing poetic tradition.

Drawing influence from T.S. Eliot, but not agreeing with him, Ransom (1937) wrote that "Criticism must become more scientific, or precise and systematic," similarly calling for an "ontological critic," by which he meant one who disregards such contextual information as emotional reactions, adherence to moral standards, author's biography, and synopsis. Both Eliot and Ransom in their own ways sought to professionalize literary criticism, Eliot to place each work in the literary tradition, and Ransom to legitimize art as a complement to science. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren in 1938 considered author biography, paraphrase, and preconceived interpretations "substitutions" for reading and understanding poetry, but did not deny them as valid methods of analysis (Brooks, 1995). Similarly, Wimsatt and Beardsley (1954) coined the term "intentional fallacy" to name the problem of assuming the "correct" interpretation of an artistic work corresponds with the exact intention of the author. They argue that no feasible way of determining intentionality exists, and any work where intention is easily discovered is likely of inferior quality. They also coined the "affective fallacy," which rejected the reader's response as a measure of quality.

Reader-response theory arose in direct opposition to New Criticism. Though they shared a common focus on the text rather than author, the reader-response critics shifted the agency of meaning-making to include the reader. Though he is typically classified as a structuralist and semiotician, particularly in his early career, Roland Barthes had significant influence on the reader-response movement. In *The Death of the Author* (1968), Barthes writes that popular culture "is tyrannically centered on the author, his person, his life, his tastes," and that criticism is more or less an expression of the failures of the person of the author. But instead of rejecting the "Author-God" totally, as the New Critics would, he believes that "a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (pp. 146-148), meaning that authority lies in the reader. He writes, "the text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture," the multiplicity of meanings brought together in the act of reading.

Reader-response critics, too, saw the text and reader interacting to create meaning, rather than meaning conveyed through a one-way conduit originating with the author. How "reader-response" is defined varies; some considered it individual, some collective, and some considered meaning static and some dynamic. Overall, however, reader-response critics considered a "text" an invention of the reader's mind, rather than an

object to decode to find the “real” meaning intended by the author. Well-known figures include David Bleich, who saw literature as an opportunity for readers to learn about themselves; “transactional” critics such as Wolfgang Iser and Louise Rosenblatt; Stanley Fish, most known for his work, *Is There a Text in This Class?* (1980); and psychological critics such as Norman Holland, who was associated with cognitive theory.

Foucault, then, discussed the death and replacement of “the author” for other concepts such as “writing” or “work.” For Foucault, however, a major problem with the concept of a work for this purpose was its own definition. Foucault wondered “what is a work? [...] Is it not what an author has written?” (Foucault, 1984, p. 103), fixing its link to the author and thus revealing the impossibility of this replacement or dissociation. In Foucault’s thesis, the problem with the definition of a work is the unity to designate it: rough drafts, plans for aphorisms, deleted passages, end notes, references, marginalia, and even a laundry list might be part of someone’s work, or not (and not precisely “any” one’s in his example, but no less than Nietzsche’s). For Foucault, the unity of a work, the definition of a work “amid the millions of traces left by someone,” would be as problematic as the author’s individuality (Foucault, 1984, p. 103). These problems, in the catalog, might be translated to the process of representation of works and retrieval of authors, as well as to the problem of the representation of a work by its author in those cases in which not everything represented by the author might be useful to define the work.

2. Methodology: phenomenological discourse analysis

Our method is simple. We use cases that we have studied before, but here we use them as bases of phenomenological discourse analysis, combining as best we can components of eidetic bracketing (a Husserlian technique for isolating noetic reduction) with Foucauldian discourse analysis. The two approaches are not sympathetic or together cogent, so we present them instead as alternative explanations alongside empirical evidence. In this way we are able to isolate components of iconic “authorship” and then subsequently engage them in discourse. In this way we are able to reveal a fuller conceptualization of the role of authors, built from both perspectives, as fundamental concepts in information discourse.

The application of Foucauldian discourse analysis in library and information science (LIS) has been presented in Frohmann (1992, 1994a, b, 2001), Budd and Raber (1996), Budd (2006), Radford (2003), Radford and Radford (2005) and Haider and Bawden (2007) among others. For John Budd, “a considerable portion of the work that is done in LIS can benefit from discourse analysis as research method” (Budd, 2006, p. 65). Haider and Bawden state that “although discourse analysis has some tradition in LIS research, it has only recently become more visible and more frequently used as a tool or framework” (Haider and Bawden, 2007, p. 540). Marike Finlay also provided a description of discourse analysis that was used in LIS by Bernd Frohmann (1992, 1994a): “the study of the way in which an object or idea, any object or idea, is taken up by various institutions and epistemological positions, and of the way in which those institutions and positions treat it. Discourse analysis studies the way in which objects or ideas are spoken about” (Finlay, 1987, p. 2). In this vein, we use a Foucauldian framework to study how the role of the author is treated by institutions and authors in different moments such as the *Seven Epitomes* in China, Panizzi’s cataloging rules in the nineteenth century in the Western tradition, and, as a timeline maturity of a globalized culture, Google and other representational tools in the current world wide web for both Abelard, as an author, and Julia Child’s *The French Chef*, as an the example of a superwork with secondary texts that should be “connected” by the author.

Other relevant discourse analyses and studies on discourses that have been published in the LIS literature include: Haider and Bawden (2007), applying Foucauldian discourse analysis to deconstruct the notion of “information poverty” as it emerged in LIS and to examine how it results in the objectification of the “information poor” as a group; Cox (2007), studying the discourse of web management in UK higher education; Špiranec and Zorica (2010), using descriptive analysis of contrasting features of library user education, information literacy and information literacy 2.0 to determine whether the concept of literacy 2.0 is “hype or discourse refinement”, Nahl (2007), using a discourse analysis technique for analyzing text, speech, or dialog produced by people when discussing their information behaviors in context and introducing the domain interaction discourse analysis; Talja *et al.* (1997), López-Huertas (1997) and Nielsen (2001) applying discourse analysis to the construction of thesauri. According to Nielsen the difference between the three approaches is that: “Talja *et al.* (1997) used the methodology to extract and classify the users’ vocabulary and López-Huertas (1997) to structure the vocabulary of a thesaurus. Both used the methodology of discourse analysis to gain semantic knowledge to analyze and structure the vocabulary, and therefore have another focus compared to the present study which uses discourse analysis at a more abstract level to gain insight into the context of information retrieval” (p. 777). Brewster *et al.* (2012), apply discourse analysis to evidence-based practice and self-help bibliotherapy in connection with healthcare policy. These authors use linguistic approaches to critical discourse analysis (CDA), such as Wetherell *et al.* (2001a, b) and Fairclough (2009), and actor network theory, an approach to examine longitudinal shifts in policy and practice; Kouper (2010), applying a combination of discourse and content analysis of information about the synthesis of life forms in the public sphere, also drawing from linguistics CDA approaches such as Van Dijk (1988, 1993) and Fairclough (1992, 1995); Abrahamson and Rubin (2012), applying it to health information behavior research (using rhetorical structure theory and linguistics techniques); Westbrook (2007) applying discourse analysis “to examine the syntactic and content markers of formality levels employed by both the user and the librarian in reference chat sessions in an effort to understand the nature of the relationship over the course of the exchange” (p. 642); Heok and Luyt (2010), applying a discourse analysis, based on a social constructivist epistemology, to internet access in Singapore’s public libraries; McKenzie (2003), reporting on the development of a model that is derived from a constructionist discourse analysis of individuals’ accounts of everyday life in information seeking. The author states (p. 20) that this form of discourse analysis (sometimes called discourse analysis in social psychology) was developed by social psychologists (Potter and Wetherell, 1987; Potter, 1996), drawing on several theoretical traditions and seeking to incorporate insights from a variety of discourse analytic approaches; and Mayor and Robinson (2014), applying a combination of bibliometric analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis to the ways in which the gene ontology is used and maintained. Mayor and Robinson regard discourse analysis as “a specific form of content analysis, focussing on the way in which spoken or written language is used, with the aim of analyzing in detail the way in which ideas are treated” (p. 183), and also acknowledge that the specific form of discourse analysis used is the form of CDA devised by Fairclough.

It should be noted the variety of approaches and types of “discourse analyses” that can be found in the literature. This is probable due to the fact that, as Graham (2005) points out, Foucault never “prescribed” (as in systematized) a way on how to replicate his analyses or one must go in order for it to be authentic, something that would be

“hypocrisy of the highest form” (p. 5). In general lines, several authors (e.g. Frohmann, 1994a; Taylor, 2004; Budd, 2006; Martínez-Ávila, 2012) have pointed the acknowledgment of basically two big groups of “discourse analyses”: “linguistic-based analysis (such as conversation, which could be applied in any setting where information professionals mediate between the universe of information and information seekers), and culturally or socially based discursive practices (along the lines of the analyses that Michel Foucault has conducted)” (Budd, 2006, p. 65). For instance, Taylor, following Fairclough’s (2003) work for social research, also identifies the difference between those approaches as the close attention to the linguistic features of texts-identified as “textually oriented discourse analysis” (Taylor, 2004, p. 435). Fairclough has constantly signaled the importance of textual analysis in his CDA, although adding that it cannot solely be reduced to this: “Text analysis is correspondingly only a part of discourse analysis, which also includes analysis of productive and interpretative processes” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24); “text analysis is an essential part of discourse analysis, but discourse analysis is not merely the linguistic analysis of texts” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 3). On the other hand, Frohmann distanced himself from the purely linguistic approach and clarified that “(u)nlike the discourse analysis of linguists, however, which usually (though not exclusively) studies ‘ordinary’ oral conversation, the kind of analysis described here investigates what Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983), in their explication of Foucault, called serious speech acts” (Frohmann, 1994a, p. 120). In our case, we have also discarded most linguistic approaches to discourse analysis for a more open and flexible combination of the method with our phenomenological approach.

3. Case studies

In two earlier studies (Smiraglia *et al.*, 2010, 2011), the perceptions of authorship in the Anglo-American library cataloging tradition were examined. These studies revealed that the author had become an iconic denominator of an alphabetico-classed system of ordering approved texts. Elements of the *Seven Epitomes* and the example of Abelard’s XX from Panizzi’s nineteenth-century cataloging rules were used in both of those studies. A third study by Smiraglia and Lee (2012) added the case of *The French Chef* for the purpose of extending analysis of the role of the author as iconic class denominator in the online catalog environment. Thus the three cases presented here are those used in the earlier studies. Smiraglia and Lee (2012, p. 36) itemized the cases thusly:

- the first documented imperial library catalogue, the *Seven Epitomes* (Qilue [七略]), in China;
- Abelard’s Works, which featured prominently in the 1848 testimony of Antonio Panizzi concerning the British Museum catalogue, a bellwether development; and
- *The French Chef*, including moving image material from the television program hosted by Julia Child and the large family of instantiated works associated with it.

The three cases were chosen for that study as well as for the present analysis because of their value as complex superworks. Each is the progenitor of a large class of aggregated works, which in turn reveal contours of the diverse roles of interwoven creators, which in turn is useful for perceiving the shifting role of authorship. Finally, each case is itself culturally iconic in some way, which means their public perception, represented by ample presence on the world wide web yields a large body of empirical evidence that for discourse analysis.

3.1 Analysis of the *Seven Epitomes*

We acknowledge that the study of the *Seven Epitomes* through Foucauldian and phenomenological lenses might run the risk of interpretive errors due to the possible imposition of epistemologies of different cultures in the analysis. Foucault, when wondering how one characterizes a discourse containing the author function or in what way this discourse is different from other discourses, preceded his questions with “in our culture” (Foucault, 1984, p. 108), opening the possibility of differences and discontinuities of his analysis across cultures. Thus, to avoid these interpretive errors, we must situate the *Seven Epitomes* in its original cultural context – two thousand years ago in imperial China – as much as possible (Lee and Lan, 2011), and be aware of the construction of the perception by a hypothetical Foucauldian reader of the *Seven Epitomes* “in our culture,” which, although different from its original culture, is acceptable and even desirable to compare and study the appearance and growth (and shifting perceptions) of the concept of “author” in different moments and cultures.

The *Seven Epitomes*, a classified library catalog, was the end product of a collation project that salvaged and organized the dynastic library (Lee and Lan, 2009). The collators followed the authorship principle when they compared different versions, sorted disintegrated slats and eliminated duplicates, and finalized each book. As a result, many works included in the catalog were constructed anthologies that comprised short pieces sharing the same authorship, genre, or theme. In numerous cases, texts by the same author were gathered into a single book whose title often included the author’s name (Lee, 2012), apparently strengthening the link between the work and the author.

Foucault (1984, p. 107) wrote:

The author’s name is not simply an element in a discourse (capable of being either subject or object, of being replaced by a pronoun, and the like); it performs a certain role with regard to narrative discourse, assuring a classificatory function. Such a name permits one to group together a certain number of texts, define them, differentiate them from and contrast them to others. In addition, it establishes a relationship among the texts.

In the *Seven Epitomes*, the usual inclusion of the author’s name in the title of a work might suggest a reinforcement of the role of the author and its classificatory function. However, the concept of the author in the catalog is not being used as an access point or organizing criterion for information retrieval. As explained elsewhere (Lee, 2012), the catalog presents only one structuring and retrieval method – by the given classification. The identity of the person of the author, which establishes the authority of the author’s name iconically, does not affect the catalog’s overall structure nor can it be used for searching.

As the only retrieval mechanism in the catalog, the classification is predominantly a ranking system of classicist (also known as Confucian) moral values (Smiraglia and Lee, 2012). This ideology and ranking system of moral values affects not only the forces driving the development of the system but also the perceptions by users and their constructions of the concept of “the author,” through the inclusion and omission of information about the authors, the criteria for the application of the author function in the gathering of texts under the unit of a work, and, most importantly, in the structure. In the classified catalog, Confucius is elevated above all other masters when two works he has “authored,” *The Analects (Lunyu)* and *The Book of Filial Piety (Xiaojing)*, are included in the foremost class rather than being mixed in with other masters’ works in the second class (Lee, 2012). Indeed, the role of Confucius in these works might be far

from that of a traditional “author.” *The Analects* is an anthology of Confucius’ teachings that was compiled and edited by his students after his death. In spite of the credit given to Confucius for being the compiler of other works such as *The Odes* (*Shijing*), those students of his who compiled the *Analects* are unnamed in the catalog (Smiraglia and Lee, 2012). Neither the omission of the students nor the elevation of Confucius seems to be happenstance here; these acts seem deliberate for the following reasons: first, three basic types of authorship have been recognized in the *Seven Epitomes*: composer of the text, transmitter, and editor-compiler (Smiraglia *et al.*, 2011); second, Confucius has famously described himself as the faithful transmitter of classical texts, not an author (Confucius, 1983). Thus, it can be reiterated that the classification of the *Seven Epitomes* “played a significant role in proclaiming and maintaining classicism as the intellectual authority and, in the meantime, other writings that deviated from classicist ideals” (Lee and Lan, 2011, p. 40).

The placement of the author’s name in a title and of biographical information about the author in an annotation might be seen as acts of restitution of the work to the author, perhaps the birth of the discourse. This information about the entities of authors in relation to the entities of works might also be seen as a closer step to the Foucault-inspired model presented by Budd and Moulaison (2012) that “extends beyond the attributes of a person, a human being who lives in a certain place at a certain time and who has other identifiable attributes” (Moulaison *et al.*, 2013, p. 3; Moulaison *et al.*, 2014, p. 3). While in Western traditional knowledge organization systems used in libraries, information about attributes of authors has been and remains hidden from patrons, the inclusion of information about the author in the *Seven Epitomes* might be a step in the opposite direction.

Foucault argued that using a proper noun as a reference means that it cannot be turned into a simple reference; it is: “more than an indication, a gesture, a finger pointed at someone, it is the equivalent of a description” (Foucault, 1984, p. 105). Here, accepting classicism, the catalogers act as the main strategies of control shaping the concept of the author. It thus would be possible to infer that if some of the personal features described in the biography of Confucius or others in the catalog were exaggerated or even nonexistent, the link between the proper noun, which is a person’s name and the designated person would not be modified at all. However, if some of the features related to the link between author and work were manipulated or demonstrated to be false (e.g. if a student had changed the whole meaning of a teaching to preserve the unity of the discourse) that would not only alter the link between the author’s name and what it implies by what it describes in the catalog, but should also modify the function of the author’s name (e.g. Would Confucius be Confucius without his moral values?). However, due to the overriding force of the structure and the strategies of control that shape it, even if the descriptions were changed and rectified according to this new finding, only if the transformation modifies the system’s structure would there be a real influence on people’s perceptions about the status of the work. Does it really matter whether Laozi, the author, existed or not? Is Laozi more important than the *Dao de jing*, said to be written by Laozi, in an intellectual lineage-driven system? This seems to contradict, at least in the Western modern tradition, the first characteristic of the “author function” for Foucault: “discourses are objects of appropriation” (Foucault, 1984, p. 108). On the other hand, it is important to highlight here the revealed importance of the strategies of control in the system as the main forces capable of modifying and shaping the authority and meaning of the author in relation to a work through the structure of the

system and independently of the a priori Foucault-friendly descriptions of the *Seven Epitomes* (thus revealing the system to be very un-Foucauldian indeed).

The second characteristic of the “author function” for Foucault is that “the author function does not affect all discourses in a universal and constant way” (Foucault, 1984, p. 109). Foucault shows how the concept of the author has affected different types of texts (literary, scientific, etc.) in different moments, resulting in different perceptions of their value. In the case of the *Seven Epitomes* this characteristic might be linked to the structure of the system and the different perceptions of different types of works according to their authors’ moral values, as well as the function of the types. The catalog’s introductory passages, for instance, insists that poetry in the Epitome of Lyrics and Rhapsodies is considered inferior to that in the poetic Classic, the *Odes*, because of the deprived status of their authors and the loss of political functions at court of this type of poetry (Connery, 1998). Therefore, the function of the author affects the perceptions of the discourse only according to the ruling system of values and strategies of control organizing the different types and authors in the structure, and not in a uniform and homogeneous horizontal way.

The third characteristic of the “author function” for Foucault is that “it does not develop spontaneously as the attribution of a discourse to an individual. It is, rather, the result of a complex operation which constructs a certain rational being that we call “author” (Foucault, 1984, p. 110). For Foucault, the construction of “the author” differs for a poet and for a philosophical author; similarly, for him, the construction of a novelist was different in the eighteenth century from that in the twentieth century. However, as Foucault also pointed out, certain constants are evident in the rules of author construction through the ages and across societies. “I am supposing that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality” (Foucault, 1972, p. 216). These rules, at least in the western world, seem to be derived from how the Christian tradition authenticated or rejected the texts. “In order to ‘rediscover’ an author in a work, modern criticism uses methods similar to those that Christian exegesis employed when trying to prove the value of a text by its author’s saintliness” (Foucault, 1984, p. 110). One example is the failed attempt of sanctification of Confucius by the Jesuits. Bergua (1969) explains how Jesuit missionaries of the seventeenth century in China became amazed by the wisdom and moral superiority of the work of Confucius, so they proposed his inclusion among the Church’s saints by the Pope. Although disregarded by the Pope, the suggestion to sanctify Confucius was an attempt to authenticate the value of his work. And here, instead of “rediscovering” an author by proving the value of the text by its author’s saintliness, the missionaries attempted to create the value of the text by making Confucius a saint. In other words, it was the reconstruction of an author to authenticate a work that was previously recognized by experience, the continuation of a previous discourse. The perception of Confucius by the Jesuits, once they had lived experiences in China, was different from the Pope’s, who had no lived experience of him. However, the attempt to sanctify Confucius seems to be an alternative device for the construction of the perception for those who have no lived experience, as though the lived experience by others during the process and approval of sanctification was able to replace one’s lived experience in the construction of the author.

In the case of the *Seven Epitomes*, that author’s saintliness mentioned by Foucault might be equivalent to how the author’s moral values and intellectual lineage develop

the author function. To the Chinese, an author's life and scholarly pedigree establishes intellectual authority, and the intellectual lineage is so important that it is used in a classified approach to organize entries. The catalogers convey the message that the authority and meaning of a text come from its author(s) just as the catalogers establish a structure and rhetoric to influence reading of individual texts (Smiraglia *et al.*, 2010). In a circular way, the moral values of the author shape the authority of the work, i.e. its value, while the moral values governing the structure of the system (supposedly reflecting the values of the authors) will shape the construction of the author that will eventually mark a place in the structure (i.e. making the author valuable). Consequently, it seems obvious that the key factor in determining the values of the system, and thus the perception of the authors, is a third type of external authority that affects the construction and transformation of the concept. In the case of Foucault, the drive of this authority was exemplified by the values of the Christian exegesis, while in the case of the *Seven Epitomes* these would be the strategies of control instigated by the political institutions and exerted by the catalogers' practices.

Other examples of analogies between the Christian exegesis described by Foucault and the construction of the concept of "the author" in the *Seven Epitomes* can also be found in some of the annotations of the catalog. In this vein, Foucault (1984, p. 111) relates how in the Christian tradition Saint Jerome proposed four criteria to determine whether one is dealing with one or several individuals in relation to a discourse (or, in other words, the unity of a discourse):

- (1) If among several books attributed to an author one is inferior to the others, it must be withdrawn from the list of the author's works (the author is therefore defined as a constant level of value);
- (2) the same should be done if certain texts contradict the doctrine expounded in the author's other works (the author is thus defined as a field of Conceptual or theoretical coherence);
- (3) one must also exclude works that are written in a different style, containing words and expressions not ordinarily found in the writer's production (the author is here conceived as a stylistic unity);
- (4) finally, passages quoting statements that were made or mentioning events that occurred after the author's death must be regarded as interpolated texts (the author is here seen as a historical figure at the cross-roads of a certain number of events).

In the *Seven Epitomes*, similar criteria seem to be followed by the catalogers when, for instance, they express doubt about authorship. In some cases the annotation of an entry asserts that the given writing was not in the style of the claimed period and in other cases it repudiates an authorship attribution to a renowned ancient figure by pointing out the inferior quality of the writing (implying inferior morality) (Lee, 2012). In the first case, those annotations would fit Saint Jerome's criteria 2 and 4, while in the second case they would fit criteria 1 and 3. It has also been acknowledged that the catalog provided guidance by offering authoritative opinions through interpretive commentaries. This aspect would also clearly fit Saint Jerome's 4th criterion.

3.2 Analysis of Abelard's works

While in the case of the ancient China it has been shown that the author already played an important role in both "scientific" and literary texts (although not in a Foucauldian way, for the purpose of our discourse analysis we might set that moment as the appearance of the discourse in that culture), in the Western world the importance of the authorial role in literature has been steadily gaining relevance since the seventeenth century: "Now, we demand of all those narratives, poems, dramas and comedies which circulated relatively anonymously throughout the middle ages, whence they come, and

we virtually insist they tell us who wrote them” (Foucault, 1972, p. 222). It should be added that, in the modern days, we insist that they tell us through information represented in catalogs perhaps revealing a relationship between constraints and the emergence and growth of the discourse. We have used the complete works of Abelard as a case in our analysis of the meaning of authorship because the editions extant in the mid-nineteenth century played a prominent role in the development of Anthony Panizzi’s cataloging rules for the printed catalog of the library at the British Museum (see Panizzi 1848/1985). Our most extensive explication occurs in Smiraglia and Lee (2012). Foucault said that the author’s name should not simply be an element in a discourse, but also perform a certain role with regard to narrative discourse assuring a classificatory function, permitting one to group together a certain number of texts, define them, differentiate them from and contrast them to others, and establish a relationship among the texts (Foucault, 1984). This after all is the function an author’s name plays in a library catalog in the Anglo-American tradition that can be traced from Panizzi. The author’s name does not serve to characterize any certain mode of being of discourse as expressed by Foucault; rather the author as person is dispossessed from the works classed under the author’s name, and the name therefore is confined to a guardian function of keeping the group of works together and in order.

In Smiraglia and Lee (2012) we showed how the name of Abelard was used by Panizzi to form a class named ABÆLARDUS, with a division titled “Opera” (i.e. “works”) which was populated by the editions extant in Panizzi’s library. The point is, the publications populating this class might contain text written by Abelard, but they also contain text written to and about Abelard. The name is not so much an indication of attribution as it is an iconic identifier of a class of related classical works. Instead of the Foucauldian function of the author’s name as a link to the person’s intellectual responsibility through the descriptions, here we see the use of a proper noun as a label for a class of instantiations. Under the alphabetically arranged class of “Abelard,” the intellectual responsibility and descriptions of other authors participating in those works (such as his ill-fated companion Heloise and the commentaries by Duchesne used in the examples) are even silenced and confused with regard to their roles as authors.

The first of the current retrieval tools for which we are going to test the representation of Abelard as an author is Google, the world wide web search engine par excellence in the Western world and perhaps the culmination of a dream of homogeneity of discourses and continuities across cultures in a post-colonial world (and specially with the non-profitable geo-local-customization of the representation of authors and works). A quick and simple Google search for “Abelard” retrieves an object in the results page that includes a small piece of biographical information (under the name of Pierre Abelárd) and five books attributed to him. When the links for any of these books are clicked, the user is referred to a results page that is the equivalent to a Google search for that specific book. That page also gathers other books by the same author. These eight books are the same books that are linked in the case of Abelard if we click on “books” (or search for “pierre abelard books,” since Google refers the users to its equivalent page), although in this case the information about any specific book is replaced in the biographical information. Of the gathered books, one, *Forbidden Fruit*: from the letters of Abelard and Heloise is said to be authored (according to Google) by Pierre Abélard and Heloise, although it should be noted that Google’s first result on the page, Amazon.com, includes one more author, Radice. The only other book that appears listed by Google as authored by Pierre Abélard and Heloise is *The Letters and*

Other Writings. The rest of the “Pierre Abélard” books linked by Google, (*The Letters of Abelard and Heloise* (1978), *Ethical Writings: His Ethics or “Know Yourself” and His Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew, And a Christian*, *Distoria Calamitatum – The Story of My Misfortunes*, *Letters of Peter Abelard*, *Beyond the Personal*, *The Love Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, and *The Love Letters of Abelard and Heloise – The Original Classic Edition* – some of these are instantiations of a previously listed work) only include Pierre Abélard as the author, omitting every other mention of responsibility even in the flagrant cases of several editions of *The Love Letters of Abelard and Heloise*. In this case, although the relationship between the author and works is established (including only a selection of works and mixing different instantiations), the inaccuracy of the biographical information about the author in relation to the works and other important people in his life, e.g., Heloise, restricts a Foucault-friendly representation and perception of the author.

Another web resource is Freebase, the large collaborative knowledge base that was initially developed by Metaweb and later acquired by Google. A Freebase search for “Abelard” retrieves a record in which Pierre Abélard, Philosopher (as he is identified in the search box with the help of a brief excerpt from the Wikipedia) appears more characterized as a topic than as an author. As of March 2014, there are 80 sources that Freebase lists as topic equivalent pages for this record, including NNDB/people, the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF), several language variations of Wikipedia, Musicbrainz (that states that Peter Abelard’s works are *Troubadour Songs and Medieval Lyrics* (Paul Hillier, Stephen Stubbs and Lena-Liis Kiesel), *Medieval Carols*, *Joan of Arc: Musical Revelations* and *Music from the Time of the Crusades*), Openlibrary.org/authors, and the Library of Congress Name Authority File (under the entry “Abelard, Peter, pp. 1079-1142”). However, despite all of this biographical information in the sources (also translated to the complete biographical information about him in the “People-Person” field), the structure of the Freebase database does not prevent this author, designated by the name “Pierre Abélard En (in English)” in the record, from being treated more as an object than as a subject (i.e. a person who authors). In the Freebase record, the “Books-Works written about this topic” field seems to mix books written by Abelard and about Abelard, as it is evidenced by the inclusion of *Forbidden Fruit*: from the letters of Abelard and Heloise (that however acknowledges Pierre Abélard, Heloise – expressed just as in Google – as the authors of the book) and *Heloise & Abelard: a new biography* by James Burge. On the other hand, the “Media-Author-Works-written” field seems to be the only device in the Freebase’s structure that gives insight about the relationship between the author and the work. However, as of August 2013, in the case of “Peter Abélard,” his field only showed one book written by this author, the aforementioned *Forbidden Fruit*: from the letters of Abelard and Heloise published in 2007, which also deceives the classificatory function in addition to the description of the author that was expressed by Foucault (1984). By March 2014, this field had added six more books: *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, *The Letters and Other Writings*, *Letters of Peter Abelard*, *Beyond the Personal*, *Hymnarius Paraclythensis*, and Peter Abelard: *Opera*, arguably including several instances of the same work (Letters).

Finally, the VIAF record for Abelard also shows some minor biographical information about Abelard, essentially in the field “About,” including gender, nationality, and languages. The relationship between Abelard and his works might be potentially traced to two fields: “Uniform Title Links” and “Selected Titles.” In the “Uniform Title Links” field, every collective title of an instantiation of a text that is

supposed to have been authored by Abelard seems to be listed under the heading “Works”. The use of the word “works” here seems to be misleading, since there is more than one “signifying, concrete set of ideational conceptions that finds realization through semantic or symbolic expression” (Smiraglia, 2001, p. 129), in fact, no fewer than 29 works are listed here and only five of these works have expressions, four of them have one expression and only one has two expressions. Thus this particular gathering by “works” and “expressions” is deceptive to the relationship between an author and the work in a Foucauldian sense as well. On the other hand, in the “Selected titles” field, the number of occurrences of titles is not reduced to works, as one might have hoped, but a few titles are listed in the form of several language variants (expressions), such as *Correspondencia* and *Letters*. In this vein, the perception of a user looking for information about Abelard’s work in VIAF will also be transformed and shaped according to the structure and selection of information of VIAF.

In summary, Panizzi’s rules and the example of Abelard’s work seem to be perfect examples for the revealing of the author as a concept defectively constructed as an iconic class symbol, and contrary to the Foucauldian sense of its functions. In the case of Panizzi’s rules, the institutions affecting the construction of the author, as something contrary to a person who writes a book, are revealed to be the practices promoted by as the main strategy of control of books. The use of these rules with the main purpose of an alphabetical arrangement also brought a side effect that was the arrangement of works under a string of characters designating an author. As a consequence of this, there has been a transformation of the concept of the author from the name of a person to a string of characters that has been continued to the present, continually shaping perception by users and hiding features in relation to the intellectual responsibility and the function of the person as author.

3.3 Analysis of *The French Chef*

The French Chef was an iconic public television cooking show that was aired from 1963 to 1973. In spite of its limited budget, *The French Chef* showed increasing and impressive production values every season, including some pioneer practices such as the now ubiquitous (on food television) overhead camera shot that could demonstrate the action of a cook’s hands or in a pot. Some of the original credits of the show featured music by John Morris, production by Russell Morash or Ruth Lockwood, and direction by several other people, including John Morash. As success drove the increasingly sophisticated development of episodes, more people contributed to the intellectual responsibility of the production. It was thoroughly, as a series, a work of shared multiple contributions, and in no way a work of authorship. In addition, there are other instantiations of progenitor or related works that directly preceded and succeeded *The French Chef*. On the one hand, the origins of the television program seemed to be rooted in the best-selling book, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, written by Julia Child together with Simone Beck and Louisette Bertholle, published in 1961. On the other hand, some of the contents of the program were captured subsequently in *The French Chef Cookbook*, published in 1968 at the middle of the program’s life-span, written by Julia Child and including illustrations by her husband Paul Child. Since some of the text passages from *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* were reused in *The French Chef Cookbook*, and, of course, the format of the latter closely followed the recorded episodes of the television show. Thus there is a semantic and ideational relationship among all three “progenitor” works. There also are other more distantly related works such as the 2009 motion picture *Julie & Julia*, directed by Nora Ephron, and even the famous 1978

Saturday Night Live skits by Dan Aykroyd that also, arguably, share some semantic and ideational content. Finally, for each node of this superwork set there are other sets of instantiations too, including translations, digitizations and other texts, that, although all share a connection with Julia Child as catalyst, also show a diversity of attributions and new practices.

From a phenomenological perspective, it is acknowledged that the lived experience of individuals encountering this family of works might incorporate different perceptions of the aforementioned instantiations, rendering the perception of authorship in this case at the very least diffuse. For example, for somebody who was only familiar with the television program, the related cookbooks – *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* and *The French Chef Cookbook* – might be perceived as subsidiary works based on the progenitor television program *The French Chef*. In such a potential perception, the perceived adaptation from television program to book, however fictional, might be regarded as defining the authorial responsibility of Julia Child only for marketing. In such a case (however far-fetched), the author's name would function primarily for marketing, and not for intellectual attribution. However, for somebody who had encountered *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* before watching *The French Chef*, the television program probably might be perceived as an adaptation from book to television, and probably this perception would not change until this person experienced the program and witnessed the degree of involvement and role of Julia Child as hostess, teacher, and chef. In every possible case involving lived experience as interaction with the nodes of the superwork, the role of Julia Child might seem to vary. Foucault also talked about this, about prior experience (or originating experience) as a manner of eliding the reality of discourse (Foucault, 1972, p. 228). He also added that: “a primary complicity with the world (recognition) founds, for us, a possibility of speaking of experience, in it, to designate and name it, to judge it and, finally, to know it in the form of truth” (p. 228). This variation of the perception of Julia Child as author, or originator, is also susceptible to transformation in knowledge organization systems, depending on the description and representation of the works, their attributions, the way they designate them, name them, and judge them, and the representation and function of Julia Child in relation to this discourse.

Regarding this, Foucault (1984, p. 113 ff.) raised the following questions:

- What place does a named concept occupy in discourse?
- Does “author” deprive the concept of its role as originator of discourse?
- Is not an author a functional principle by which culture limits, excludes, and chooses?
- Is not an “author” the “founder of discursivity”?

For Foucault, authors as founders of discursivity would be very different from, for instance, a novelist, who is simply the writer of a text. Rather, founders of discursivity are exemplified by Freud and Marx, who are not just the authors of “The interpretation of dreams or jokes and their relation to the unconscious” and the *Communist Manifesto* or *Das Kapital*, but indeed “they both have established an endless possibility of discourse.” By no means we are trying to suggest that the importance and role of Julia Child's discourse or that French cooking must be situated at the same level as Freud's and Marx's, or that she started the discourse of cooking as a science or that her style of cooking is equivalent to the founding of a field.

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However, besides these differences, in the current www representation it is clear that there might be some useful analogies between the case of the superwork of *The French Chef* and what Foucault was talking about in his examples about starting discursivity, and hence the justification of this case for analysis. First, in spite of the arguable similarities between the establishment of the Gothic novel characteristics and the innovation of practices such as the overhead camera shot in cooking programs, the case of Julia Child would not be the same as in the counter-example of Ann Radcliffe used by Foucault (1984). The main difference here seems to be that *The French Chef* did not only allow other similar programs to be developed, but also served to derive other unrelated works, while other Gothic novels by other writers hardly can be considered works derived from Ann Radcliffe. This leads to the second analogy, as in the case of Marx and Freud, Julia Child's discourse might have "made possible not only a certain number of analogies, but also (and equally important) a certain number of differences" (Foucault, 1984, p. 114), while at the same time it gathered all those different works and instantiations under the same superwork in a classificatory fashion. Here, it would be hard to justify the addition of the Ann Radcliffe's authorship or even attribution in every Gothic novel written since hers.

Although Foucault predominantly talks about discourses in science, there might be more similarities between Julia Child's *The French Chef* and the initiations of discursive practices by Marx and Freud than between Julia Child and the founding of any scientific endeavor, such as Cuvier's and Saussure's. For Foucault, one of the main differences between them would be that "unlike the founding of a science, the initiation of a discursive practice does not participate in its later transformations" (Foucault, 1984, p. 114). This point might be analogously considered for examples such as the *Julie & Julia* movie and the *Saturday Night Live* skits, because, rather than just showing some formal and technical resemblances, they also share semantic and ideational contents with *The French Chef*. However, it has to be noted here that Foucault recognized that "It is not always easy to distinguish between the two; moreover, nothing proves that they are two mutually exclusive procedures" (Foucault, 1984, p. 117). Also, we recognize that the characteristics of the example of *The French Chef* might not strictly parallel the examples used by Foucault. However, the use of a Foucauldian framework for the analysis of *The French Chef* seems to be justified by the purpose and bigger scope of the analysis itself, that in our case it is to show the intrinsicalities of the author function in a class of instantiations. As Foucault stated, "I have attempted the distinction for only one reason: to show that the author function, which is complex enough when one tries to situate it at the level of a book or a series of texts that carry a given signature, involves still more determining factors when one tries to analyze it in larger units, such as groups of works or entire disciplines" (Foucault, 1984, p. 117).

Who is the real Julia Child? Or, perhaps we should ask, what does it matter for information retrieval, or for knowledge organization? On an empirical plane, a Google search for Julia Child retrieves some biographical information about her and highlights some of her main works. While as of August 2013 Google highlighted the visual display of five books and just mentioned her role in the movie *We're Back! A Dinosaur Story*, an animated movie in which she voiced the character of Dr Bleeb, as of March 2014 those categories seem to have been reversed as five "Movies and TV shows" are visually displayed and fourteen books are listed. In any case, there is no reference to the *The French Chef* television program in the first results page, making palpable the concept that the name of Julia Child, here, plays no role with regard to *The French Chef* or any

other discourse. Rather, it seems that the name of Julia Child (as a string of characters) is functioning as a designation of the person, constructed with all information gathered from the web, but not linking this biographical description to any particular indication of her work as something that “is not ordinary everyday speech that merely comes and goes, not something that is immediately consumable” (Foucault, 1984, p. 107). The first five books included in Julia Child’s profile on the Google results page were: *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (1961), coauthored by Simone Beck and Louisette Bertholle, *My Life in France* (2006), coauthored by Alex Prud’homme (and also noting the adaptation to *Julie & Julia*), *The Way To Cook* (1989), *Julia’s Kitchen Wisdom*, and *Julia Child and More Company*. When clicking on the links for any of these books, we were redirected to a new class of books called Julia Child books that expanded these five titles to seventeen, all of them including her as an author. As of March 2014, when we clicked on links for any of the books we are redirected to a similar page that shows the same fourteen books. The books that have been removed since August 2013 are *Julia and Jacques Cooking at Home*, *The French Chef Cookbook*, and *From Julia Child’s Kitchen*. At both moments (August 2013 and March 2014), although most of these books note her role in *The French Chef* television program (through the description field extracted from Wikipedia or Google Books), none of them shows anywhere else this common superwork or its relationship with her as an author. In our Foucauldian analysis, this division and exclusion (and even rejection) in the organization and representation of works can be regarded as another system for the control and delimitation of the discourse, in this case an internal one analogous to the “internal rules, where discourse exercises its own control; rules concerned with the principles of classification, ordering and distribution” (Foucault, 1972, p. 220). In the same page, Foucault uses the example of “a society without its major narratives, told, retold and varied; formulae, texts, ritualized texts to be spoken in well-defined circumstances; things said once, and conserved because people suspect some hidden secret or wealth lies buried within” and commentaries, that can be extrapolated to the example of the original superwork *The French Chef* (that perhaps it is only kept as a hook or advertisement of derived works or perhaps it is only kept by the author function for “external eyes”, an external perception). The example of Julia Child’s *The French Chef* and the model of the superwork fit with Foucault’s analysis on commentaries as secondary texts, when he states that “Not a few major texts become blurred and disappear, and commentaries sometimes come to occupy the former position. But while the details of application may well change, the function remains the same, and the principle of hierarchy remains at work” (Foucault, 1972, p. 220). The key question here is, does the biographical information of the author in the representation help or affect the role of the author in the discourse and discursivity?

The biographical information about Julia Child in Freebase (Julia Child-chef, the most complete of her profiles and as it appears characterized in the search box) is obviously much more complete than in the case of Abelard, including aspects such as the date and place of birth, ethnicity, parents, siblings, spouse, employment history, education, height, places lived, and more. As for her function as an author, Julia Child appears to be credited for the following categories: “Film actor-Film performance,” for her voice for Dr Bleeb in *We’re Back! A Dinosaur’s Story*, “Film story contributor-film story credits,” for *Julie & Julia* (that also appears listed as a “film on this subject”), “Person or entity appearing in film,” listing twelve films in which she appears and also showing other attributions such as the direction, “Books-Literature subject-works written about this topic,” for *My Life in France* (written by Julia Child and Alex

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Prud'Homme). Again, it should be noted here the treatment of the author's name as a topic and not as a person), "TV actor-starring TV roles," for *Julia and Jacques Cooking at Home*, "TV personality-TV regular appearances," for the programs *The French Chef*, *Julia and Jacques Cooking at Home*, *Cooking with Master Chefs*: hosted by Julia Child, *Baking with Julia*, and Julia and Jacques: *More Cooking in Concert* (this category including the only appearance of *The French Chef* and perhaps suggesting that, contrary to the TV actor role, in her TV regular appearances Julia Child did not have to act or there was no script, something that degrades the perception of the authorship role), and "Media-Author," with thirteen "works written" and six "book editions published," as of August 2013, and fourteen "works written" and six "book editions published," as of March 2014. In no way is the link and role of *The French Chef* television program noted in relation to the development of these or other derived works.

Finally, the VIAF record of Julia Child also includes some biographical information about the person, although most of it can be regarded to be useful for the same disambiguation and classification purposes that have been derived from Panizzi's rules (e.g. preferred forms (of the heading), alternate name forms, etc.). Is this person an "author"? The "Selected titles" field includes many language variations of the same work and not even representatives of instantiations of each work. In addition, *The French Chef* television program, that, as it has been reasoned before, might be considered the start of the discourse by Julia Child and superwork, still remains omitted through the database fields. On the other hand, the only title included in the "Uniform title links-Works" field of VIAF as a work (as of August 2013, this field is not present as of March 2014) is Julia Child & company, that, again, is not strictly speaking a work or informs the user of the author in regards to the start of the discursive practice. In every of these cases, a potential user searching for information about Julia Child would not receive useful insight about the role of Julia Child in the discursive practice or about the importance and link of *The French Chef* in the whole set of works.

4. Just what is an author?

We return to our original question, just what is an author? In cataloging tradition, and to some extent in classical bibliography, an author is foremost a named entity to whom intellectual creativity is attributed. But also, and almost more importantly, in cataloging and bibliographical tradition, as the discourse has been transformed to this date, an author is the name of a class of related works that can be collocated with the iconic representation of the named entity. We turned to Foucauldian discourse analysis to discover the loci of power in the interactions of the public with the named authorial entities. We also looked to phenomenological analysis to consider the lived experience of users who encounter the same named authorial entities. The discussion leads inexorably to the conclusion that an author is not so much a person who writes, as it is the name of a class of works that can be related, either through power structures or lived experience, with a specific named entity.

What does it mean when a search engine, or catalog, asks a user to enter the name of an author? And how does that accord with the manner in which the data have been entered in association with the names of the entities identified with the concept of authorship? This is the crux of the question, because here is where the discontinuity is rife. It is one thing to designate a human by name as "author" but it is another thing entirely to generate the class of works associated with that same name.

Who are the "authors" in the *Seven Epitomes*? Clearly, individuals named are culturally responsible for moral authority associated with their texts. This is discourse

at the highest level, between a people and its government. In the case study of Abelard we see that there is also a discontinuity between the individuals named, their lived reality, and the perceptual reality of their works as influential in spheres beyond their own perception or intention. Perhaps this is a key, then. An “author” is an iconic name associated with a class of works. An “author” is a role in public discourse between a set of works and the culture that consumes them. An “author” is a role in cultural sublimation, or a power broker in deabstemiation. An “author” is last, if ever, a person responsible for the intellectual content of a published work. The library catalog’s attribution of “author” is at odds with the Foucauldian discursive comprehension of the role of an “author.”

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