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JACQUES DERRIDA-DECONSTRUCTION

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Abstract

Jacques Derrida is an Algerian born French phenomenologist. He coins the term 'Deconstruction' which has been exceedingly contentious yet immensely dominant in much of the scholarly world on the late twentieth century, more particularly in the 1970's. Deconstruction, delineated by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, is a post-structuralist movement. Derrida's lecture 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' at a symposium at Johns Hopkins University in 1966 smudges the decentering of our academic cosmos. Derrida believes that the meaning can be attributed to other meanings or significance than the Western metaphysics estimate by means of deconstruction. He elevates the issues about the structuralist ideas like neutrality, certainty in a scientific justification behind the working of any organism. He scrutinizes philosophical texts as constructs of language. He thinks language is rhetorical, fluid and unstable.

Key-Words

Modernism, Postmodernism, Language, Meaning, Writing, Saying, Metaphor, Deconstruction.

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Deconstruction which has attained widespread recognition as one of the most important avant grade intellectual movements in France and America is essentially post-phenomenological and post-structuralism. In the history of contemporary deconstruction the leading figure is Jacques Derrida, who published three influential books in 1976, *Of Grammatology*, *Speech and Phenomena* and *Writing and Diffrence*. Deconstruction idea is not a method, not a technique, not even an act, for a deconstructive reading listens to the deconstructive processes *all the time* going on in the texts and *before now* there in the offing to be read. The deconstructive process comes not from the reader/critic but from the text itself; it is already there, it is the tension 'between what the text manifestly *means to say* and what it is nonetheless *constrained to mean*'. There is no way for deconstruction for the grounds that texts *exactly* deconstruct themselves in their impractical endeavor to utilize language as a 'transcendental signifier that is, as a way of 'pointing' at some perpetual legitimacy or other. As Spivak (1976) observes, 'All texts . . . are rehearsing their grammatological structure, self-deconstructing as they constitute themselves' (p. lxxviii). All that the deconstructionist needs to do, then, is writing, because in the final analysis, deconstruction *is* writing. Furthermore, it is writing with no preconceived goal; as Barthes (1970) put it, 'to *write* is an intransitive verb', a verb without an object, an end in itself. Deconstruction is completing evident itself in the *progress* of writing rather than in the product: 'Deconstruction *takes place*; it is an *event* that does not await the forethought, perception, or organization of a subject. According to Shirley F. Staton, "Deconstruction's

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admirers see it as a way that begins to let us question the presuppositions of the language we think in. Its detractors condemn its subtle and convoluted readings as narcissistic reflexivity”.

Deconstruction is the best-known form of literary criticism known as post structuralism, and in fact many people use the terms interchangeably. To understand the revolution that post structuralism has created in literary criticism, it is necessary to look at some of its predecessors, both structuralism-the movement that it both incorporates and undermines-and those that structuralism itself challenged. The innovatory temperament of deconstruction can be recapitulated by saying that in general it dares the way Western civilization has conjures up of the world since Plato. More specifically, it overturns the principles that have provided basic beliefs about truth and meaning since the eighteenth-century French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician Rene Descartes (1596-1650) applied the rational, inductive methods of science to philosophy. Refusing to accept the truth of anything without grounds for believing it to be true, he began with the one thing he could know, that consciousness of his thinking proved his own existence. "Cogito, ergo sum," he declared. "I think, therefore I am." From that one certainty all other knowledge could proceed. The Cartesian approach, which elevated the importance of reason over passion, superstition, and imagination as a means of finding truth in the natural world, has had an impact well beyond the eighteenth century. It has helped shape the thinking of humanists, artists, and philosophers into the twenty-first century, providing them with the conviction that they could make a better world. If meaning and truth could be found by thinking and acting rationally, humankind could solve social problems, cure illnesses, and create new technologies. In short, through the use of reason progress was possible, perhaps inevitable.

Derrida on Logo centrism:-Derrida reads the history of Western Metaphysics as a continual search for a logos ordinary presence. He said that all of the western metaphysics is logo centric. But he felt the problem. He says we keep trying to find out the logos in origin we cannot get that in the universe system. The transcendental signifier can be referred back. What we mean to say we want the logos meaning we want the center. The main is that thing one signifier refers to another signifier. No absolute is gained. Now behind the reason is that there is the desire for higher reality of full presence that is beyond just not implicated in the play of structure. We know that there is something such as God but not identified. Derrida is like Marxist believes in the non existence of the thing. The personal consciousness is that we have something inside that is the presence and the real that is undefined we yearn for that we are hungry for that which is caught up in the world. Now he claims Western philosophy since Plato has simply renamed the presence and shifted the centre without the breaking from its central impulse. Even though, different philosophers have given different names. But it is based on the same centering impulse. Now Derrida

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explains the metaphysics which is looking for logos. But he is not metaphysical one. Modernists have sought a centre, a fixed locus or presence or origin. But they are decentred. They are juxtaposing the idea "margin to centre". But the structuralists have worked from the old metaphysics and use it in binary form. They think the binary in terms of the logocentricism. When we think center, it may not be God but something presence in the world. Here the binary means the one privileged over the other. Derrida would deconstruct all such attempts to posit a centre or to establish a system of binaries. He would replace it instead with a "full free play of meaning. Derrida said there is no stop in the world. There is no logo, no centre and no presence in the world. But the free play of the word moves in any direction. The can break any rules at nay circumstances. He again said modernism switches the binary but deconstructs want to break the binary. The essay, "structure sign and play in the discourse of the human sciences" (1966), is considered the birth deconstruction. In some cases, postmodernist and deconstructionists are the same. But they are using interchanging. Derrida spends more time to attack the modern theorists that he dies the modern tradition. Derrida particularly attacks Ferdinand de Saussure and *Claude Lévi-Strauss* etc. He just broke the potentialities of the structuralism one of the main reason why the deconstruction is very popular that all the followers of Socrates are using his dialogue to go around and to break down all the idea of their own elder. Another is to find out the reason and logic. In his lecture Derrida identifies three forerunners such as Nietzsche, Freud and Heidegger. Nietzsche and Levi-Strauss the predecessor of Derrida did away with such concepts as being and truth showing them to be arbitrary and in constant play. The question of the dreadful discordance between art and truth or art and science in Nietzsche is, perhaps, a question of the relation of gaiety and gravity. But Heidegger's Nietzsche ignores gaiety-an avoidance which enables Heidegger to avoid the complex and multiplex questions of woman and Christianity or what I call the problem of the "Christian woman" in Nietzsche. This omission facilitates Heidegger's arduous reduction of Nietzsche to positivism. In Chapter 20 of Nietzsche 1, where Heidegger deals with truth in 'Platonism and positivism in relation to "Nietzsche's Attempt to Overturn Platonism on the Basis of Fundamental Experience of Nihilism," he says, "It is indisputable that prior to the time of his work on the planned Magnus opus, *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche went through a period of extreme positivism; these were the years 1879-81, the years of his decisive development toward maturity. Such positivism, though of course transformed, became a part of his later fundamental position also." It is on this restrictive or metaphysical basis that Heidegger delineates Nietzsche's much quoted 1888 statement: "Very early in my life I took the question of the relation of art to truth seriously: and even now I stand in holy dread in the face of this discordance" (Nietzsche 1, 142). Nietzsche took the art-truth relation seriously by approaching it playfully, and it is this playful dimension (which encompasses woman and Christianity), missing in Heidegger's exegesis, that intrigues me. My discussion

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operates within and without the (till))economy of gaiety and gravity. Economy here denotes an ever open "dialectic" with no tertiary closure; this economy enables Nietzsche and enables me to consider the truth/art or science/art relation both seriously and playfully. Put differently, this economy of gaiety and gravity involves a stylistic plurality which cannot be exclusively identified with either art or science but both; therefore, gravity and gaiety are not synonyms for truth and art or science and art. In his Preface to the 1886 edition of *The Birth*, Nietzsche formally identifies his lifelong concern with the relationship between art and science, a relationship he examines by seeing science through the eyes of the artist and seeing art through the eyes of life. Here there is already the suggestion that art and science are "rooted" in life that they both belong together, and that either can assume the other's being. Art and science emerge as serious modes of life which can play with each other. Therefore, the general economy of gaiety and gravity can be characterized as play. With such play, the traditional notions of truth and art and science as such are seriously and playfully put into question, and all we seem to observe thereafter is chaos or anarchy. But Freud did away with the faith that the subjective self or consciousness can function as a logo centric presence of a transcendental signified. He said that there is no God but me and my ego can make a fixed centre in the world. Freud found in the "Mystic Writing Pad" a mold that would enclose in the problems of psyche-a virgin exterior that still retained undying traces. The Freudian argument is that the establishment of permanent traces in the psychic apparatus precludes the possibility of immediate perception. In other words, we have 'memory-traces' marks which are not a part of conscious memory, which may be energized into the consciousness of long after and so affect us. Derrida's chief interest in Freudian psychology lies in the fact that it teaches and uses a certain method of deciphering texts. Freud lists the four techniques used by dream work of the psychic apparatus to distorter refract the forbidden dream thoughts to produce pictographic script of the dream: condensation, displacement, considerations of represent ability and secondary revision. Condensation and displacement may be rhetorically translated as metaphor and metonymy. The third item on list refers to the technique which distorts an idea so that it can be presented as an image. Secondary revision is a psychic force that smiths over contradictions and creates an apparent connectedness. Freud suggests that the verbal text is constructed by concealment as much as by revelation. He suggests that where the subject is not in the control of the text, where the text looks very smooth or very clumsy, is where readers should fix their gaze. Derrida develops this further; he suggests that we should fasten upon a small but tell-tale moment in the text which harbors the author's sleight of hand and which cannot be dismissed simply as contradiction. We should look at that passage where we can for the time being locate the flash when the text transgresses the laws it apparently nets for itself, and thus unstitches deconstruct the very text. The structuralism of Levi-Strauss can be illustrated as a search

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for invariant structures or formal universals which reflect the nature of human aptitude. This approach lends support to the rational idea of the text as a bearer of stable meanings and the critic as a faithful speaker after truth in the text. Derrida suggests that when Levi-Strauss describes the life of the Nambikwara (indigenous people of Brazil) and their transition to civilization he takes upon himself the burden of guilt produced by the counter between civilization and the innocent culture it ceaselessly exploits. He gives expression, like Rousseau, to an eloquent longing for the lost primordial unity of speech before writing. Writing for Levi Strauss is an instrument of oppression, means of colonizing the primitive mind. In Derrida's view there is no pure 'authenticity' Strauss imagines; the theme of lost innocence is a romantic illusion. Derrida situates the project of Levi Strauss in logo centrism. One of the crucial problems of anthropology is the roadway from nature to culture. Derrida argues that Levi-Strauss ordinarily and symptomatically finishes up privileging the situation of nature over culture. He appears sentimental and nostalgic, trapped in a Rousseauistic dream of innocent and natural primitive societies. In case of writing, Levi-Strauss conceptualizes it as a tardy cultural arrival, an enhancement to speech, an peripheral instrument. Speech is endowed with all the metaphorical attributes of life and healthy vitality, writing with dark connotations of violence and death. Derrida, in short, is critical of Saussure's notion of the sign and argues that the traditional concept of signifier and signified rests firmly within the phonocentric and logo centric episteme. One of the characteristics of the logo centric epoch is that there is a general debasement of writing and a preference for phonetic writing. It should be noted that for Derrida 'writing' does not refer to the empirical concept of writing. Rather writing is the name of the structure always already inhabited by the trace. This boarding of the term, Derrida argues, was made possible by Sigmund Freud. It may be decided that if Nietzsche kills ontology, Freud kills epistemology. Finally Heidegger did away with metaphysical concept of being as presence of any natural pre-existence I am. Derrida actually breaking from western metaphysics means to break two things Christianity and Platonism because these two things are brought together western tradition. In rejecting the two, Derrida has affirmed the fundamental trends of Plato's Nemesis Gorgias who has three propositions. 1) nothing exists 2) if it exists, it cannot be known 3) if can be known, it can be communicated. Following the first of Gorgias, Derrida said that there is no presence no culture and no touchstone. Under the second if they exist, there is no way to get back to the transcendental signified. Derrida coined the word "Difference" The word is pun to show difference and to defer. The word actually breaks the binary species. Derrida said that meaning of a word comes at difference such as it is act not bat and hat. He said to get referential object in the world, we jump from one signifier to another. Meaning is completely deferred. When we get to the centre or meaning of the text, we end in a trap named aporia. It is the Greek word meaning way less. Aporia is a state of suspension in which meaning is "always already".

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Deferred. Every man is in a trap to find out the center in the universe. In my opinion, the negative capability of Keats is a kind of Aporia. The signifier and signified are not arbitrary but completely broken. Think of the prologue to John's Gospel (P1.1-18). He actually refuted Georgias's proposition completely Christmas and Platonic idea showing that logos exist and can be known or cannot be communicated. But Deconstruction ends up the structure and ends up incardination. Not only it rejects metaphysics, it rejects the possibility for higher transcended truth or meaning to any form. We have to understand that Aporia is not a negative state. Derrida has said the Deconstruction has no nostalgic like Rousseau sums up the whole we have lost our golden days. For Derrida Deconstructive Aporia is positive. It marks the "joyous affirmation of the play of the word and of the innocence of becoming. Derrida like J.P Satre believes that the absence of higher place or purpose in our life did not render life meaning but make our choice more vital.

From the above it is unequivocal that deconstruction has a reason of its own and the thoroughness of this logic is very similar to the carefulness of logic in systematic philosophy. It does not connote that deconstruction is analytic philosophy. Instead "deconstruction is the active antithesis of everything that criticism ought to be if one accepts its traditional values and concepts" (Norris, 1991, p. xi) by Norris. Deconstruction can be seen in the wider practice of analytic philosophy. Derrida hence finds out that metaphysics is replicated even in its destruction .This moves us forward to conclude the perspective with an exposition of 'late' Derrida, which forms my whole writing.

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