REVISITING THE TALE OF JACQUES DERRIDA’S DECONSTRUCTION:
A CRITICAL STUDY

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41
JACQUES DERRIDA

15th July 1930 - 9th October, 2004
ABSTRACT

The objective of the present thesis is to analyze and examine Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction. French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) born in Algeria was famous for his deconstructive strategy. To know about Derrida’s new theme deconstruction, it is important to point out the postmodern turn. The student revolution of the late 60s in Europe played a crucial role in making of a postmodern sub-culture. Postmodernism denies there is an objective reality. They treat objective reality as a kind of conceptual construct. It questions the universal validity of reason and logic and distrusts science and technology as instruments of human progress. Many of them believe that reason and logic is oppressive as they have been used to destroy others. Postmodernism holds that there is no intrinsic human nature, it is completely socially determined. According to them, language does not represent reality outside us; it is not a mirror of this universe. Though in philosophy, the movement of postmodernism and in particular post-structuralism was geared by Jacques Derrida, but here it may be mentioned that Derrida was a postmodernist or even post-structuralist philosopher. It is because he never addressed himself as either postmodernist or post-structuralist. But Derrida may be considered as post-structuralist as he worked with Ferdinand de Saussure, Levi Strauss, and Michel Foucault. On the other side when he moved to France and introduces his term deconstruction he is known as postmodernist. Therefore it may be commented that his theory of deconstruction leads to postmodern thought.

During the Second World War, Algeria suffered from the Nazi Germany atrocities and Vichy government. Though it was not worsted as nuclear holocaust, that time young Derrida was deeply affected by the racial discriminations. Thus, in 1940, the anti-Semitism of Algerian Jewish Jacques Derrida in his young age encountered Fredrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Sigmund Freud, Ferdinand de Saussure, and other thinker’s breakthrough thoughts, who provoked Derrida to perform deconstruction on the traditional Western philosophy. This work deals with not only the Heideggerean philosophy but Derrida was influenced by the structuralist philosophers too. Derrida’s philosophical heritage starts from his relation with Plato to Heidegger. Derrida belongs to the second generation of French Phenomenologist; he himself notes that he was deeply influenced by Husserl, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Sartre, Levinas, and Saussure in linguistics. It examines how Derrida influenced by those
philosophers and why Derrida deconstructs their theories. This work tries to analyze or 
examine the above positions.

Deconstruction is a mode of writing, a way of reading and challenging all interpretations of 
texts based on conventional notions of the stability of the external world, human self, 
language, and meaning. According to Derrida, the term ‘centre’ is problematic as it always 
tries to attempt to exclude anything else other than itself. Thereby the ‘centre’ marginalized 
others. In doing so, binary opposites are formed. He observed that the whole Western 
philosophical tradition was based on metaphysical assumptions like; truth, origin, presence, 
reason, God, and essence. That is why he termed traditional philosophy from Plato to 
Heidegger as logocentric- based. To deal with this logocentrism Derrida used his strategy 

This work tries to throw light on Derrida’s relationship with contemporary French 
philosophers, such as structuralist philosopher Ferdinand de Saussure, who is a specialist in 
phonology. Derrida was influenced by structuralism because they recognize the world 
through language. But not only Saussure, he also deconstructs Emmanuel Levinas, Lévi-
Strauss, Jean François Lyotard, and Michel Foucault’s position.

According to Derrida not only in Western philosophical tradition but logocentrism is present 
in Indian tradition too. There are some schools such as Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Vedanta and Nyāya, 
where the above trend may be observed. These schools are structured in terms of dichotomies 
or polarities where the second term of the pair is considered as lower status. Thus, this 
present work tries to examine these issues.

This present thesis tries to examine and analyse some major issues that are related with 
‘Deconstruction’. Such as:

I. Derrida rejects modernism. But why does he reject modernism? Or how far is it just to 
call postmodernism opposite to modernism?

II. Derrida is claiming that writing and speech bear the same importance. There is no 
difference between spoken language and written language, but here a question arises 
how writing and speech can stand the same side of the binary opposition?

III. According to Derrida Western thought has been always structured in terms of 
dichotomies like good and evil, presence and absence, truth and error, mind and 
matter, man and women, soul and body, speech and writing. Here the second term in
each pair is considered as the negative, corrupt in Western thought. But for Derrida, both first and second terms are equally important. This work tries to throw light on these aspects.

IV. Derrida himself notes that he was influenced by Plato, Descartes, Husserl, Heidegger, Nietzsche and Saussure; then why he deconstructs those philosophers thought?

V. The origin of language has not only been discussed in Contemporary Western philosophy but also been discussed in traditional Indian philosophy. That is why it is very challenging to observe whether there is any relationship between western and Indian schools from the perspective of language or not.

VI. The main thrust is to analyze and examine whether it is possible to get free from the cage of metaphysics or not? We will uncover in the course of the discussion that it is not possible to get rid from the metaphysical tunes. In any philosophical discussion, the issue of metaphysics is always present in some form or other, directly or indirectly.

These are some of the questions that the present thesis will try to examine besides a critical evaluation of ‘Deconstruction’.

From the above it may be commented that Jacques Derrida’s attack on metaphysics and his deconstruction is a critical reading of a text. A text can never carry a single basic meaning, there are several meanings. Thus, he was interested to find out how the meaning of the text can be plural. He felt that philosophical problems exist in language. Derrida observed that it is possible to overcome these problems only through language. He introduces his terminology such as différence, trace, arché-writing and so on to unearth the above issue. Through all these terms Derrida tries to redefine ‘writing’ and remarked that writing is not secondary rather it is equally important as speech is. It has an important and more primordial role in the production of language and even in philosophical discourse.

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PREFACE

The objective of the present thesis is to analyze and examine Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction. French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) born in Algeria was famous for his deconstructive strategy. During the Second World War, Algeria suffered from Nazi Germany atrocities and Vichy government. That time Nazism spread its wings to the European church, university, and diplomatic groups. Therefore Young Derrida was deeply affected by racial discrimination. Thus he encountered his previous traditional philosopher’s thoughts and those philosophers provoked Derrida to perform deconstruction in the Western philosophical tradition. Derrida and his philosophy is the main area of the present dissertation. Here the main thrust is how deconstruction works on the history of the Western philosophy.

The Introductory Chapter, try to analyze and examine the postmodern turn in philosophy. To understand deconstruction, it is important to examine what is postmodernism. It is an intellectual movement that have affected the entire socio-cultural political milieu of that period. It is a student revolution of the late 60s in Europe. This trend criticizes the effort of rational inquiry to examine the origin of the source of all human knowledge.

The First Chapter, entitled “DERRIDA’S PHILOSOPHICAL HERITAGE” proposes to discuss Derrida’s relation with Plato to Heidegger and how he was influenced by them. Especially he follows Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger to elaborate the critique of ‘western metaphysics’. According to Derrida, western thought has been always structured in terms of dichotomies like good and evil, presence and absence, man and women, speech and writing. Here second term in each pair is considered as the negative and corrupt. But for Derrida, both terms are equally important. This chapter try to throw light on these aspects.

The Second Chapter, entitled as: “ON DECONSTRUCTION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS”, propose to discuss the aim of Derrida’s deconstruction. According to Derrida deconstruction is a strategy to overcome logocentrism. It is phonocentrism because this logocentric bias of western metaphysics operates the traditional priority which afforded speech over writing. This chapter proposes to analyze Derrida’s some terminologies, such as différance, arché-writing, erasure, trace and so on.
“DERRIDA AND CONTEMPORARY FRENCH PHILOSOPHER” is the title of the third chapter. Here Derrida’s relationship with contemporary French philosophers, such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Emmanuel Levinas, Lévi-Strauss, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Michel Foucault are highlighted. The present chapter examines how they all tried to find out the truth about reality and why they reject the foundational theories.

The origin of language has not only been discussed in Contemporary Western philosophy but also been discussed in traditional Indian philosophy. That is why it is very challenging to observe whether there is any relationship between western and Indian schools from the perspective of language or not. This is the thread which helps to connect the challenge by introducing Bhartṛhari’s thought and postmodern western deconstructionist Jacques Derrida’s thought. This fourth chapter “BHARTRHARI AND DERRIDA: ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE” will discuss the above issues.

In the Concluding Chapter, the main thrust is to analyze and examine whether it is possible to get free from the cage of metaphysics or not? We will uncover in the course of the discussion that it is not possible to get rid from the metaphysical tunes. In any philosophical discussion, the issue of metaphysics is always present in some form or other, directly or indirectly.
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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1 – 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derrida’s Philosophical Heritage</td>
<td>10 -43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Deconstruction: A Critical Analysis</td>
<td>44 -60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derrida and Contemporary French Philosophers</td>
<td>61 – 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bharti hari and Derrida: On the Origin of Language</td>
<td>89 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>101-111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>112-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>121- 125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The present work is an attempt to introduce a challenging philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) who is famous for his deconstructive strategy; while dealing with the strategy, this thesis tries to explore the deconstructive methodology too. Generally, methods are understood as a way or road to obtain knowledge. The method is an instrument or an instrumental approach for representing a given field e.g., in philosophy, or in science from the outside. “That is, it is on the side of the subject and is an external reflection of the object. It is an instrumental approach to knowledge from an entirely subjective position. Yet such a relation of scientific representation as a form exterior to a given content is in principle extraneous to any thinking philosophy”¹. According to Hegel, methodological thought not to be replaced “by the non-method of presentiment and inspiration, or by the arbitrariness of prophetic utterance, both of which despise not only scientific pomposity, but scientific procedure of all kinds.”² But for Derrida, his philosophical inquiry takes the standard rules of philosophy very seriously and his method was not characterized by any exteriority to its object. Now the question is how deconstruction is originated and when?

There is no perfect solution to this question. But when Derrida writes Letter to his Japanese Friend he said:

“What deconstruction is not? Everything of course!
What is deconstruction? Nothing of course”³

The word deconstruction is a translation of the French word Destruktion or Abbau, which has both a mechanical and grammatical meaning. It means both disassemble a machine and transport it elsewhere and to disarrange the construction of words in a sentence. It cannot be reduced to a mechanical or semantic model, the term deconstruction “itself questions the architecture of such models, as well as the model of architecture.”⁴ Indeed it is associated with post-structuralism but it has their contextual root which is related to structuralism.

³ David Wood & Robert Bernasconi, Derrida and Diffrance, 1985, p 5
[Chapter- Letter to a Japanese Friend]
⁴ Martin McQuillan, Deconstruction: A Reader, 2000, p 1.
Deconstruction is concerned with a certain idea of structure like structuralism. It tried to desediment or undo all kinds of a structure including the structure of structuralism. Derridean term deconstruction places all western philosophical term under erasure. It has been called negative theology although it is incompatible with all theologies. Derrida claims that literary critics do it, psychoanalysts, architects even poets do it, philosophers do it, painters do it and texts do it to themselves. However, there are lots of criticisms about this but one of the key themes of deconstruction is undoing such transcendental apparatus.

When Derrida moved to France the important stage of his life was started. He developed his interest in Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Maurice Blanchot through the influence of Sartre and next he developed his interest in more literary writers such as Georges Bataille, James Joyce, and Francis Ponge. Derrida was an anti-essentialist. It does not mean that he is against essence rather he is against essentialism. Actually, it is the problem of words. He claimed that any thought or word about something which started with ‘ism’ means that in anti-essentialism there is a certain anti-ism which tried to get us away from ethics. Derrida was ephemeral and silent about absolute truth, the question about origin, end, and God in his all texts. According to Derrida, “the point of writing cannot be to write the perfect text in which the absolute will not hide its face again. Rather, the point is that writing means to be engaged in it as an infinite process. Writing about the absolute, then, can never, must never, come to an end!” He never avoids the absolute absolutely. That is why his works strike people to find “a liberating way to think the absolute that will not result in the proliferation of structure.” Another way we can say that there is something a good way to think well and he tried to find out what that way.

Derrida was not interested about a moral theory and the question of values vs. Social norms, virtue vs. Duty and other issues which belongs to the area of ethics. He treated these issues in a different way. For him, it is not an inquiry into the problem of what is right and wrong but it is an inquiry into the problem of the ethical constitutedness of human beings. His theory of deconstruction is a literary criticism which questions traditional assumption about identity, absolute truth, and certainty.

6 Ibid, p 1.
Before we start the discussion about Derrida’s new theme ‘deconstruction’, it is important to point out the postmodern turn. Here the question arises, is there any difference between modernism and postmodernism?

In the second half of the 20th century, a new turn in philosophy was started. At that time there were three main schools; Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, and Postmodernism. These schools dominated Continental Philosophy. Structuralism believed that all human activities are constructed, they are not natural and everything operates only through the language system. It has had an intense effect on sociology, linguistics anthropology and other fields in addition to philosophy. According to structuralism all human activity even perception and thought itself are constructed not natural. There are four main common ideas; such as: (i) every system has a structure, (ii) the structure is what determines the position of each element, (iii) ‘structural laws’ deals with coexistence rather than changes and (iv) structures are ‘real things’. The great figure in the philosophy of structuralism was Swiss linguistic and theorist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913). He developed science of signs based on linguistics, which he calls Semiotics or Semiology. For him, any language is a complex system of signs. He concluded that any individual sign is essentially arbitrary and there is no natural relationship between a signifier which means the word like ‘Cat’ and signified which means the mental concept of the actual animal. Structuralism argues that any piece of writing has no origin. According to them, ‘language speaks us’ rather than we speak the language. Some major structuralist philosophers are; Michel Foucault, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan, Jean Piaget, Roman Jakobson, Noam Chomsky, and Roland Barthes.

Post-Structuralism is a reaction to Structuralism. It is closely related to Postmodernism, although they are not synonymous. Post-structuralist’s approach is a kind of textual analysis. It emerged in France during 1960s. It remains an influence in a wide set of subjects including literature, art, cultural criticism, politics, sociology and history. It is a way of understanding the world by studying the relationship between language and being. If post-structuralist’s theoretical assumptions are correct, then signifieds (concepts) and signifiers (words) that we use to represent them are constantly shifting in meaning. Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Roland Barthes were initially structuralist but later they rejected most of the structuralist’s claims, especially its notion of the fixity of the relationship between signifier and signified. The other notable post-structuralists are Gilles Deleuze, Julia Kristeva, Umberto Eco, Jean Baudrillard, and Judith Butler.
Now it’s time to focus on the radical movement in philosophy, known as Postmodernism.

Postmodernism, the western contemporary and intellectual movement have affected the entire socio-cultural and political milieu of our times. The influence of postmodernism is reflected almost in every sphere of life in literary circles and in scientific movements and also in the spectrum of academic disciplines. Postmodernism questions the trust of modernity and calls for the affirmation of plurality and diversity. But this approach fails to provide a compatible alternative to reason; hence, it offers preposterous proposals. The term postmodernism is widely used to denote the number of philosophical views developed in France in the late 60s.

Postmodernist argues in any objective universal meanings of words or texts or any such permanent structures that are at the foundation of human consciousness. So, it is claimed that socio-cultural structures are a burden to humanity and unless we get rid of them from our cultural discourse we can’t live our lives with freedom and creativity in its fullness.

Rudolf Panwitz, a German philosopher, first used this term ‘postmodernism’ in 1917. After that, some Spanish writers like Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset, and Frederico de Onis used this term in 1934 to refer to the backlash against literary modernism. English theologian Bernard Iddings Bell in 1939 used the term postmodernism to refer to the failures of secular modernism in the religious sphere. Later it was used by several literary critics and theologians to denote different meanings. The term is currently used in philosophy to refer to the post-structuralist philosophy of the French philosophers. They hardly believe in any universal structures or categories of thought that from the human self. According to those philosophers, cultures do not create man, rather man creates his cultures. The very legitimacy of western culture and civilization is questioned here. Actually, postmodernism expresses its radical views on different spheres of life even beyond philosophy. The student revolution of the late 60s in Europe played a crucial role in making of a postmodern sub-culture. So, it is clear that the history of postmodernism in the 70s and 80s is basically one of widespread acceptance of the ideas spread by different philosophers. This trend criticizes the notion of ‘presence’ or ‘presentation’ in knowledge and criticizes the effort of rational inquiry to examine the origin of the source of all human knowledge. Postmodernism focuses on the marginalized, the outlawed and the abnormal of society. Actually, it calls for a critical analysis of our smug complacency towards accepted norms and traditions.

However, it is difficult to define postmodernism. It is an umbrella term drawing within its fold different disciplines like philosophy, history, literary theory, and art. Postmodernism is a
movement which occurs as a reaction against the philosophical theories, values, and worldview of the modern period, roughly the period of scientific revolution from the 17th and 18th centuries till the mid-20th century. Many of the doctrines typically associated with postmodernism can be fairly described as the denial of the 18th century Enlightenment faith in human reason and in the pursuit of science and technology. Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Heidegger assumed the modern philosophy to generated provocative postmodern modes of writing, discourse, and criticism. A group of French thinkers in the 1970s, associated with post-structuralism radicalized the critique of modern philosophy. They came to be labeled as postmodernist theorists. As Eagleton, an English social philosopher-cum-literary theorist has put it: “Postmodernity is a style of thought which is suspicious of classical notions of truth, reason, identity and objectivity, of the idea of universal progress or emancipation, of single frameworks, grand narratives or ultimate grounds of explanation. Against these Enlightenment norms, it sees the world as contingent, ungrounded, diverse, unstable, indeterminate, a set of disunified cultures or interpretations which breed a degree of scepticism about the objectivity of truth, history and norms, the givenness of natures and the coherence of identities.”

Postmodernism denies there is an objective reality. They treat objective reality as a kind of conceptual construct. From the above, it follows that there is no such thing as absolute truth in philosophy, science or history. It questions the universal validity of reason and logic and distrusts science and technology as instruments of human progress. Hence, postmodernism is a response to the horrors of the Holocaust and the dangers of an atomic age. Many of them believe that reason and logic is oppressive as they have been used to destroy others. Postmodernism holds that there is no intrinsic human nature, it is completely socially determined. According to them, language does not represent the reality outside us; it is not a ‘mirror of the universe’. It is semantically self-contained or self-referential. The meaning of a word is a series of contrasts and differences with the meanings of other words in the system.

Postmodernism dismisses any totalizing systems of thought in man’s social, historical, biological development as a grand meta-narrative. Such grand narratives keep some social groups in power and others out of it. From Christian redemption to Marxism and the political narrative of nationalism are all ‘meta-narrative’. If there are no absolute objective truths in metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics, then such truths are constructed by discourses. A

discourse is a set of interlocking and mutually supporting statements used to define and describe a subject matter, for example: the discursive practices of law, medicine, and aesthetic and so on. Some postmodernist holds that the prevailing discourses in any society are always influenced by power relations. They reveal the interest and values of the powerful, dominant elite groups.

After all this discussion, unfortunately, it is impossible to find out a simple and uncontroversial meaning of the term postmodernism. There are so many criticisms about postmodernism. Christopher Norris mentioned that postmodernism is a period of playful freedom, a kind of consumer choice. For him, it’s just an unfortunate mistake. J. F. Lyotard observes postmodernism as conditions. S. Connor sees it as a culture. For Jameson, it’s a kind of cultural domination and even Eagleton see it is an illusion. American literary critic Ihab Hassan in his book *The Dismemberment of Orpheus: toward a Postmodern Literature* in 1982 introduces a list of difference between modernism and postmodernism, like:

- Modernism discusses Romanticism, form, purpose whereas postmodernism discusses pataphysics or Dadaism, Anti-form, play.
- Modernism is about logos, distance, creation or totalization whereas postmodernism is about silence, participation, deconstruction.
- In modernism, the word synthesis, presence, metaphor, metaphysics, and transcendence are used. But in postmodernism antithesis, absence, metonymy, irony, and immanence are used.

There are some categories which are highly controversial. Even Hassan says that there are some problematic points in his own categories. He argues, these categories are produced here just as a guide nothing else.

There is a more transparent way to understand both the theories, which are explained below:

The generation of modernism used rational and logical means to gain knowledge. It based on hierarchical, organized, and determinate nature of knowledge. Their approach was objective, theoretical, and even analytic. Modernist’s thinking was about the search for an abstract truth of life. They had an optimistic view (believed that there are values and ethics that need to be followed). But if we see the generation of postmodernism, they denied the application of logical thinking. Here as a reaction to modernism, the thinking was based on unscientific, and irrational, whereas Postmodernism is based on an anarchical, non-totalized, and an
indeterminate state of knowledge. Their approach was subjective. According to the postmodern philosopher, there is no universal truth, abstract or otherwise.

Modern thinkers tried to construct a coherent worldview. They believe in learning from past experiences. To fully analyze the subject they believe in going deep into it. Here art and literary works were considered as unique creations of the artists, which believed to bear deep meaning in novels and books that were predominated society. In the postmodern tradition, they try to attempt to remove the difference between high and low. They believe that there is no connection between past experience and the present. In present time past experiences are irrelevant. There is no depth of subjects. They believe in going by the superficial appearances, and in playing on surfaces. Here people concentrated in deriving their own meanings from pieces of art, and literature. During the postmodern era advancements in technology, television, and computers became dominant in society. Art and literary works are copied by the means of digital media.

Before the Second World War, a philosopher who gave a powerful effect in philosophy and literature was Sartre. His first book was published in 1936 *The Transcendence of the Ego (La Transcendance de l’ego: Esquisse d’une description phénoménologique)*, Here he observed the ego as in the world but not materially of consciousness; rather he described the ego as an object for consciousness. In 1938 another book was published: *Nausea (La Nausée)*, which grants consciousness as remarkable independence and it gives reality the full weight of its sense. For a few years, these two books create some remarkable effect on the world. However this discussion is not something new in French thought and literature, but it makes Sartre’s thought very special and practical. In Western philosophy, it was a new way of thought where Hegel a great philosopher who even can’t reach in that point. And that might be the reason for comparing him to some Indian Buddhist philosopher. Although in 1945 Sartre considered himself as a hermeneutic and again in 1947 it was observed that in his book *SituationsII: What is Literature? (Qu’est-ceque la littérature?)*, he was trying to show his interest in Marxism. But still, Sartre’s theory was in success. During that time many philosophers were interested in him, among them, two philosophers play an important role: one is Roland Barthes and another is Jacque Derrida. Thus, the impact of Sartre in the case of Derrida was very much critical. For this reason his followers do not mention Sartre’s name into their discussion. In the present work, the main discussion is about Jacques Derrida and his theme deconstruction, which will be discussed critically in the next chapters.
Postmodernism is a kind of response to modernism. People consider them as two aspects of the same movements. If we see the social side of society, we realize that modernization is bringing a massive amount of change in social society; it transformed modern western society to postmodern society. In that time the workers of social thinkers are the products of their social and political contexts. Here the word ‘contexts’ are not used as universal rather they could be broader or narrow. Two types of social society are mentioned here one is Indian society and another is western. We find the difference between Indian and Western sociology due to social and historical conditions. Indian sociological theory bears a deep imprint of these historical forces. G.S Ghurye and N.K Bose are the pioneers of the Indian sociology are strongly influenced by functional theorists. Indian sociology believes in feudalism, colonialism, and exploitation. But if we see the western side, they were democracy, industrialism, capitalism, and modernization; although not all thinkers supported the growth of capitalism as a good thing like Karl Marx. For him “the theoretical arguments included the exploitative, oppressive nature of capitalism, the meaningless nature of work in the capitalist world, the importance of economic classes in world history, the expansion of capitalism to worldwide oppression, or imperialism, and the expected eventual revolution of the world’s working classes against the capitalist’s owners”

“Instead of resulting in a functioning organism, the division of labour resulted in alienation. Ideologically, the first- and second-generation radical anti-capitalists argued that explanation and understanding must have changed their goal. They, too, were optimists, convinced that the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism was not only needed but inevitable.”

But when functionalism became as a trustworthy method in 1930, many theorist and ideologies remarks that Marxism is dead. In that time Francis Fukuyama in his thesis stated that ‘there is the end of history’. Perhaps, in India postmodernism can be traced not only in architecture, literature; but it may be traced in Hindi films also.

Though in philosophy, the movement of postmodernism and in particular post-structuralism was geared by Jacques Derrida, but here it may be mentioned that Derrida was a postmodernist or even post-structuralist philosopher. It is because; he never addressed himself as either postmodernist or post-structuralist. “Whether or not Derrida would accept that he is a postmodern account, it is certainly the case that his concept of deconstruction has

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8 Jean Baudrillard: Biography, writings and Intellectual Orientation of Baudrillard.
9 Ibid.
entered the canon forgive me! – of postmodern critique”\textsuperscript{10}. But Derrida was post-structuralist when he related to Ferdinand de Saussure, Levi Strauss, and Michel Foucault, which we will discuss later. Barry Stocker claimed that “Derrida is not just reacting to structuralism, and his real starting point is in philosophical phenomenology, and he certainly never talked about post-structuralism”\textsuperscript{11}. Therefore it may be commented that his theory of deconstruction leads to postmodern thought.

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\item[\textsuperscript{10}] David Lyon, Post Modernity: Concepts in Social Thought, 2002, p 18.
\item[\textsuperscript{11}] Barry Stocker, Derrida on Deconstruction, 2006, p 15.
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CHAPTER ONE

DERRIDA’S PHILOSOPHICAL HERITAGE

Not only the Heideggerean philosophy but Derrida was influenced by the structuralist philosophers too. Derrida’s philosophical heritage starts from his relation with Plato to Heidegger. This chapter tries to bring out the relation between the above-mentioned philosophers. It examines how Derrida influenced by those philosophers. Derrida belongs to the second generation of French Phenomenology and he himself notes that he was deeply influenced by Husserl, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Sartre, Levinas, and Saussure in linguistics. In his books and articles, for example in his diary The Postcard which is published in 1977-1979, he includes his relationship with some famous philosophers. Especially he follows Nietzsche and Heidegger to elaborate the critique of ‘Western metaphysics’ in Western philosophical tradition and ‘everyday’ thought and language. According to Derrida Western thought has been always structured in terms of dichotomies like good and evil, presence and absence, truth and error, mind and matter, man and women, soul and body, speech and writing. Here the second term in each pair is considered as the negative, corrupt in Western thought. But for Derrida, both first and second terms are equally important. This chapter tries to throw light on these particular aspects.

In 1967 Derrida’s dreadful impact began on contemporary theoretical thought with his three major philosophical works, such as; An introduction to the problems of the sign in Husserl’s phenomenology; which is translated by David Allison as Speech and Phenomena. A collection of essays on the problematic of writing in philosophy, literature, psychoanalysis and anthropology; which is translated by Alan Bass as Writing and Difference and a sustained analysis of the repression of writing in western theories of language, culture, a methodological and theoretical outline of a new ‘Science’ of writing; which is translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak as Of Grammatology. After five years his other major works are Positions translated by Alan Bass, Margins of Philosophy, Literature and Linguistics and La Dissémination. As a student of Husserlian phenomenology, he began his philosophical career with a number of close writing. He studies Logical Investigations and The Origin of Geometry also. Some of the central conceptions of Derrida are deconstruction, presence, repetition, traces, and différance. In contemporary philosophy Derrida’s influences are
undeniable and it is no doubt that he is one of the great influential philosophers of twenty-first century.

For Derrida, with Plato’s *Pharmacy* especially in his dialogue, *The Phaedrus* is a good place to start because it occupied Derrida’s argument about textual and analytic commentary. Here Derrida engaged with some mythic moments in the *logocentric* epoch. For him, it is an inaugural moment, and its effects reach down from Plato to Saussure. However, Derrida does not like to talk about the origins but it is in Plato and in *Phaedrus* Derrida discovered certain a prototypical scene of instruction which deals with the priority of speech over writing and the dangers moral philosophical thinking which inverted that priority. Derrida in his writings challenged this traditional philosophy and its rigorous protocols of argument. Thus we can say that Derrida provides a new and brilliant interpretation of Plato’s dialogue.

The central reason for handing down of tradition was the new idea of philosophy. Derrida finds these principles in Hegel’s writings on philosophy. Therefore, that pattern established a patriarchal inheritance and a situation where a father retains his full power until his son came or until his son is able to exercise reason. Even in the *Phaedrus*, Plato adopted an exotic mythology to explain why writing menaces or threatens the interests of morality and truth. For example, in the Greek period this myth, which was in question, tells a story about the Egyptian King Thamus. That time a visitor named ‘Thoth’ or ‘Theuth’ (who believed to invented mathematics, the art of geometry, astronomy, and writing) came to the King and wanted to give him ‘writing’ as a gift. But later when he measured its virtues and vices, then he steadily declined that offer. For him, the man was better off without writing. The reason which he gave was the King’s response about writing that writing was a dangerous gift for the authentic living presence of spoken language and writing rejects or set-aside mere inscriptions that are: arbitrary, alien, and lifeless signs. According to the King, with the access to writing means real power of memory rapidly reduced. Although they would no longer need to remember anything; but when they can simply look upon things it inwardly and actively gets by heart.

Therefore, the effects of writing on the one side break those peculiar ties of paternal sanction and on the other side of filial obligation. Thus, from each generation to the next generation these ties are served to ensure the passage of authentic truth. So, by respecting the authority which is vested in the teacher and which is achieved through self-knowledge but not just obtained by reading books is written by some other men. This is why pupil can arrive at
genuine wisdom on their own account. But Derrida called knowledge as ‘memory’ and non-knowledge as re-memoration. Plato applied the word ‘anamnesis’ to good kind of memory and it is not possible to get rid of it. It is a recollection of spiritual truths and the soul has forgotten it in its fallen state but through the discipline of self-knowledge and wise teaching, it can be summoned to mind. Another type of memory or bad kind of memory alternates some mnemonic devices for a living and genuine wisdom, and by a crafty resort to the remedy of writing it simulates knowledge. Thus, for this reason, Egyptian mythology agrees with Judaeo Christian account of God’s creating word and the power of the logos. But in contrast to the authentic and natural self-present speech, Derrida in Of Grammatology gave numerous instances of this logocentric will to devalue written language.

In the evolution of Greek thought and culture, we have seen the contest between logos and mythos as one of the great transitional stages. In Plato’s writing it was dramatized through various dialectical encounters, where against the sophists, rhetoricians, poets, and other purveyors of false wisdom, Socrates’s voice of reason and truths comes. Plato condemned writing and also he seeks to denounce the effects of writing and uphold the authority of spoken truth. So, whenever philosophy refuses to acknowledge its own textual status, this predicament repeats itself. In the Phaedrus, Plato’s treatment of writing sets a pattern and which was similar to the history of Western thought. Therefore, Derrida traced this pattern in the texts of that tradition from Plato to Husserl and also other representative thinkers. So, if Plato’s thought was a special case then it is because of their thinking about language, truth, and reality. These ideas of origin, subject to mere repetition and mythology are mentioned in Plato’s dialogue. However in a paradigmatic way his dialogue sets for deconstructive treatment.

If we observe the platonic tradition we realize that Plato plays a very crucial role in the debate between Derrida and Foucault. There is a saying that ‘Plato is to Derrida as Aristotle is to Foucault’. Their time period was different but if we ponder over the statement, it is possible to follow that there is a connection between them. First of all, Aristotle was a student of Plato and their time period was the same. Like Plato and Aristotle, Derrida and Foucault live in the same time period. In the case of Plato, he gives us the theory of Idea and also he saw the possibility of a political institution with classes, which would not clash with one another which was ruled by the aristocracy. But Aristotle directly attacked the ideal theory of Plato and he did not accept Plato’s thought, in favor of a system that was between democracy and an oligarchy. Plato sees justice as a human virtue but whereas Aristotle sees happiness as
the ultimate goal to pursue. In *The Republic*, Plato says that “... if each person does one thing for which he is naturally suited, does it at the right time, and is released from having to do any of others.” But Aristotle comments, “Both oligarch and tyrant mistrust the people, and therefore deprive them of their arms.”

In the same way Derrida and Foucault, based on their position, they were in opposition to one another. In *Truth and Power*, M. Foucault takes a stand which is more akin to Aristotle’s argument that looks upon those in power with scrutiny. Although their arguments were not the same but Foucault’s position in the respective debate is similar to how Aristotle stood against Plato. Foucault states, in his book *The Foucault Reader*, “... it’s not so much a matter of knowing what external power impose itself on science, as of what effects of power circulate among scientific statement, what constitutes, as it were, their internal regime of power.” On the other hand, Derrida takes a position, which is more akin to Plato. For example, Derrida uses ‘deconstruction’ and his focus on self-reflection (self-consciousness), is similar to Plato’s innate human desire for virtue. But although by the nature of deconstructionist thought virtue or justice is not possible and Derrida does not agree with Plato’s aristocratic control. Derrida admits that the combination of sovereignty and democracy is a contradiction of terms. He does not directly subscribe to Plato’s school of thought but in modern times, Derrida’s role in the contemporary debate would be similar to the role that Plato played in the classic argument.

Another important relation with Platonic tradition is this; Like Plato, Derrida sees the relation between author and text as one of the filiations. Following Platonic Tradition Derrida gives importance to Speech. But there is a difference, Plato’s idea of filiations involves only the relation of father and child, but according to Derrida author alternates the relation between father and also the mother of the texts. Although for Derrida Speech is important but he added that actually, human writing is prior to human speech. “Speech, according to Derrida, tends to make us imagine that all meaning is fully ‘present’, in the manner that the speaking self and her or his interlocutor appear to be. It is this phenomenon which encourages the further delusion that there are ideas or things present to us before and outside the signifying

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Derrida says that this realization is the end of the Platonic domination of Western culture. For Plato, the idea of any realization is taken as a lapse from original completeness. But according to Derrida, simply there is no original idea, only an original sign whose meaning is itself mediated, and deferred by another sign.

Derrida points out in *Of Grammatology* that our philosophical tradition, basically from Plato to Heidegger has been dominated by speech as a direct way of communication. While writing is seen as a technical supplement for representing speech, in the *Phaedrus* Plato blames that writing as bastard which is separated from its source; it is separated from the father, from the *arché* and also from the origin. Writing gives rise to some misunderstandings because the speaker is not there to protect, even to explain his or her words. For Derrida, the characteristic of metaphysics is the emphasis on presence, truth, unity, reason, essence, good, and meaning. These are all metaphysical themes and presence is the basis of such metaphysical themes. For him, traditional philosophy gives importance in reason and they give primacy and priority to speech over writing. That is why he calls it ‘logocentric’. He proposes a new concept of ‘writing’ for dealing with *logocentrism* (phonologism and presence or onto-theology). Besides Plato, Derrida bears affinity with Husserl, Heidegger, Nietzsche, and Levinas. But René Descartes, Immanuel Kant, and G.W.F. Hegel they are the masterminds and major founders of modern thinking. Hence, their philosophies are found within the logocentric basement.

**René Descartes:**

One of the major figures of modernity is seventeenth-century French thinker René Descartes (1596-1650), who tried to find proof of existence in our ability to think, recognize and reflect upon the process of thinking. His aim was to discover a new foundation for thought. The famous formulation of Descartes was ‘I think therefore I am’ (in Latin, *the cogito ergo sum*), which means there is only a mind or consciousness doing the doubting and even believing its perceptions. He explained while we doubt we cannot doubt our existence. According to him, mind and body were two separate and distinct entities. He stated that if the body exists it does not mean the ‘I’ (subject) exist. The mind is something which is indivisible, thinking, and non-extended. On the other side, the body is something which is disabled, non-thinking and extended. There is no earth, no sky, no mind, and no bodies; there is nothing in the world.

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But ‘I’ certainly exist if ‘I’ convinced him or her of something. There is a supreme power who constantly and deliberately deceiving, in that sense ‘I’ too undoubtedly exist. In short, Descartes thinks that whenever it conceived in my mind or put forward by me, I am, I exist, is necessarily true.

In Writing and Difference, Derrida mentioned a detailed study about Descartes. Descartes contributes to the development of human subjectivity, science, rationalism; here truths are examined rigorously. But Derrida criticized this, and on the various ground, he deconstructs Descartes. He reads Descartes’s Meditation andCogito. InWriting and Difference, Derrida investigates the Cartesian Cogito, reason, doubt, and existence of God. In Discourse on Method and The Meditation, Descartes begins with Scepticism and states that “I have sometimes found that these senses played me false, and it is prudent never to trust entirely those who have once deceived us.” But in the same book, someone claimed that a madman only can doubt sensory evidence which was so strong. Here about sensibility, Derrida acknowledged the same opinion of Descartes and mentioned that Descartes has stated not only to measure madness; but questioned the general truth of ideas. In Descartes and Derrida: Economizing thought, this issue was analyzed by Judovitz Dalia in connection with Derridean description of the problematic as “Derrida’s claim relies not on the particular terms in which doubt is presented but on considering its function that is its economizing and totalizing character. He understands madness to be merely one term, in a constellation of terms that include dreams and error, necessary to interrogate the totality of ideas of sensory origin. Descartes’s reference to madness is thus framed by the larger question regarding the danger of deception that the subject experiences in dreams.” Through the concept of Cogito, Descartes tried to develop a philosophy like the revival of Renaissance. It is because repeatedly it emphasized subjective and individualistic tendencies.

Derrida agreed with Descartes statement that there is no real than his dreams in the world. He emphasized doubt as an idea of truth. For him, Descartes’s doubt is simply an amalgamation of the hypothesis of insanity, dreaming argument, an example of a madman, and most of the sensory origin. Although he agrees with Descartes but he rejects Cartesian concepts by his own way of interpretation. For Derrida, the reason is constructed through the totalizing gesture of hyperbolic doubt. Descartes believed that reason can be used in everything from the methods of mathematics to the criterion of truth. Derrida in this context takes the

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16 Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method and the Meditations, 1979, p 96.
existence of ‘truth of Cogito’ through rhetoric of negation as an exercise of an impossible fiction. Here the truth of rhetoric was based on the totalizing character of fiction. Then he says that on the power of representation Cogito depends to perform its own negation “as if the appearance of subjectivity did not require the substrate of language, even when attempting not to speak.”

In the Second Meditation, Descartes admits at every time when he used the phrase ‘I exist’, that time mentally he conceived it. It shows the role of language in the thought process.

Derrida deconstructs this problem in order to “underline that in question is a self-dividing action, a cleavage and ferment interior to meaning in general.”

Derrida mentioned that the self-dividing action of the subject was internal dissension within meaning and language. This is called ‘logos’, which we have to carefully erase by scrutinizing the exteriority of madness and the interiority of reason. He holds that contradictions are continued in the logocentric tradition and even in every doctrine these contradictions are enforced the hierarchy. They carried these contradictions as “it can be proposed that the classical crisis developed from and within the elementary tradition of a logos that has no opposite but carries within itself and says all determined contradictions.”

Back to Descartes, in Sixth Meditation, he described the existence of material things, the distinction between soul and body, the primary qualities and secondary qualities, different emotions, various sensual activities, his physical body parts, about external objects and their qualities. After that, he realizes that material things independently exist of the perceiving subject. It was because of the impact of physical science, which was originated by Galileo. Due to these assumptions, the problem of mind and matter was emerged. For him, the relation between mind and body was a ‘mystery’. After that, he predicted that the psychophysical interaction takes place at pineal gland and through this thought, he thinks that mind and body are relative substance and ‘God’ was the absolute substance. That is why he tried to give proofs for the existence of God through the ontological arguments.

According to Derrida, Descartes gives his proof for the ‘existence of God’ in the context of reason, doubt, the Cogito and he finds the ‘interiority of reason’. Again Derrida explained that, for the proof of God, the idea of fictitious perfect being was the base. He observed the rupture between Meditations and Discourse. Then he mentioned that, “Now, the recourse to

20 Ibid, p 42.
the fiction of the evil genius will evoke, conjure up the possibility of total madness, a total derangement over which I could have no control because it is inflicted upon me – hypothetically – leaving me no responsibility for it. Total derangement is the possibility of a madness, insanity, will spare nothing, neither bodily nor purely intellectual perceptions.”\(^{21}\) But in Cartesian hyperbolic doubt, Derrida traced a paradoxical element. Thus he first decentralized the Cartesian subjectivity, then marginalized and then rejects it. He applied his \textit{différence} on it and in this way he sidelined the concept of reason, doubt, \textit{Cogito}, and God.

At the end of the eighteenth century, after 150 years almost, Immanuel Kant like Descartes tried to introduce a new account of subjectivity through which he reconciles the arguments of earlier philosophers.

\textbf{Immanuel Kant:}

Like Plato, Immanuel Kant develops a kind of conceptual Scheme. For him, without concept perceptions are blind. Thus, concepts are necessary for perception to have meaning, these concepts are beyond space and time; therefore these are universal, which are temporally true but perceptions are spatio-temporal. That is why Derrida marked the philosophy of Kant as an ‘illusion’, it was more than ‘writing’. In regarding the relationship between words and the world, Derrida tried to give a non-Kantian account, which was dialectical. Derrida with dialectics breaks Kant’s claim, ‘understanding makes nature’. Basically, to illustrate the paradox of Kantian project, Derrida takes the philosophical language of Kant. Through this, he showed how in a spatio-temporal vehicle this ‘a-temporaly’ true could be contained. It formalizes the relationship between a man and what he seeks through exhibiting its structure. Therefore it can be mentioned that on writing Derrida’s position has no end, it leads to more writing and it goes on and on. For Derrida, texts and books exhibit truth through writing, which they contained. But this truth was not about the world but about the texts.

About Derrida’s method of deconstruction of Kant’s philosophy R.P. Singh mentioned, “With the method of deconstruction, Derrida claims that he is not writing a philosophy like Kant who claimed that only a transcendental idealist could be an empirical realist. Derrida is also not offering a comprehensive view of the world, like Kant who said that the order and regularity in the field of appearances that we entitled nature we ourselves introduced. Derrida is also not protesting against the errors of a philosophical school, like Kant who critically

\(^{21}\text{Ibid, p 53.}\)
examined the claims of rationalism and empiricism. Derrida is, however, protesting against the notion that the philosophy of language, pursued realistically as the study of how language and the world are related is something more than it is First philosophy. The basic question is what is Derrida’s solution to the problem of the relation between language and the world? Derrida does not come right out and tell his views about the relation of language and the world.22

According to Derrida, just like always a sign has a reference to another sign, a text refers to other text. Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason was purely epistemic. Kant believed in a-priori activity of human minds and their theory of knowledge was synthetic a-priori. But he never answered how language expressed thought and represents the world. He observed that philosophy was just like Newtonian physics, where a literary pretension doesn’t work. This is why Derrida deconstructs Kant’s modernist epistemic preoccupations. For him, literature was the best way of doing philosophy rather than mathematics or physics. In doing so, Derrida finds writing as a philosophical activity. Therefore he bears a non-Kantian dialectical thinking.

During the twentieth century enlightenment Immanuel Kant, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Edmund Husserl, and Martin Heidegger each of them are assigned a different conception of the world. In that time many different texts regarding aesthetic have been published. For Kant, the idea of the world cannot be confirmed as empirically it is regulative. He treats the world as a principle which constitutes the possibility of experience. He thinks that for the sake of the unity of reason it is necessary to postulate the wholeness of the world.

There was a relation between Kantian aesthetics and two philosophers, Hans-Georg Gadamer (who was a German philosopher of the continental tradition) and Jacques Derrida. They both react against Kant’s first critique (critique of pure reason). Gadamer tries to develop a philosophical hermeneutics, a reflection on how possible understanding is. In his main work, Truth and Method (1960), he takes ‘work of art’ as a starting point. In this book, he says that in relation to a community, these works of art create a truth experience, which we have to interpret over and over again. Gadamer gave attention to Kant’s aesthetics (Kant’s third critique: a critique of judgment). In his third critique, he tries to investigate our ability to judge, which have no domain of knowledge of its own. In his first critique, he tries to investigate theoretical knowledge and second critique (critique of practical judgment) is

associated with practical knowledge. For this analysis, the transcendental method comes, which Gadamer criticizes for its lack of interest in reality. Through the transcendental method, Kant tries to search philosophically for scientific legislation of knowledge. In his transcendental critique, he focussed on the conditions of possibility for something to appear, the art of human knowledge or belief. His critique seeks in the necessary combination of the pre-existing framework not in things themselves or in pure ideas in the mind. According to him, for any human experience, knowledge, and consciousness, space and time are the grounds of possibility that is why they are not observable material things. From that, we have experienced that the world appears to us in a similar way in which the human mind understands them. Due to this, there is a division between things in themselves and their mental appearances. According to Kant, an aesthetic judgment introduces us to inter-subjectivity but George Gadamer criticizes it and argues, it happens within an analysis of the thinking process only. He argued that Kant is not interested in the work of art. For him, the work of fine art is the expression of our freedom to be moral and as the creation of something which looks as if it has a purpose in itself we recognize this (a fine art). Though there was a conscious intention of the artist, Kant’s aesthetic judgment is not a pure judgment, needs to be transposed to nature to return to pure judgments, Gadamer argued that it. He believes that here an understanding of our being in the world is lost. He says like Kant we cannot follow a scientifically inspired method to arrive at this truth (understanding of our being in the world). Rather than following Kant’s way of thinking, he made his own path of the humanistic tradition to explain this.

Jacques Derrida began his career with a set of problems from Kant to Heidegger and moved to critique of structuralism (as a method), and philosophy of language. He deconstructed Kant’s aesthetic judgment and called parergon. Deconstruction is not an analysis or a critique; it is a way of reading texts. Actually, by bringing the construction to the fore, the construction of truth is deconstructed and shows how it differs from the content. While Derrida reads the Kantian text as a work of art, he follows the reasoning of Kant. Although he himself experiences aesthetic pleasure but not as Kant suggests an absolute and pure pleasure. Aesthetic judgments are disinterested and pure for Kant. But according to Derrida, there is a possibility of a neutralization of myself and the world. In an absolute sense, there was no pure pleasure as a consequence of the disinterestedness. Actually, Kant has created a science of metaphysics and laid the foundation for that science with his three critiques.
Both Derrida and Gadamer interpret Kant and they define the truth of art in their own way. Derrida reads Kant’s text as if it’s a work of art while Gadamer in his hermeneutics takes work of art as a starting point. However, they both elaborate the work of art and its relationship with truth in different ways. Gadamer’s goal was concerned with an understanding beyond a scientific method. In the essay, *The Relevance of the Beautiful* Gadamer discusses that aesthetic experience has to be embedded in the world. For him, the work of art creates a common world and this art invents the truth of a community. In short, the reality of art in relation to the world was searched by Gadamer whereas Derrida demonstrated the context forms of our aesthetic experience. Derrida elaborates aesthetic as a kind of feeling, which escapes and questions our conceptual understanding. It has no pure formal understanding of it is possible. Gadamer’s thought about aesthetic judgments or experience stands in the phenomenological tradition. He holds that a picture or image was a work of art and it has the power which immediately affects us. Thus, which Gadamer experience as a work of art, Derrida experience ‘thing’ as if it is a work of art. By demonstrating how truths are created in texts, Derrida’s deconstruction shows the limits of rational thinking. However these two philosophers not only interpret Kant’s theory, they takes Kant in a positive way. They mentioned that Kant inspired their thinking. Gadamer in his book *The Relevance of the Beautiful* mentioned that he was inspired by Kant. Here it may be mentioned that Derrida also remains dependent on Kant’s thought and texts when he deconstructed Kant. This two ways of thinking in an absolute sense can never be fixed, which brings us the constantly evolving truth.

**Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel:**

In the early 19th century German philosopher Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel was one of the greatest philosophers who had a profound influence on the course of Western philosophy. He belongs to the period of German idealism. He was an art lover and expressed art as the spirit of particular cultures, as well as individual artists and the general human spirit. When he started thinking about the philosophy of art, Kant, Friedrich Von Schelling (1775-1854) and Schiller influenced Hegel with their ideas. For him, the aesthetic experience meant all about art, whereas for Kant aesthetic experience is related to the beauty of nature. According to Hegel artistic expression and artistic consciousness was the climax of the history of the human spirit, where truth of art revealed in a direct and intuitive way.
Derrida was influenced by Hegel’s dialectics. Hegel’s dialectics with contradictions was parallel with Derrida’s deconstruction. Even Hegel’s theory of speech and writing, and semiology was parallel with the theory of sign. Derrida claimed that “his philosophical formation owes much to the thought of Hegel and it is within and around this particular framework, more than anything else, that his thinking has evolved.” This is the reason of Derrida’s purpose of deconstructing Hegel’s philosophy which embraces Hegel’s theories of spirit, truth, dialectic and sign. For Derrida, it is because just as writing leads to more writing, truth leads to more truth, but it cannot lead to absolute truth. Here Derrida rejects Hegel’s conception of God, self presence of God, and World, as ‘myth of the presence’.

In the chapter entitled The Pit and Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel’s Semiology, of the Margins of Philosophy, Derrida deconstructs Hegel’s theory of speech and writing. In Hegel’s thought Derrida clearly catches the logocentric tradition, and he ‘defers’ and ‘differs’ from Hegelianism. In Of Grammatology he shows that he differs from Hegel’s theory of sings, which always determined by and dependent on metaphysical opposition such as; the sensible and the intelligible. Here he mentioned, “The problematic of the sign derives from a fundamental logocentrism, from a philosophy of consciousness or of the originary subject.” Here Derrida followed Hegel’s thought to show that philosophical generation points out some unconscious presuppositions which built into the vocabulary of its predecessor. However, Derrida’s thought is difficult because he is aware of the problem of the vocabulary, phrases, terms, and metaphors (metalanguage). Some postmodern thinkers saw Hegel’s philosophy as arrogant and reductive. Hegel thinks that speech is the natural state of the language. For him, non-phonetic writing is hieroglyphics and phonetic writing is a faithful transcription of the voice. In his theory spoken language and phonetic writing faithfully records the intentions of the author, which is an apparently ideal coincidence of meaning and intention. But Derrida engages with ordinary language philosophy. Here with normative overtone, we encounter the elevation of the natural attitude into metaphysics of communication. Derrida deconstructs the idealism of the bond between speech and writing. He was not trying to ‘rehabilitate’ writing rather than he discusses in his deconstruction the difference between writing and speech.

Derrida analyzed the chapter psychology and subchapter Imagination in Hegel’s work The Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences. Derrida decentres theory of speech and writing. He criticized this approach to psychology first, where subjective spirit has the psychological

23 Ibid, p 53.
temper and it shows that reason was the active elements of spirit. Hegel’s dialectics was an absolute idealism, where thought was primary and reality was secondary. So, first, he formulates the principle of dialectics in the concepts, categories, and sphere of logic. After that he introduced laws of dialectic to the world outside, which Derrida called ‘Hegel’s idealizing mastery’. It is because from spirit laws of dialectics are arise, and his semiology built on this along with onto-teleological or onto-theological synthesis. Another point is, according to Hegel, within the limits of meaning and explanation thoughts are beginning and also progressed. “So nothing is in the thought that can occupy a spurious elevation above the world.”25 In that case, Derrida was ready to accept Hegel’s concept about the otherness of the world, but when Hegel gives the meaning for interpreting that otherness in a dialectical way, Derrida does not accept his thought.

Edmund Husserl:

Derrida was influenced by Edmund Husserl. Actually, when he was in Ecolé Normale, he initially focused on Husserlian phenomenology. Derrida, in 1962, translated *Edmund Husserl’s Origin of Geometry: An Introduction*. Husserl plays an important role in Derrida’s philosophy. Because Husserl’s role in written language was the main inspiration for Derrida’s claim that western culture totally dependents on speech. Like Husserl, Derrida tries to criticize western traditional philosophy. Husserl is known as the ‘Radical’ beginner of a new philosophy. He wanted to establish the scientific ideal in philosophy. Although he was attracted by the Cartesian ideal of certainty and like Descartes, he wanted to ground philosophy on the model of mathematical knowledge but his thinking is radically different from Descartes. Descartes started with the method of doubt to reach to certainty but Husserl started with pure essence to reach to the quality of thinking. In *The Origin of Geometry*, Husserl says “Our problem now concerns precisely the ideal objects which are thematic in geometry: how does geometrical ideality (just like that of all sciences) proceed from its primary intrapersonal origin, where it is a structure within the conscious space of the first inventor’s soul, to its ideal objectivity?”26 For Husserl, geometrical discoveries are objectified in written forms. “In writing down symbols, the addressee is removed and what is written down becomes a ‘sedimentation’ which can be reactivated by new acts of

understanding”\textsuperscript{27}. Husserl gives importance in symbolic thought for science that is why he recognizes the need for written language to underpin the ideality of meaning. “The objectivity of geometry is made possible, for Husserl, through the ‘body of language’.”\textsuperscript{28} In \textit{Of Grammatology}, Derrida comments “Husserl is the first philosopher to recognize that writing is the condition of the possibility of ideal objects and therefore of objectivity.”\textsuperscript{29} In \textit{Writing and Difference} Derrida remarks: “Meaning must await being said or written in order to inhabit itself, and in order to become, by differing from itself, what it is: meaning. This is what Husserl teaches us to think in \textit{The Origin of Geometry}.”\textsuperscript{30}

For Derrida, phenomenology plays the role of tradition. However, Husserl’s phenomenology was a great source from which a succession of the major philosophical project comes. Edmund Husserl plays the lead role in shaping the thoughts of Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau Ponty. Derrida treated Husserl as a main actor who played the lead role in classical philosophy in the European context. Derrida’s deconstruction is not just a system of concept but a way of traversing the body of a text, a textual labour. His works leave a track in the texts of Husserl, which cannot be traced without reference to the text in which it was marked. From the \textit{Logical Investigations} to \textit{Crisis} Husserl’s central concerns are the firstly, to establish the objects of our knowledge. The objects of our knowledge are transcendent to the mental act through which we know them. They are not ‘real’ component of our psychological flow but these are the ideal identities which could be repeated as identically the same by different subjects. Secondly, he was concerned about that man was not just a technician, where they manipulated knowledge; because according to Husserl, we constantly recovered the constitutive or generative activity of thoughts in the process of knowledge accumulation. And this is necessary for the original institution of truths in language, where for others they will be available. Language is a store of insights for us and our ethical responsibility is to quicken them with our own minds constitutive activity. That is why Husserl mentions in \textit{Crisis}, the meaning of a scientific formula is not just in the relations of numbers but is a task given to scientific humanity.

The aims of philosophy are to know what true knowledge is. Because knowledge is something through which we know another. So, if we have knowledge about something then

\textsuperscript{27} Dermot Moran, \textit{Introduction to Phenomenology}, 2000, p 447.  
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{30} Martin Travers, \textit{European Literature From Romanticism to Postmodernism: A Reader in Aesthetic Practice}, 2001, p 296.
what we know is true. But sometimes it may happen that the fact can be false also. But everything depends on that ‘if’. So, the only way to check it is to examine the matter what we seek to know. And whenever we go back and verify the previous judgments then we get a new judgment.

The ideal knowledge is a kind of knowledge which must be in ‘itself’. Knowledge adjusts itself to the structure of what is independently existence of the cognitive act, but the object cannot be created whimsically. But here the paradox is “what is independently of our experience only becomes accessible in experience, and the experience is not the same as the thing of which it is the experience.”

It is a common assumption that objects such as rocks, trees, river exist in the outer world even when no one is observing them. But about this unexperienced existence, we have no experience. And we are not satisfied with saying to the skeptic that when we do not look towards the object even then whether it exists or not. Here Realists have admitted that “objects are by their very nature objects of knowledge only in the experience of subjects.”

According to Empiricism (all knowledge based on experience), experience means the only experience of the object, and Husserl called this, the problem of transcendence. By ‘transcendence’ he refers to the objectivity of objects and outside of the temporal flow of consciousness they exist. So, in this sense, it can be said that material objects and ideal objects e.g. mathematical truths are also transcendent.

According to Husserl, the telos of rationality was the objective knowledge and the knowledge of the world. He persisted upon self-evidence, and this was the goal of phenomenological reflection. ‘Phenomenology’ was a transparent method and free from presuppositions. It describes consciousness exactly as it is and objects are described as given to consciousness. However, at the same time within consciousness, it obtained to preserve the relation to the outside and within subjectivity, it obtained the relation to objectivity. But through the concept of intentionality, he solved the problem of this relation. According to Husserl, the directness of consciousness to the object of which it is conscious called intentionality. No object appears without experience. So, there is no experience without an object of which it is an experience.

Therefore, from the beginning of the world, everything has its place in the pure internality of the ego but the object is given to consciousness as what it is appropriate for the objectivity. And the ‘specific sense’ or meaning which we experienced is the transcendent or an object outside. It is given within experience but accurately given as the sense ‘an object out there’.

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32 Ibid.
So, what is transcendent or outside is also given as a part of the immanent or inside. But these are sense material object, not an actual or real material objects, which means if we want to attain the phenomenological viewpoint then we have to leave the natural standpoint which a common man and science shares. Explicitly the natural standpoint is the objects about which we are conscious really exist but sometimes we raise a question about this existence. And upon this natural consciousness, phenomenology as a kind of reflection tries to describe what is absolutely given within consciousness. For this reason, phenomenological reflection ‘brackets or suspends’ the question of existence. So, the thesis or judgment that things are actually present to my perception belongs to the natural standpoint, which further belongs to the experience of an object as a whole. Therefore, according to Husserl when we said that there is a tree before us, then it engages in the phenomenological epokhé or abstention. He never said that *epokhé* is a skeptical questioning of existence. Even it is not a Cartesian doubt but a change of perspective or an absolute being of the modality of consciousness which makes judgments. So, whether really the tree is there or not is indifferent. Here what remains is that the tree appears which is judged by the consciousness to be really there.

Husserl reacted against the psychologistic or sensualistic view, where he showed that from the bundles of sensations the ideas of objects enter into consciousness, which functions in the consciousness as a representative of the objects or as images. But according to Husserl, there must be a constitutive or interpretive activity of consciousness, if someone has an accurate description of perceptual consciousness. For example ‘a box’; here the bundle of sensation which we experience about this box, as a real content of consciousness, is a different bundle from what someone experiences or what we experience tomorrow. So, our perception of this box to be the same as our own yesterday or it is to be the same as someone’s perception but between the perceptions, there must be an ideal identity. However, as a real content of an individual consciousness, sensations of a particular moment could not be the same with other consciousness. Thus, by the consciousness as having a particular ‘sense’ the sensations must be animated or apprehended.

In *Investigations*, Husserl solved the problem of immanence through distinguishing the objects. For him, it is transcendent. He remarked that the identity of the object must be ideal and identity of sense or meaning but not of sensations. It means that by understanding the object (real object) through an ideally constituted identity, the relation of a real object transcendent to subjectively be guaranteed here. So, in *Logic*, he mentions that only this type
of ideal objectivity is capable of being experienced as identically the same objectivity for
different subjects, which never share the same real sensory content.

So, it is very important to keep in mind the distinction between the natural and
phenomenological standpoints. For example, when I see a tree at that time on the basis of
experience I perceive the tree itself but not the inner representation of the tree. This is a
natural standpoint. Here someone’s attention is absorbed in the object which is intended by
his or her perception. But when we describe the perceiving object’s character as given to our
reflection, then such description has different characteristics of that tree. Since the object
(that tree) has an infinite number of perspectival viewings. So, the tree or object which has in
my perception is noema (co-relate of consciousness). But when we look at the tree from
distance and then approach closer and when we stand below the branches of the tree and look
at that tree, then each moment we have some different perspectival apprehension about that
tree, which is not identical with all over the tree. For the phenomenological reflection, the
object has no reality of its own. But noema is directed towards the modes in which
consciousness is aware of objects. And for Husserl this reflection brackets or suspends the
question of reality, which is called the phenomenological reduction. For him this reduction of
the natural and empirical standpoint is fundamental. He wanted to describe and to deny
nothing which is undeniable and to assert nothing which was not evident. According to him
subjectivity and objectivity are the two sides toward which his phenomenology is oriented.
Husserl maintains the balance between these two, between conceptual judgment and pre-
conceptual experience and between real objects and ideal objects. But the phenomenological
reflection is everything is preserved just as it is but some new elements of the scene are
coming, which are thematized as objects.

Husserl’s phenomenological investigation is an investigation which is present in the sense of
experience. It demands the understanding glance of the wakeful cogito, and it demands
insights into the sense in which it investigates. But in this perspective, the ordinary geometers
or logicians are not farther from naive sensualists. However, phenomenology finds a world
that is given to consciousness and covered in the interpretations which are accumulated in the
history and this is obviously found underneath the sedimentation or accumulation. It tried to
discover by some interpretation that what the object is prior to being given form. It demands
that we withdraw ourselves from the layers of the interpretive form where this world is
covered in front of us, and it tries to return back to those primitive moments where due to the
consciousness, things jump of the being. This is the only way to reach into the
presuppositionless or a truly evident description. So, if we want to take the world as it appears to unreflective experience which is shaped by tradition, previous experience and language then we have to take or accept it as a habitual world, as a world we can only manipulate and understand and as it were from the outside.

Husserl’s followers have criticized and widely reject his transcendental phenomenological reduction, for example Iso Kern’s evaluation. According to him, ‘reduction’ is designed to break through the limitations of natural objective consciousness and it sees the object as foreign things, a static fixed, which tries to lighten the depth character of the world as a dynamic achievement of consciousness. Kerns quoted Husserl’s word that “to exclude the world means not to want to pass judgment on it straightway.” According to Husserl’s axiomatic thought if the world is intrinsically capable of being known as a whole then in some implicit way it contains the protoform, from where the forms of conceptual identity is developed. In this case, phenomenological reduction (which suspends the question of the object as such) focuses on the noematic idealities and tries to lighten the transcendental subjectivity, where this ideality appears as a way of unfolding the totality of the ideal possibilities.

According to Husserl language is the necessary medium of intersubjectivity. And by the verbal expression, the ideal objectives are fixed. It is the object of knowledge. This object of knowledge makes possible their accumulation in the communal tradition, for example, the tradition of philosophy or science which culminates into the phenomenology. Therefore, Husserl’s treatment of language is neither essential nor in-essential. For example, there is a living body of language which is transparent to intention and there is an opaque body (dead) of language. So, Husserl’s thought of language carried a tension and Derrida discussed this topic in his reading of Husserl. Even due to his deconstructive turn, he considered Husserl as the main agent of motivation. Some issues about the Origin of Geometry, which Derrida discussed, firstly, Husserl takes to examine the dependency of ideality on language and tradition. But the problems which created from this dependence are called The Origen of Geometry. This essay clearly expressed the necessity of original reactivation of ideal meaning occurs via subjectivity. Derrida focused on this necessity and the conflict of the worldliness of the linguistic sign.

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33 Ibid, p-41.
In *The Origin of Geometry*, Husserl mentions that the original inventor of geometry has to be engaged in a primal creative spiritual act. In this spiritual act, the inventor of geometry achieves the geometrical truths with the consciousness of its original being-itself-there. But in the mental space of proto-geometer (original inventor of geometry), this original moment of insight is restricted. Due to this reason, the real temporal event belongs to their empirical subjectivity. Those geometrical entities are not psychological; rather they are present in their essence, which exist supratemporally. So, to escape from its primary intrapersonal origin, where it structured within conscious space of the first inventor’s soul and to achieve an ideal objectivity, the geometrical idealities should be expressed in language or a linguistic living body. Then the second person catches these linguistic expressions, which was experienced by the proto-geometer.

For historical tradition, by writing the activity of original reproduction is possible. Derrida took interest in Husserl’s text. In one side, writing is necessary for ideality to be freed from the contingency of any particular empirical subject. For this reason, it permanently remains as virtuality. From an ideality, the originating consciousness achieves a wakeful moment of self-evidence. Then consciousness stores this fully wakeful moment in language. After that, it sleeps or dies. But at the end, the ideality or the permanent possibility of wakefulness remains. In another side, ideality and linguistic formula are not the same (which embodies the ideality and avails permanently). So, the being and ideal objectivity of permanent availability are different from their linguistic embodiments. Even they are essentially independent. Therefore, these are possible because of that linguistic embodiment. Thus the linguistic formulas are receptacle only. This has to be transformed through a recite, in the corresponding activity of meaning constitution. It is an activity which re-activates the primal self-givenness in the originator’s mode of full conscious presence from being-itselthere. For this reactivation, this necessity is impeded on a level of habitual response by the fact that we can read and in general operate with language. That is why Derrida mentioned that for ideality writing embodiment is necessary.

Husserl commented that through the sense perception an act of intellect involved. And by this intellect, an object is realized through sense or an ideal object-identity. For him, meaning gets completed in language, in the presence of an object. This is intended before consciousness. The intellectual form is the shape of the intention and of the object as given to this intention. According to him, the act of pure meaning operates as a ‘goal-seeking-intention’ and when the object is thought within the symbol then it is present in the intuition. Here the meaning
intention is just like the outline of the form, where the object is intended. Then the intuition of the actual object unifies a perfect corresponding filling into an empty outline. In this moment of object intuition, meaning and object both get united or blended in a single unity (ideal or intentional blending). But this blending and intended in a single mental act is possible in one condition. This is that, meaning-bearing a linguistic sign which is drop out of the picture. He remarked that signs are never an object in our thought; rather we fully survive in the consciousness of meaning.

Husserl sometimes stressed in the difference between the sensuous sign and mental act, which passes in the ideal meaning through the perceptual sign. He mentions that when we experience some certain data from that tree, then based on the sensational content we perceive the tree. Therefore between sense data and object perceived, there is an intrinsic relation. But in the case of the sign, the relation between the experiences of the sign is a sensuous phenomenon. And this sensuous phenomenon and its meanings are arbitrary. Therefore the connection between sensuous sign and realm of meaning is less prior compared to the ordinary material objects. Signs are the indispensable medium of meaning but the meaning (logical meaning) is not bound to sign.

Logical meaning is the essence of meaning. Thus, the meaning is always in its essence. However, it is not free or separate from the sign. A principle sign never creates opacity between the merging of intention and object. For instance, when I think or when I speak that ‘this box’, although the box is before me, then the meaning and object becomes one and that time the signifying medium assumes a kind of transparency. Even after this cognition and thought, these two are not the same. The thought is meaningful although it points towards the object within the principle. But the time between intention and fulfillment can be indefinitely extended on that time thought functions signitively or emptily. So, the signitive intention functions in the absence of fulfilling intuition which is thought. Thought not only plays in case of some sign but it also plays in case of the meaning of those sign. For this reason, it (signitive intention) moves in the ideality. And by the contingency of the material sign, it is not essentially conditioned. According to Husserl, the meaning intention and intuition or sense perceptions both are the freedom of thought.

Derrida expressed Husserl’s two side projects as formalist and intuitionist. In this case, he comments that Husserl in his analysis about formalist moment succeeded a lot. Husserl’s analysis of intentionality yielded a distinction between meaning and object. In his Fourth
Investigation of a pure logical grammar, this distinction was in the center most. Grammar is the universal structure of the language. This grammar, for the linguistic meaningfulness, defines a-priori conditions of possibility. And in the interval before the fulfillment of sense perception, the pure forms of meaning are unfolded. Derrida explains, sometimes without knowing any object we can speak. According to him, we know the act of meaning which always tries to create a relationship with the object. In this case, intention animated the body of a signifier for speech to take place. But by an intuition, the fulfillment of that aim is not indispensable or absolutely not necessary in the original structure of the expression. It tries to distribute with the full presence of the object which is aimed at by intuition. Due to this reason, we remember a meaning symbolically. But it is not true and never gets fulfilled. For instance, the square is a triangle. According to Husserl, this expression does not refer to even possible or actual object; rather they have some meaning. Because as an expression they have some forms and they follows some rules. On the other hand, Husserl has given another example ‘green is where’. In this case, the expression is nonsense. It has no form and meaning. Thus Husserl in his formalist moment separates the stratum of meaning from the stratum of object intuition. Here he tries to see how these stratum functions according to its own laws. However, Husserl described the emancipation of speech as non-knowing and independent of fulfilling intuition. In another side, he effaces this emancipation.

Husserl explained that, meaning waits upon truth. As a relation to an object, it is a-priori in its essence. And only in it's grammatical from it makes sense. This tolerates the possibility of a relationship with objects. Here Derrida questioned this teleological determination of the essence of meaning. According to him, the essence of meaning is its power on the ability to do some function in the absence of the object by animating the body of a signifier. But when the object is present in front of us that time we cannot see the distinctive or unique character of the meaning as a distinctive from the object intuition. Due to this reason, Derrida tried to break the concept of meaning far away from the moment of intuition. Here he tried to attach or fix to the moment of signification. But to deconstruct the Husserl’s meaning and signification does not mean to deny it or to refute it rather his deconstruction almost followed the conceptual path which is traced by Husserl. Even he followed some major steps which took by Husserl.

However, the above discussion is not meant for criticizing Husserl, though there is a contradiction in his thinking; it tried to show some aspects of the articulation of his concepts by which one leads to another. Here we try to lighten up that ethico theoretical character,
which Derrida used. This discussion tries to explore a perfect shape to the articulation and their linkage. We already have seen that Husserl choose a path according to the telos of the fulfillment of the signitive intention by something itself. Due to this reason in the case of the moment of signification, that kind of subordinate value has been prescribed. In his discourse, the path which he chooses is a subordinate place in the linkage of moments. Although his decision about ethico-theoretical determines the value of the moment of the sign. This decision of Husserl suspends the decision to throw open the question of the place and the value of the sign. According to James Joyce, the way of Husserl leads by the fixing of terminology in univocality. It is transparent to the logical units of ideal meaning. But, Derrida thought that this work of James Joyce is a repeated one and he has taken the responsibilities for that equivocation. He utilized language, which is equalized the greatest potential for buried with the greatest possible synchrony. Even he accumulates and tried to interwoven these intentions within each linguistic atom, vocable, simple propositions, each word, actually in all worldly cultures and their ingenious forms (science, mythology, art, religion, politics, philosophy, literature and so on). According to James Joyce, it is very difficult to read Derrida as poetry and as a simple philosophy.

Another important point where the difference between Husserl’s thought and Derrida’s thought are mentioned. The point is described as follows:

Derrida has shown his model of the sign as the structure of difference on the basis of rejecting the theory of Husserl’s model of presence. According to Husserl, the essence of sign is a type of character which is present in the mental or spiritual act. But, he was aware that there is another level of ideality, the ideality of the signifier or verbal corporeality, in between the material substance of the sign and its meaning. Here for Derrida the sign into a worldly or material side and an ideal side was not splited by the ideality of the signifier. Thus, the existence of the sign is not bracketed in favor of its ideality. In general, Husserl defines idealities as identities. And by a rational subject, it presented the standing possibility of repetition. So in this sense, the sign is too an ideality. But the identity of the sign is a kind of a ‘type’ of a contingent existent (or of a set of allowable sensuous configurations) which is recognizable as the same sign. However, these types of identities are not real things. Therefore, for thought the sign is not a final route (terminus). So, the fact is that beyond this there are various sensuous configurations which can also count ‘as the same sign might have no objective identity with each other’. And within the system of a difference, they retain the relative function in a long time. This system of difference constitutes the whole system of
sign to which they belong. In that way the language can treat ‘I’, ‘K’, and ‘R’ as the same as another language treats them as different phonemes. As a result neither in the purity, ideality the sign is an ideal object nor is it quite a material object. Derrida mentioned that there was nothing amazing or something new about the nature of the sign. For Husserl, the sign confounds the categories of ideality and materiality. He introduced meditation to make the nature of the sign as the focus of thought, which is no longer that of classical metaphysics. It is something other than a being but not being a thing. It is no longer a meditation on the being of the thing but the ‘sole thing’. But it is not a matter of a question. So, Husserl reduced the sign in favor of their ideal signification. Because according to him, the essence or non- essence of the sign lacks freedom and presence both. Through this thought, the sign remains in its essence. Therefore following Derrida, it can be remarked that necessarily the sign belongs to ideality. We can bracket the existence of ordinary materiality but in the same way, we cannot bracket the sign.

The difference between Husserl and Derrida is, Derrida takes the sign as something which is the limit point of the movement of idealization. And he wanted to show that how modern philosophical waves (from Plato to Husserl) break on that point. He tried to go in another direction and re-capture the ground which he previously accepted. The distinctive structure of the sign was identified by him as a repetition of what was not fully present. For that reason, he reinterprets the fundamental structure of presence in its terms. He re-conceived his all experiences on the model of signitive experience. And for him, “‘Repeatability’ is the condition for the existence of idealities (all), whether they are the “senses” of real or ideal objects, turns out to infect the entire domain of presence.”34 Because at that time he understands that on the repetition the constitutive form of all ideality depends. But according to Husserl by a unifying and unified form of ideality repetition is possible. He concerned about presence or self-giveness of objects to consciousness. According to him, consciousness depends on the primal impression that ‘an object makes on consciousness in an absolute “now”’.35 And that moment of primal impression only has full being. At the place of past ‘now’ comes a new ‘now’ and the moment would be changed into past ‘now’ immediately. Here Husserl realized that the concept of a primal ‘now’ and irreducible ‘now’ is an idealization and it is a limit concept. So, an appropriate sense from a primal ‘now’, a

35 Ibid.
complete concept of now was created which contains the anticipations of the future. ‘Retention’ retains itself a previous now and so on.

Husserl talks about time consciousness in terms of the object, they are themselves temporal; mainly sounds and melodies. When an individual person can listen to any melody “the individual notes do not completely disappear when the stimulus or action of the excited by them comes to an end. When the new note sounds, the one preceding it does not disappear without a trace; otherwise, we should be incapable of observing the relations between the notes which follow one another. We should have a note at every instant... but never the idea of a melody.”36 For this reason, phenomenological retention is a kind of descriptive concept which acknowledged the fact that in any given moment perception is immediately informed by the sense that which has preceded it. That kind of sense is not a self-contained and different thing. In the case of Kant, we observed that he realized the problem about the isolation of the moment of consciousness and tried to give a solution by reference to the concept of an object. But in phenomenology according to Husserl the moments of originary consciousness are essentially or naturally linked in a continuous gradation, which is possible from that time constituting continuity, from where the idealities of objects are derived. Although each moment of consciousness is filled with a new content and the form of that consciousness always remains the same. So, ultimately the consciousness of the unity of an object is possible only because of the formal structure of the flux of the time-constituting consciousness. For Husserl, through an impression, a ‘now’ is constituted and it joins a horizon of protention with a chain of retentions.

But according to Derrida, this analysis (time consciousness which concerns the nature of retention) of Husserl have some problems. The problem is: if the ‘now’ of impression consciousness was constituted by its relation to past ‘now’ which it already retains, then the question is, is it followed that previous retention? Which belongs to the perception in the primordial sense, what Husserl wants to assert? However, there is some descriptive difference between retention and recollection but it does not demonstrate that previous retention as opposed to recollection (secondary remembrance), which means there is a character of perception ‘of the immediate intuitive presence of consciousness of its objects’ Husserl mentioned that consciousness in its every phase is necessarily consciousness. When Derrida competes with Husserl’s observation about the nature of retention, he challenged the fullness

36 Ibid, p- 51.
of consciousness. If the primary remembrance does not belong to the primordial fullness of objective consciousness then it contaminates the originality of the origin.

Thus Husserl’s own analysis expressed that there is no content which is possible as lived experience without retention. But the problem is, whether these retained contents are perceptually present? According to Husserl, the answer is yes, they must be. The reason is, his whole system was based on a-priori assumptions that all forms of mental representation referred back to the primordial experience of full perceptual presence which determines phenomenology as a philosophy of presence. Here deconstruction of phenomenology treats retention as a non-fullness which infects perception. So, just because without retention there is no perception, the trace of non-presence come out as essential to the principles of perceptual presence and the ‘originarity’ of ‘now’ depends on that repetition of ‘not now’. Thus, for the appearing of the phenomenon, the non-present ‘not-now’ becomes the condition of possibility. So, we cannot imagine consciousness as full and it is no longer conceived in the ‘now’ of perception but it becomes possible only for Derrida to move into the direction of an accommodation to the psychoanalysis, and postpone constitution of a mental content which is never present consciously.

Derrida starts with the structure of sign, and then on the same model, he reinterprets the structure of transcendental consciousness and the structure of ideality. To appear in any present term, ‘in-principals multiplicity’ is a condition within a repeatable identity. There are some beliefs or habits which are common to people but at the same time, it is difficult to follow the underpinning meaning of the sentence. Derrida’s proposal evoked that opposition which it has. However, his formula is attractive and noticeable of the established formula and it is rationally formulated. Its intention was to provide an alternate description of a set of phenomena. According to Derrida the ideality of the sign was breaked or divided by repeatability. So, as a follower of the logic of deconstruction, it may be mentioned that we not only revise our concepts; rather we will revise our concept of language and the concept of concept also. Like Wittgenstein, Derrida mentioned that deconstruction is not a pure thought but by the medium of language it allows itself to work. For him, the divided essences have a trace structure. Here trace is retention within the same of the reference to the other. However, the other itself has never been present. It is the transcendental structure of experience. As the structure of the ‘now’ and of the sign, the trace is the possibility of experience and meaning. In general, the first possibility of a trace is the possibility of a particular language and it (trace) is the pure form of signification.
In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida supplements his trace structure with Saussure’s concept of the sign. According to Saussure, the sign is not a positive term. It is “constituted in its identity by its difference from the other terms in the system to which it belongs.” For him, language is not a substance but ‘a form’. He gives an example, such as: “the term a and b are radically incapable of reaching the level of consciousness – one is always conscious of only the a/b difference.” Here it may be marked that the form of ideality is the trace of difference. Here, by the double difference, the sign is constituted from itself and from the other signs. But Derrida redicalized the concept of the differential form of language, which is Saussure’s concept, and Derrida assimilates it to Husserl's concept of ideality.

In *Of Grammatology*, it is mentioned that the sign is an ‘irreal’ identity. As a system of differential trace structure, the pure form of language only can appear in the phenomenological lived experience zone. But on the other hand, in terms of Saussure's concept of significative value, Derrida redirects the phenomenological discourse on which he draws by analyzing the structure of lived experience. However, signification is not ‘presence’, not self-identity but only it appears as a lived ideality. In *Of Grammatology* it is stated that a sign is a structure of reference in which not pure identity and difference appears as such.

So, the signification as the trace of a difference, the split identity of the sign, Derrida summarized all these themes under ‘writing’. According to the usual sense, writing is a kind of language which is detached from the subject physically who intends the meaning. But for Derrida, it is more than that. It is the signitive essence of language experience of speech and thought. Derrida argued, “From the moment that there is meaning there are nothing but signs.” Thus within someone’s own experience the partial nonpresence or spacing of writing as the possibility of that experience is at work- where someone not fully present to his or herself and not fully wakeful: “Arche-writing as spacing...marks the dead time within the presence of the living present.” So, René Descartes’s proposition ‘I think, therefore I am’ (*Cogito ergo sum*) put forwards the fullness of self-presence to flower as the fullness of self-present thought. Within thought, spacing opens the relation to death and to the unconscious, and experiences are written. But in one hand, apart from the constitutive intention of a wakeful consciousness, it makes a sense of its own and for the same reason in another hand,

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37 Ibid, p-59.
38 Ibid.
39 Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p-50
40 Ibid, p- 68
the sense which it makes is equivocal, partially opaque and lacking in unity. However, deconstruction is not a new explanation of how things really are; rather difference and writing, in general, are that kinds of the zone in which the concepts are designed to contest are located. In deconstruction, the turn to writing is not just a simple return to the natural standpoint which precedes the phenomenological reduction. For Derrida, it is a reduction of the reduction.

From the above discussions, it is clear that equivocal surface of writing; the zone of ideality begins itself to show up in the ordinary sense of the text as a textual zone. The phenomenological reduction which is opened by Husserl is a linguistic effect. On the other side about *différance*, Derrida said that it is neither a word nor a concept. For him, it is a grammatical device. It is a trace structure which is constructed as a baffle. Therefore against the pressure of the paternal tradition that baffle holds open the texture of language to allow different kind of text to be interwoven. For example a Freudian discourses on the irrational and unconscious to flow into the philosophical texts.

Derrida attacked ‘logocentrism’ or ‘phonocentrism’ (western culture, since Plato’s Phaedrus) by his new or a general science of writing, which he called ‘grammatology’; it is not just one science among others but the ‘true science of science’. For Derrida: “It is true that for me Husserl’s work, and precisely the notion of epoché, has been still is a major indispensable gesture. And in everything I try to say and write the epoché is implied. I would say that I constantly try to practice that am speaking or writing.”

It may be commented here that Derrida is influenced by Husserl but the differences between them are, Husserl’s phenomenology is concerned with ‘phenomenology of language’ and ‘speech’ but Derrida’s ‘deconstruction’ concerned with the ‘text’. That is why Derrida bracketed Husserl within the group of ‘logocentrism’. The problem of Husserl is that like Descartes, Hume, and Kant, he accepts the character of modern epistemology and the presumption, the content of consciousness represents only our certain knowledge. He believed that Descartes’s method of doubt is still a valid method. But Derrida opposed to Husserl. By the influence of structuralism, which is developed by Ferdinand de Saussure, Derrida developed his path with the Saussure’s concept of sign. According to Husserl, living present of human consciousness is the ultimate locus, the ground of meaning and

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understanding. But for Derrida meaning depends on sign-system. He explains that there is no self and no other, which can be understood apart from the sign. For Derrida ‘logocentrism’ is the tendency, which is associated with truth, with the voice of word or logos, it involves a prejudice in favor of ‘presence’, what Derrida calls ‘metaphysics of presence’ and Husserl’s logocentrism leads him to privilege the presence of the voice or speech as opposed to writing. That is why Derrida says that Husserl reproduced another deep prejudice of Western thought and Derrida calls it ‘phonocentrism’.

**Martin Heidegger:**

After Husserl, another philosopher who played a crucial role in French Philosophy was Martin Heidegger. Derrida was strongly influenced by his position. He was deeply interested in Heidegger, and his relation with Heidegger is critical. Heidegger’s influence on Derrida is especially visible in Derrida’s central concept of deconstruction. Some commentators say about deconstruction that ‘Derrida as merely taking over and developing on the earlier Heideggerian concept’. In 1927, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger used the word ‘destruction’, which is contrasted with ‘construction’. Here “he describes the Phenomenological method in terms of three basic components: reduction, construction and deconstruction. Deconstruction is a critical process in which traditional concepts that at first must necessarily be employed are deconstructed down to the sources from which they were drawn.”

Heidegger observes in *Being and Time*, that destruction is a hermeneutic tool. Like Heidegger, Derrida understands, by ‘Metaphysics of Presence’, the meaning of beings has been determined, in the Western philosophy. For this reason it can be mentioned that Derrida’s philosophy is a Post-Heideggerian. But Derrida does not begin his philosophical career with a question on being, he does not engage in any rational inquiry of the meaning, it is always directed to the center, and reason. Derrida claims that he deconstructed Heidegger’s important essay *The Origin of the Work of Art* by which he actually tries to overcome the metaphysics of presence. With some thinkers such as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Levinas, and Saussure; Derrida finds difference at the origin of truth. Like Heidegger, he says that a philosopher at all time has gone wrong in trying to make sense of meaning by looking for essential truth lying with the essence of things.

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Heidegger used the term ‘destruction’; there is a difference between Heidegger’s ‘destruction’ and Derrida’s ‘deconstruction’. Heidegger used the term ‘destruction’ as something positive, it is not aimed to do away with metaphysics; rather phenomenological reduction is oriented towards the reconstruction of the meaning of beings which is found mixed within the hard layers of ‘Being’. Heidegger’s master word is ‘Being’. Aristotle, who wrote Metaphysics, raises the question of what is being (entity) as being? For him, everything is a being. After a long time, Heidegger reformulates Aristotle’s question and he enquires what the being of beings is? According to Heidegger “philosophy is not a science of beings but of being.”

As an existentialist, Heidegger begins the analysis of being not with the meaning of entity but with ‘Dasein’ (existential structure or the human subject whose existence precedes his essence). And “Heideggerian destruction of metaphysics is a de-structuring of philosophy in order to arrive at the meaning behind the structure of Being. For Heidegger origin of truth is neither the a-priori categories nor the truth of proposition, but non-originary origin, which is explained in terms of the disclosedness or truth of Dasein and that of work of art.”

However, Derrida does not reject Heideggerian concept of ‘being’ but he used the word ‘trace’ (arché-writing). Derrida says Heidegger’s destruction signified an operation bearing on the structure or traditional architecture of the fundamental concepts of ontology or of Western metaphysics. Both Heidegger and Derrida teach us, to use in terms of trace – structure; but the difference between them is, Heidegger’s being is the inarticulable presence and Derrida’s trace is the mark of the absence of a presence. Derrida’s writing is a kind of radical critique of Western metaphysics, and his strategy for overcoming logocentrism is called deconstruction. It is closely related to the word ‘analysis’, etymologically meaning “to undo”, not related to Heidegger’s ‘destruction’.

Friedrich Nietzsche:

Nietzsche was one of the remarkable philosophers who bear major influences not only in the 20th century but also in the present, especially on Jacques Derrida. His ideas of individuality, morality and the meaning of existence contributed to the thinking of Martin Heidegger and Jacques Derrida. Nietzsche declares the end of metaphysics; he was the first philosopher who

43 Peter Alawa, Martin Heidegger on Science and Technology: It’s Implication to the Society, vol-12, Issue-6, 2013.
says that ‘God is dead’, not only the death of ‘God’, but as a necessary consequence of the human subject. His genealogy plays a deconstructive critique of the tradition. Like Nietzsche, Derrida tries not to lay importance to ‘reason’. We can say that actually Nietzsche’s ideas are developed in Derrida’s thought on literary authority and its relation to the deconstruction of the subject. His central concept is will to power and the authority of the ‘Übermenschem’ (supermen). Postmodernism challenges the modernist and medieval mindset. It tries to overcome logocentrism or reason on metaphysical and mythical worldview. But in the 20th century a new anthropological project started and Nietzsche is credited with this change in Western philosophy. He says that reason is nothing but the will to power; it is overtly and covertly operates for power. According to him, knowledge is a means of power, even in science, morality, art, and metaphysics. Power is a major category.

But the difference is that Derrida does not endorse Nietzsche’s statement of ‘the death of God’. Derrida’s doctrine of ‘God’ is a negative theology, for him, it is ‘the divine God’, which is distinct from the metaphysical ‘God’, and it cannot be known by conceptual knowledge. Derrida’s deconstruction is neither theistic nor atheistic; it is directed to the ‘ism’ rather than the ‘theos’. Deconstruction is not the doctrine, which is directly denounced ‘Western thought’ or ‘metaphysics’ but it questions all the assumptions of the ‘Western tradition’.

**Ludwig Wittgenstein:**

There is an important relationship between the philosophy of Postmodernism and Wittgenstein’s analysis. They both reject any kind of foundationalism (like Descartes tradition even like Platonic and neo-Platonic tradition). Because foundationalism adopts that there must be some ultimate grounds for human knowledge and reality. In any interpretive exercise, they both emphasize the importance of interpretive communities as the final point of reference and as in the Postmodernist’s ‘local communities of interpretation’. Even they emphasises the importance of that interpretive communities as in ‘language games’ (Wittgenstein’s concept) where we are inescapably involved and our forms of life connected with them. Another point is, they both questioned the traditional assumptions and they are claiming that everything must be understood and interpreted within specific contexts. It is true that Derrida and Wittgenstein come from different cultural and intellectual traditions, Derrida from French and Wittgenstein from the British, but they both reject ‘metaphysics’. That is why they belong to the contemporary movement of analytical skepticism. That means
they deny any kind of Meta contextual facts, for example, ‘God’, from which we can judge and justify our epistemological views about human knowledge and our metaphysical views about the structure of reality. Both Wittgenstein and Derrida changed the milieu of philosophical discourses. The word ‘deconstruction’ first time used by Derrida, but even it would be ‘practiced’ by other philosophers. This deconstructive activity is as old as the philosophy and he himself says that there are three proto-deconstructors like Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Freud.

Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* deals with thinking activities and the writing modes, which are similar to the deconstruction of Derrida. Like Derrida, Wittgenstein describes his Investigations as not a method. The word ‘Game’ plays an important role in both Wittgenstein and Derrida’s philosophy of texts; they both understand the game as a ‘strategy’. Wittgenstein used in his philosophy, ‘language game’, which should be understood not as a theory but as an activity. With some concepts like *différence*, *reserve*, *réstance*, and *dissémination* ‘game’ has a specific role in the texts of Derrida.

It may be mentioned that there are some similarities between them but the important differences between deconstructions of Wittgenstein and Derrida are about the relationship to the texts of the history of philosophy. Derrida adopts the history of philosophy as a ‘tradition’. He deconstructed the individual texts. But Wittgenstein does not analyze historical texts. Wittgenstein questions about the language, always he speaks about forms of language and forms of expressions. He gives a “deconstruction of the reading, and trying to differentiate between three art of reading: the reading-machine, the beginner and the reading as mental activity in his Philosophical Investigations and also in his Brown Book.”

But according to Derrida, reading is not the search for meaning; it’s a kind of special text interpretation and text writing. Derrida in his book *La Dissémination*, says that his deconstructive reading is contrary to the “metaphysical model of reading”; it is a “prudent, differentiated, slow stratified” reading. Another difference between them is about ‘game’. Although they both used the word ‘game’ but Wittgenstein thinks from the language and from the sense of language that is why he used language game. But Derrida writes from the writing and from the sense of writing, which is known as ‘writing game’.

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There is no doubt that there are similarities between the philosophy of Postmodernism and Wittgenstein’s analysis, but their philosophical structures are radically different. The sources of Wittgenstein’s philosophy are totally different from the sources of Derrida’s philosophy. The philosophical ambitions of postmodern philosophy are much larger than the Wittgenstein’s analysis. Postmodernism is completely a new way of treating the social-cultural being.

Derrida criticizes linguistics and main traditions of western realist philosophy. He started with a critique of foundationalism and realism, where he deconstruct the assumption that language can reflect, correspond or represent to real things outside of language and the human mind. Like Saussure he stated that our inherited theory of signs entails an unacknowledged metaphysics; e.g. presence (ideas, concepts, things are somehow present in thought or in an objective transcendental realm which reflected in words). For him, in language we acknowledged the structure of presences and absences which constitute sign and meanings, which means in writing and speaking we perceived something as present signifiers in letters, images, and in verbal sounds, and absent means something (values, beliefs, and meaning) supplied by our knowledge of the system of relationship but they are not present in signs. It must be acknowledged that Derrida got influenced by Saussure but he criticizes structuralism and says that structuralism is a kind of logocentric thought, a speech centered thought. But according to Derrida, there is no structure or center. For Saussure sign is the basic elements of language. Meanings are always explained in the relation between signs and their referents; whereas Derrida decentres the idea of sign system and structure. He remarked that there is no truth, God, being (transcendental signified) when signs and signification are examined.

Thus it may be commented here that if we compare Derrida’s reading with Husserl, Heidegger and Nietzsche’s reading, then we can realize that Derrida’s reading is strong reading; mainly his theoretical concern with deconstruction. It is about subverting illusions (there is no ‘there’, centers are an illusion) in our knowledge and ideologies, not about the demolition truth or reality. It is not something we can do, but something we are in.

Before delving into the issue of deconstruction, it is necessary to discuss how Jacques Derrida became a deconstructionist?

Derrida did a lot with artistic circle, literary spheres, aesthetic arenas, and social sciences. One interesting topic arises that is he contested at some zone as postmodernist or even as a
post-structuralist? When he related with Levi Strauss, Ferdinand de Saussure, Jacques Lacan, and Michel Foucault, he was appeared as poststructuralist. He was just not reacting to structuralism. He started with philosophical phenomenology. Instead of people raised their voice that his deconstruction is a postmodern philosophy.

In the history of philosophy especially in each tradition we probably find that either they are refusal or development of previous philosophies. Let’s start with Socrates. In his philosophy, to reconstruct a true wisdom he introduced the method of dialectics and questioned the naturalistic principles of pre-Socratic thinkers. After Socrates, Plato came and he raised some objection to his teacher Socrates and introduced his doctrine of Universal Idea. But by his student Aristotle’s first philosophy Plato was criticized. But later by the theocentric thoughts of medieval philosophers, all these stalwarts were submerged. Soon the metaphysical theories are upheld by the theological thinkers, who were overturned by the revolt of rational cum progressive conceptions, but later these are reconstructed by some distinguished modernist philosophers, who centered upon human subjectivity, rationality, the concepts of rights, freedom, and democracy.

Thus from the above discussion, it is clear that at every point of time till modernists philosophers, what they have actually done. First, they read carefully their forerunners and then they critically analyzed their previous thoughts. After that, they constructed their own conceptions and doctrines. Another delicate aspect is, although each school denied the other school but they believed in the existence of universal truth, and all these different philosophies accommodated within two different schools of thought, either it was idealism, or materialism. This categorization of ideology was propagated and well established by the great modern philosopher René Descartes. He introduced dualism. According to him, things, reality and their relationship are viewed either idealistically or materialistically. “Postmodernism enframes modernism without identity or unity. It is fragmented, discontinuous, multiple, and dispersed. Where modernism asserts centering, focusing, continuity- once the break with tradition has already occurred- postmodernism decenters, enframes, discontinues, and fragments the prevalence of modernist ideals.”47 In short, in the time of postmodernism, reality follows diverse models which are rich and mutually exclusive in conflicts. Mostly, postmodernism desires for fragmentation and pluralism. Here totality

and unity was shattered with continuity and determinism. Therefore, the significance of relativism was revealed.

At the International School for Holocaust Studies, in an interview with Dr. Michal Ben-Naftali, Derrida explained the situation, when he turned as a deconstructionist. He said that for twelve years, European churches, diplomacies, universities collaborate with Nazism in their own ways, which happened through diplomatic arrangements, discourse, silences, through bad faith and also looking other way. The question is, before the war how could French and English diplomacy go along? How could the church behave in that manner? And why they behave like they do not understand what was happening to the Jews culture? And all these thoughts connect European culture as a whole. This is why deconstruction is work on the European culture, which does not take forms rather it takes without the reference to that moment and which was that of interwar period.

For Derrida, the deconstructive philosophy is an ‘event’, a kind of rupture occurred in the history of the concept of structure. Derridean deconstruction is not just a redefinition or reconstruction or replacement of the past. During the Second World War, Algeria suffered with the Nazi Germany atrocities and Vichy government. Though it was not worsted as nuclear holocaust, that time young Derrida was deeply affected by the racial discriminations. Thus, in 1940, the anti-semitism of Algerian Jewish Jacques Derrida in his young age encountered Fredrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Sigmund Freud, Ferdinand de Saussure, and other thinker’s breakthrough thoughts, which provoked Derrida to perform deconstruction on the traditional Western philosophy.

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CHAPTER TWO

ON DECONSTRUCTION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

This chapter is intended to consider Derrida’s account of Deconstruction. He is one of the remarkable philosophers of the twentieth century. In deconstruction, he tries to dig out the meaning of meaning. He has been both reviled and revered for his anarchic play with the eccentric ingenuities of language. “A text, for instance, Mahabharata gives a meaning to us: we should fight, if injustice is done to us.” But this is not only the meaning of the text. There could be several other meanings of Mahabharata. Derrida’s central theme is to go deep into the things as they appear to us. He thinks, the meaning which we are communicated might not be the meaning, always there is something hiding behind that which is present. He interested to find out in his deconstruction theory, how the meaning of texts can be plural and unstable than in fixing them to a rigid structure. Here the question is why Jacques Derrida writes or speaks about ‘deconstruction’ for a long time?

Deconstruction is applicable to art, literature, science, architecture, psychology, mathematics and philosophy. He himself stated that “my most constant interest, coming even before my philosophical interest I should say, if this is possible, has been directed towards literature, towards that writing which is called literary.” His text belongs to philosophy because of his questions, which he raised about language, thoughts, and identity and about some other longstanding themes of philosophical debates. He was very sensitive about the problem of marginality and centre. He mentioned that “The function of this centre was not only to orient, balance and organize the structure.... but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the play of the structure.” This idea of centre systemizes the functioning of an entity and restricts its freedom also. For him, always ‘centre’ freeze the play of binary opposites and it leads by the metaphysical absolutude. Because ‘centre’ exists in the form of a fixed point, a Truth, an Origin, an Essence, an Ideal form, a God and Presence.

48 S.L. Doshi, Modernity Postmodernity and Neo-sociological Theory, 2003, p 329
49 Alan Montefiore, Philosophy In France Today, 1983, p 37.
According to Derrida, the term ‘centre’ is problematic as it always tries to attempt to exclude anything else other than itself. Thereby the ‘centre’ marginalized others. In doing so, binary opposites are formed. “The center that dominates acts in such a way that at times the existence of ‘others’ are totally excluded. Not even the presence of the suppressed entity comes to the fore. May be one centre would be substituted by another centre, as a linked chain of determinations of the center but there is no space for play. It is also not so easy to trace out the centre that marginalizes other. It may operate in a hidden form.”

At this juncture Derrida felt that the problem of centre comes into existence only because of language. For him, human minds are conditioned through codes, categories, and concepts. Therefore, it worked only on the basis of conceptual pairs which are constructed. According to Derrida “since philosophy exists in language, there is no escaping from language as the medium of philosophy. As the medium, it cannot just be like a pure transparency; it must condition philosophy; and that can only be shown by emphasizing the medium of philosophy.”

He traced that, ‘metaphysics of presence’ hunts every philosophical theory and it comes through language. It monopolized everything and catches them under its total control.

Another unique observation follows here; everything became discourse in the absence of an origin or centre. Thus, if there was no metaphysical conception then there was play. His attack on metaphysics was familiar in the philosophical history. However Derrida was influenced by a Nietzschean critique of metaphysics, Heideggerian destruction of ontology, of metaphysics, of the determination of Being as presence; he mentioned that in a kind of circle these all discourses and their analogues are trapped. This kind of circle described the form of the relation between the history of metaphysics and the destruction of that history of metaphysics. Derrida observed, when one will trapped into a centre, even if the effort to dissolve this, because there is no syntax, language, which was foreign to this history. But here Derrida finds, “language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique.”

According to David Loy, Derrida wants to say that, “Philosophy always re-appropriates for itself the discourse that delimits it.”

In the same style, he questioned the idea of stable centre which helps him to formulate the strategy called ‘deconstruction’. Through his strategy, he performs a tactic of centering

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52 Barry Stocker, Derrida on Deconstruction, 2006, p 16.
(thinking of the structurality of the structure). It is a way of reading the text, first which gives us the awareness of the centrality of that central term. After that, he moved further and tried to unearth the paradox, a contradiction which lies within the same language. Then he tried to destroy the central term and replaced it with another term which was so far marginalized. Thus the marginalized term becomes the centre; therefore temporarily the hierarchy was overthrown. Here Derrida explained that the philosophical actions are not worked out to dismantle the dominant aspects of language. The reason was, after the inclusion of linguistics, philosophy has never been unbiased. So, it is necessary to start “.... beginnings of a step outside of philosophy”\textsuperscript{55}, which is very difficult.

Logocentrism is the main tone of his deconstructive strategy. His strategy ‘deconstruction’ shows to act upon the fundamental tendencies in western thought, for example, logocentrism was interested in theology, phonocentrism (gives the priority for sound over writing), geocentrism (the belief in a permanent self), phallocentrism (superiority of one culture, and intellectual traditions over other). Derrida acts against logocentrism. It is a kind of universal system, believed to be taught directly by God, which is true, right and so on. According to Grorge Ritzer “logocentrism has led to the closure not only of philosophy, but also of the human sciences. Derrida is interested in deconstructing or dismantling the sources of this suppression –thereby writing from the things that enslave it.”\textsuperscript{56} So, it could be said that it’s the deconstruction of logocentrism. The Greek word logos means reason, it implies the assumption about some fixedness, foundational principle which can be uniquely named. For Derrida, it is phonocentrism because this logocentric bias of Western metaphysics operates the traditional priority which afforded ‘speech (phone) over writing (gramme). He claims, western metaphysical tradition always characterizes ‘writing’ as a ‘supplement’. It is a kind of unnecessary and accidental side effect of living speech. He calls ‘phonocentrism’ as a ‘heliocentrism’- the privileging of the spoken over writing. In Of Grammatology Derrida claims that “logocentrism: a discourse which holds that living discourse (logos) grounds sense or meaning: the sense of being as presence...logocentrism...[is the]...epoch of full speech.”\textsuperscript{57} “logocentrism is, therefore, a term that Derrida uses to signify the metaphysics of phonetic writing...which was fundamentally- for enigmatic yet essential reasons that are inaccessible to a simple historical relativism- nothing but the most original and powerful

\textsuperscript{55} Jacques Derrida, Writing and Difference, 2002, p 359.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid, p 329
\textsuperscript{57} Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, 1976, p 43
ethnocentrism.” 58 Above all, it is clear that for Derrida ‘philosophical problem is the problem of language’. Derrida’s contention is that the metaphysical tradition which takes the living speech to be a defining feature of truth has dominated philosophical thought since its inception and has a lineage that can be traced from Plato to Hegel and even from the pre-Socratic thinkers to the work of Heidegger.

In deconstruction, Derrida discovered some terminologies, such as différance, arché-writing, erasure, trace, supplement, pharmakon, parergon, text and so on. Through all these terms Derrida approached philosophy beyond all philosophical categories, where he finds, all philosophical structure has got basic presuppositions.

Différance:

In 1968, the term différance originated at the société françaïse de philosophie, at a seminar given by Derrida. He launched this différance to efface the hierarchy and presuppositions, which anchored in the tradition of Western philosophy. Especially, against the ‘metaphysics of presence’ he brought that term. It is neither a word nor a concept, neither active nor passive, at the same time it is neither thought nor image but actually “the possibility of conceptuality.” 59 To critically examine various philosophers and philosophies, Derrida deals with the French neologism différance in numerous texts and also various contexts. According to Derrida, within the playground of knowledge, this non-concept exhibits the dance of language. According to him, it indicates the middle voice, “it precedes and sets up the opposition between passivity and activity.” 60 It prefers to play in the middle, which means différance can be understood as signifying inequality and distinction both, identity and non-identity. Différance is Derrida’s way of referring to the trace of difference. Différance always addresses that which is nameless, for example, what is commonly understood to be ‘God’. Yet ‘God’, unlike différance signifies a metaphysical ground but différance is neither eternal nor sequential. For Derrida “it is the nonfull, nonsimple ‘origin’; it is the structured and differing origin of the differences.” 61 It is what makes the meaning of words possible, through this, a phenomenon that is experienced as a present shows itself as a relation to both the past and to the future. According to Merleau-Ponty “in the certitude of the present, there is an

58 Ibid, p 4
61 Jacques Derrida, Speech and Phenomena, 1973, p 131
intention which outruns the presentness of the present.”62 But according to Derrida “both the past and the future create a present that is hollow, a present in relation to what is not”.63

_Différance_ is typical of Derrida’s poetic excess. His term _différence_ [with an ‘a’] is the difference that shatters the cult of identity and the dominance of self over others (means there is no origin). Here in this term, the word ‘a’ could not be heard but only seen in writing, it remains silent, like tomb (silence: that functions only within what is called phonetic writing). Derrida explained that _différence_ has several meaning. It names the non-coincidence of meaning both as synchronically which means ‘differing’ and diachronically which means ‘deferring’. The term difference derived from the French verb ‘differer’ which means both ‘to differ’- it is to be unlike and ‘to defer’- means to delay and postpone, it is temporal. Not only Derrida refers _différence_ to the state of being deferred but it also refers to the state of being different. Thus, in differerence it expressed that the meaning of a subject was a play of difference which was always deferring. Here the verb ‘to differ’ (differe) indicates difference as a distinction or as inequality. Sometimes the different and the deferred correspond to this verb. This correlation is not only between act and object or cause and effect. In one case the verb ‘to differ’ signifies non-identity; in another case, it signifies the order of the same, there must be some common. It relates the two movements of differing to one another. This sameness, which is not identical, is called _différance_. _Différance_ incorporates two significations ‘to differ’ and ‘to defer’.

Saussure highlighted two significant features of language: one is a differential character, which concerns the human ability to recognize letters, written in different ways but which understood for the same alphabetical letter. For Saussure “phonemes are not identified by having a particularly unique sound attached to them but rather are always differentiated by their distance and distinction from other phonemes.”64 Here Saussure sums up this thought with notorious claim: “in language there are only differences without positive terms.”65 In another word, he says that phonemes are marked out by a set of differences from one another. Derrida refers to it as ‘the differential character of the sign (language)’. And another significant feature of language is the arbitrary nature of linguistic signs. According to Derrida, there can be arbitrariness in the sounds, like dog, chien etc. because the system of signs is constituted by the differences in terms. So, both Derrida and Saussure concluded that

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62 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, _Phenomenology of Perception_, 1962, p 44
63 _Speech and Phenomena_, 1973, p 105
64 Dermot Moran, _Introduction to Phenomenology_, 2000, p 462
65 Ibid, p 462
these two features are correlative; the arbitrariness of sign is possible only because of the differential character of language. Saussure’s view about language and meaning is holistic, for him may be the differences between ‘sofa’, ‘settee’, and ‘couch’ expressed by comparing each with the other term. As Wittgenstein would say, “there is a family resemblance between these notions, rather than there being a set of fixed essences with essential characteristics.” According to Derrida “each concept is inscribed in a chain of concepts and they refer to each other by means of a play of differences.”

Let us again go back to Derridean term *différence*. Derrida in most of his work such as; *Of Grammatology*, *Margins of Philosophy*, *Edmund Husserl’s Origin of Geometry An Introduction*, *Speech and Phenomena*, *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, and *Positions* discussed about *différence* in detail. In all these work he mentioned that to show the multiplicity of meaning this non-concept comes and then to exhibit the instability of meaning and the falsity of metaphysical. He never gave any definition about it but for him, it was a subtle argument.

**Trace:**

Derrida brings the idea about ‘trace’ along with the idea of defferance. For him, naturally, words refer to other words. Derrida advances the idea that writing cannot be a reproduction of spoken language; it is originary in the same way speech is, it is the articulation and inscription of the trace. The notion of the ‘trace’ was a concept borrowed from Sigmund Freud. For Freud, “the effect of a psychological trauma does not have to be fully present initially but can defer itself.” The concept of ‘trace’ occurs in Heidegger’s essay. Derrida proposed that writing, a non-being precedes ‘being’, which comes from indebted to Heidegger’s Writing. “Heidegger sees the forgetting of Being as belonging to Being itself and so the effacement of the trace also belongs to the trace.” But Derrida, like Levinas, takes the notion of ‘trace’ as something absent that has never existed, e.g. our nostalgia for Garden of Eden. Following Levinas Derrida mentioned that “a trace is not an effect since it does not actually have a cause. All signs are in effect traces. Indeed, the act of signifying itself can only be understood as a trace”.

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66 Ibid, p 463  
67 Ibid, p 463  
68 Jacques Derrida, *Writing and difference*, 1978, p 203  
69 Dermot Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 2000, p 469  
70 Ibid, 469
Trace itself does not exist. Roberto Rino Magliola, an Italian American philosopher explained it as “the Derridean trace is empty but ‘marked’.”\textsuperscript{71} A trace was something from which a sign differs and defers. In the presence of the sign, it is always absent. A sign leaves behind a trace through the act of difference. Derrida writes a trace “in presenting itself, it becomes effaced.”\textsuperscript{72} All signifiers which are present to be containing traces of absent (other) signifiers, where the signifier can be totally neither present nor absent. In Of Grammatology, Derrida observed about trace that “it is the absolute origin of sense in general. The trace is the difference which opens appearance and signification...no concept of metaphysics can describe it.”\textsuperscript{73} His basic argument is, whatever we see in the reality is through the sign (writing). There is always something hiding behind that which is present in the sign. So, Derrida introduces his new term ‘deconstruction’.

**Supplement:**

Like ‘logocentrism’ there was another important rigid conception called ‘supplement’ upon which western thinking was constructed. Derrida takes the word ‘supplement’ from Jean Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau defines ‘supplement’ as “an inessential extra added to something complete in itself.”\textsuperscript{74} Derrida in his writings remarked that philosophers from the ancient period, the ‘logic of supplementation’ has been extended to spread out hierarchy. But for him, the ‘supplementary’ was two apparently contradictory ideas, therefore it suggests at the same time two things. In one perspective, it is something which is added on to make up the missing, as if there was a void space then to be filled up. And on the other perspective ‘supplementary’ serves to increase the presence of something which was considered already to be self-sufficient and complete.

At the end of Grammatology, Derrida observes the verb “to supplant [suppléer] or to compensate for”\textsuperscript{75}, defines the act of writing. Therefore, as with the notion of differing/deferring, there are two meanings and two translations within the same term and idea, which apparently marking that homogeneous and undifferentiated identity. ‘To supplement’ means to add something. On the other hand, it signifies a replacement for that which came before it. The supplement does not merely compensate for a lack but it supplants that which preceded it. With the structures of words such as the meaning of *différer* [French]

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\textsuperscript{71} Robert Magliola, On Deconstructing Life Worlds: Buddhism, Christianity, Culture, 2000, p 140.
\textsuperscript{72} Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, 1976, p 125.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid, p 65
\textsuperscript{74} Devadasan. P. (Parol), 2008, p 75.
\textsuperscript{75} Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, 1976, see (Forth chapter of part II, p 280)
or supplement [English] is never simple. Derrida highlights the verb because it appears with the meaning of ‘to overcome’. At the structural and pre-subjective level of language, there is always the trace of some other meaning or some other identity. “Returning to the ‘living’ speech however, and to cite Gayatri Spivak in her ‘Translator’s Preface’ from Of Grammatology, speech, supposedly that living thing that ensures and bears in it presence, complete and self-sufficient identity present to itself, identity of the subject who speaks, ‘carries within itself the trace of a perennial alternity’.”76 Thus what holds true for the structure of the sign also holds true of the structure of ‘psyche’. Alexander Cleave, a Novel’s narrator asks “what makes for presence if not absence? - I mean the presence of oneself as a remembered other. This structures that Derrida ‘gives the name “writing”’.77 Thus, speech is a manifestation of writing means for Spivak, “the sign, whether inscribed or spoken, is ‘always already inhabited by the trace of another sign that never appears as such’.”78

According to some previous philosopher, writing was the supplement of speech. But Derrida questioned the western idea of this thought. For some western philosopher, a thing which has supplement cannot be truly itself complete. But Derrida does not agree with this. He argued that “...it is not simply added to the positivity of a presence...place is assigned in the structure by the mark of emptiness.”79 For this reason, Derrida raised the question, “if it were complete without the supplement it should not yearn for the supplement. Hence, a thing needs to be added to some other thing to make it much more “present” or “whole”.”80 It means, there was a hole and supplement fulfills that hole, which Derrida called an originary lack, and the metaphorical opening of ‘hole’ was named as ‘invagination’. Derrida mentioned that “The supplement is maddening, because it is neither presence nor absence.”81 Supplement does not enhance something’s presence but it underscored its absence.

We found the word ‘supplement’ in Derrida’s remarkable work Of Grammatology. Here one chapter was titled as “…That Dangerous Supplement...”82 In Rousseau’s work, this word was in quotation, but Derrida’s chapter on supplement itself becomes a supplement. The reason is, he supplied that title to the essay from the other text. Supplement is ghostly and haunts. It leaves a trace without itself being present or absent. By Derrida, it was spread to transform

77 Ibid.
78 Gayatri Chakroverty Spivak, 1998, p xxxix
80 Devadasan. P. (Parol), 2008, p 75
82 Ibid., p 141-64.
the terrain. This could be called ‘deconstruction’. According to him, before the logic of the supplement there was nothing. In *Of Grammatology* he said about this: “one wishes to go back from the supplement to the, source: one must recognize that there is a supplement at the source.”\(^{83}\) For British philosopher Nicholas Royle, “all of Derrida’s work might be incapsulated within a notion of supply or substitute teaching, a teaching of the supplement.”\(^{84}\)

**Pharmakon:**

For Derrida, Deconstruction was not carried out as a discourse from the outside rather vividly within; such as: in Plato, Derrida’s study about *Pharmakon*. In *Studies in Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Deconstruction*, Professor R. Sundara Rajan commented that, in *Pharmakon*, writing was designated as to be inferior and supplementary. According to Derrida, it was a double-edged feature, which referred to the play between poison and cure. When Derrida studied Plato’s *Phaedrus* particularly the concept about writing, he takes the word *Pharmakon*. It was an ancient Greek word deployed by Plato. Here Plato condemns that writing was an inferior supplementary but Derrida picks up the word *Pharmakon* to decentre Plato’s assertion. *Pharmakon* has an undecidable meaning. So, it could be translated to mean anything like recipe, a drug, poison or medicine. Thus people think that the word *Pharmakon* would give a meaning according to that context in which it used. But Derrida mentioned that “…these two antithetical senses of the word are everywhere copresent in Plato’s text, defeating all attempts to choose one or the other according to context.”\(^{85}\)

In *Of Grammatology* Derrida will redefine the term ‘writing’- is not a secondary, it has an equal or even primordial role in the production of meaning, even in philosophical discourse. Derrida deconstructs Platonic metaphysics by demonstrating its some revered categories of timeless presence- *eidos*, and *logos*. These are based on a ‘complicity of contrary values’. “Platonic metaphysics requires writing to preserve speech, to re-present its original presence in its very absence. As *pharmakon*, writing is therefore a play of irreconcilable opposites. For it alienates the invisible interiority of the soul-in-dialogue-with-itself by embodying it in visual markings and written signs outside of the soul and at the same time functions as a Salvatory power which can reawaken the soul to forgotten truths.”\(^{86}\) But if the *pharmakon* is ambivalent Derrida, writes “it is because it constitutes the medium in which opposites are

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\(^{83}\) Ibid., p304.

\(^{84}\) Nicholas Royle, *Jacques derrida*, 2006, p 51.


\(^{86}\) Richard Kearney, *Modern Movements in European Philosophy*, 1986, p 119
opposed, the movement of the play that links them among themselves, reverses them or makes one side cross over into the other (soul/body, good/evil, inside/outside, memory/forgetfulness, speech/writing)... The *pharmakon* is the production of difference. It is the *differance* of difference."^{87}

**Under Erasure:**

‘Under Erasure’ was an immediate step which was performed by Jacques Derrida in his discussion about binary opposition. For him, in binary opposition (man/women, writing/speech) both terms are put ‘under erasure’ (in French sous rapture). By drawing an ‘X’ he marks that the concepts are ‘under erasure’. This idea was borrowed from Martin Heidegger. Through this, Derrida tried to show in the oppositional pair both of the conceptions are inadequate to narrate the general play of differences which are common to both. But Derrida at the same time shows that none of these ideas are totally useless. They are highly inadequate; one could not do something without them simultaneously. Derrida calls this as the philosophy of ‘under erasure’.

**Arché-Writing:**

The next step to under erasure Derrida tried to show that spoken and writing are just two forms of the play of difference. Thus to demonstrate this, he introduced a form of writing, which is non-existent, called the *arché-writing*. It is the formation of writing that takes place in the sign. Thus writing is the most primordial activity of differentiation; it’s a pre-vocal process that operates to inaugurate language. According to Derrida *arché-writing* (a sort of writing before writing) is the notion of writing, which conceptualized in terms of difference. Here difference as temporalization is the trace or track of the written language in the spoken language, e.g. punctuations are supplemental to speech but not a reproduction of it. Derrida expresses that text cannot be explained by its origins, like the author, history, and context. For him repetition is the origin, the text is writing and writing is language. *Arché-writing* cannot be objectively defined. However, it is a kind of reading (what makes text and writing possible) that includes writing. According to Derrida, writing is characterized by textuality and it is at once the non-closure and closure of the text: “But one can conceive of the closure of that which is without end. Closure is the circular limit within which the repetition of

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^{87} *Ibid.*
difference infinitely repeats itself. That is to say, closure is its *playing space*. This movement is the movement of the world as play...”

In the term *arché-writing*, Derrida deconstructs the vulgar concept about writing which was imposed by the ‘metaphysics of presence’. *Arché-writing* declares that writing was not a kind of form which was derived from speech. But in between written and non-written forms of language, it emphasized a condition of a play of difference. “In *Of Grammatology*’ Derrida explicates that signification when analysed thoroughly is seen to be always referring to other signs. The fact is one can never reach a sign that refers only to itself.” Derrida writes, “…writing is not a sign of a sign, except if one says it of all signs, which would be more profoundly true.” Therefore, according to Derrida, writing is something, always in which an in-between prevails. Thus, whenever we write a word it introduced something which is in between what is intended to be conveyed and what actually conveyed. Derrida called this, *arché-writing*.

**On Deconstruction:**

Here we are presenting some interpretation about ‘deconstruction’:

A literary critic, Geoffrey Bennington in *Deconstruction is Not What You Think* (1989a) observed deconstruction as “not as a theory or a project. It does not prescribe a practice more or less faithful to it, nor project an image of a desirable state to be brought about.”

Christopher Norris remarked that “deconstruction is the vigilant seeking-out of those ‘aporias’, blindspots or moments of self-contradiction where a text involuntarily betrays the tension between rhetoric and logic, between what it manifestly means to say and what it is nonetheless constrained to mean.” Thus, “it is the dismantling of conceptual oppositions, the taking apart of hierarchical system of thought which can then be reinscribed within a different order of textual significations.”

According to John D. Caputo, “the very meaning and mission of deconstruction is to show that things – texts, institutions, traditions, societies, beliefs, and practices of whatever size and sort you need -do not have definable meanings and determinable missions, that they are

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89 Devadasan, P. (Parol), 2008, p 78-79.
93 Ibid.
always more than any mission would impose, that they exceed the boundaries they currently occupy. What is really going on in things, what is really happening, is always to come. ..........A “meaning” or a “mission” is a way to contain and compact things, like a nutshell, gathering them into a unity, whereas deconstruction bends all its efforts to stretch beyond these boundaries, to transgress these confines, to interrupt and disjoin all such gathering........... Whenever deconstruction finds a nutshell- a secure axiom or a pithy maxim – the very idea is to crack it open and disturb this tranquillity.....One might even say that cracking nutshells is what deconstruction is.”

Derrida’s central contribution to post-structuralism and postmodernism is ‘deconstruction’. He is interested mainly in one particular opposition between writing and speech. ‘Deconstruction’ shows that dualisms are always hierarchically ranked but not equivalent. Presence, truth, man, and good are privileged at the expense of the absence, lie, woman and evil. Derrida argues that writing is always opaque, there is something hiding behind that which is present and for him ‘deconstruction’ discovers hidden assumptions about the text. For Derrida, ‘deconstruction’ is a method of inquiry and it’s a play of presence and absence. The structure of the present is seen as being constituted by difference as well as deferent. Instead of simply concentrating on the presence and the focus in the study of a text is on the play of presence and absence. For him, meanings and texts can be plural and unstable. The text does never carry a basic single meaning. There are fragmentation, discontinuity, and plurality in the text. ‘Deconstruction’ means the critical reading of texts; it rejects the surface meaning and tries to find out the hidden meaning. ‘Deconstruction’ implies that there is a dismissal of all notions about truth in the interpretation of texts, there is nothing outside of the text that is why any attempt to arrive at truth must be carried out within textuality. A text gives several meanings; it transcends its author and points to its origin. But the meaning of a text is not exhausted by the author's intentions not even the particularity of the historical context. “Derrida suggests that the reader and analyst much approach the text with the awareness of the arbitrariness of sign and meaning. This implies that the search for a unified coherent meaning within the text must be given up. In fact, one should not see the text as a united single whole. Instead, the focus should be on the inconsistencies and contradictions of meaning in the text.”

95 S.L. Doshi, Modernity Postmodernity and Neo-sociological Theories, 2003, p 338
‘Deconstruction’ is concerned with something tantamount to a critique of the Western Philosophical tradition. It has two aspects. One is a literary aspect, concerns the textual interpretation (where the invention is essential to finding hidden alternative meanings in the text) and another is a philosophical aspect, concerns the main target of deconstruction, the ‘metaphysics of presence’. Derrida considers the classical opposition between literature and philosophy. The opposition is predicated on the belief that literature is concerned with aesthetic representation, style, and fiction whereas philosophy is the domain of truth. This binary opposition is one of the significant targets of his ‘deconstruction’. In the opposition between speech/writing, Derrida coined the term arché-writing (arché-écriture). In the case of literature, he sets up an opposition between notions of ‘book’ and ‘text’ to force a similar re-evaluation. “The ‘book’ is envisaged by Derrida as a fundamentally theological notion: Nature described as the Book of God in the Middle Ages.”96 In this case “the Book is conceived as a totality, a meaningful whole, referring beyond itself to the real world, a volume heavy with meaning.”97 Derrida argues that the idea of the book, which always refers to a natural totality, is profoundly alien to the meaning of writing.

Derrida applies his deconstructive reading to western metaphysics and also to his own phenomenological masters Husserl and Heidegger. He deconstructs the traditional concept of signification itself. “The primary lesson that Derrida gleaned from the ‘deconstructive’ tendencies of the late Husserl and Heidegger was the impossibility of discovering a radical beginning. It was, ironically, Husserl himself who sowed the seeds of doubt. By seeking so emphatically a pure intuition of presence beyond all presuppositions of language or history, Husserl’s ultimate failure to secure such an absolute beginning spelt the end of traditional metaphysics.”98 Heidegger used the term ‘deconstruction’ in Being and Time as a hermeneutic tool recover the originary experience. In this critical project, he was guided from the outset by a resolve to overcome, which he called the ‘onto-theological’ bias of western metaphysics. This is a systematic prejudice against the temporal and historical character of our experience of Being. According to Derrida metaphysics is a metaphorical cover-up, but its metaphoricity can be metaphorically stated. For him, the founding concepts of western metaphysics like Theoria, Arche, Eidos, Eschaton, and Logos are all themselves metaphors. We cannot have a conceptual theory of metaphor. Therefore Derrida argues, there is no ‘logocentric’ principle for fixing metaphor, it is absolutely uncontrollable. “From

96 Jacques Derrida, Dissemination, 1981, p 51
97 Ibid, p 51
98 Richard Kearney, Modern Movements in European Philosophy, 1986, p 114
Heidegger’s equation of metaphysics and metaphoricity, Derrida learned that ‘language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique’.  

Heidegger tried to deconstruct metaphysics by retracing the idea of being to the temporalizing process of signification, which precedes it, which calls a hermeneutic circle. He uses the language of metaphysics to overcome metaphysics by crossing out the word ‘being’, which Derrida learned from Heidegger. Heideggerian deconstruction has revealed the sign ‘being’ to be a trace, which indicates presence only in absence. Derrida refers this process to as supplementarity which means being as a trace supplements absence in the sense that both adding to and standing in for an absence.

According to Derrida “there is still in Heidegger, linked up with other things, a nostalgic desire to recover the proper name, the unique name of Being. To be fair, however, one can find several passages in which Heidegger is self-critical and renounces his nostalgia: his practice of canceling and erasing the term in his later texts is an example of such a critique. Heidegger’s texts are still before us; they harbour a future of meaning which will ensure that they are read and reread for centuries. But while I owe a considerable debt to Heidegger’s ‘path of thought’ (chemin de pensée), we differ in our employment of language, in our understanding of language. I write in another language - and I do not simply mean in French rather than in German – even though this ‘otherness’ cannot be explained in terms of philosophy itself. The difference resides outside of philosophy, in the non-philosophical site of language; it is what makes the poets and writers that interest me (Mallarmé, Blanchot, etc.) totally different from those that interest Heidegger (Hölderlin and Rilke). In this sense my profound rapport with Heidegger is also and at the same time a non-rapport.”

In deconstruction, Derrida mentioned that difference, dissemination, trace, deconstruction—these are all basically ‘non-concepts’, ‘undecidables’. But the question is what actually he means by the word ‘non-concept’?

The notion of ‘non-concept’ does not have the logical generality which a philosophical concept claims to have in its independence from literary language. And according to Derrida the notion of ‘différance’ is ‘non-concept’ in the sense that it cannot be defined in terms of oppositional predicates. It is both the act of differing and of deferring. Différance as a determination of language developed, from which it is inseparable. There is no conceptual

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100 Richard Kearney, Dialogues with contemporary Continental Thinkers, 1984, p 110
realm beyond language. It is non-conceptual because it remains a trace of language. For Derrida “because it has no oppositional or predicative generality, which would identify it as this rather than that, the term ‘differance’ cannot be defined within a system of logic-Aristotelian or dialectical – that is, within the logocentric system of philosophy.”

From the above discussion, it is possible to get an idea of Deconstruction. But the question is can we deconstruct the logocentric system of metaphysics? It is true that in a certain sense still ‘deconstruction’ is in metaphysics. But Derrida argues that “we must remember that if we are indeed inside metaphysics, we are not inside it as we might be inside a box or a milieu. We are still in metaphysics in the special sense that we are in a determinate language. Consequently, the idea that we might be able to get outside of metaphysics has always struck me as naive. So that when I refer to the ‘closure’ (clôture) of metaphysics, I insist that it is not a question of considering metaphysics as a circle with a limit or simple boundary. The notion of the limit and boundary (bord) of metaphysics is itself highly problematic”. And Derrida’s reflections on this problematic always have attempted to show, the end of metaphysics is not circular in any indivisible sense. The end or limit boundary of metaphysics is divisible that the logical rapport between inside and outside is not simple, we cannot say, we are ‘locked into’ or ‘condemned to’ metaphysics (neither inside nor outside).

Characteristics of Deconstruction:

- We can say that deconstruction is a mode of writing, a way of reading and challenging all interpretations of texts based on conventional notions of the stability of the external world, human self, language, and meaning.
- Deconstruction is not a decomposition of an architectural structure; rather it is a question about the foundation, the relation between what is founded and foundation, about the whole structure of philosophy. It is run up against various obstacles.
- It is not a theory which is unified by any set of consistent procedures.
- It tries to display the operations of logocentrism in any text.
- According to deconstructionist there is no reality and no truth which stands behind or outside language.

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101 Ibid, p 111
102 Ibid, p 111
Within the connections of the various terms deconstruction tries to reinstate language which have conventionally dominated Western thought; the connection between self and world, thought and reality, subject, and object.

There are some seminal work sign, structure, and play, which exhibits some of the persistent concerns of that deconstruction and reveals both what he owes from structuralism and also from where he divergence.

About binary: ultimately Derrida reveals that neither of them was superior to other, and with the participation of both members, the activation is possible.

His aim was to start a free play. But there was a tension between play and presence. Play is the disruption of presence. It is always an element of absence and presence, and the presence was always a signifying and substitute reference which was inscribed in the system of difference and the movement of a chain. But play was not to be thought radically; rather it was conceived of before the alternative of absence and presence.

Therefore, in conclusion, it may be remarked that Derrida searched a non-philosophical site from which we questioned philosophy. For him, the crisis in philosophy was, when we are attached to a particular form of other or philosophizing position. He questioned the concept of philosophy. The writings of Derrida rest on re-reading philosophies and it carried out discussion on other works. About this thought Christopher Norris said that “Derrida’s writings demand the reader a considerable knowledge of the subject.”

Deconstruction takes place; it is an event that does not await the deliberation, consciousness, or organization of a subject, or even of modernity. It deconstructs itself. It can be deconstructed.

Any authoritarian, dogmatic and fixed reading could be deconstructed. So, after his deconstruction, there are neither marginal nor central configurations. It is not an attempt to attack or reject philosophy or the complete contributions of philosophers. Derrida in his essay The Supplement of Copula: philosophy before linguistics (Margins of Philosophy) clearly mentioned that as a field against any claim in linguistics he defending philosophy. This tactic (deconstruction) used to de-centre the dominant ideologies. However as an ‘intellectual terrorist’, he was criticized, where people said that, Derrida tries to dismiss previous all philosophy. Thus, he goes through enormous trouble to reconstruct the position of philosophical classics.

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In conclusion, it can be said that, for Derrida, deconstruction is a kind of inquiry; it’s a play of presence and absence. Texts and meanings can be plural and unstable. And deconstruction rejects the surface meaning. It tries to find out the hidden meaning. The meaning of deconstruction is a critical reading of texts. Like any form of *graphé* or writing, grammar, a text gives several meanings. Another important thought is the twin strategies of postmodernism are reading of absences and the insertion of new meanings, which emphasize that knowledge is not a system of discovering truth; rather it is the field of free play. Derrida suggested that we should critically look at the assumptions, which embedded in widespread beliefs and dogmas. To understand present-day philosophy and sociology Derrida conveys a lot as a poststructuralist.

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As we have seen in the previous chapter, in his essay on *différance*, Derrida rejects the possibility of metaphysics and denies that difference should be seen as a theological concept. For him, it is not something behind language in the manner, in which the transcendent ‘God’ is behind negative theology. Many people comment that both God of negative theology and *différance* are different. The reason is, the God of negative theology functions as an ultimate or a higher reality where *différance* does not. According to John D. Caputo “*difference*, is not the God of negative theology........ Negative theology is always on the track of a “hyperessentiality”, of something hyper-present, hyper-real or sur-real, so really real that we are never satisfied simply to say that it is merely real....... *Différance* is but a quasi-transcendental anteriority, not a supereminent, transcendent ulteriority.”

His *différance* is the surpassing of onto-theology and philosophy itself. Some critics believe that Derrida was conscious of the theological meanings of *différance* from early in his career and this is not a recent preoccupation. According to Habermas “Derrida does not want to think theologically; as an orthodox Heideggerian, he [Derrida] is forbidden any thought about a supreme entity...As he assures us at the start of his essay on “*différance*”, he does not want to do any theology, not even negative theology”.

After discussing Derrida’s key term ‘deconstruction’ in the previous chapter this chapter tries to throw light on Derrida’s relationship with contemporary French philosophers.

**Ferdinand de Saussure:**

Structuralism is a kind of method or approach rather than as a discipline, its aim is to analyze isolated events or meaning in terms of their underlying structural laws. The founding father of structuralist method of analysis is Ferdinand de Saussure, who is a specialist in phonology. It means the study of language as a system of sounds. He coined a new linguistic theory which came to be known as ‘semiology’, which means a science (*logos*) of signs (*smeia*). His approach is to treat language as a self-regulating rather than referential system of signs. Saussure’s writings are highly technical, he proposed some important distinctions; distinctions between language (*langue*) and speech (*parole*), signifier and signified,

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semiology and semantics, system and realization, synchrony and diachrony. The distinction between *langue* and *parole* are; *langue* is defined as the systematic totality of all possible linguistic usages but *parole* refers to any particular act of language. Another distinction is *langue* is a universal and timeless system, whereas *parole* belongs to now and here. The point is Saussure didn’t deny the importance of these dimensions of speech. But he just affirmed that they were not primary. Saussure stated, “*if langue is the whole of language, parole is the part (or multiplicity of parts) which operates within the whole*”\(^{107}\).

Structuralisms do not pay much attention to what is written in the text. Saussure’s one of the famous maxim is ‘language is a form, not a substance’\(^{108}\). According to him the meaning of a sentence is found in its structure, not in its sentence. He gives priority to language over speech. Saussure had a strong impact on Derrida in the sense that structuralists are used language to organize and to construct reality. For them, language enables us to give meaning to the world. Meaning is through its relationship to other things, even no single thing gives off meaning of its own accord. For structuralists, verbal and written language provides the demonstration of these structural or relational properties of meaning. Here Saussure, with reference to other words, tried to know the meaning of words. For him, language is an arbitrary system. In linguistic structuralism, his contribution is that there is no natural bond in between words and things that is why he believed that all of our culture is made up of sign.

The sign is a kind of device through which human beings are able to communicate with each other. Verbal and written language offered that through a system of arbitrary social conventions, how signs made meaning. Therefore linguistics could provide a strong basis for a ‘scientific study about life of signs’ in society. This could be called semiology or semiotics. Not only Derrida but there are some other postmodernists like Jean Baudrillard, Judith Williamson, and Pierre Macherey, those who are influenced by Saussure, they all argued that “we should try to find out fundamental order behind texts. Texts not only try to cover over their own internal gaps and conflicts, but are created out of the meanings they omit or repress: what a text puts ‘outside’ of itself determines what it says. Poststructuralism does not necessarily believe that everything is meaningless; just that meaning is never final”\(^{109}\).

Here Jacques Derrida reminds us that human subject is inscribed by language and in language, not only in formal condition but also in historical and material matter of the

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\(^{109}\) S.L. Doshi, *Modernity Postmodernity and Neo-sociological Theories*, 2003, p 332
subjects determination, he or she is a function or effect of language, there is no subjectivity without language. So, one can refer to speech or some other system of signs. However, Saussure gives importance to language though he differentiates speech from language. He understands language as essentially phonic, means spoken (speech) not as a graphic. In this sense, Derrida departs from Saussurean linguistics. According to him, language is a form of writing and he gives this notion to incorporate any system of signs. He rejects the Saussurean phonocentric model of the system of language.

Derrida sees that Saussure as being trapped in phonocentrism. For him, meanings (regarded as a ‘presence’ in the text) and truths are never absolute. They are determined by the social and historical conditions, there can be no knowledge, which is outside of history and culture. ‘Grammatology’ is a term which has been coined by Derrida. For him, it is a type of knowledge (is a writing which is manifestation of knowledge). Writing is of two types, one is ‘graphic notion on tangible materials’, for example: drafting on a paper, and writing latter. The other is natural or living writing. In this type of writing, we erase the word which already written by us and in the same place we write another alternative. For this reason, Derrida is concerned with this type of writing. They both use writing in the sense of a sign. But the difference between them is that Saussure uses ‘signs’ in terms of binary sign, for example male/female, and white/black. Derrida does not use it in the sense of binary. According to Derrida, the essential part of writing is ‘erasure’- which makes him a ‘grammatologist’.

Emmanuel Levinas:

Both Derrida and Levinas belonged to the second generation of phenomenology. They both began their view with philosophical significations which always pre-supposes the signifying activity of our intentional consciousness. If we see, Derrida’s earliest writings on différance, he himself has acknowledged the powerful influence of Levinas’s theory of the other. Even Levinas’s thought was influenced by Heidegger’s Being and Time. “The Heidegger of Being and Time presents us with an elucidation of the nature of Dasein in terms of its ‘pre-theoretical’ understanding of Being and develops an analysis of the other through an ontological investigation of Dasein’s existential composition that begins by asserting its individuated nature (the claim that the Being of every Dasein is in each and every case ‘mine’). Levinas, in contrast, argues for an approach that places emphasis upon the metaphysical preconditions of all ontology, and such preconditions exceed the mere ‘mineness’ of Dasein’s self-awareness. In this way, Heidegger’s claim to the possibility of an
overcoming of metaphysics through ontology is challenged by Levinas”\textsuperscript{110}. But for Levinas, “the word metaphysics is the tendency of thought to transcend the limits of its own particularity and seek out the other”.\textsuperscript{111} At the beginning of \textit{Totality of Infinity}, Levinas mentioned about metaphysics that “is turned toward the “elsewhere” and the “otherwise” and ‘other’”\textsuperscript{112}

In the title \textit{Convergence and Divergence}, Derrida owes a considerable philosophical debt to Levinas. For Levinas, “then, the ethical relation – and ethics is simply and entirely the event of this relation – is one in which I am related to the face of the other (\textit{le visage d’autrui}), where the French word ‘autrui’ refers to the other human being, whom I cannot evade, comprehend, or kill and before whom I am called to justice, to justify myself”\textsuperscript{113}. He stated that the other always encountered by face. “The notion of the face...opens other perspectives”\textsuperscript{114}. Like Levinas, Derrida maintains that the other precedes Philosophy and ‘necessarily invokes and provokes the subject before any genuine questioning can begin’. Derrida approves of certain aspects of Levinas’ critical interpretation of phenomenology and influenced by the Hebraic tradition through Levinas. While commenting on Levinas’ ethics, Derrida has remarked, ‘ethics is wholly other, and yet is the same word’. Ethics is wholly other because Levinas has taken it beyond the traditional metaphysical determination. According to Levinas my relation with the other is not simply a relation with a thing but it is a relationship with someone “over whom it is impossible to assert power, for they cannot be ‘possessed’ in the fashion in which things can be possessed”\textsuperscript{115}. However, Derrida notes Levinasian ethics as transcendence towards the other and because of which, he prefers to call it an ‘ethics of ethics’.

On the one hand, Derrida adopts an attitude of undeniable and irreducible respect towards Levinas and on the other, he deconstructs Levinas’s ethics. Derrida elsewhere remarks that we are not denouncing here, an incoherence of language or a contradiction in the system. We are wondering about the meaning of necessity, the necessity of lodging oneself within traditional conceptuality in order to destroy it. Thus, Derrida’s ethics, unlike the ethics of Levinas, begins by postulating that ‘\textit{tout autre est tout autre}’ (every other is totally other).

\textsuperscript{110} Peter Sedgwick, \textit{Descartes to Derrida: An Introduction to European Philosophy}, 2001 p 179.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{112} Emmanuel Levinas, \textit{Totality and Infinity}, 1961, p 33
\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Totality and Infinity}, 1996, p 51.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
In the title The Ethical Responsibility of ‘Saying’, Alphonse attempts to show in what sense Levinas affirms that language (the ethical ‘saying’) is intrinsic to the ethical relation. In this regard, Levinas in his work entitled Otherwise than Being makes a distinction between ‘saying’ and ‘said’. He then characterizes the former as ethical discourse and the later as ontological. The ‘saying’ must include the ‘said’ due to the necessity of the same order. Since the ontological ‘said’ has always betrayed the ethical ‘saying’, Levinas explores how the ‘said’ can be moderated and be overlooked by considering the ‘saying’ as the trace of the ‘said’ as an irruption and an interpretation of ethics in the ontology. According to Levinas, ethics is not simply the absence of ontology; it is rather a deconstruction of ontology, a revelation of its weaknesses and the ersatz of its mastery. Ethics, therefore, pre-exists ontology and accordingly precedes existence and essence. For Alphonse ‘saying’ is another way of characterizing ethical responsibility which opens up the ethical relation to testimony. Derrida says that as soon he related to the other he can respond to his call only by sacrificing ethics by sacrificing what obliges me to respond in the same way. It concerns choice and decision which must go beyond calculative reasoning and anticipatory modes. According to Derrida, if a decision cannot be deduced from knowledge or from family and religious traditions, whoever makes this decision is alone. However, before the ‘undecidable’, the decision cannot be differed, for responsibility for the other demands a decision here and now. Ethics, with its dependence on generality, must continuously be sacrificed in order to make a decision. Derrida describes this situation of aporia as follows: “I cannot answer to the call, to the demand, to the obligation, or even to the love of the other without sacrificing to him the other other, the other others”\textsuperscript{116}.

However, we can assess here, of course following Derrida, is that a responsible appreciation for aporia actually demands a respect for the universal as well as for the particular and therefore a responsible treatment of the alterity commands recognition of the universal as well as the particular. In fact, responsibility for any individual is only possible by irresponsibility towards all others. Following Derrida, it can be said that no choice can be justified, because ‘every other is totally other’. If every other is totally other, be it, God or Human persons, ethics is no longer confined to the domain of generality as expounded by Kierkegaard. It is also the respect for the absolute singularity as recalled by Levinas.

As far as the norms of ethics are concerned, Abraham is murdered according to Kierkegaard. If God had not prevented him from sacrificing his son, the civilized society would have accused him beyond doubt of infanticide. Reflecting upon Kierkegaard, Derrida at once remarks that the same society (of neighbors or of fellow beings of whom ethics or the discourse on human rights speaks), without any moral or legal court competent to judge the sacrifice. Here sacrifice of the other is meant of not sacrificing oneself. Such a society not only takes part in but also organizes this incalculable sacrifice. The genesis of Derrida’s position actually hinges on the point that each other has to be considered in his or her singularity. The other important aspect of Derrida in this regard is that he does not refer to a future which will one day become present, but to an unconditional openness towards an unknown future. This irreducibility of the other is pertinently conceived as a radical openness to the future. Derrida, in fact, does not affirm the other who is present, rather he has emphasized on what he termed as ‘metaphysics of presence’.

If we see the conversation between Richard Kearney and Derrida, Kearney asked a question that does you agree with Levinas that Judaism offers an alternative to the Greek metaphysics of presence? Here Derrida argued, “Though I was born a jew, I do not work or think within a living Jewish Tradition. So that if there is a Judaic dimension to my thinking which may from time to time have spoken in or through me, this has never assumed the form of an explicit fidelity or debt to that culture. In short, the ultimate site (lieu) of my questioning discourse would be neither Hellenic nor Hebraic if such were possible. It would be a non-site beyond both the Jewish influence of my youth and the Greek philosophical heritage which I received during my academic education in the French universities.”

Lévi-Strauss:

Derrida’s relation with post-structuralism is just like his engagement with phenomenology. For him, structuralism and phenomenology these two are the twin poles of the twentieth century. Of Grammatology contains the analysis of Lévi-Strauss. Here Derrida gave attention to Lévi-Strauss who was a French anthropologist. He applied structural linguistics of Saussure to the study of anthropology and in particular myth. He has no time for the literary use of structuralism, His main objection “to literary structuralism was to its attempt to apply the techniques of, for example, the anthropological analysis of myths to individual texts.”

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117 Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers, p 107.
118 Christina Howells, Derrida: Deconstruction from Phenomenology to Ethics, 1998, p 34.
Levi-Strauss’s argument was based on the binary opposition between culture and nature. According to him, culture is perverse, corrupting and nature is natural, pure even it is innocent. He favors nature over culture and sees writing as a supplement to speech (natural speech), which is perverse. Lévi-Strauss conceived writing as an ideological and broad historical term which seem to invite deconstructive reading. But unlike Saussure to Derrida’s theory of textual process, he contributed little. Here Derrida begins his deconstruction with making a distinction between text and discourse. For him, within the experience of the person who reads or writes a text discourse indicates the living, present and conscious representation of the text, whereas text exceeds such re-presentation by its own laws and the entire system of resources. There is a problem between text and discourse and Derrida’s deconstruction tried to operate this problematic zone. He deconstructs Lévi-Strauss’s *The Writing Lesson*. This is the chapter of Lévi-Strauss’s book *Tristes Tropiques*, a sad topic. “This book is an extended and sweetly melancholy farewell to a world which ceased to exist between the 1930s, when Lévi-Strauss was there, and 1955, when his book was published.”

*Tristes Tropiques* is the story about Nambikwara, a tribe in the wilds of Brazil. Here in this tribe, Lévi-Strauss sees the example of primitive naturalness. This tribe knows only speaking. They don’t know writing. For this reason, Lévi-Strauss feels guilty. He admires there open and communal sexuality, closeness to nature. Everything they know through myth rather than through science. *The Writing Lesson* begins with the population of Nambikwara tribe. In 1938 when Lévi-Strauss visit in this tribe the population was only 2000. “They also constitute the goal of the ethnographer’s professional quest.”

I had been looking for a society reduced to its simplest expression. That of the Nambikwara was so truly simple that all I could find in it was individual human beings.” He distributes some paper and pencils among the non-literate tribes and when he writes something in his notebook, observes that the tribes drawing some wavy lines. Actually, they are just mimicking what they see. The chief person of the tribe was the only one who understands the actual purpose of writing. The chief grasped the meaning of writing as a matter of power and if he convenes his companions that he was the master of that white men’s writing then his power will be enhanced. Lévi-Strauss realizes that the chief understands writing to reinforce his authority and prestige but not to

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understand to remember knowledge. Therefore, he reconsiders the common viewers thought that writing is a form of artificial memory, it increased humans ability to preserve knowledge, which makes possible a sharp view about the past that it has the ability to organize the present and the future, which indicates the distinction between civilization and barbarism. But Lévi-Strauss rejects this thought. According to Lévi-Strauss, after the birth of writing for 5,000 years, knowledge was not increased it but only fluctuated. The reason behind this, there was no vast difference between Greek and Roman citizen’s life from an eighteenth century (European middle-class). “These reflections lead Lévi-Strauss to the conclusion that writing seems to have favored the exploitation rather than the development of human beings.”

Lévi-Strauss was the major founder of the modern structuralism. Both Derrida and Levi-Strauss’s objection was not identical but there was much common with it. According to Strauss, both biological and linguistic structuralist doesn’t describe a particular configuration as unfinished or unsatisfactory and each totality they examine as a complete entity. Linguistics, anthropology, and biology these three have a number of versions of the same phenomenon to compare and “Literary critics can only do something similar by imposing a finalistic interpretation on an author’s production.” Derrida admits although this is a critical version of a problem which regularly found in all structuralism. Therefore structuralism is not teleological it is only descriptive however it has some difficulty to describe an organized totality in practice. Thus, nature/culture opposition is the central for the whole history of Western philosophy and Derrida starts from this opposition. For Lévi-Strauss, this opposition has both essential to use and impossible to believe.

From modernism to postmodernism was not a kind of compartmentalized journey rather postmodernism was contested terrain. There are some inner differences which make the following three figures remarkable; M. Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and J. F. Lyotard. They agree and disagree with each other. These difference and disagreements are made them part with each other.

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122 Ibid, p 144
123 Jacques Derrida, Limited Inc., 1998, p 34
Jean-Francois Lyotard:

Lyotard a non-sociologist contributed to the development of postmodernity. The *Postmodern Condition* is one of the most popular and well-known treatises, which deals with the concept of postmodernity. Here he claims that both in the society and in the production of knowledge transformation postmodern rethinking is necessary. The major themes of his book are to condemn or criticizes the consensual theories of Weber, Durkheim, and others. In the *Sociological Theory*, Bentz and Kenny mentioned that “Order’ theories of Spencer, Comte, Durkheim, Merton, Parsons, and Sumner have lulled us into belief that we are part of a ‘real’ social order which protects, balances, and regulates our activity. ‘Conflict’ theories from Marx, Simmel, and Mills to Marcuse and Habermas, while revealing that all was not right with this ‘ordered’ world, have reaffirmed the possibility of a re-ordered and right world. Marxist, neo-Marxist theorists present the hope that some group – the workers, the students, or the new professional class – may bring about a more just social order.”

In his discussion of postmodernity Lyotard offers a new turn. According to him, postmodernism is not a beginning of a new era and not a new epoch; rather it is within modernism a recurrent historical phase. For him, undoubtedly it is the part of the modern. The thoughts which we ascribed as postmodernism exist before. He thought that one work can only be modern when it is postmodern. *The Postmodern Conditions* is a classical work of Lyotard, where he defines postmodernity and metanarratives. In this book, he explained the meaning of postmodern. He said that “simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives.” Thus through this statement, it is clear that he is against about all the totalization of society. He attacks to all the emancipatory and all scientific grand narrative which is associated with the enlightenment. Postmodernism involves a critical re-examination of the thought of the enlightenment. Here he used the word ‘postmodern’ to describe the state of knowledge. It has been generally undertaken that the status of knowledge is changed as cultures enter what is known as the postmodern age, as societies enter what is known as the post-industrial age. For this reason, he remarked that postmodernism is a kind of movement which has a reference to a vast field of activities; such as drama, dance, art, women’s movements, and architecture to culture.

125 Ibid, p 312.
The *Postmodern Condition* is not an academic document rather it is a kind of report which has assumed all importance. Because Lyotard raised some important questions about the field of knowledge and during that time some vast changes occur in the society and culture. That time scientific disciplines are no longer assume the time theories and discoveries that are regarded as timeless value or universal. Lyotard stands on scientific knowledge, and mentioned, “Knowledge related to human emancipation of the kind initiated by enlightenment and modernity.”\(^{126}\) It tries to find out the form and nature of knowledge. Through this, he criticized the metanarratives of social sciences and particularly sociology. The first question is how the form of knowledge comes into being? The second one is who controls it? And third is, who has access to knowledge?

Lyotard explained that the postmodern era is the continuation of the modern era. It is not the beginning of a new era. He commented that “We have had postmodern phases before modernism. Postmodernism is not modernism at its end, but a nascent state, and this state is recurrent.”\(^{127}\) It is a social movement, a process. So whenever disenchantment with modernity comes; the postmodernity emerges. He pointed out that knowledge about society and people are never coherent rather it is a task of postmodernity to study multiple pieces of knowledge about peoples and society. Now, society is charged with many problems and becoming increasingly multi-cultural. So, people’s lifestyles are becoming more cosmopolitan. Thus, there is no agreement about what is worth believing. But for him, the only solution lies in the postmodernity. For that type of society, he argues that there cannot be a timeless or universal body of knowledge. His definition of postmodernity lies in his thought on grand narratives, which are also called meta-narratives or metanarratives. For him, the thing which is narrated or told is called narrative. But there was a technical meaning of narratives, which Anthony Giddens offered: “Metanarratives are broad overarching theories or beliefs about the operation of society and the nature of social change. Marxism and functionalism are examples of metanarratives that have been employed by sociologists to explain how the world works. Postmodernists reject such ‘grand theories’, arguing that it is impossible to identify any fundamental truths underpinning human society.”\(^{128}\)

However, Lyotard’s rejections of metanarratives are simple and definite. He mentioned that both scientific and cultural narratives think that all societies are uniform and their identity,

\(^{127}\) Ibid, p 314  
\(^{128}\) Ibid, p 315
problems, and ethnicity are the same. These assumptions were not accepted by Lyotard and because of this their society and knowledge stuff were in a state of damage which cannot be repaired or stored elsewhere. So the metanarratives and the theories which are propounded by their authors have failed to do justice to mankind. For this reason, all these theories are responsible for the degeneration of society. Therefore generating a new knowledge must be required for the health of this society.

Lyotard in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* attacked mainly two types of metanarratives; such as (i) emancipatory or cultural metanarratives, which are associated with reason, experience, traditional authority and skepticism of religion. For him these appear in sociology from enlightenment, which are liberalism, secularism, and democratization of human society; and these are all responsible for totalitarianism, war, and also a gap between the poor and rich. For this reason, Lyotard rejects these metanarratives.

(ii) The second one is scientific metanarratives. Here his bold observation was that in the scientific knowledge there was no truth and it has no direct access to truth. For example: when television or social media shows advertisement about some brands like shampoo, toothpaste, and creams. They try to convince others. This is the way through which they create public awareness. So, they are giving knowledge about their experiment. He comments, truth is something which is created by people. Therefore truth can never be timeless and universal.

According to Lyotard, both emancipatory narratives and scientific narratives are forms of knowledge but these forms are different. Emancipatory narratives includes denotative statements which shows know-how, how to listen, knowing how to live, how to eat. So basically this narrative gives some down to earth rules or pragmatic rules to the people. Thus these narratives helped to bound society and in this way knowledge becomes the legitimate store house of society. This legitimacy comes from the simple fact that they do what they want to do. As a form of knowledge, scientific narratives are also denotative statements. Here the reference is the only truth. Thus, from this perspective, these narratives do not have the elements of sharing. Therefore they do not establish any social bonds.

The metatheories of conflict and functionalism are considered as totalistic theories by Lyotard. Here totalization means constituting or comprising an entirety or a whole. And the theory of functionalism claims to study all the societies of the world; so it is universal and stands for an ordered society. During the period of modernization, they exercised their
dominance. Functionalism propagated the ideology of capitalism, totalitarianism, and elitism. But Marxism promised for a stateless and classless socialism. On the other hand, a conflict theory argues the society is never consensual. According to them “the history of all the societies is the history of class war.”

For Lyotard, there is a relationship between emancipator and scientific narratives. Here Wittgenstein explained that these both narratives are characterized by ‘language games’. Lyotard’s thought about that is social relationships are just like a game which required language in order to participate and that type of languages required the minimum relationship for society to exist. Thus for him, language games are the social bond. He notes that always science has been in conflict with narratives. He concluded that never scientific knowledge gives truth; so why accept them when the metanarratives do not carry any truth. Lyotard gives some key ideas about scientific truth: (i) knowledge is never universal; rather always it is altered when traditional societies become modern and when modern societies are becoming postmodern. The pace of knowledge is slower or faster depending on the country. And according to the sector of activity within countries, the pace of knowledge varies. So, if the knowledge had given the truth then it would never have changed. Thus the science does not give the absolute truth according to Lyotard. (ii) Scientific knowledge is a discourse; a framework of thinking. Here we mention one important point of Foucault. He shows that our knowledge regarding madness, punishment, and sexuality have changed through the periods of history. So, clearly it shows that knowledge in all its respects is a discourse; there is nothing about its neutrality. Even in the present information age, scientific knowledge is a subject to technological transformation. Today the perfect way for the transmission of our knowledge is cybernetics. Our knowledge gets commercialized through machines. (iii) According to Lyotard, when technologically knowledge is transformed then it tends to become quantitative. The fact is, this is the age of technological development. So the nature of knowledge is not stored without changing. Here we can only estimate that anything in the structure of knowledge could not be transformed through the machine. Consequently, the direction of research will change. Here those researches are accepted which are into computer language translatable. Thus the knowledge which are generated from sociological or anthropological are transmitted through the computer.

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129 Ibid, p 316.
Therefore, Lyotard talks about both scientific and social-cultural narratives. For him, about science, our assumptions are demolished in the context of present-day society. Thus the scientific narratives do not have any legitimacy. Lyotard mentioned that in the period of the 18th century onwards, people had great faith in science. That time Max Weber argued for sociological knowledge. Rationality is the core value of modernity and correlated it with science. During those days scientific assumptions functioned with the same vigour. For example: in Indian television, there are advertisement regarding flood situation. Basically, the aim of the advertisement is to sell their commodity. Thus, at the end of the Second World War Lyotard claimed that most of the scientific myths are collapsed. So, now what has remained is just a little science, not the big scientific narratives.

He draws a parallel between the social-cultural narratives and scientific narratives. Since the coherent scientific knowledge was caught as specialisms therefore in culture and social life appeared a splintering. In cultural and social life, appeared a splintering. He found many narratives; such as cultural theory, political theory, and art criticism. However in the later edition of the book *Postmodern Condition* he includes a postscript. This postscript concentrated on aesthetic rather than scientific issues. His writing had a great impact on humanities and science. His main concern was about the forms of knowledge and its ability for production. But the experiments which he has performed put a lot of effect on humanities, social thoughts, and politics. He was influenced very much by Marxism. According to Marxism, the class was the main instrument of exploitation and the proletariat class was universal, which leads the revolution for socialism. But Lyotard and other postmodernists have not accepted this Marxian position. According to him, any single class, factor or structure could not bring revolution. His plea was that the modern political theory was never coherent in its structure. It is because in the area of political theories there are much fluid social groups and identities which would never lead to any revolution. For him, there is no single knowledge but there is knowledge. Because each ethnic group has their own knowledge and knowledge is splintered as well as his class formulations are disintegrated. He argued that the Marxian class war has witnessed fragmentation.

Thus the impact of Lyotard’s experiments about the status of knowledge was greater in the field of cultural and social realms of life. To the postmodernist, the power is not monolithically concentrated in state or class only; rather through little works of everyday life, it exerted. He holds that the present era is the small-scale acts of dissent. If we see any city in India then we can find some disruptions of traffic in the market which is a common
phenomenon. There are demonstrations, processions of agitating people and rallies. Actually, all these agitations disrupt the social system. In the late 20th century he analyzed the state of scientific knowledge and information. His major and basic argument is that since society and culture are continuously in a changing mode, therefore, the scientific discipline does not believe that their discoveries and theories have timeless or universal value.

Michel Foucault:

It is now time to discuss the philosophy of Michel Foucault (1926 - 1984). Francis Bacon, one of the most important philosopher's comments, “human knowledge and human power came to the same thing, because ignorance of cause frustrates effect.”

The relationship between knowledge and power is like cause and effect. For example, in India, village gossiping is a normal thing. It may so happen that if someone faces a lion in a forest, then after coming back he may spread the news and slowly this news assumes the form of knowledge. But in the present era, there are an enormous amount of data in the proliferation of electronic system which (data) stored in that place which is accessible to those individuals, institutions, corporations, and governments- whose requests are deemed legitimate for such knowledge. But that same data are not acceptable to the subject who contributed that information. That time in the postmodern world, which have a larger store of data or knowledge only they are powerful. But for Michel Foucault, it was the dominant theme of discourse. He does not accept knowledge as power; rather contributed as a context or way to exercise of power. According to him, knowledge does not itself provide any predictable, inevitable effects. But power can produce itself knowledge. Particularly, his concern is too timely given the way in which about individuals all informations are evaluated, stored and monitored in modern society. Basically, they tried to abolish the classic enlightenment distinction between a private and public realm.

However, Foucault a poststructuralist also known as a postmodernist and by his thinking, the postmodern social theory was powerfully affected. He has directed some specific empirical studies; such as the human sciences, medicine and the birth of clinical practices, madness, and asylum. There are other works: the social control of sexuality and self and sexuality. Even among the postmodernists, he was known as the architect of the theory of the relationship between knowledge and power. In the thinking of sociology, the relation between knowledge and power has made a dominant shift which challenged Weber’s theory of power.

130 S.L.Doshi, p 283.
His works include a number of disciplines in sociology, criminology, history, and philosophy. He was influenced by Hegel’s work on phenomenology and Nietzsche’s work. Marx, Freud, and Structuralism are included in his work too. However, he claimed that he was never been a Marxist, never been a Freudian and never been a structuralist. His central theme was to establish knowledge and power relationship. For this, he borrowed some various sources and tried to integrate them. For him knowledge gives power. He was influenced by Weber’s rationalization theory. But according to Foucault rationalization is found in only certain key sites, which is not an iron case. Although he borrowed Marx’s ideas, he goes beyond Marx’s economic determinism. Mainly he was interested in micro-politics of power and this conceptualization of power was multidisciplinary. Therefore when Marx thinks about power, it is a total power which is based at the societal level. As a phenomenologist, he rejects the idea of an autonomous and meaning-giving subject. He adopts Nietzsche’s interests especially the relationship between knowledge and power, which was analyzed by Foucault sociologically. Besides all these influences he was described as a poststructuralist.

Foucault’s main concern lies in the field of epistemology. Here he tried to uncover knowledge. His search for knowledge led him to find out power. Finally, he connects power with truth. But before he took up his search for truth, Nietzsche in his work Genealogy of Morals analyzed good and evil. Here he comments that there was no original or essential definition about truth. Foucault carried this argument further. According to him, the truth was tied to the operation of power and domination. Thus truth is produced by power. For him, knowledge, power, and truth are interconnected. And power is assumes different role in society. His theme was the concept of discourse. He argued that knowledge, power, and truth are connected through discourses and texts. Discourse means disciplines and institutions. Crime, leadership, corruption, industrialization, village development, environment, and capitalism are all discourse. These are the stuff of society. For example: in Indian society family is a kind of discourse. Before industrialization joint family played the main role in society. But today’s scenario is totally different. Nuclear family is the call of the hour. Public views were changed. Thus Foucault argued that discourse always keeps changing. It is not images and abstract public sphere; rather it exists in a concrete social situation, which has real effects.

In Madness and Civilization, Foucault mentioned that madness is a discourse. Through the period of history, people developed their specific framework of thinking about the insane and the mad. For instance, in the period of renaissance reason and madness were not separated.
There was a dialogue between madness and reason. Foucault argued that “by the middle ages, the people, that is, the mad were locked up with those who suffered from leprosy. Leprosy is not only contagious but also disturbing to look at. Everyone was happy about it, but what were they supposed to do with these big places to lock people up? They left them empty, but just for a while. In the 15th century, an idea cropped up, and became a central image in the popular imagination. People came to know anyhow that the madman may have dangerous insights.” Here Foucault’s main concern is towards generation of knowledge and it helps people to get power.

Actually, Foucault was not interested in madness; rather he was trying to know especially knowledge about psychiatry. According to him madhouses, hospitals, prisons, and workhouses are part of a broad system to judge and to oppress people. For example: in the Renaissance period there was an economic crisis and there were agitations. After that, there emerged a shift in the analysis of the mad. Thus in history for the first time institution of morality was formed combining civil law and moral obligation. Especially morality, virtue, and goodness are the responsibilities of the state. With discourse through centuries he traced out the history of madness and in 1960s The French Revolution was a turning point in the discourse on insanity.

In France, Jean-Paul Sartre was at the top of intellectual rank before Foucault. After Sartre, we find varieties of literary critics such as Roland Barthes, the radical psychiatrist Jacques Lacan, the structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss and a poststructuralist Michel Foucault. Foucault’s writing The Order of Things poses a direct challenge to the humanism of Sartre.

The above essay examines three main areas of human sciences, such as linguistics, biology, and economics. Here Foucault tries to find out the structure of knowledge of time and its way of establishing order. But in the 17th and 18th century he started to examine the development of the fields such as general grammar, natural history, and analysis of wealth. Here he questions about the death of man, which was parallel with Friedrich Nietzsche’s word that God is dead. For him, before 18th-century humans are not the centres of discourse. Before that period humans are never regarded as a centre of the universe. God played the central role at that time. God’s knowledge was infinite but human knowledge was limited. So, God was

\[\text{Ibid, p 289.}\]
the source of knowledge. But in the 19th century, the scenarios changed completely, instead of God human were at the center as the source of knowledge.

*Existence precedes essence*—this slogan of Sartre becomes the centre point of attraction. Here essence means ultimate or real nature of an individual. For Sartre, the meaning of things or essence was not predetermined by any outside force. It is the humans who played the lead role in ascribing meaning to everything. For him, there is no transcendental meaning but human-centric meaning played the lead role. Foucault followed the above procedure. But the problem is with Sartre’s notion of existential freedom is, there is no meaning which is predetermined. Humans (each person) are free to create their own meaning through their own actions. But the freedom is something which is itself given, which either we accept it or try to deny it. According to Foucault by social conditioning (which surrounds the individual) individual’s freedom was constrained or limited. But structuralist Simon de Beauvoir questioned the Sartre’s notion of individual freedom, and the most powerful advocate of social conditions (economic determinism) Karl Marx also rejects this thesis of Sartre. Saussure and some structuralists helped Foucault to form his theories. According to Saussure, in any language (Hindi, English, and French) the relationship between signifier to signified is arbitrary. Because the collection of sounds and letters makes the word ‘cow’ (signifier) does not itself connected with the animal which we see in the field (signified). The reason is, in a different language, a cow is called by different words. Saussure made two important points: (i) sound and the words are not related with the real object. (ii) Language should be signified ‘is at the discretion and social conditioning of the individual.’ Earlier it observed that Foucault studied three human sciences. In linguistic, he analyzed the general grammar of languages. (a) Here he examines Saussure and argues that words do not have anything to do with the objects which they signify, and this is the language which gives meaning. (b) In the natural history, he discusses about the biology of the body. (c) In the analysis of economics, he focussed on wealth.

In structuralism, Saussure, Lévi-Strauss, and Foucault believed that binary oppositions are not only found in language but these are found in knowledge and social structure. The binding binary oppositions can be best understood by freezing time and looking at a single moment. For them, the structure of language was a dominant one. Language is the centre fore which binds people. So, one is not free to think anything outside the rules of one’s language. However, the difference between Sartre and Foucault is that for Sartre, the meanings of things are constructed by men, which is predetermined. But according to Foucault the
meaning of things are not given by men; rather it is given by language. It was the signified which contains meaning.

Here we are presenting some aspects of Foucault’s writing:-

According to him, language is a sign, which he used in his discourse as a tool. He argued that in the course of history there were constant changes in the discourse. For instance, Nietzsche rejected the notions of man and absolute truth. But for Foucault, no absolutes reign and history’s search for origin was totally misguided. There are no absolutes.

According to him, knowledge is power, which enables man to identify or invent some techniques and through this, human behavior can be controlled. It rests with the individual. Foucault argued that by power, truth is produced. Thus it was an interpretation tied to the operation of power and domination.

Foucault holds that power is exercised not possessed. It is not essentially coercive or repressive but it can be productive. It flows from the bottom up. It does not flow from a centralized source. And he calls it ‘micro-politics’. Power diffused throughout society. It reaches into the grain of individual and then touches their bodies, and itself inserts their discourses, learning processes, attitude, actions, and everyday lives. He mentions that power produces things.

Another aspect of Foucault’s vision was, by particular forms of knowledge each historical age was characterized. He ascribes this knowledge from an ‘episteme’. It means a set of presupposition which organized and counts knowledge, truth, reality and it indicates how this matter can be discussed.

From the above narratives, it may be commented that there was a difference between Derridean deconstruction and Lyotard and Foucault’s postmodern thoughts. But each one has some roots in a different legacy of Nietzsche and Saussure.

Within modernism and postmodernism, the different shades of poststructuralism show a way of conceptualizing the debate between structure-agency. In this schema, some commentator ascribed Derrida as a poststructuralist because of his Saussurian heritage, but there are others who denied this title. Michel Foucault played an important role in Derridean thought. Due to his structural affinity, there are some commentator who thought that deconstructionism is not a method/anti-method; rather it is a development of post-Lévi-Straussian paradigmatic shift.
via Nietzsche, Saussure, and Foucault. This happens due to the different varieties of poststructuralist thought in postmodernism. There is a trinity of post-structuralism: Discourse, deconstruction, and postmodernism. There is some kind of overlapping in regarding Derrida’s position. There are some divergences between them which exemplified in Derrida, Foucault, and Lyotard.

A deconstructionist claimed that postmodern discourse begins with the idea that the system lives of their own and it makes them fundamentally independent of human control. In one side, postmodernists accuse Derrida of being a neo-formalist. But in another side, it claimed that the system doesn’t have purposes or meanings. For postmodernism, this abolition of referentiality is the rehabilitation of human agency as he or she was free from the closure (repression) of language. But according to deconstructionism this decentering of human agency lapsed into self-referentiality of the text. So these arguments are goes into a theory of desire, and body in contrast to forms. Thus it is anti-discourse, which is closer to Nietzsche than Saussure.

According to Derrida difference is a unity and at the same time, it is divided from itself. However, it constitutes human discourse and it is intrinsic to all social forms. This focus on difference makes this approach a deconstructionist. Derrida’s this radicalized reading of the text’s or forms criticized by postmodernism as neo-formalism. But Lyotard read this and chose as a continuum with Derrida. In the case of Lyotard that search was the beginning of the denial of language signifier or text, which is a kind of move towards de-differentiation. Science difference takes place on the forces of elemental passion, a prime energizer. Thus it is more than a theoretical concept. Therefore human action was seen to stem from drives beyond direct human control. So, individual or institutional, and behavioral are essentially are the reaction to an originary force. Here comes ‘passions’ as a determining movement whose composition organized social life, which also is (passion) a slip from deconstruction to postmodernism from Saussure to Nietzsche, from discourse to free-play and from Derrida to Lyotard. Lyotard’s desire is that passion is the prime energizer. According to postmodernist’s language, image or idea, and sign or signified these are all secondary processes which inhibited libido and regulate. Thus to rehabilitate the primary forces from the structuration of these secondary processes postmodernism tries to transgresses and therefore di-differentiates.

The similarity between Foucault, Lyotard, and Derrida’s thought is that, Foucault’s genealogical method was similar to Lyotard’s agonistics and also similar to Derrida’s
They all deny the concept of perfect origin and for it they substitute a process of differential contestation. Derrida’s process of differential contestation is a difference of reason and unreason. Therefore the unity of dualism comes. But postmodernism overcomes this dualism in the primacy of unreason – irrationality. According to them, this transgression in a primacy of desire was the answer of the problem of dualism. But Derrida claimed that the difference and postmodern transgress towards de-differentiation. Postmodern thinkers observed that the imminence of the body in social life took as a pervasive critical theme. But according to Foucault, the body is not just a physiological structure; rather it is the place of will, desires, passion, and failings. So, it (body) is the organ of difference. Thus, from Nietzsche to Foucault and to postmodernism, the movement was certainly the postmodernist materiality of the body. Foucault discussed about the materiality of the body and he was a post-structuralist. However, he was not moved into the postmodernist traits of the theory of desire. But his theory of body was not like Lyotard’s body of libidinal forces. Because he sees ‘the body’ as ‘the organ in perpetual disintegration’ is an ‘organ of difference’ and in deconstructionism, it moved to become a text of difference.

Here Foucault differs from Lévi-Strauss’s structuralism, it has two ways. One is of Saussure moving towards Derrida and second, is Nietzschean diversification to Lyotard. But Foucault was standing in between these two rules. Thus he was criticized by both the camps for his structuralism. For this reason this chapter tries to present these divergences with the structure of four movements:

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<th>Saussure’s movement towards</th>
<th>Nietzsche’s concern about body &amp; desire</th>
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<td>Habermas</td>
<td>Derrida</td>
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<td>(Critical/reflexive modernism)</td>
<td>(Deconstructionism)</td>
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<td>Communicative rationality and ethics of substantial rationality</td>
<td>Aesthetics of difference, text as indeterminate and instable; dualism of rational or irrational, discursive or non-discursive: text/body of the</td>
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From the above it may be remarkec that the main problem in Foucault is the conflict between the subjects and of course the discourse of which he was a part. According to him, “systems of regularities (which) have a decisive role in the history of the science – to know whether the subjects responsible for scientific discourse are not determined in their situation, their function, their perceptive capacity and their practical possibilities by conditions that dominate and even overwhelm them.”

Therefore, his elaboration is a non-discursive transgression of the will to know and “effect a knowledge which in the density of its workings should be both knowledge and a modification of what is known, reflection and a transformation of the mode of being of that on which it reflects.”

Mainly in textuality, Foucault’s interest wanted to present text stripped of its hermetic elements.

But in the case of Derrida, the starting point turns to Saussurean concept of language as the system of difference, and subject as being the product of the language system. For him, the system was a seriality of differences and so that ‘subject is the difference’. But Derrida argued that “essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, the other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences – The play of differences – diffÃ©rance (is) – system in general.”

So, it can be concluded that all the words does not share any common meaning but they have a common structure.

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133 Ibid, p 327.
Postmodernity means a break with the signifier and formalism and from structuralism. It is a new primacy of the bodily and material, of the unconscious and of desire. In this break, there is a rejection of the text, the primacy of the discourse. Thus in contradistinction with Foucault and Lyotard who are in the Nietzschean pedigree, Derrida’s inspiration was F. Saussure. Postmodernism takes the social relations to be language games which are governed by the libidinal economy. And for Lyotard, psychic energy is straightaway discharged in the primary process of unconscious and desire. Through the ‘unhindered mobility of catheixis’ desire is fulfilled but language discursive is the secondary process where through verbalization and transformation energy is discharged.

On the other hand, if we see Freud; his secondary process is “discursive economy of desire through the colonization of the unconscious by discourse; through the subversion of the primary process by language and the transference.”

However, the secondary process of Foucault is reversed in postmodernism. Said in his book mentioned that Foucault’s reading of texts is different than Derrida. But they theoretically locate or situate texts and they enact more dramatically. Foucault takes curiously the topic that, why and how the power is gained, and how it is used. This is the dangerous consequence of his disagreement with Marxism. However, he criticized Derrida for his reductionist effect of textualization; which was an act of reducing discursive practices to textual traces. If we looked at Foucault’s journey then we can see that although he was started as a structuralist but moved toward the theory of body. On the other hand, Freud’s central concern was body and unconscious termed as structuralist where libidinal forces become socially structured. Thus this moves of Freudian makes postmodernists took towards Nietzsche and Foucault.

Richard Rorty:

Richard Rorty (1931-2007) was an American philosopher. He was educated at the Chicago University and Yale University. He was one of the influential philosophers and his philosophical thinking provides a valuable and interesting perspective. Rorty’s pragmatism illustrates the relation between ethnocentrism, art-representationalism, and the virtues of the socio-political culture. Rorty and Derrida shares the same thought about epistemological truth claim. According to them, the truth validity claim of epistemology can be questioned. Thus all traditional philosophers have to imagine that they don’t have any special truth.

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135 Lyotard, Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, 1984, p 58
Rorty was a pragmatist and he mistrusted all grand theories of history, class consciousness, and knowledge. When he himself claimed as a postmodern *bourgeois* liberal, he distanced his liberalism from the leftists of America. He mentioned that we possess the ‘first-order’ natural narratives; hence to tell the story of stories, any new attempts are the species of grand delusion. Rorty sees grand narrative as ‘Naturalized Hegelianism’. With Habermas, Rorty argues that there is no incommensurable language that any language can be learned through one who was able to use other language. For him, the world is a shadow of our discourse; there is nothing as one to one language world relationship. He mentioned that one of the most socially useful philosophers was Habermas. He sees “Habermas’s theory of ‘communicative reason’ as a giant step towards completing the task that Deway began reformulating traditional philosophical conceptions in ways that will make them more useful for the self-description of a democratic society.”\(^1\) Here Habermas tries to put philosophy in the work of human emancipation.

As a pragmatist, Rorty explained that since the world can tell us nothing about what really it is, and it can offer us no self descriptions; even since it is neither language nor it is written in language, therefore we must abandon the idea of science as the search for something like the ‘real nature of reality’. According to him, there is no such thing as ‘nature proper’. Rorty argues, “we ought to give up any philosophical attempt to make our criteria appear to be more than simply our criteria, but in addition the right criteria, somehow belonging to nature itself, and thus capable of leading us towards truth”\(^2\). In another word, nature might be the foundation of a certain conceptions and beliefs, but it could be the cause of the fact that these conceptions are better than others. Thus for Rorty, the history of science just tells us about the theory of gravity. Here he tried to say that how the world guides us to converge on absolute.

Pragmatism denies ‘the possibility of getting beyond’. Here Derrida claims that concepts and discursive totalities are cracked already and it was fissured by heterogeneities and necessary contradictions. Rorty mentioned that Derrida’s work divides into two periods. His earlier period was more professorial period and later period in which his writings are more eccentric, personal, and original. For him, during the earlier period Derrida was involved in public project but later Derrida turned away from philosophy and involved towards literature. Rorty again explained that in the human sciences, Derrida was responsible for moving beyond the

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'linguistic turn' towards a 'pictorial turn'. Thus Derrida changed his direction from language to images. In that time he invoked imagination, echoing the phonemes, and fantasy as graphemes. “He is also said to have renewed the traditional disciplines such as aesthetic, iconology and art history and the emergence of new formations such as visual culture, and the study of media, as well as it equality important immateriality that renders all things or objects – all ‘beings’ in other words – uncanny”\textsuperscript{139}.

Some topics which Derrida discussed during this period are as follows:

Political sovereignty, rogue states and democracy, animal rights, law and justice, the University, television, the idea of Europe, Secularism, hospitality, religion, violence, capital punishment, and terrorism.

Derrida in his work ‘Rogues’: Two Essays on Reason (French: voyous) comprises two major lectures which Derrida delivered in 2002 investigating the foundations of the sovereignty of the nation-state. According to Derrida sovereignty is not only the modern system of states nor international component; rather it is about laws, ethics, and human relations. It is defined by human’s capacity and he or she has the right to suspend the law. For example, in the U.S, sovereignty is manifested in the right of the President. Thus, in this context, sovereignty is linked with the use of force. Deconstruction tries to demonstrate the non-democratical features about sovereignty. “The idea of a sovereign is contradictory (one over many), the concept of exception (being above the law), the notion of the death penalty (contravening the right to life of the citizen), and........ only small states ever see their sovereignty contested and disputed by powerful states, even when it is in the name of universal principles. Not only would these powerful states never allow their own sovereignty to be challenged”\textsuperscript{140}. Derrida mentioned that one could not ignore the sovereign self, its equality, liberty, power and responsibility more than the sovereign nation’s state. In this text, he extends the meaning of sovereignty to the ruler, God, reason, people, nationstate, subject, University and the asylum city.

Rorty was an anti-metaphysician and interested to deconstruct the Western metaphysical tradition. The different perspective of J. Derrida and R. Rorty is: Derrida goes towards a radical position which exists in the practice of constructing the world and social order. His


aim was to question all modes of settled practices and through the existing political and social practices he tried to open up a new avenue. On the other hand, R. Rorty drifts towards a critical reconstruction of a liberal community. His goal was to accomplish a liberal community. This community includes the specificity, sensitivity, and the greatest possible plurality to identify with others. But according to Rorty, the problem of Derrida was that he was only interested to unfold the narratives of Western philosophy. Rorty remarked that linguistic philosophy undermines the whole epistemological project. They show that from the effort to interpret the central claims of epistemology the nature of contradictions are emerged. Thus philosophers who wanted to revive the tradition they not only misreading the multiplied evidence of past failure but also the sign of a new, when it is more worth.

Their thought about metaphysical circle of reason was same but in two different directions. Rorty carries out ‘critique of metaphysics’ to extent that “it does not go to serve the interests of the community”\textsuperscript{141} On the other side Derrida carries it to brings out the claim of any discourse. They have been oftentimes condemned by traditional philosophers. The similarity between Derrida and Rorty was that, they both refused Habermas’s claim that there was necessary link exists between universalism, rationalism and modern democracy. They deny ‘Reason’ (an Archimedean point) which “could guarantee the possibility of a mode of argumentation that would have transcended its particular conditions of enunciation”\textsuperscript{142}. Their disagreement with Habermas was theoretical. For them, though Habermas engaged with democratic politics but democracy does not need any philosophical foundation.

Thus it can be said that J. Derrida and R. Rorty they both are at the centre of controversies and they both belongs to a non-foundationalist theory of democracy. Although their perspectives are different but their work completely undermine the dominant Rationalist’s approach. Though their way of thought was different but their contribution in re-interpretations and critique set a particular tone in philosophy.

Jean-Baudrillard:

Baudrillard (French sociologist and cultural theorist) was another postmodern thinker, who explained that postmodern society have moved away from being which was based on the production of things but moved towards being based on the images of things. Baudrillard called these copies of things \textit{simulacra}. For him, the difference between real life and

\textsuperscript{141} Critical Polemics- II: Postmodernism’s Inner Subversions: Rorty and Derrida in Crossing, p 274.
\textsuperscript{142} Chantal Mouffe, Deconstruction and Pragmatism, 1996, p 1.
Simulacrum in postmodern society has been reduced. Therefore it becomes difficult to differentiate one from the other. This state-of-affairs are known as hyperreality, where simulation or images of things are considered as more real than the reality. His introduction of The Gulf War Did Not Take Place was a significant movement. It throws lights on the relation between reporting and hyperreality. For example, CNN – the news channel, where a group of reporters presents a live report in the Gulf to know what was happening. This was discovered, and they themselves were watching the channel CNN to find out it. Thus it shows by news how news is generated and so the source of news is the news itself. He said that “the media promotes the war, the war promotes the media, and advertising competes with the war. Promotion is the most thick-skinned parasite in our culture..... it allows us to turn the world and the violence of the world into a consumable substance”\textsuperscript{143}. In short what he trying to explain that news produced the reality of the war, and media generates more advertisements for channels.

Thus following his path, in this new age, we do not buy what we actually need or what satisfied our need but we buy the brands, lifestyle identities and images. So, our desire is never satisfied by any particular purchase and according to him, this is the moving forces of the society of postmodern.

Through the above story now we can summarize the contemporary French theory as follows:

M. Foucault delivered a speech in a seminar where Derrida was present and on the basis of that speech Derrida writes a paper called Cogito and The History of Madness (1963). In this paper, he criticized M. Foucault’s interpretation of Descartes. Thus this paper creates a rupture between Foucault and Derrida. After that paper, Violence and Metaphysics was in a leading position. Here in one side, we see Derrida’s sympathy for Levinas’s thought of alteration and on the other side, he goes away from Levinas’s thought. This book opens up their lifetime friendship.

About Deconstruction, Derrida gives many definitions but there are three definitions which are classical. In the preface of Dissemination, he mentioned that deconstruction consists of two phases. The first phase attacked the belief that existence is structured in terms of opposition, which are hierarchical by reversing the Platonistic hierarchies. In the second

\textsuperscript{143} Jean Baudrillard, The Gulf War Did Not Take Place, 1995, p 31.
phase, Derrida discussed about reversal – reduction of Platonism. Here he tried to return to the idea that every experience or appearance was temporal. He said that in the experience of present, there is always a very small difference between the moment of newness, the past, and the future.

Derrida’s second definition about deconstruction was more political and less metaphysical. In *Force of Law* (1989-1990) Derrida mentioned that deconstruction was practiced in two styles; which are not corresponding to the two phases. On the one side, there was the genealogical style which recalls the history of a theme or concept but now the issue is history of justice. There was the structural or formalistic style and that style examined a historical aporias or paradoxes.

Firstly, the épkchè of the rule: In ethical or political thought our common axiom is to exercise justice. One must be responsible and free for one’s decisions and action. Here Derrida asked a question that what freedom is. For him, it consists in a rule but in the case of justice, a judgement which followed the law was only right. Because the law must be suspended or destroyed and conserved (épkchè), thus every case is other and each decision is different. Therefore these decisions are required an absolutely unique interpretation.

Secondly, the ghost of the undecidable: It is a decision which starts with the initiative to read, calculate, and interpret. According to Derrida, ‘undecidable’ is not a movement between two significations; rather “it is the experience of which, though heterogeneous, foreign to the order of the calculable and the rule, is still obligated – it is of obligation that we must speak – to give itself up to the impossible decision, which taking account of law and rules”\(^\text{144}\). Derrida said that “a decision that didn’t go through the ordeal of the undecidable would not be a free decision, it would only be the programmable application or unfolding of a calculable process”\(^\text{145}\).

The third aporia was the urgency that obstructs the horizon of knowledge: The word ‘horizon’ suggests both the opening and limit which defines a period or infinite progress of writing.

When Derrida starts his career as a writer, structuralism was very popular. They first received a comprehensive attention with Claude Levi-Strauss (an anthropologist), and affected the

\(^{144}\) Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, *Deconstruction and the possibility of Justice*, 1992, p 24-26.

\(^{145}\) Ibid.
thinking of Jacques Lacan (a psychoanalyst). Then they applied their thought to many different texts. It was about some formalities of how texts mean; rather than what they mean. According to Derridean structuralism words have meaning in relation to others. He mentioned that meanings and truths are never timeless and absolute. Derrida argued that in reality whatever we see is through sign and this is writing. Though in Derrida’s work the sign reduced more than a legible but it was indistinct tools. Further, there was something hiding behind the present in the sign and here he brings the concept of deconstruction. For Derrida, through deconstruction texts are always open a new critical discovery. It rejects the idea which has a basic and single meaning. Therefore they believe that there is no reason but reasons.

Some postmodernist thinkers before Derrida such as; Lyotard and Baudrillard engaged with a war against the Marxism (the father of foundational universalistic theories). In society Lyotard, Baudrillard, Foucault, and Derrida they all tried to find out the truth about reality. They all reject the foundational theories or logocentrism. There was a hearted condemnation of metanarratives and grand theories but in postmodernity, Derrida gives a new turn. Therefore, through his new thought poststructuralism came. He developed his own poststructuralist blend of philosophy, literary analysis, and linguistic which was known as deconstruction.

The first half of *Writing and Difference* includes the essay on Descartes and Foucault. The second half contained his compelling analysis about how and why metaphysical thinking excludes writing from its conception of language. This book reveals the unacknowledged program which makes thought itself possible. Through these analyses Derrida focused on a new way of reading, thinking, and writing. It was the most rigorous and complete understanding of the old ways. Students and scholars find this book as an excellent introduction to the challenging of Contemporary French thinkers. The reason behind this, Derrida questions thought as we know it. So, we recognize that these debates between Derrida and post-structuralists’ thoughts are fascinating which encouraged reading more on this.

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The origin of language has not only been discussed in Contemporary Western philosophy but also been discussed in traditional Indian philosophy. That is why it is very challenging to observe whether there is any relationship between these two different schools from the perspective of language or not. And this chapter tries to accept the challenge by introducing some dialogue between Bhartṛhari’s thought and postmodern Western deconstructionist Jacques Derrida’s thought. In Indian and Western thought, they both tried to reach language from some non-linguistic sources; such as imitative sounds and interjectional sounds. It is clear that language is always present. There are two extreme views about language: the relation between words and their meaning is either created by human beings or language as a-priori, created by God or supreme power. If we follow the Mīmāṃsa philosophy in India, they believe that the words and their relation with meaning are a-priori, impersonal, eternal and un-derived. But Buddhist philosophy challenged Mīmāṃsa’s view of language as eternal. According to them language always expresses vikalpa or some imaginary constructions and it never accesses the real meaning. They believe that all the languages even the Vedic languages are constructed by a human (human creation). Even the language which we used in our daily life does not give exposure to the real meaning.

There is a quite surprising link between deconstructionist Jacques Derrida’s Grammatology and these two views of Indian philosophy about the origin of language. Such as, Derrida does not believe in idealizing of language like Buddhist, which always typified in traditional thought. Another point is, like Buddhist, he concentrated his analysis on the subject of linguistic experience. However, there is some link between his and Buddhist thought but Derrida finds in his analysis that his thought is more compatible with Bhartṛhari’s Vyākarana viewpoint. It is because in many points Vyākarana defense the Mīmāṃsa doctrines. Derrida’s analysis about Buddhist thought, his engagement with the Indian philosophy of language introduced a new forum, from where Indian philosophy get engaged with Contemporary Western philosophy and literary criticism.
Derrida has discussed a lot about Western heritage, especially about ‘logocentric’, where language has been expressed as a-priori experience. On the basis of his analysis, he criticize Plato, Aristotle, Kant even Saussure. In traditional thought, we have always seen that mind has an immediate relationship between voice and breath, which reflects ‘logos’ naturally. Here our mind observes the things through natural resemblance. Thus when we speak something, then the relationship which is created between speech and mind is called conventional symbolization. Due to this, a traditional thought expressed through spoken language. They believe that spoken language is the first conventional symbolization and inner reflection of the divine logos. So, speech is very closed to the reflected presence or logos of the things itself. But writing is the second conventional and it is the technical representatives of speech. According to them, writing does not improve one’s wisdom and memory. Writing can never be a part of wisdom. In this perspective, writing is downgraded. Due to this reason, in the classical Western thought speech is meant as the origin of language, which symbolizes the divine of a clear mental reflection. But writing can never come towards the divine- it keeps away from the divine. This discussion is very near to the Indian traditional Vyākaraṇa viewpoint. In Vyākaraṇa it is been mentioned that the spoken Veda is only the real word which mirrors the Brahman, and via spoken Veda, we come to know the Brahman, and dharma or duty. Even through the Vedic mantras, we remove the karmic ignorance. Like Socrates, Vedic Sanskrit tradition mentions that writing is meant for them who are dull to remember. The reason is writing never perfectly represented the spoken word. So, it is always secondary. Thus for both the Greek and Vyākaraṇa viewpoints, language always originates through the divine of the natural reflection – which first symbolized by speech and secondly, by writing. However, convention is related within the formulation of speech and writing. And these conventions are totally dependent on ‘logos’ in the mind for both their power and meaning. These two traditions understood the language through its transcendental origin. But for Derrida logocentric approach locates the essence within the interior, which is very close to voice and breathe, but not close to the writing which is exterior.

When Derrida discussed about Rousseau and Saussure he observed that they follow the same classical logocentric pattern. They both gave importance to the interior of language as essence and also holding within the ontology of presence and logic of identity. But Derrida criticized the thought of Rousseau and Saussure that language as an exterior and criticized the Buddhist position that language is unable to engage the real. Derrida tried to find a way to move out from this debate. He never accepted the Buddhist position where language is
considered as an imaginary construction (vikalpa). According to him, the origin of language is not only symbolized by speech rather it can be in the writing. For him a writing which is both interior and exterior.

According to Indian thinkers language always primarily expressed through the spoken word (vāk). But this definition of language never identifies it with the written signs which are merely phonetic copies of the speech or spoken sounds. In Indian philosophy, the distinction between word (śabda) and sound (dhvani) is a basic discussion. And if we identify them then, we have to take physical sound like the word, which is a category mistake. Derrida agrees with this contention and remarked that the whole Western metaphysics from Plato to Rousseau and Levi-Strauss when they identified logos or language with the speech or spoken word. But here they made a category mistake. Here Derrida wanted to go in opposite direction and identified the essence of logos or language with writing. He criticises both the logocentric position and Buddhists philosophy. When he described language as writing, he tried to mean written words are prior to the spoken reflection of the inner logos as well as language is not only a sort of writing or external speaking as suggested by Buddhist. Here Derrida wanted to attempt self-analysis or deconstruction of language. According to him, deconstruction exposes the mistake of a reductionism in either outward to conventional sign or inward to the divine logos. To escape all philosophical oppositions, he precisely states that “language is not merely a sort of writing ‘but’ a possibility founded on the general possibility founded on the general possibility of writing.” For him, writing is characterized as both inner and outer words within dynamic interrelationship. There are some similarities between Derrida’s thought with Bhartṛhari’s language, which he described in his Vākyapadiya. In the traditional Indian philosophy either it Hindu or Buddhists, used to correct the written text with the oral words because oral words are carefully memorized and passed down from succeeding generations. Therefore, Derrida’s proposition, writing is not secondary rather it is prior to spoken word is quite incredible. For him, writing is not just a computer program or the inscription of words on a paper but it includes the neuronal traces in the brain, which Freud identified as ‘memory’. Derrida suggested DNA as writing, which is present in all living substances. Here his aim is to counter one of the terms over the other, to escape the system of metaphysical opposition, which has dominated Indian philosophy.

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146 See, Harold Coward, Derrida and Indian Philosophy, 1990, p- 50
To elaborate the critique of metaphysics, Derrida followed Nietzsche and Heidegger in Western and Nāgārjuna in Indian philosophy. By the critique of metaphysics he does not mean only the western philosophical tradition but everyday languages and thoughts as well. According to him, the western thought has always been structured in terms of dichotomies: presence vs. Absence, good vs. Evil, identity vs. Difference, man vs. Women, being vs. Nothingness, speech vs. Writing and soul vs. Body. Here the second term is always corrupted than the first term. That is why these two terms are placed in a hierarchical order which always gives priority in the first term both in quality and time. Therefore some of the Indian and Western philosophy has always answered about the question of the nature of being in terms of presence.

Derrida’s critique of metaphysics mainly focused on the privileging of the spoken words over the written words, which has similarities with the Indian thought. Here Derrida’s translators Barbara Johnson summarized: “The spoken word is given higher value because the speaker and listener are both present to the utterance simultaneously. There is no temporal or spatial distance between speaker, speech, and listener, since the speaker hears himself speak at the same moment as the listener does. This immediacy seems to guarantee the notion that in the spoken word we know what we mean, mean what we say, say what we mean, and know what we have said. Whether or not perfect understanding always occurs *in fact*, this image of perfectly self-present meaning is, according to Derrida, the underlying ideal of Western culture.”

For Derrida, the belief about the self-presentation of meaning (logos, reason, speech, and the word of God) from the Greek time is ‘logocentrism’. From this perspective when speaking is impossible, for example: those who are unable to speak, then writing is used as a secondary representation of speech. Because when the writer puts his thoughts on the paper he is distancing himself from the immediacy of speech and when someone reads the paper that time he stays far away from the writer even after writer’s death. Derrida sees all of these as a corruption of the self-presence of meaning. Through his critique of logocentric position neither he tried to reverse this value system and showed that writing is superior to speech but his attempts were to dissect the whole system of metaphysical opposition from where the debate between speech vs. writing was grounded. In doing so he finds that both speech and writing is structured by distance and difference. For him, the experience of meaning is itself

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an experience of difference. And Derrida showed that this difference is to inhabit the heart of what appears to be immediate and present. For him, the difference is present also in the structure of the unconsciousness. He showed in his commentary on Freud’s mystic writing-pad. “The apparent experience of a unitary self-presence of meaning and consciousness is found to arise from the repression of the differential structures from which they spring.”148

And his deconstruction of logocentrism is dependent on *différance* and the *différance* is a characteristic of speech as well as writing in both space and time.

But before the discussion of this topic in detail, it is necessary to express that, in Indian philosophy, there are some schools which are perfectly fit into the logocentric category. Such as: the orthodox traditions or *Āstika* darshan namely *Sāmkhya-Yoga*, Vedanta and *Nyāya* schools. These schools are structured in terms of dichotomies or polarities where the second term of the pair is considered as lower status.

They venerate speech over writing theory. However, in Western philosophy, this theory is more strongly used. But there is a kind of school such as Chinese who gave value to the phonetic speech and writing over non-phonetic language. In Indian philosophy, Pānini’s grammar or *Āstādhvāvi* was based on the sound of spoken Sanskrit, which was the prime candidate for Derrida’s phonocentrism. And this phonocentrism opens up all criticisms about logocentrism. The negative status about writing in the Western is paralleled with Indian tradition, where written texts are judged unreliable. In Vedic text, writing was also ritually polluted. The Orthodox or *Āstika* schools except for Grammarian school share the same logocentric biases about being and speech against writing which was located by Derrida. But heterodox school or *Nāstika* was unable to escape from Derrida’s net. Jainism shares the soul matter dialectic thought strongly and agreed with Buddhism, language as merely conventional which cannot touch the real.

Derrida attack this detachment of speech from the real, basically *Mādhyamika*’s negation about speech into silence. For him, it is the most extreme logocentric position. However, he not only criticized the logocentric position but any philosophy where between two opposite word, priority was given to the first term over the other. But only the Grammarian school which was formulated by *Bhartrhari*, able to escape from Derrida’s deconstructive net. Because both Derrida and *Bhartrhari* agreed that philosophy is connected with language but the literary analysis is more important over the logical analysis. For Derrida, philosophers are

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148 Ibid, p-54
able to impose their various conceptual thought by suppressing or ignoring the disruptive effects of language. In *Vākyapadīya*, Bhartṛhari describes Grammar as the “purifier of all the sciences”, which is possible through the use of correct forms of language and through which philosophic or another kind of knowledge can be obtained. So, both Derrida and Bhartṛhari crossed the barrier between philosophy and literary criticism. Although they both believe that all knowledge comes through language, it does not mean that language depends on something like the logos, *Brahman* and God. Is there any source or ground of language, beyond or outside of the language? The reason given by Bhartṛhari is that the absolute truth is *Śabdatattva* or the Word Principle, which is not beyond or apart from language. Through deconstructing the viewpoint that dominated metaphysics basically a separate, presence or being is reflected immediately in speech. Regarding the above Derrida’s answer is negative. By finding writing as *différance* he deconstructs some arguments that were presented at the time of Plato, Rousseau and other philosophers.

He found some evidence for his ‘deconstruction of Platonic view and said “While presenting writing as a false brother – traitor, infidel, and simulacrum – Socrates is for the first time led to envision the brother of this brother, the legitimate one, as another sort of writing: not merely as knowing, living, animate discourse, but as an inscription of truth in the soul,”149 This kind of writing which is written on the learner’s soul, called *arché-writing* or *trace*. And for both speech and external writing, it is seen as the dynamic source. In *Philebus* Socrates mentioned that the sound which we speak first is one that possesses a different and unlimited variety of sounds. For Derrida, difference and relation are irreducible and designated by Plato as writing. Here Derrida observed that though the wisdom of Socrates is originally spoken but these all come to us after his death. His disciples recorded his writing later. By a critique of linguistic theory especially Saussure’s theory Derrida establishes the need for *arché-writing* or the inner *trace*. Saussure mentioned that, in the natural bond of the sense or concept (signified) to the spoken word, the basis of language is found, from where the written image was contaminated. He finds, the source of linguistic value is ‘difference’ and suggests that by an analogy to both the content and form of writing, language can be best understood.

But for Derrida, this movement of difference is the *trace* or *arché-writing*, which contains the possibility for all written and oral language. Writing and speech are the expressions of the same language. But *arché-writing* does not depend upon writing or sound; rather it is

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149 Ibid, p-58

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dynamic, expressive *différance* and it is the condition for such writing and sound. However, it
does not exist but it is a previous possibility of all expression (content expression,
signified/signifier etc.). In place of the term *trace* or *arché-writing*, Bhartṛhari used the term
Word-Principle or *Śabdatattva*. For him, the Word Principle or *Brahman* is the beginningless
or endless and which is divided by its inherent power. Particularly, Word-Principle shows
itself in the expressive activity of language, by the sequencing power of time or *Kāla.*
According to the Śaṅkara’s understanding of *vivartate*, these activities are seen as a real
manifestation but not as a merely apparent. Like Śaṅkara, Bhartṛhari never spoke writing in
terms of causality. But it emphasizes an extraordinary activity through which this multiple
universes are manifested from the one word *Śabdatattva* or Word-Principle.

So, for Bhartṛhari as the Word-Principle, *Brahman* is an expressive reality and intrinsically
dynamic. He used the notion of a beginningless *trace* like Derrida which is inherent in
consciousness. Unlike Derrida he discussed about the trace of speech in relation to previous
birth which has no beginning called *pratibhāgamyā* or the residual *trace* of speech. Another
point is, like Derrida Bhartṛhari sees, as the conditioning of all psychic experience the
inherent *trace* consciousness of language from deep sleep to dreams and to ordinary
awareness to mystical states. But the difference is that only in this stage (dream stage) the
*trace* or seeds of language stays in a more subtle manner. Evidently, Derrida’s development
of Frude’s thought is easily accommodated within Bhartṛhari.

As Derrida finds behind the experience of unchanging self or presence, logos, the
psychological mechanism is to be the suppression of the experience of difference within the
psyche. That is why Bhartṛhari rejects some Indian schools, which equalized the experience
of presence or self with something external to language and consciousness. According to both
Derrida and Bhartṛhari, the experience of self is the unhindered experience of *arché-writing*
or *Śabdatattva*, which is manifested in the temporal dynamic of language. And in
*Vākyapadīya*, he used the term *āgama*, when he referred to writing. The way Socrates in his
‘*Phaedrus*’ discussed about the opposition between speech and writing debate, Bhartṛhari did
not discuss in the same way rather he only gave some passing reference about writing and
identified texts as *apauresaya* (without author). And *āgama* is used as a text, which is
composed by writers in contrast to *Vedic* texts or *Śruti* (said to be without author). Derrida’s
discussion is not about the contrast between spoken and written but the important case for
Derrida is between texts, which considered to be without any author and whose authors are
known. Though the *Vedas* may be written but they are eternal consciousness. They are not dependent on any human author but the criterion manifestation of the *Śabdatattva*.

However, *Bhartrhari* agreed with Derrida on a point that the benefit of *āgama* is when the author or teacher dies, their words continue as the basic seed for the formation of next traditions. So, it is undoubtedly clear that for *Bhartrhari*, texts are composed by authors and authorless speech which both are manifestations of the *Śabdatattva*. They both find some common cause against those who maintain that it is not possible to capture reality through language or who locate the absolute outside of language. It is the pure possibility of difference for both, which manifested as language and the intrinsic difference of *arché-trace* allows the articulation of speech and writing. This *arché-trace* manifested into the opposing forms of outer sound image and inner concept. Here through the use of a technical term ‘sign’ Derrida refers to the whole, where ‘signifier’ refers to the spoken and articulated image and ‘signified’ refers to the abstract concepts. In the case of *Bhartrhari*, he indicates the whole through the use of the technical term *sphota* where *artha* refers to the meaning or concept and *dhvani* refers to the spoken or articulated image which is parallel to Derrida.

So, according to both of them, *sphota* or sign (linguistic whole) has an inherent force which produces the double manifestation of *artha* or signified (inner meaning) and signifier or *dhvani* (spoken sound). However sign and *sphota* cannot be experienced as a pure presence, they are irreducible. To describe *Veda*, *Bhartrhari* in his *Vākyapadīya* used two terms; one is *prāptyupāya* (the means for the attainment of *Brahman*) and the second is *anukāra* (symbolization of *Brahman*). It suggests the dynamic activity of the Word-Principle. *Vritti* clearly explains the verse, when the *Vedic* seers spell the mantras which are the standard case of word making activity. According to pure Sanskrit language, the *mantras* are the conjunctions of some certain powerful seed character. And in a psychosomatic structure vibration or rhythm arise in a corresponding psychic state. But in producing an immense progeny of language these sounds can be differentiated. When poetry finds its full vision in language, then it should be deconstructed to recover its original power for signification.

It appears in Derrida’s thought, when he referred to the book which is in its ordinary form (prose book) as the corpse of language which is exited from the delimiting of the multi-significant roots followed to its logical conclusion and the word power has been exhausted. His aim about deconstruction is to get back to the poetic and metaphoric language, where the power for signification has not been used. *Bhartrhari* notes that language separates and
divides. In the end, this necessary process is the source of confusion. But his solution is not to reverse or deconstruct the process of differentiation; rather this has to be controlled by the imposition of strict grammatical rules. And through this solution the power of mantras convey knowledge. With other grammarians, Bhārtrhari claimed that “to have uncovered the pure forms of the correct unfolding of the patterns of differentiation inherent in the Śabdatattva and symbolized (anukāra) in criterion form in the initial speaking of the Vedas.”

But for Bhārtrhari Veda is not a direct description of the Śabdatattva, the Brahman. Through the dynamic idioms of language, Vedic revelation provides the inherent action of the Śabdatattva. In general, he privileged towards the scripture and the Veda in particular. But Derrida did not agree with Bhārtrhari’s thought. He criticized the notion of the Veda as manifesting anukāra or original linguistic form of arché-writing. Another important point is, they both locate the real in Śabdatattva or arché-writing and that is not separated from manifested language. But according to Saṅkara, the assessment of māyā have epistemological status but not ontological. For him, language and the Veda transcended for Mokṣa (spiritual realization) but according to Bhārtrhari it is in language which makes a union with the Śabdatattva, is realized.

For Derrida, there is no longer any origin or source. And representation is just a shadow. More clearly it is mixed with what it represents to the point where one speaks as one writes. So, reflecting images, pools and the infinite reference from one to the other, have no longer any sources. These all are split in itself. According to him, the sensitive deconstruction of the illusions of presence, permanence is the means for the realization of the whole. But his aim is to understand the whole as a manifestation of the inherent difference of the trace. In short, we are deconstructing the language in our own consciousness, in our own speaking and thinking. We ourselves are the text which we deconstruct. It is the process of self-realization and of becoming self-aware. That is why Derrida said that there is nothing outside the text. Bhārtrhari also observed that the analysis of linguistic experience is nothing but an examination of the nature of our own consciousness. Just like Derrida explained consciousness as writing or trace, similarly, Bhārtrhari explained it as Śabdatattva. But the difference between them is Bhārtrhari never gave privilege in one scripture or book. He clearly described that the Veda is the means for the realization of Brahman. It is not a book;

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150 Ibid, p-65
rather it is the true manifestation of the *Sabdatattva* but Derrida deconstructs all scriptures, all texts.

*Bhartṛhari* explained the science of grammar as the door or path to obtain the spiritual realization. He thought that the individual inner experience of language as involving an inner transformation and it is parallel to Derrida’s thought about Grammatology as the science of writing before the speech and it contains the power to change the individual’s self-awareness in speech. His Word-Principle, *Šabdatattva*, primarily is an ontological principle and secondarily it is epistemological. Like Derrida his analysis about the inner experience of individual is not similar to the Saṅkara’s *māyā* or superimposition of epistemological forms nor as the logos model or the static presence of set of divine forms or words but it lightens up as an inner form or word which is primarily productive of activity and secondarily productive of knowledge.

After discussing the above position it may be observed that Derrida’s movement of language is a continuous sequencing of the *trace* or *arché-writing* into the written and spoken words, which is to be thrown back again and again in a continual deconstructive reverse. Similarly, in *Bhartṛhari’s* thought, we have seen the same implosion-explosion cycle. According to him, the *Sabdatattva* manifests in itself objectively and the same Word-Principle manifests itself within each individual’s experience of language. Here the words and letters are subordinate to the sentence. So, understanding of the sentence is possible when it’s all words taken together evoke a flash of *sphota* or *pratibhā* (illuminations). *Pratibhā* or illumination is already prefigured within the consciousness. According to *Bhartṛhari*, the activity of *Šabdatattva* is when the individual’s word meaning has been understood separately, a flash of understanding takes place that is the meaning of a sentence, which is assembled by the meanings of the individual words. This is something indefinable or *avicāritā* and never explained to others as such but experienced by everyone within himself. It brings about a kind of amalgamation of the individual’s word meanings and it covers the whole sentence as it was earlier which its object becomes. This flash of understanding or *pratibhā* is an insight into the whole meaning and form of *Šabdatattva*. *Pratibhā* is the nature of one’s inner self or *Šabdatattva*. So, *Pratibhā* and *Sabdatattva* are the two sides of the same coin.

Another point is that the science of Grammar for both *Bhartṛhari* and Derrida enables one to experience language as something more than epistemological in function. When we speak then something impels us to do some action or dharma. However, the acting, speaking, and
writing of the word for Bhartṛhari are the means of spiritual realization or yoga. Here Derrida gave only some hint in this direction. For Derrida, the secondary manifestation of the trace is theological. Here his rejection of metaphysics and theology is rooted in Bhartṛhari’s observation. And this dynamic interrelatedness of language cannot be described by an agent. For both this kind of description was a reduction of the dynamic interrelatedness of all experience to some things or ideas.

A common conclusion arises from some different religious roots that the correct practice and understanding of language results in a teleological transformation of experience. If we see Derrida rigorously deconstructs all philosophy, theology and ordinary languages which objectify our experience into unreal presences and false God. In his essay: Of An Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy, suggested that deconstruction has a prophetic goal. Here the word ‘apocalyptic’ is considered as a transcendental condition of all experience itself of all discourse and of every trace. He suggested that The Apocalypse of John as an exemplary revelation of that transcendental structure. This example has two characteristics. He recognizes the theme of the ‘Johannine Apocalypse’ as the recurrent and imperative ‘come’ of the text. The word ‘come’ evokes both; one is imminent coming of the Lord and another is imperative coming, where after listening to the word ‘come’ hearer comes quickly. So the call beyond logos or being cannot come from any voice, which is given by any person, but it itself comes from beyond being. According to Derrida, the word ‘come’ is plural in itself and oneself. For Derrida, its content is its resounding imperative tone and this calls forth action from us. Another characteristic of that example is the imperative ‘come’ and ‘come’ from beyond being within oneself never close. So, we realized that the action of coming to the call never ceases. The above are fits within the prophetic impulse. Derrida reformulated this prophet as a critique of all idolatrous (worship of idols) use of language. So the prophetic hearing of the call always translates into action. It has some open-ended future which calls us to become to an end, which is simultaneously a new beginning.

Here if we compare Derrida’s thought with Bhartṛhari’s observation, then we realize that like Derrida, Bhartṛhari’s science of grammar also is a call to action. He reinterprets Vedic dharma as the dharma of the Śabdatattva or the Word-Principle. This means that the dharma is the essence of one’s consciousness. It is no longer outside of the Veda, one’s self or one’s language. Thus, in conclusion, it can be said that like Derrida ‘come’ becomes the inner voice of language, ‘come let us go’, Bhartṛhari thoughted that the Vedic dharma as the Word-Principle within the individual consciousness or Śabdatattva becomes the dharma of correct
language. For him, the task of the traditional Vedic discipline of grammar and the purification of speech becomes a means for the inner spiritualization.

So, we can say that this comparative study between Bhartṛhari’s philosophy and Derrida’s deconstructive Grammatology has identified lots of important points which have some substantive contact with Derrida’s thought and some traditional Indian thought. The analysis of these contact provided both Western and Eastern comparison. This highlights the error of the previous interpretation and demonstrated some new insights on both sides.

Through this comparison, we learn some important points of common emphasis on both sides. Firstly, language is beginningless and it is coextensive with consciousness. The second point is, through time, language is grounded in its dynamic sequence, which takes the form of the dynamic interrelatedness of the cosmos. And this interrelatedness conveys an imperative call for action, which is suppressed by our egocentric creation of concepts. Through this stage, we can identify ourselves as true presence.

Thus, both Derrida and Bhartṛhari deserve a higher place in the philosophical arena. Here they both tried to purify or deconstruct language by linguistic criticism or Vyakāraṇa, and both Indian and Western philosophy needed their deconstructive and purifying task to continue their philosophical endeavour.
Jacques Derrida’s attack on metaphysics is well known in the history of philosophy. Starting from Aristotle, the entire Western tradition centres round their discussion on metaphysics and metaphysical thinking. Therefore it may be mentioned that the whole philosophical tradition was full of attack on metaphysics. In that sense some philosopher remarked that Derrida was part of that sceptical tradition. But if we delve deep, one can unearth that Derrida belongs to opposite direction. Through deconstruction, his goal is to question the philosophical thought. In the strict sense he was not a sceptic because the strict sense of scepticism includes two positions. The first one is completely denial of knowledge of reality itself on the ground that “no knowledge claims have guaranteed certainty”\textsuperscript{151}. This tradition goes back to the Sophists and earlier Ancient Greek philosophers like Heraclitus and Parmenides. The second one is where people deny a maximum part of what is taken as evidence of the nature of reality, which is always followed by the constructive move. In Plato’s Idea, we can see that in search of pure ideas or forms, the idea of evidence was rejected. So, the questions of Scepticism are the major issues of the theory of knowledge (of epistemology). Here certain metaphysical issues are involved. Whether there is any reality outside the contents of our experience? Whether about reality we have any truth or not, and what reality in its most general sense is?

Most of the earlier metaphysical discussion leads to paradox. It is worth here to mention that in the dialogue the Sophist, Plato’s opinion was that “we cannot refer to what is not, to non-being, without the danger of paradox and therefore of self-contradiction.” In the seventeenth century especially before Kant, Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) remarked that any attempt at philosophical first principle was self-contradiction, but we cannot explain from where these principles arise and how these could be justified except by reference to a kind of pure invention. For Kant, dialectical problems are major question. After Kant, German Idealist G.W.F. Hegel discussed about the problem of contradiction. After that Bertrand Russell (a principle figure in the Analytic approach to philosophy) was deeply concerned with those issues. On the one side he was concerned with sentences about things which were not in existence. On the other side he was concerned with classes of things and the status of the class of things which does not exist but this second problem itself a version of the first problem. Therefore it leads to an important paradox, because here we are talking about

\textsuperscript{151} Barry Stocker, *Derrida on Deconstruction*, 2006, p 18.
classes. It is impossible to say that the class of classes are either true or false without getting into any contradiction, because the paradox is the status of the class of classes which are not members of themselves. As this class is a member of itself, it is not a member of themselves. It is true that the concept of classes leads to Russell’s paradox. But for Russell it was an unacceptable situation. Thus he tried to give a solution called ‘Theory of Descriptions’ that revise the apparatus of mathematics or natural language and this solution is known as the ‘Theory of Types’. But he does not solve the paradox. It is not just a paradox of classes; rather Russell’s paradox was a version of Plato’s paradox of non-being and paradox in language.

Derrida like Russell referred to Plato’s paradox and explained that “Henceforth it is not to the thesis of the arbitrariness of the sign that I shall appeal directly, but to what Saussure associates with it as an indispensable correlative and which would seem to me rather to lay the foundations for it: the thesis of difference as the source of linguistic value. What are from the grammatical point of view, the consequences of this theme that is now so well-known (and upon which Plato already reflected in the Sophist)?”

Sophists first raised the issue of the paradox and they claimed that everything that can be said must refer to what exists and this includes non-being too. Here Plato’s paradox is the consequence of Sophistical pseudo-reasoning, which Derrida refers to Saussure’s method and it is again a repetition of Plato. However Saussure’s idea of being was distinct from Plato. For this reason it is important here to discuss some point about Saussure.

Though Derrida explained his philosophy through contemporary discussion of other works but there are some critics, careless readers and followers who are confused with Derrida’s position. Saussure had a revolutionary impact on linguistics which was very interesting. His key ideas are: (i) distinguishing between language as a system or as a static abstract system (synchrony) and language as an individual using at a particular moment, which changed over time within linguistic sign (sounds of speech or writing). (ii) Distinguishing between the spoken phenomena or written grapheme (material sign) and the concept of signified. (iii) Saussure sees the sign as arbitrary and its relation with the things or the concept are signified, which was its referent and it was accidental. The reason is that, its linguistic values dependant on the system of differences with the other signs. Thus Saussure has a bold theory about linguistics. He holds that linguistics is concerned with the sign as a general institution which

152 Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, p 52-3.
he called semiology. But Derrida doubted this account of Saussure. For him, Saussurean linguistic was metaphysically neutral science of linguistics, because Saussure followed Rousseau, and Rousseau’s thought was parallel with Platonic and Cartesian metaphysical assumptions.

While discussing about Saussure, Derrida shows that metaphysically neutral science of linguistics is highly open to doubt. Derrida doubts the metaphysical neutrality of structuralism and philosophical phenomenology. His way of doubting resembles earlier criticism of philosophical positivism. In nineteenth century, Auguste Comte coined the term ‘Positivism’. He claimed that science and the whole organization of society were based on positive knowledge, which was derived from pure facts. These are the main targets of Nietzsche. For him, the whole society was based on pure facts was self-refuting. Empirical method and science wants to destroy the un-empirical, what includes any metaphysical posit about the universe, law-governed events, causality, and the presupposition of the unity of laws. According to Nietzsche, these rigorous empirical refutations follow from Positivism.

At this point if we ponder again to Saussure, it may be observed that he was dependent on the absolute opposition between the social and the natural, where language marks the emergence of the social in a break with the nature. For Derrida such breaks and oppositions are metaphysics. So, Derrida interprets that Saussure just repeats the Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s assumption which Rousseau mentioned in his Essay on the Origin of Language. Here he mentioned the separation between human social world and the natural physical world. It repeats Descartes’s metaphysical separation of spirit as substance from the matter as substance. All these metaphysical oppositions are attempts to overcome contradictions which cannot be removed. They just tried to place one term over the other. For Rousseau, in language the social was placed in the natural. Here Rousseau influenced by Platonist position, comments that the pure ideas contained in language are opposed to the empirical forces of linguistic acts, such as: in writing the force of material inscription and the force of the voice in speech.

However, there was a contradiction within Rousseau’s claim; purely social language emerges from the purely natural language. There is a moment where the force of natural became social. Therefore that point must be both natural and social. Since, he depends on there being on absolute opposition; it is not possible to place both the social and natural force at the same place and same time. Therefore contradictions follow. For Rousseau, it was a trauma but it
was repeated everywhere like his variations in language. In the same way Saussure’s thought rests on the opposition between social and natural. In the case of Saussure’s definitions, there was a superiority of *langue* or system over *parole* or individual instances of language. This was similar to Platonist metaphysics and placed one term over the many by placing what was unchangeable over time. Here static and constancy of substance are raised above the change over time and the diachronic aspect of movement. As less real than the immutability of structure, time itself was denied and these all are the characteristics of Plato’s forms. Saussure’s another Platonic assumption was that the pure concept within the sign was signified and it is essential in relation to the material signifier, the graphic or phonic force and through this, in the sign, the concept was unified. Here “the superiority of the concept is the superiority of the Platonic form over the diversity of appearances in the senses”\(^{153}\). But Derrida strongly criticized this superiority of the concept in Saussure. That is why Derrida believed that reality does not exist outside the concepts of language. But the precursor of Analytic Empiricism George Berkeley observes that reality was immaterial and consisted of the contents of ideas in people’s mind. They claimed that reality is something which exists in someone’s mind as content. But when Derrida interpret Saussure he finds some positive aspects, which are: difference and the materiality of the signifier. Saussure never mentions that the system of language was a form which imposed on an existing set of meanings or linguistic values; rather it was the effect of the differences between the signifiers. So, through its differences from other sign we only can give a meaning, a sign, and a linguistic value. We can define a word only by using other words and we can separate signs or words from other signs or words only by the differences between words but not the essence. About this concept Plato and Aristotle mentioned an example such as: when we speak the word ‘tree’ it means only tree. The reason is, it does not mean any kind of animal and not any kind of vegetable and so on. But according to Derrida these arguments are trapped within the disruption of metaphysical system and this disruption was present in Saussure’s thought. For Saussure, meanings are determined only by the differences between the material signifiers. After that, the issue about the transmission of metaphysics exists in the anthropology Levi-Strauss. They opine that metaphysics arise in the assumption; there can be such a thing as natural man which is in consciousness completely interior. Therefore it lacks in exteriority. The above traditions come from Rousseau.

\(^{153}\) Barry Stocker, p 29.
Thus for Derrida, the history of metaphysics is indelible. This thought of Derrida was derived from Heidegger. Heidegger was concerned with Presence or Being and mentioned that both are distinguished from being (what is present). But in his concept what is present is never Presence or Being itself; rather it (what is present) is being, where Being has withdrawn from ‘what it is’. Thus both Heidegger and Derrida agreed that the history of metaphysics is the history of something which is a substitute for Presence or Being and it is only grasped as present. However Heidegger’s arguments are applied to empiricist’s position, where logic and sensation are understood as Presence, and as being, which is present. According to the classical British empiricism especially Locke, Berkeley and Hume, the sensation or impression is understood on the model of Descartes’s Idea and it is purely rational. But Heidegger never gives weight age to the Empiricists view point. On this issue Derrida was clearly opposite to Heidegger. What distinguishes Derrida from Heidegger is, for Derrida deconstruction is the challenging of the transcendental by the empirical and refers his position as ‘radical empiricism’, for Heidegger empiricism as non-philosophical and instrumentalist never appears important. He refers to Being and Presence – these are appropriate but never present. In Heidegger, there was a supreme power of Being and Presence but Derrida does not endorse it at all. Although like Heidegger, Derrida comments that Being and Presence are ungraspable and unnameable but the conclusion which Derrida draws are not similar with Heidegger. Derrida mentioned, Heidegger was just a one side of deconstruction – in opposition to the affirmation of difference in the case of Nietzsche. Thus it may be realized that for Derrida there is only nature exists as the opposite of the social but never as it is in itself. So, Being or Presence is only the opposite of difference and absence.

The concept of being or ‘what is present’ is the main issue of metaphysics and this concept excludes absence as difference, illusion, and non-Being. But according to Derrida only Being itself can be absent and we are never confronted with it. So absence is necessary for there to be difference. But in Saussure’s point of view, no words have a completely present meaning. Always meaning depends on there being other different words; and meaning is contextual in various ways, which includes a way where languages exist as a system of differences. Therefore a word’s meaning depends on what it does not mean. The reason is, in the system there are other words, and these words already have excluded that meaning by possessing it. In the *Genesis and Structure*, Derrida explained, the aspects of structuralism are joined in metaphysics. He studied already this in Husserl. Derrida explained that Husserl’s position was parallel with the Logical Positivists. Husserl rejects metaphysical questions through
phenomenological *epoché* or ‘bracketing’. But in Logical Positivism, there was a commitment to descriptions of experience and it precedes any theoretical point of view. Thus, like Logical Positivist, Husserl wanted to see a formal approach which includes two sides of pure forms. In one side, it includes logical judgements and on the other side, it includes empirical facts. But here it may be commented that equal significant differences exist from Logical Positivists.

In *Logical Investigations*, Analytic philosophers are the main issue to Husserl and in this work he includes those philosophers who were concerned with relative technical question, for example: about mereology; a theory of parts and wholes. Even his text is followed by a mathematician and logician Gottlob Frege, but startled difference exists, between them. There are two issues on which their thoughts are parallel. One was rejection of psychologism; the explanation of philosophical issues with the reduction of the contents of thought to the subjective states of mind or truths of psychology. Secondly, they are concerned with language as a general sense and as signifying objects; they both operate these issues in relation to subjective psychological associations. There are some Analytic philosophers such as Russell, Strawson and Kripke who carried a different story but their works are not regarded as accurate. On individual points their commentary is always questionable but their creative and original ideas are collected to bear on classical text. As the scope of the present study is limited, we are not giving here any detail discussion of those philosophers. For Continental European philosophy, *Logical Investigation* was a major moment in Phenomenological tradition and it takes various ways with reference to Husserl, Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Mearleau-Ponty, Emmanual Lévinas and Derrida. However Husserl rejects Heidegger’s work, where Heidegger expressed historical and subjective instead of formal and transcendental. Husserl in his work himself gives importance to the subjective, historical and intersubjective. John Claude Evans, who was a traditional Husserl’s scholar, criticized Derrida. For him Derrida was a bad philosopher and a bad reader. Evans said that Derrida was falsely attributed ontological claims to Husserl’s phenomenology. Therefore with the work of Russell, Strawson and Kripke, the comparison of Derrida’s reading of Husserl shows that Derrida was far more careful by a long way and he was careful to give long quotations. Derrida’s thought about Husserl was very deep.

Here Evans claims that “Husserl said many things which suggest that he was trying to exclude ontological claims from Phenomenology; and what he then does is to claim that, if Derrida finds any ontological implications in what Husserl says, then Derrida must have read
Husserl badly”154. But the problem of Evan’s thinking about Derrida was he depends on the idea that in Husserl there are no ontological claims, which Husserl claimed explicitly. But in every aspect a text cannot be judged by the general claims which made by its author. Derrida observed that, in the Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy, Husserl claimed to be a Platonist, in the sense of the status of abstract objects like universal qualities, universal type, and ideas of objects. Platonism was a belief in the reality of abstract objects which exist outside the mind and it separate from physical objects. Husserl’s philosophical career strides the path of Platonism to explain the status of the transcendental structure of consciousness. As anti-psychologist, one of the main aims of Husserl is to explain transcendental structure as mental entity. So, as Platonist he supports phenomenological claim and he also describe the content of consciousness without any reference to the ontological status of anything. Thus the ambiguity of Husserl is very clear.

Derrida’s attention is to draw the ambiguity of Husserl’s idea of pure contents of consciousness which exist independently of ontological considerations. In his philosophy, in the pure ideas of the ideas of consciousness he takes the pure forms as the first principle. Here Derrida mentioned that this is the repeat ambiguity of Kant. In Kant’s theory there are some pure ideas as categories of the understanding and as the regulative ideal of reason. Derrida in Of Grammatology mentioned that Husserl holds a Kantian transcendental and Platonist view, and such position exists irreducibly in a tension with historical and the empirical concerns of Husserl. But Derrida rejects this because for him, all these attempts replaced metaphysical ontological problems with formal problems. It holds that ontological commitments are self-contradictory. The reason behind this is, by a formal category (phenomenological or linguistic) if we replace the ontological category then we actually created another ontological category. Thus phenomenology rests on Platonist metaphysics because like Platonist form or idea, it has the same status. According to Plato, the secondary imitation of the idea of the object is the empirical object. Husserl asserts that after Kant and in neo-Kantian formalism writing-the pure forms of consciousness are transcendental, and it is beyond any particular object. Therefore, phenomenology of Husserl always returned to Platonism even when they claimed that their theories are non-metaphysical and descriptive.

Husserl’s phenomenology orientated towards both transcendental metaphysics and a life philosophy. Transcendental metaphysics provided the basic forms of judgement and

154 Ibid, p 37.
intentions. The act of consciousness in phenomenology understood and directed towards an object. It is intended by consciousness. Thus all act of consciousness are defined as ‘intentions’. In Husserl’s Phenomenology, on the model of Kant’s theory about experience and knowledge as judgement about objects tends to be less intellectualist. In the life philosophy, Husserl understands the transcendental structure to appear in the everyday life’s immediate experiences. So, for intentionality, if there are transcendental structures and transcendentals ideas then whatever those structures and ideas are will be the contents of consciousness. Therefore all the contents of consciousness are understood to be contents of the consciousness of a transcendental ego. This transcendental ego is the subject of the transcendental structure, which is a self and it exists as a pure form of the self and it has a pure forms of consciousness. However the transcendental purity itself becomes a part of a life-philosophy, where all the contents of consciousness and each moments of consciousness are fulfilled with the transcendental consciousness within the life of the human self. So, according to Derrida if Husserl’s attempt to transcend metaphysics was tied up with life philosophy then the above thought must be true in metaphysical system. Thus all metaphysic caught up within the principle of consciousness, fulfilled all of nature and gives both the individual human and nature a purpose.

After that in *Of Grammatology*, Derrida remarked that the concept of metaphysics required the concept of writing. Husserl distinguished between the consciousness of the general ideal object and a particular object. In some substratum of absolute objectivity, particular languages are separate from the general ideal object but this is necessary to account for the essential fixity of the object, which is independent of variations between languages. The object of perception is contingent and changeable. So, to be an ideal object, if language is necessary then ideality was caught up in the cultural, historical and ambiguities of language. Language as necessary and fixed means writing, since speech was tied to the moment of consciousness. According to Derrida these aspects undermine the metaphysical phenomenological starting point. It is the content of consciousness and understood as what is present in someone’s consciousness. In the whole philosophical tradition these remarks are applicable. Even Husserl in his book *Cartesian Meditations* mentioned that philosophy tried to find itself on the self contemplating contents of its own consciousness and said that it could not mentioned in the earlier philosophy. But Derrida claimed that phenomenology itself rest on previous traditions and it referred to the inside as pure and the outside as an impurity with regard to ideas, truth, and the soul. In *Speech and Phenomena* Derrida remarked that “is this
to say that what opens the repetition to the infinite, or what is opened up when the movement
of idealisation is assured, is a certain relation of an ‘existent’ to his death? And that the
‘transcendental life’ is the scene of this relationship? It is too soon to tell. First we must deal
with the problem of language. No one will be surprised if we say that language is properly the
medium for this play of presence and absence. Is there not within language – is it not
language itself that might seem to unify life and ideality? But we ought to consider, on the
one hand, that the element of signification – or the substance of expression – which best
seems to preserve ideality and living presence in all its forms is living speech, the spirituality
of the breath as phōnē; and, on the other hand, that phenomenology, the metaphysics of
presence in the form of ideality, is also a philosophy of life.”155

Derrida criticized and defines metaphysics on the basis that it was a reduction to oppositions
between the social and natural. He observed that a list of oppositions followed in the wake of
Nietzsche. But the history of metaphysics largely derived from Plato where he gave
preference to pure forms over the appearances and it was a preference to life in another world
to life in this world. Nietzsche defines the denial of this world, this life and the appearances
which we perceive in it, as nihilism. Therefore Derrida does not accept this Nietzsche’s
condemnation of metaphysical nihilism, as he shows an inescapable contradiction between
empirical and transcendental force. Here transcendental refers to something which is abstract,
universal, general or conceptual in meaning which includes metaphysics. Nietzsche
highlighted that every word was an abstraction of the constant changes. Therefore every word
carries variety of sensation. He gave an example: ‘leaf’. For him, in every different kind of
tree there is a different type of leaf. Even in one particular tree, all leaves are different from
one another. Thus from the massive variety of leaves in nature, there is an abstraction. He
explained that if we find that two leaves were identical; in their each single detail they would
be different in place, time, and space. Thus any kind of thought and language must be
metaphysical and by any particular philosophical argument, the philosophical issue cannot be
eliminated. For this reason, from the Logical Positivism or Pragmatism, Nietzsche became an
anti-metaphysician. In this case, Derrida followed Nietzsche. There was a similarity between
Nietzsche and Hegel’s thought because Hegel sees the name as universal like Nietzsche.
Therefore it goes beyond any particular object named. But the conclusion which Hegel draws
was totally opposite from Nietzsche. According to him, when the name goes beyond the
objects of experience that time it is more real than the particular experience. He realized, the

world is structured by the relation between the complex rationality of reality and particular existences in the sensory reality as the whole. But this rests on contradictions and becoming.

Nietzsche finds oppositions as the evidence of conflicting forces and it is in itself undermine the view of thought. So, reason is more rationally real and ideal than the material and empirical world. He includes some opposition such as real and apparent, good and evil, truth and false; and from Nietzsche, these oppositions are picked up by Derrida. Here, in the discussion of language, metaphysics takes inside as real, good, and truth. It takes speech as an inside, which has being. On the other hand metaphysics, accepts outside as apparent, evil and false. It takes writing as an outside, which has non-being. Derrida discussed about the distinction between speech and writing. Sometimes he claimed that philosophy contained a phonocentric theory and he argued that logocentrism was dominant in all philosophers and it was inescapable in whole philosophy (including Plato, Rousseau, and Rationalist: Leibniz, Hegel, Analytic philosopher: J. L. Austin). So, the issue is not to describe how many philosophers are intentionally placed speeches over writing; rather the issue is whether philosophers are assumed constantly that meaning was found first in speech, in both the logical and temporal sense, and writing was found to be secondary. Through Socrates, Plato clearly argued in his Phaedrus that speech was the immediate expression of the speaker because speaker is present to clarify any uncertainties about meaning. Therefore writing is inferior to speech. Even in the case of writing, there was the absence of the individual who inscribed it. Anyone reads the words and puts a number of interpretations on them, sometimes which was out of context. Therefore, there were no possibilities of corrections from the inscriber. Here Derrida combined this discussion with Rousseau and Saussure’s phonocentrism, where they both presumed that in natural order speaking is first in time, compared with writing. Even when he discussed about J. L. Austin he notes, knowledge in its non-descriptive aspects refers speech act as the primary form of language. On the other side, in Husserl he notes the primacy of inner speech. According to them, writing was always assumed as the copy of speech.

In Of Grammatology, Derrida mentioned that the analysis of writing is important and it is the study of ‘grammē’ (the written words). From the above it follows that Leibniz’s thought includes the urge for the universal language which is the product of written design. Hegel advocated the system of absolute on the basis of a spirit. However in Phaedrus, Plato states that truth was best uncovered in speech. From the above study, it does not mean that all philosophy is faithful to speech as superior to writing. Thus it can be claimed that
metaphysical philosophy is ‘logocentric’ and ‘logocentrism is a neologism for Derrida, which refers to ‘what is centred’. So at the heart of metaphysics knowledge or being and truth are present at some particular moment. ‘Logocentrism’ refers to the philosophical tendency which finds truth in the spirit, the presentation of Being, philosophical ideas or system and consciousness. In this respect, Plato was a ‘logocentric’ philosopher. With reference to dialectical speech, Plato’s dialogues are claimed to reveal truth. On the other side, Descartes was ‘logocentric’ because his claims reveal truth in the distinct and clear ideas of our consciousness. Hegel’s claim reveals truth in absolute spirit. For Austin, the truth of language appears in the immediate situation of the utterance of particular statements. Therefore the challenge from empirical to philosophical in Derrida denied the idea that the meaning of a statement can be placed in any situation beyond doubt.

Thus, now it is very clear that the position of Derrida is not holding a metaphysical position. His aim is to get outside of metaphysics. Like Wittgenstein, Derrida is not thinking that philosophical system just as full of metaphysics; rather he sees, our usages of language itself fall into metaphysics. According to both, writing outside metaphysics is a contradictory but it is a necessary way of doing philosophy. It constantly struggles with the tendency of words to become an abstract concept. Therefore it is metaphysical. But their views are different. According to Derrida, transcendental or metaphysical forces are perpetually present. Therefore, they are necessary for there to be concepts, language, communication, and philosophy. Thus, there is no kind of pure logical or empirical method which removes the metaphysical.

Thus we may conclude this discussion with the thought that there is always some kind of philosophical touch in literature, metaphor, and aesthetics. Philosophical language always contains metaphors and philosophical language cannot eliminate metaphor. Therefore it cannot eliminate its status as literature. The Western Philosophical tradition has tended to try to separate from metaphor- which is nothing but this only can be another mythology, another fiction. Philosophy always contains metaphor and it tries to establish the interpretation of the laws. This interpretive activity leads towards the metaphorical status of language as free invention. It is not an argument for arbitrariness in argument; rather this is for saying that there is no position in which this arbitrariness has been eliminated. Thus, it may be remarked that we are always within the closure of metaphysics.
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INDEX

A

Absence: 6, 10, 29, 38, 41, 45, 51, 53, 55, 56, 59, 60, 65, 92, 105, 110.


Aesthetic: 6, 18, 19, 20, 41, 56, 73, 80, 84, 111, 117.

Apaureṣaya: 95.

Aporia: 54, 65, 87, 119.


Arché-writing: 35, 38, 47, 53, 54, 56, 94, 95, 97, 98.

Aristotle: 12, 13, 38, 42, 90, 101, 104, 112, 120.

B

Being: 2, 3, 17, 19, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32, 37, 38, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49, 52, 55, 57, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70, 79, 81, 84, 89, 92, 94, 99, 101, 103, 105, 110, 111.

Bhartṛhari: 89, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100.


Body: 10, 15, 16, 23, 27, 28, 30, 53, 70, 77, 79, 80, 81.

Bracket: 25, 26, 31, 32, 36, 106.

Brahman: 90, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98.

Buddhist: 7, 89, 90, 91.

C

Cartesian: 15, 16, 17, 22, 25, 103, 108.

Centre: 22, 41, 44, 45, 46, 52, 59, 76, 77, 85, 101, 110.

Cogito: 14, 15, 17, 26, 35, 86.


Contemporary: 4, 10, 11, 13, 39, 57, 61, 66, 86, 88, 89, 90, 102, 113, 115.


D

Dasein: 38, 64.

Deconstruction: 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 30, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 78, 79, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 93, 94, 97, 99, 101, 105, 112, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 120.

Defer: 14, 21, 48, 49, 50, 55, 58.

Deleuze: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120.
Descartes: 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 35, 39, 42, 64, 86, 88, 103, 105, 111, 113, 117.

Dessemination: 11, 40, 52, 56, 57, 86, 113.

Destruction: 37, 38, 45.

Dialectics: 17, 21, 22, 42.

Dichotomies: 10, 92, 93.

Di\textit{\`{e}rance}: 1, 11, 14, 17, 36, 47, 48, 49, 53, 57, 58, 61, 63, 93, 94, 95, 118, 120.

Diff\textit{\`{e}}s: 21, 50, 80.


Dualism: 42, 55, 80.

Emancipatory: 69, 71.

\textit{Epoch\`{e}}: 36, 106.

Erasure: 2, 47, 53, 63.

Essence: 2, 14, 22, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 37, 49, 65, 77, 90, 91, 99, 104.


Foucault: 3, 9, 12, 13, 42, 68, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 86, 88, 114, 117, 120.

Foundationalism: 39, 41.

French: 1, 4, 5, 7, 10, 14, 37, 39, 43, 47, 48, 51, 53, 57, 61, 64, 66, 67, 76, 77, 84, 85, 86, 88, 117, 119.

Freud: 36, 40, 43, 49, 75, 82, 91, 93.

Gadamer: 18, 19, 20.

God: 2, 12, 15, 16, 17, 21, 39, 40, 45, 56, 61, 66, 76, 77, 84, 89, 92, 94, 99, 112.


Gramme: 46, 110.


Hebraic: 64, 66.

Hegel: 1, 7, 11, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22, 47, 75, 83, 101, 109, 111, 115.

Heidegger: 2, 5, 10, 14, 18, 23, 37, 38, 40, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 53, 56, 57, 61, 63, 64, 92, 105, 106, 115, 116, 119.

Heritage: 10, 66, 78, 90, 115.


Immanence: 6, 25.

Intentionality: 24, 29, 108.

Irrational: 6, 36, 80.

Jean – Paul – Sartre: 2, 7, 10, 23, 76, 77, 106.

Justice: 13, 44, 64, 71, 84, 87, 114, 119.
K
Kant: 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 33, 36, 90, 101, 107, 115.
Kierkegaard: 5, 66.
Knowledge: 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 27, 33, 36, 39, 40, 41, 47, 59, 63, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 87, 94, 97, 98, 101, 103, 108, 110, 115.

L
Language game: 39, 40, 72, 82.
Levi-Strauss: 3, 66, 67, 68, 76, 78, 80, 87, 91, 104.
Logocentrism: 14, 21, 36, 37, 38, 39, 46, 47, 50, 59, 88, 92, 93, 110, 111.
Logos: 6, 12, 16, 37, 46, 52, 57, 62, 90, 91, 92, 94, 98, 99.
Lyotard: 6, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 88, 115, 116.

M
Madness: 15, 16, 72, 74, 75, 76, 86, 114.
Mantras: 90, 96, 97.
Marxism: 5, 7, 70, 72, 73, 82, 88.
Meta-narrative: 69, 70, 72, 88.
Metaphor: 6, 21, 51, 57, 97, 111.
Method: 1, 8, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 36, 40, 42, 55, 61, 62, 78, 79, 102, 103, 111, 113, 119, 120.
Modernism: 3, 4, 6, 8, 42, 68, 69, 70, 78, 80, 113, 115.
Mythic: 11, 39.
Mīmāṃsā: 89.

N
Narrative: 5, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 78, 83, 85.
Nāstika: 93.
Negative theology: 2, 39, 46, 61, 112, 115.
Non-concept: 47, 49, 57, 58.

O
Ontology: 38, 45, 64, 65, 90.
Origin: 2, 3, 4, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 27, 28, 34, 37, 39, 45, 47, 48, 49, 51, 53, 55, 56, 78, 80, 89, 90, 91, 103, 113, 116.

P
Paradox: 17, 24, 46, 87, 101, 102.
Parergon: 19, 47.
Parole: 62, 104.
Phaedrus: 11, 12, 14, 36, 52, 95, 110, 116.

Pharmakon: 47, 52, 53.


Phonocentrism: 36, 37, 47, 63, 93, 110.

Plato: 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 32, 36, 42, 47, 52, 90, 91, 94, 101, 102, 104, 107, 109, 110, 111, 113, 116, 118, 120.

Postmodernism: 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 23, 39, 41, 42, 55, 60, 68, 69, 70, 78, 79, 80, 82, 85, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119.

Pratibhā: 95, 98.

Presence: 4, 6, 10, 11, 14, 21, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 63, 66, 90, 93, 94, 96, 98, 99, 100, 105, 109.

Quantitative: 72.

Reason: 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 39, 46, 47, 51, 52, 61, 63, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 75, 76, 77, 80, 83, 84, 88, 90, 92, 102, 104, 107, 109, 110, 114, 115, 117.


Repetition: 11, 12, 31, 32, 34, 53, 54, 102, 108.

Rorty: 82, 83, 84, 85, 112, 115.

Rousseau: 50, 52, 90, 91, 94, 103, 104, 110, 117.

S

Saussure: 3, 9, 10, 11, 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 43, 48, 49, 61, 62, 63, 67, 77, 79, 80, 82, 90, 91, 94, 102, 103, 104, 105, 110, 114, 115.

Scepticism: 5, 15, 101.

Semiology: 3, 21, 22, 62, 103.


Socratic: 42, 47, 114.


Strategy: 1, 38, 40, 46.

Structuralism: 2, 3, 8, 9, 19, 36, 41, 42, 55, 59, 61, 62, 63, 66, 67, 68, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 87, 88, 103, 105, 112, 113.

Supplement: 14, 35, 46, 47, 50, 51, 52, 57, 59, 60, 67.

T

Text: 2, 4, 8, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 28, 36, 39, 40, 44, 47, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 62, 63, 67, 74, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 88, 91, 93, 95, 96, 99, 105, 106, 110.

Trace: 8, 12, 17, 22, 30, 33, 34, 35, 38, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 57, 65, 82, 91, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 112.

Transcendence: 6, 7, 24, 64.
Truth: 2, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 30, 37, 38, 41, 45, 47, 55, 56, 60, 63, 70, 71, 72, 75, 78, 82, 83, 88, 94, 101, 106, 108, 110, 111, 116.

U

Undo: 2, 38.

Unity: 14, 18, 29, 33, 36, 42, 43, 45, 79, 80, 103.

Universal: 4, 5, 7, 8, 17, 30, 42, 46, 62, 65, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 84, 85, 88, 107, 109.

V

Vak: 91.

Vakyapadiya: 91, 94, 95.

Vedic: 89, 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100.

Vikalpa: 89, 91.

Virtue: 2, 11, 13, 76, 82.

Vyakarana: 89, 90, 100.

W

Wisdom: 12, 42, 90, 94.

Wittgenstein: 24, 32, 34, 39, 40, 41, 49, 111, 117, 118.

Work of art: 18, 19, 20, 37, 38, 116.

Writing: 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 28, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 62, 63, 67, 68, 73, 76, 78, 83, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 103, 107, 108, 110, 111, 113, 120.
CONTENTS

Ranjana Mukherjee: Ethical Theory and Ordinary Moral Practice ...1
Kalyan Kumar Bagchi: On Interpreting Radhakrishnan, the Interpreter Today ...6
Ashok Madak: Rajiv Malhotra: A Unique Exponent of the Hindu Worldview ...11
Rakesh Chandra: Some Reflections on Tenability of Pluralism, Transformation and Trivialization of Religions ...26
Raghunath Ghosh: The Concept of Matter: a Physics-Philosophy Interphase ...36
Kantiial Das: Wittgenstein on Philosophy of Silence ...45
Jyotsna Saha: Some Reflections on the Meaning of Life: ...58
Balaganapathi Devarakonda: Role of Guru as an Interpreter of Dharma ...65
Nirmal Kumar Roy: Value Education as a Means to Resolve Social Crisis ...74
Anil Kumar Har: The Concept of Woman in Indian and Western Tradition ...81
Samar Kumar Mondal: Aristotle and Kautilya on the Concept of Good Governance and Welfare State ...90
Anirban Mukherjee: Aspect Perception as a Case of Interpretation ...99
Laxminikanta Padhi: Bipinchandra’s Thought on Hinduism, Tradition and Modernity ...108
Varbi Roy: Gandhian Perspective of Conflict Resolution ...118
Mamata Kundu: Sister Nivedita: a Dedicated Soul of Creative Culture ...123
Mukul S. K.: Anita Desai’s Voices in the City: a Discourse of the Postcolonial Modernity ...132
Alok Kumar Khatua: Sāntarakṣita and Kanakālītā on the Problem of Universals ...143
Reshme Sarkar: Fregean Reflection on Thought ...155
Sandipa Ghosh: Ethical Philosophy of the Gītā ...164
Priyanka Basak and: Transcending the Concept of Morality from Human to the Post-human ...174
Debika Saha: Indian Perspective of the Philosophy of Voluntary Service ...187
Gambhir D. Subba and: Kant’s Moral Philosophy: Aims, Methods and Some Core Concepts ...192
Debika Saha: Anup Deka: Wittgenstein on Religion and Meaning of Life ...199
Rakhi Debnath and: Ambedkar’s Postmodern Vision ...209
Debika Saha
Our Contributors
Notes to the Contributors
Our Publications
AMBEDKAR’S POSTMODERN VISION*

RAKHDEBNATH

Though Ambedkar belongs to the Indian Contemporary world and Postmodernism is a trend of the western contemporary world but they have some surprising similarities between their thoughts. Now the question arises that ‘Is India postmodern or not?’ For me the answer is paradoxical. I believe that India is traditional, at the same time it is modern and also postmodern. For instance, in many areas, we still follow the traditional worldview in our lives and at the same time follow the modern trend. After analyzing Ambedkar’s thought in relation to postmodern thought, comparison of these two ways of thought bring many points of similarities which will reveal many interesting areas. But before delving this issue, let us try to analyze the concept of postmodernism.

Postmodernism, the western contemporary and intellectual movement has affected the entire socio-cultural and political milieu of our times. The influence of postmodernism is reflected almost in every sphere of life in literary circles and in scientific movements and also in the spectrum of academic disciplines. It questions the trust of modernity and calls for the affirmation of plurality and diversity. The term postmodernism is widely used to denote the number of philosophical views developed in France in the late 60s. Postmodernist argues in any objective universal meanings of words or texts or any such permanent structures that are at the foundation of human consciousness. So, it is claimed that socio-cultural structures are a burden to humanity and unless we get rid from our traditional cultural discourse we can’t live our lives with freedom and creativity in its fullness. They hardly believe in any universal structures or categories of thought that form the human self. According to those philosophers cultures do not create man, rather man creates his cultures. Actually, postmodernism expresses its radical views on different spheres of life even beyond philosophy. The student revolution of the late 60s in Europe played a crucial role in making of a postmodern sub-culture.

* I am sincerely thankful to my teacher Prof. Debika Saha for her kind help in framing this paper.
So, the history of postmodernism in the 70s and 80s is basically one of widespread acceptance of the ideas spread by different philosophers. This trend criticizes the notion of ‘presence’ or ‘presentation’ in knowledge and also criticizes the effort of rational inquiry to examine the origin of the source of all human knowledge. It focuses on the marginalized, the outlawed and the abnormal of society. It calls for a critical analysis of our smug complacency towards accepted norms and traditions. However, it is difficult to define postmodernism. It is an umbrella term drawing within its fold different disciplines like philosophy, history, literary theory, art etc. Postmodernism as a movement is largely a reaction against the philosophical assumptions, values, and worldview of the modern period, roughly the period of scientific revolution from the 17th and 18th centuries till mid-20th century. Many of the doctrines typically associated with postmodernism can be fairly described as the denial of the 18th century Enlightenment faith in human reason and in the pursuit of science and technology.

Postmodernism denies there is an objective reality. They treat objective reality as a kind of conceptual construct. There is no such thing as absolute truth in philosophy, science or history. It questions the universal validity of reason and logic and distrusts science and technology as instruments of human progress. Hence, postmodernism is a response to the horrors of the holocaust and the dangers of an atomic age. Many of them believe that reason and logic is oppressive as they have been used to destroy others. It holds that there is no intrinsic human nature, it is completely socially determined. According to them, language does not represent the reality outside us; it is not a “mirror of the universe”. It is semantically self-contained or self-referential. The meaning of a word is a series of contrasts and differences with the meanings of other words in the system.

According to them, there is no magical meta-theory or universal theoretical ground that can provide a foundation for every other subsequent theory. Meta-theories are referred to as meta-narratives or very similar to ‘philosophy with a capital ‘P’. It is no longer a viable and credible enterprise. Thus, it reveals that modernity in general terms is a war against all forms of tantalization. It dismisses any totalizing systems of thought in man’s social, historical, biological development as a grand meta-narrative. Such grand narratives keep some social groups in power and others
out of it. From Christian redemption to Marxism and political narrative of nationalism are all ‘meta-narrative’. If there are no absolute objective truths in metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics, then such truths are constructed by discourses. A discourse is a set of interlocking and mutually supporting statements used to define and describe a subject matter, e.g., the discursive practices of law, medicine, and aesthetic and so on. Some postmodernist hold that the prevailing discourses in any society are always influenced by power relations. They reveal the interest and values of the powerful, dominant elite groups.

There are lots of thoughtful remarks about postmodernism, which we find in ‘Of Grammatology’ and in many other books about postmodernism. Like, Norris says that postmodernism is a period of playful freedom, a kind of consumer choice. For him, it’s just an unfortunate mistake. Lyotard sees postmodernism as conditions. Cannor views it as a culture. For Jameson, it’s a cultural domination and even Eagleton narrates it as an illusion. American literary critic Ihab Hassan in his book *The Dismemberment of Orpheus: toward a Postmodern Literature* in 1982 introduces a list of difference between modernism and postmodernism. But in this paper, it has been discussed briefly. After pointing out some of the remarks about postmodernism it’s time to compare Ambedkar’s vision and postmodernism.

As postmodernism stands against any kind of ‘ism’, likewise Ambedkar stands against any kind of ‘ism’. The reason behind this is that any kind of ‘ism’ has been framed with rigid rules and principles which may not be reshuffled in the course of time and according to the needs and demand of transparent society. This happened in so many philosophical theories against which postmodernism are vocal. The position of Ambedkar is similar to this. Although he was born as a Hindu but in 1935 he quit Hinduism. He adopted Buddhism on 14th October at Deekshabhoomi, Nagpur with his followers.

Ambedkar was struggling against Hinduism because it is based on some rigid rules and principles which are not transparent in any situation. Hinduism is dictated by God’s will and what is termed as God’s will cannot be negated by any means. He was victimized as untouchable and has been exploited and humiliated by the default of caste system prevailing in Hinduism. In 1935 he gave an important speech where he told his followers “After giving deep thought to the problem, everybody will have
to admit that conversion is necessary to the Untouchables as self-government is to India. The ultimate object of both is the same. There is not the slightest difference in their ultimate goal. This ultimate aim is to attain freedom. And if the freedom is necessary for the life of mankind, conversion of Untouchables which brings them complete freedom cannot be called worthless by any speech of imagination. Ambedkar throughout his life has struggled against the rigidity of \textit{Varnavyavastha} prevailing in Hinduism. However, he eventually failed to do it because it is based on uncharacteristic ‘ism’. Thus, Ambedkar’s outlook towards Hinduism is postmodernistic in nature.

On the foundation of Indian democracy his views on caste, individualism, constitutionalism, economic and religion also gave a profound impact. Ambedkar with the great support of 20 million Dalits brought back a ‘new millennium’ and a new hope of a golden future for the depressed class in India. This was made possible because of the dynamicity of his thinking. The post dynamicity of great Ambedkar actually robs the power politics of the casteist elements in Hinduism. The urgency of the implementation of the \textit{Hindu Rashtra} agenda, the attempts at the saffronisation of education, the growing attacks and atrocities on Dalits and other minorities, the boosting of the capitalistic globalization process through privatization, liberalization exhibit that oppression is intimidating on the Dalit community with a new aggressiveness. This was the gloomy and dark period of the Dalit and at that time the appearance of Ambedkar as the savior of the Dalit community was a pleasant surprise. At that time the presence of Ambedkar was the need of the hour of India. To attribute the significance of Ambedkar as a reformer of Dalit, Victor Ferrao remarks, “Hence, we get a bird’s eye-view of the life of this great man who could be said to exhibit a postmodern approach.”

Ambedkar visualizes the true reality of India with honesty and open eyes. He was shocked by realizing that motherland fails to provide two important things, such as equality and liberty. He felt that liberty, equality, and fraternity are three concepts on the basis of which a just society can be built up. According to him, on a social

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1 See ‘Why go for conversion?’ Held on 30th to 31st May, 1936 in Mumbai.
plan, the Indian society runs with graded inequality and on the economic plane even though we have immense wealth but due to social inequality there are ‘many who are being in abject poverty’. Ambedkar says, “On 26th January 1950, we are going to enter into a life of contradictions. In politics, we will have equality and in social life and economic life we have inequality...we must remove these contradictions at the earliest possible moments or else those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this assembly has so laboriously built up.”

Being a postmodernist, Ambedkar felt that religion was essential for human social growth. He said, “Man cannot live by bread alone. He has a mind, which needs food for thought. Religion instills hope and drives him to activity.” However, Ambedkar advocated a liberalized religion which according to him plays an important role in emancipating the minds and souls of people. In his view the religion that is not liberal, that breeds oppression and sanctions unjust inequalities is not true religion. Unfortunately, Hinduism belongs to this category by robbing human rights in the true sense of the term. He declared, “Inequality is the soul of Hinduism”.

Eventually, he left Hinduism and embraced Buddhism reason behind this Hinduism failed to secure basic human rights. For him, Buddha Dhamma was the best and it was the most scientific religion. Ambedkar said in the hymns of Rig Veda “we see man’s thoughts turned outwards, away from himself, to the world of the Gods.” It is full of praise, worship, and prayer. But Buddhism is “directed man’s search inwards to the potentiality hidden with himself”. He invited others to follow suit. He becomes clear when he says, “So long as we remain in a religion, which teaches a man to treat another man as a leper, the sense of discrimination which is deeply rooted in our mind cannot go. For annihilating caste and untouchability from among the untouchables change of religion is the only antidote.”

According to Ambedkar, the actual fact is, a person is untouchable because he or she has been born of an untouchable parent. That is why he or she was polluted

5 Ibid. p.66
6 Why Dr. Ambedkar left Hinduism and Chose Buddhism, 6th Dec, 2016.
7 Ibid.
not in some special conditions but under all conditions and permanently. For him, it is something which is inherited. He realized that the main problem of Hinduism is the caste system, which belongs to the four castes; Brahmans, Kshatriya, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Here Brahmans are the highest caste. They are separated from other and teachers of the other caste, not only that but also they are the custodians of the Vedas and all other scriptures. Even they called themselves ‘Bhudevas’ means equal to God. These each caste was described in Purusha Sukta.

There was another outcaste besides these four castes are untouchable. Although in caste system shudras are occupied the lowest position but the untouchables were more suffering. According to Ambedkar, “they were born impure; they were impure while they lived, they died in the death of the impure, and they gave birth to children who were born with a stigma of untouchability affixed to them. It is a case of permanent, hereditary stain which nothing can cleanse.”9 Like Hinduism, Muslim and Christian religion also believe their religious injunctions and customs. But against these superstitious practices and beliefs, Buddhism was a revolt. Here Gautama Buddha could not tolerate this evil practices.

The other important dimension of Ambedkar’s postmodernism is that he often criticised Gandhian ‘ism’. Even though Gandhi was non-committal regarding caste system, but he was an ardent advocator of Varna system. Ambedkar, however, thought that the Varna system of Gandhi actually invited the caste system of Hinduism. Therefore, Ambedkar simplistically drew the conclusion that “The only reaction and a very natural reaction of the Untouchables would be to run away from Gandhism.”10 Ambedkar thus quests for the kingdom of righteousness through righteous conduct. It aims at bringing about a total and integral liberation of every human being. Ambedkar felt that love, justice, and peace are the prime value of the kingdom of righteousness. Thus, by establishing the kingdom of righteousness, Ambedkar eventually breathed the cause of Dalit liberation.

9 Ambedkar, 1990, p. 266.
In conclusion, we can say that Postmodernism is a war against all forms of totalization. Even though postmodernism as a theory did not appear in the time of Ambedkar, but one should look back to the past history to trace the relevance of postmodernism. In this regard, the relevance of Ambedkar, Buddhism, and Gandhi are noteworthy. Ambedkar has treaded the path of postmodernism through his socio-political thinking. The movement that Ambedkar had adopted against Hinduism and against all kinds of social injustice was based on rationality and science, but not based on rigid God based dictum and verdict which according to him was a social trauma. Just postmodernism stands against every kind of philosophical doctrine totalization, Ambedkar stood against every kind of social oppression based on any kind of rigid ‘ism’. Ambedkar’s postmodern technique of dismantling and reassembling of different ideas is found specially in 1948 publication *The Untouchable*. Gail Omvedt, an American Scholar, makes an important remark in her narration that although Ambedkar subscribed to certain Marxist descriptions of ideology and economic relations, he reversed the base-superstructure model to give primacy to the superstructure, of which religious factors were fundamentally important. Instead of falling back on a theory of caste oppression as determined by economic disparities, Ambedkar interpreted religious difference as having an equally material effect in explaining the nature of social oppression.

Ambedkar did exhibit postmodern tendency in his lifelong struggle against the casteist metanarrative just like the postmodernism has been struggling over the years against philosophical ‘isms’. Ambedkar struggle against metanarrative of Hinduism, everybody should be inspired by this lesson.
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## CONTENTS

**Volume 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Pg.No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Function Problem in Regulating Press as Non-Market Component in Indonesian International Tourism Trading Service</td>
<td>Made Mangku Pastika</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Effect of Plyometric Training and Resistance Training on Selected Physiological Variable among Kabaddi Players</td>
<td>D.Rambabu and P.Johnson</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Ideology of Feminism in the Works of Balinese Contemporary Women Visual Artists</td>
<td>Hardiman and Made Hery Santosa</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Catching them Young: The Early Exploitation with no Resistance the Mental Exploitation with no Resistance Finally ends up Shaping the Mind as a Colony</td>
<td>Martaza Rahim Bhat</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Surfing Through the Language of Gen Y in India Through Media</td>
<td>Meghna Ghatak</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>People’s Participation in Gaon Sabha Meetings: A Study of Dibrugarh District in Assam</td>
<td>Biswabijoy Bhattacharjee and Debotosh Chakraborty</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Effect of Synectics Model on Language Creativity: A Review</td>
<td>Harjot Kaur Dhanoa and Sapna Nanda</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Death in the Eyes of the West</td>
<td>Nisha Singh</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Contributions of Missionaries Education in Thoothukudi District</td>
<td>P.Manikandan</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>A Historical Study of Theyyam</td>
<td>Raji.M and P. Vennila</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BHARTṬHARI AND DERRIDA ON THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE: AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The origin of language has not only been discussed in Contemporary Western philosophy but also been discussed in traditional Indian philosophy. That is why it is very challenging to observe whether there is any relationship between these two different schools from the perspective of language or not. This paper tries to accept the challenge by introducing some dialogue between Bharṭṛhari’s thought and Postmodernist Derrida’s thought. In Indian and Western thought, they both tried to reach language from some non-linguistic sources. There are two extreme views about language: the relation between words and their meaning is either created by human beings or language as a-priori, created by God or supreme power. For example, the Mimāṃsa philosophy believed that the words and their relation with meaning are a-priori, and eternal. But Buddhist philosophy challenged this view and hold, language always expresses some imaginary constructions and it never gets access the real meaning. They also believe that all the languages even the Vedic languages are constructed by human. Even the language which we used in our daily life does not give exposure to the real meaning. So, this paper tries to delve the above issues.

Keywords: Derrida, Bharṭṛhari, writing, arché-writing, speech, Śabdātattva and Word-principle.

According to Indian thinkers language always primarily express through the spoken word (vāk). But this definition of language never identifies it with the written signs which are merely phonetic copies of the spoken sounds. In Indian philosophy the distinction between śabda(word) and dhvani(sound) is very important. If we identify them then we have to take physical sound as the word, which is category mistake. Derrida agrees with this contention and remarked whole Western metaphysics, which identified logos or language with the speech, they made the category mistake. But here Derrida wanted to go in opposite direction and identified the essence of logos with writing. When he described language as writing, he tried to mean written words are prior to the spoken reflection of the inner logos. Derrida here added that Language is not only a sort of writing or external speaking, which is also suggested by Buddhist rather He
wanted to attempt self-analysis or deconstruction of language. According to him, deconstruction exposes the mistake of a reductionism in either outward to conventional sign or inward to the divine logos. To escape all philosophical oppositions, he precisely states that "language is not merely a sort of writing "but" a possibility founded on the general possibility of writing". For him, writing is characterized as both inner and outer words within dynamic interrelationship. In the traditional Indian philosophy either it is Hindu or Buddhists they had been to correct the written text with the oral words, because oral words are carefully memorized and passed down from succeeding generations. Therefore, Derrida’s proposition, writing is not secondary rather it is prior to spoken word is quite incredible. For him, writing is not just a computer program or the inscription of words on a paper but it also includes the neuronal traces in the brain. Here his aim is to counter one of the terms over the other, to escape the system of metaphysical opposition, which has dominated Indian philosophy.

Derrida’s critique of metaphysics mainly focused on the privileging of the spoken words over the written words, which also characterized by the Indian thoughts. In Indian philosophy there are some schools which are perfectly fit into the logocentric category. Such as: āstika namely Sāṅkhya-Yoga, Vedanta and Nyāya schools, they structured in terms of dichotomies where the second term of the pair is considered as lower status. However in Western philosophy this theory is more strongly used. Derrida attack this detachment of speech from the real, basically Mādhyamika’s negation about speech into silence. For him it is the most extreme logocentric position. But only the Grammarian school which was formulated by Bhartṛhari able to escape from Derrida’s deconstructive net. They both Derrida and Bhartṛhari agreed with however philosophy is done in language but literary analysis is more important over the logical analysis. In Vākyapadīya, Bhartṛhari describes Grammar as the purifier of all the sciences, which is possible through the use of correct forms of language. So, they both Derrida and Bhartṛhari crossed the barrier between philosophy and literary criticism. Although they both believe that all knowledge comes through language, but it does not mean that language depends on something like the logos, Brahman and God. There is no source of language, beyond the language. The reason given by Bhartṛhari is that, the absolute truth is Śabdatattva or the Word Principle, which is not apart from language. And through deconstructing the viewpoint which was dominated metaphysics basically a separate presence or being which is reflected immediately in speech, Derrida establishes his answer ‘no’. By finding writing as
différance he deconstructs some arguments which were presented at the time of Plato, Rousseau and other philosophers. By a critique of linguistic theory especially Saussure’s theory Derrida establishes the need for arché-writing or the inner trace. He find some evidence for his “deconstruction of Platonic view and said “While presenting writing as a false brother – traitor, infidel, and simulacrum – Socrates is for the first time led to envision the brother of this brother, the legitimate one, as another sort of writing: not merely as knowing, living, animate discourse, but as an inscription of truth in the soul,”2 This kind of writing which is written on the learner’s soul, called arché-writing or trace. But for Derrida it contains the possibility for all written and oral language. Writing and speech are the expression of the same language. But arché-writing does not depend upon writing or sound; rather it is dynamic, expressive différance and it is the condition for such writing and sound. However, it does not exist but it is a previous possibility of all expression (content expression, signified/signifier). In place of the term arché-writingBhartrhari used the term Word-Principle. For him, the Word Principle is the beginning less or endless and which is divided by its inherent power. Particularly, Word-Principle shows itself in the expressive activity of language by the sequencing power of time. He also used the notion of a beginning less trace like Derrida, which is inherent in consciousness. Although unlike Derrida he discussed about the trace of speech in relation to previous birth which has no beginning called pratibhāgamyā or the residual trace of speech. Another point is like Derrida Bhartrhari sees, as the conditioning of all psychic experience the inherent trace consciousness of language from deep sleep to dreams and to ordinary awareness to mystical states. But the difference is that only in this stage (dream stage) seeds of language stays in a more subtle manner. According to both, the experience of self is the unhindered experience of arché-writing or Šabdatattva, which is manifested in the temporal dynamic of language. In Vākyapadiya, he used the term āgama, when he referred to writing. Bhartrhari identified texts as ‘apauruseya’ (without author). And āgama is used as a text, which is composed by writers in contrast to Vedic texts or Śruti. Derrida’s discussion is about texts, which considered to be without any author and whose authors are known. Though the Vedas may be written but they are eternal consciousness. They are not dependent on any human author but the criterion which is manifested from the Šabdatattva.

However Bhartrhari agreed with Derrida on a point that the benefit of āgama is, when the authors are dies, their words are serve continue as the basic seed for the formation of next traditions. So, it is undoubtedly clear that, for Bhartrhari, texts

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are composed by authors and authorless speech which both are manifestations of the Šabdatattva. They both find some common cause against those who maintain language has no purchase on reality or who locate the absolute outside of language. It is the pure possibility of difference for both, which manifested as language and the intrinsic difference of arché-trace allows the articulation of speech and writing. This arché-trace manifested into the opposing forms of outer sound image and inner concept. Here through the use of a technical term ‘sign’ Derrida refers to the whole, where ‘signifier’ refers to the spoken and heard sound image and ‘signified’ refers to the abstract concepts. In the case of Bharṭṛhari, he indicates the whole through the use of the technical term ‘sphota’ where ‘artha’ refers to the meaning or concept and ‘dhvani’ refers to the spoken or heard sound which is parallel to Derrida. According to both of them, sphota or sign (linguistic whole) has an inherent force which produces the double manifestation of artha or signified (inner meaning) and signifier or dhvani (spoken sound). However sign and sphota cannot be experienced as a pure presence, they are irreducible. To describe Veda, Bharṭṛhari used two terms; one is prāptyupāya (the means for the attainment of Brahman) and the second is, anukāra (symbolization of Brahman), it suggests the dynamic activity of the Word-Principle, vritti clearly explains the verse, when the Vedic seers spells the mantras which is the standard case of Word making activity. According to pure Sanskrit language, the mantras are the conjunctions of some certain powerful seed character. So, in a psychosomatic structure vibration or rhythm are creates a corresponding psychic state. But in producing an immense progeny of language these sounds can be differentiated.

Derrida’s aim about deconstruction is to get back to the poetic and metaphoric language, where the power for signification has not been used. Bharṭṛhari also notes that language separates and divides. In the end this necessary process is the source of confusion. But his solution is not to reverse or deconstruct the process of differentiation; rather this has to be controlled by the imposition of strict grammatical rules. And through this solution the power of mantras convey knowledge. “With other grammarians, Bharṭṛhari claimed that to have uncovered the pure forms of the correct unfolding of the patterns of differentiation inherent in the Šabdatattva and symbolized (anukara) in criterion form in the initial speaking of the Vedas”³. But for Bharṭṛhari Veda is not a direct description of the Šabdatattva, the Brahman. Through the dynamic idioms of language Vedic revelation provide the inherent action of the Šabdatattva. In general he privileged towards the scripture and the Veda in particular. But Derrida did not agree with this thought. He criticized the notion of the Veda as manifesting anukāra or

³Ibid, p- 65.
original linguistic form of arché-writing. So, it is clear that there was an agreement between the thrust of Derrida’s deconstructive critique and Bhartrhari’s emphasis on language as necessarily engaging both thought and action, as active rather than passive and as mediating the absolute. Another important point is they both locate the real in Šabdatattva or arché-writing and that is not separated from manifested language.

For Derrida, there is no longer any origin. And representation is just a shadow. More clearly it mixed with what it represents to the point where one speaks as one writes. So, reflecting images, pools and the infinite reference from one to the other, have no longer any sources. These all are split in itself. According to him, the sensitive deconstruction of the illusions of presence, permanence is the means for the realization of the whole. But his aim is to understand the whole as a manifestation of the inherent difference of the trace. In short, we are deconstructing the language in our own consciousness, in our own speaking and thinking. We ourselves are the text which we deconstruct. It is the process of self-realization and of becoming self aware. That is why Derrida said that there is nothing outside the text. Bhartrhari also observed that the analysis of linguistic experience is nothing but an examination of the nature of our own consciousness. But the difference between them is Bhartrhari never gave privilege in one scripture or book. He clearly described that the Veda is not a book; rather it is the true manifestation of the Sabdatattva but Derrida deconstruct all scriptures, all texts.

Thus in conclusion we can say that, this comparative study between Bhartrhari’s philosophy and Derrida’s deconstructive Grammatology has identified lots of important points which are faithful and has some substantive contact with Derrida’s thought and some traditional Indian thought. The analysis of these contact provided both Western and Eastern comparison. And this highlights the error of the previous interpretation and demonstrated some new insights on both sides. Through this comparison we learn some important points of common emphasis on both sides. First is, language is beginning less and it is coextensive with consciousness. Second point is, through time, language is grounded in its dynamic sequence, which takes the form of the dynamic interrelatedness of the cosmos. And this interrelatedness conveys an imperative call or action, which is suppressed by our egocentric creation of concepts. And through this stage we can identify ourselves as true presence. Thus, both Derrida and Bhartrhari deserve a higher place for the practice of philosophy. Here they both tried to purify or deconstruct language by linguistic criticism or Vyakāraṇa, and both Indian and Western philosophy needed their deconstructive and purifying task.
Bibliography: