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F. 7. Structuralism and Post-structuralism

CHAPTER 32

The Possibilities of Language: The "Forked" Paths of
Meaning

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In a short story entitled *The Garden of Forking Paths* published in 1941 Borges leaves the reader baffled with a line—"I leave to the various futures my garden of forking paths". Through a complex weaving of the narrative of Dr Yu Tsun, a former professor of English at a German university in China, (who is a spy for the German Reich with the mission of conveying to Berlin the name of a town where the British are hiding an artillery unit), *The Garden of Forking Paths* is a statement about Borges' conception of literature as a living labyrinth and therefore a field of multiple possibilities, resisting the closure of interpretation, a fixed meaning. This has an echo in Derrida—"there is nothing outside the text" which sounds the aporia¹ that falls between the thing in itself and the linguistic representation that inscribes a limit upon one's world: *the object arises only after it is represented and not before it*. Neither there could be a de re Subject to whom the representational language could be ascribed, nor could there be an object qua the object to which the representation could be ascribed. The aporia arises in the network of relationality between sign and object at the moment when the closure appears as an impassable limit. Derrida purveys here a simultaneous closure and opening of the text at the limit, which is an in-between, the inside and the outside. It is something like locating a place outside language which is entirely transparent, an alterity beyond language that calls forth the multiple lines of forces inside the text to fragment, interrupt and crack against an outside, which can take place in lieu of a place. Such an alterity and exteriority is a part of philosophy's search for a place outside the limits of determination, a radical undecidability that invades all determinations of meaning and interpretation. This is how the context disrupts the text and re-writes it with a multiplicity that gives rise to a categorical imperative: 'act so that the maxim of your will may erect a principle of

multiplicity"² so that it regulates the text, the world and the subject without determining how to go about it.

Interpretation as an act of deciding the meaning of a text encounters this multiple possibilities of meaning not as an intended consequence but as an inevitable directedness to a referential frame, which cannot be determined by the text or the interpretation. This undecidability of the referential frame acts as a source of multiple interventions on the text, which simultaneously provides support to the text as well as re-orders it from a critical position. This is how Derrida pronounces, "I have only one language and it is not mine." It indicates the possibility of search for the "other" or /and "other of language". The other, which is beyond language and which summons language is not a "referent", but a "dissemination" that is irreducible to language. Contra Kant, the representational device of language is not just loaded with concepts and the unity between the self and the world, but concepts such as presence of the self and the world as the origin of representation are re-mark(s) that fold on itself and on thought. The fold acts as re-plica or re-application of quasi-transcendental or quasi-ontological conditions within which the empirical or the ontical arises. This is putting the referential theory of meaning upside down: instead of knowledge or belief requiring the idea of objective truth, the truth merely appears in language and it presupposes the trace of language and a dissemination of language without return to origin. The referential theory of meaning turns language into its own subject that finally gives rise to an awareness of objects with the conditions of possibility of this awareness. Derrida gets rid of this mechanism of understanding the world and constructions of meaning in language by creating a principle of dissemination that progresses to an absolute otherness, an alterity that crosses out the analogical or the metaphorical in language. Derrida develops the notion of 'concept-metaphor' to introduce a Copernican turn in language: a move away from ontological, epistemological and metaphysical commitments to turning those commitments into tracing, folding, disseminating and representing functions of language. Such functions are endowed with a sense of alterity, a mode of othering that refuses to follow rules; as such rules paradoxically tie constitutive elements of language to mere norms of substitution and co-referencing. However, a concept-metaphor is neither a concept nor a metaphor, but an ongoing dissemination of sense, meaning, reference without being bound by use and context, rather it only disseminates in-formation and puts it into play with its other that is without a place. For example, subject, time, truth, sense and all other conceptual machinery of philosophical theories enter into a play with the other, a non-entity and a non-place in a catachresis of their senses. Concept-metaphors are *catachrestic*: they call for opposites and their reversals leading to displacement of reversals; concepts based upon metaphors and vice-versa. Concept-metaphors start from the possibility of elimination of difference between presence and representation, origin and structure, marking how one can go into the science of linguistics and Semiology, none of which adduces a secondary and derivative status to signs. In Saussurian Linguistics, sign is given its position within a chain of signifiers, which in totality determines its meaning and position. Both the meaning and position are fixed by the totality of signification and by the exchange and combination between them. But such exchange and combination are treated as two sides of the "one and the same production". This notion of unity produced through a chain of signifiers is the crux of Saussurian Linguistics, in which a signifier acquires a fixed signified through its presence in the totality. Derrida shows that the

totality of signification is constituted by the difference between arbitrary signs, which affect the totality, and totality in itself is never present in and of itself without this difference. Derrida gives a special reference to this effect of difference, which further produces a representation without any pre-given relationship of knowledge. This representation further affects a causality. All these series of effects are differential in character in such a manner that retracting its precedent cause only produces a difference between the representation and what is represented that are hierarchically arranged in the functioning of ordinary language.

This shows the idealizing role of signs and its relevant negativity, both of which work within the sign to unsettle the sensory receptions. An idealization that follows is the concept of a Physical ideality, which is a displacement of reality or spatial criterion into some hierarchies. This movement of idealization summarizes the entire metaphysics of presence, a certain organization of functions that philosophy has called "meaning". Further, this idealizing move prescribes a metaphysical way of thinking of the Being. One example of this is Humanism that re-appropriates being 'in the thinking of the truth of man' to ensure a transition between metaphysics and humanism via a universal following of various moves of idealizations. In Derrida's words,

"Being" and language – the group of language – that the we governs or opens: such is the name of that which assures the transition between metaphysics and humanism via the we.³

The question that should be asked at this point is, how could the construction of a metadiscourse of humanism and metaphysics undermine the primordial structure of repetition of marks that signifies nothing? One obvious Derridean answer is, by privileging concepts where the negative image of a differentiated space of mark is inscribed in the concept itself, as concepts are conditioned upon such a field of heterogeneous marks. So, the concepts that represent a unified presence to it-self are interrupted by the non-presence produced by those marks. This interruption constitutes the present and "divide the present in and of itself" and thereby divides the concepts into presentation to itself and presentation to the other. Such a division extracts a reduced predicative trait held in reserve by the concept in presenting its content to itself. This regulated extraction of predicate enables the concept to represent and this is a sort of displacement of the limits and closure of the concept within the discourse that gives rise to it. This acts as a lever of intervention such that interventions produce another structure of a derivative discourse that borrows its artifacts from the previous one and yet makes a difference.⁴

This marking of a difference always shall bear the trace of the previous predicates, which are newly predicated in the discourse derived from any pre-given conceptual structure. The two discourses grow in an interlaced manner such that neither of them neutralizes the force of concepts contained in them, but chooses to interlace use-able parts of the concepts. By doing so, the two discourses thwart the illusionary possibility of moving out of their field of concepts; rather they engrave concepts in a newer mix. Structuring two fields of discourse in such a manner that one always bears the trace of the other in a constitutive sense marks a rupture in the conceptual interior of discourse. Such a rupture lays open the closure of discourse into a structure of differences.

This structure of difference displays two characteristics: one, regulation of conceptual predicates refers back to the a priori difference that marks a space of inscription. Such a space of inscription further exhibits a double movement: a movement of designation or position by which the field of their production gets blended with the space unfolding between marks of the series; and a movement of re-mark that marks the space between repeated marks and marks that are already there. Such a movement represents marks in a series and marking of the space between marks in that series is coloured by the recoiling of the mark on itself and onto some other marks. Such a remarking of the space in-between in the act of recoiling and passing on to other marks makes the space of inscription inexorable. What one has to understand is that remark is not simply a recoiling repetition but a structure of self-reference as well as reference to the other. Therefore, in the process of re-marking, the marks represent themselves and this representation withdraws them towards other unmarked marks to make them represent them.

Such a structure of representation functions as a structure of signs that functions like linguistic signs, while it is more primordial than the linguistic signs. This primordially makes representation possible, which merely strives for an identity of signs, which is merely derived from this basic structure of difference.⁵ But the primordial structure of signs derives the ideality from repetition and so, there is an a priori effacement of the sign in order to emerge into remark, a doubling of the mark that supplements the already effaced mark. The effacement makes possible the supplementing function of a re-mark. This is like a structure that marks presence between possible and impossible, a structure that is without a non-self-identity, in which identity is always affected onto its re-marking. The supplementary addition of the mark to its other un-marked correlates is a simultaneous production of "blank", an effacement and a delayed restitution of one effaced sign on another, to be effaced to a different one. This structure of supplement is a structure of re-appropriation of the withdrawn signs in an outside of re-mark that points to an infinite substitution, 'in-the-place-of-itself', an auto-affection that is delayed infinitely. This presence achieved through such supplements is an auto-affection that structurally haunts the absence of a stable presence, the mode in which the self affects itself. Such an auto-affection is unmediated except by its own act of designation that endlessly subverts recoiling into one's own self by an openness towards an unmarked exteriority in general. Derrida considers this primordial structure of repetition as a fecund source of episteme, the source of non-identity, the trace of erasure of the identity which take place in the form of "protowriting (...) at the origin of sense". This protowriting⁶ takes place in the traces of erasure of signs into an ideality producing re-mark, a non-sense, an impossibility to coincide with itself. This draws a reference to Derrida's famous allusion to Freud's idea of deferment of pleasure in which pleasure is delayed by postponement of satisfaction manifested in traces that are neither pleasure nor displeasure but just unconscious traces on psyche that cannot be named within presence or absence. Such a process of perpetual deferment of the final satisfaction or acquiring of the signified brings in a structure of folds. Derrida asks this question, *what is the effect of such a structure on subjectivity or rather the effect of subjectivity as it is produced in the structure?*⁷ (Derrida, 1993:21)

Derrida answers the question in two ways: one, the idea of supplementing, that is adding and substituting that go on at the protowriting, follows a mode of marking every

position and two, such marks play the role of re-inscribing any discourse/signification into a more flexible and non-present exteriority of something that is an absolute other of the discourse. The first move signifies ordinary conditions of possibility of repetition. For example, the way phone or verbal signs are produced repetitively marks a fixed relationship between the voice and the phone. The second move marks the production of an experience by an absolute differentiability of signs. An example of this could be the way voice or phone is being written down as an 'outside' or dead marks of living voice/phone, as the self-presence of the voice to itself is dirempted and displaced into marks that have no organic link with voice.⁸ (Derrida, 1976:29) So, the case of writing produces a double deal: in its 'literal' sense it makes the living 'phone' dead and in its "figurative" sense it retains an originary self-presence that the voice contains to itself.

This double sense of "literal" and "figural" constitutes the movement of difference in the structure of repetition. The 'literal' determines the totality of signification in language, while the 'figural' determines the possible extension of the field of difference beyond the limits of language. The primordial form of meaning of place and position are neither presence nor sense, but only the form of syntax that intuitively postpones the coming of sense by first bearing a trace of mutual contamination of signs and then extending it beyond the limits of structure to constitute an "absolute over board"⁹ that produces the same when it divides it through multiple iteration and repetition. Therefore the answer that Derrida gives to the question of effect on the subject or on effect of reproduction of subjectivity turns into (i) an absolute suspension of possibility of objectivity within the self-presence of the subject, and (ii) subjectivity falling back upon its ground of difference shall constitute itself as an ideal object in itself. The first one shows an originary lack in the constitution of objectivity, while the second one shows that the plenitude or full presence of subject is dependent on an absence of the other. The formation of the subject as a representable entity assumes a noumenal presence that is never present. This absent presence of Subject gives rise to a subjectivity that carries the erasure of the Subject-Object dichotomy both within language and consciousness. It is rather the thought of the unrepresentable, which is constitutive of subjectivity of the Subject. This characteristic feature of subjectivity is constituted and there is nothing intrinsic about it. Derrida describes this "originary lack" as well as the subsequent presence of subjectivity qua absence of the Other as simultaneously as "beyond" language and essence, by way of reflecting on the title of Levinas's work called, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*,

(...) in a singular comparative locution that does not constitute a sentence, an adverb [*otherwise*] immeasurably wins out over a verb (and what a verb: *to be*) to say an other that cannot make or even modify a noun or a verb, or this noun-verb that always comes back and comes down to *being*, to say an "other" that is neither verb nor noun, and especially not the simple alter-ity that would put the *otherwise*, this modality without substance, still under the authority of a category, an essence or again a being. The beyond of verbalization (constitution as verb) or nominalization, the beyond of the *symplokē* linking nouns and verbs so as to play into the hands of essence, this beyond leaves a chain of traces, another *symplokē* already "within" the title, *beyond essence*, yet without letting itself be included there, deforming rather the curvature of its natural edges. (Derrida, 2007: 152)¹⁰

This “deformation of the natural edges” is a concept-metaphor of construction of a labyrinth, where the emerging forms of language is located in a de-formed trajectory that displays inferences emerging only from relations between altered states, which exist distinctly but with “dependent non-identity relations.” The modifications and qualifications made to “representation” by “expression” results into incompatibility in/of states of affairs, which Derrida states in a paradigm statement, quoting from the aforementioned text of Levinas, “the psyche ...[as] as a seed of folly”.¹¹

The statement can be interpreted in terms of what the “seed” grows into, which is an already constituted “folly” such as “logos”, which remains, according to Derrida, “(...) indispensable as the fold that bends to the gift (...) as the tongue of my mouth when I tear bread from it to give it to the other”.¹²

This is a return to truth and identity by way of a passage beyond the language, but without letting it “included” within the surface and depth of language. This is simultaneously hitting the ground of language and the chasm between “representation” and “expression”, both of which are “follies” arising from the “psyche” as the “seed”. The question is, is this the first person subjectivity that acts as the seed of folly? Derrida contends that the “relation of the same” arises in the re-appropriation of the logos by the self, which symptomatically surrenders to the “essence”, which is necessarily “responding” to the other. The other arises as the gift, a relation outside the self and the other that belongs to each other. Derrida assigns a place to this “response” outside the grammar of language. Derrida terms it as an opening to the other. In his inimitable words,

Even though language is also that which , leading back to presence, to the same, to the economy of being, and so on, does not *surely* have its essence in that responsibility responding (to and for) the other as a past that will never have been present, nevertheless it “is” such responsibility that sets language in motion. Without this (ethical) responsibility, there would be no language, but it is never sure that language surrenders to the responsibility that renders it possible (surrenders to its simply probable essence): it may always (and this is even probably, to a certain extent, ineluctable) betray the responsibility and tend towards enclosing it within the same. Language must be allowed this freedom to betray so that it can surrender to its essence, which is the ethical. The essence for once, and this is unique, is delivered over to probability, risk, and uncertainty.¹³

Derrida considers this risk and uncertainty of response to the other as “surrender” to its “essence” by language. Risk involved in such a surrender manifests as “a performance of the wholly other”, which is a serial erasure of the other that gives rise to “the mobile syntax of marks, outside contextual transformation”.¹⁴

This simultaneous affectation of a lack qua mark and plenitude qua context produces a double bottom of heterogeneity: (i) doubling of the mark inhibiting a total reflective adequation and (ii) a deferral of the mark that prevents the subject for ever. Such a double bottom coincides with the double deal of signs in which one cannot choose between living repetition of life and truth and the dead repetition of death and non-truth, because the structure of difference would continually erase the stable position of signs into a reference to the other. This discursive relationship of a fixed determination of the other produces a law of repetition between the signifier and the signified only to repeat and

relate them together, because iterability of signifier and signified in the discourse shall depend upon identification of self-identical marks. Such identification follows an "interiorizing" of identity inscribed upon a stable "mark" not subjected to the discursive deferral. One can object here and raise the issue that discursivity cannot be understood in terms of an outside (iterability) constitutive of the inside (repetition). For example, Michel Foucault argues that Language is constituted by an effacement of whatever pre-exists and the phenomenon of use of language is "an acute attention to what is radically new, with no bond of resemblance and continuity with anything else"¹⁵. The radically new awaits language and hence, language has to "forget" the discourse that makes us aware of the present. Therefore, language "opens a neutral space in which *no existence can take root*"¹⁶

This interiority of language belongs to the phenomenological and ideal aspect of every signifier. The ideal form of the written signifier, for example, is not in the world, and the distinction between the grapheme and the empirical body of the corresponding graphic sign separates an inside from outside, phenomenological consciousness from the world.¹⁷

Derrida would reply to the objection by pointing out that phenomenological spatial reference lies in the world and this sense of being "outside" of the "world" constitute the phenomenon. But by a strange paradox, meaning is identified through suspension of relation to outside, while expression of meaning in language produces a distance from "outside" in order to hold meaning in ideal objectivity. Derrida considers such distance from outside as just a representation of function of language through which representations are validated. This is simultaneously a "figurative" function of language which successfully maintains the relationship between the verbal phone and the written sign and by the same forbids the written sign or grapheme in general as an image of the former. It forbids because the written sign links the verbal phone to an exterior, which it delinks in order to retain an ideal objectivity. This blurs the distinction between speech and writing and also redraws the natural relationship between them. Derrida re-produces another account of this relationship. Now we must think that writing is at the same time more exterior to speech, not being its "image" or "symbol" and more interior to speech, which is already in itself a writing.¹⁸

This reversal of opposites result into juxtaposition of dissimilar lines of thought and theory where the self-same difference between the two is dropped out and a radical difference emerges in the form of undecidability, where both are opposite, equally true and yet one does not lead to the other. Any decision shall involve this undecidability and a text shall only unconsciously cross over this tension that cannot be crossed over. This is *d'esistance*, a concept metaphor for untranslatability, inability to cross the impassable and at the same time a bridge that is the perpetual remainder of difference. The logic proper to *d'esistance* leads to the destabilization of the subject, to its disidentification from every position in *estance*, from all determinations of the subject by the ego. This does not mean that the subject "desists itself" ("to desist" does not allow a reflexive construction in English which it requires in French) rather that it desists without "desisting itself". For Derrida, the thought of *d'esistance* is one of the most demanding thought of responsibility.

But how does one desist without desisting herself? It is something like distinguishing super blindness victims from the hypothetical victims of blindness, whose touches do not

differ, while what differs is the qualia of the touch: the ego or the ipseity of touch is different than the seeing and touching of the self that performs the touch. That the self is not seen, the portrait of the self is the self that one does not see. The question is, how does one move from mere blindsight to seeing oneself blind to oneself? Is not the experience of being blind in the world different from blinding the world or worlding the blind as experience? Is not the concept of representation of the world through the sense of "I see" violated in touch that figures the world and configures it in senses without the necessary "I see"? Derrida points out that between seeing and touching the impiety of the subjectivity is intervened by the "interrupted", by understanding without artifice, without instituting the self. In such seeing with touch and without the artifice of the self, the self can see its ruins, ruining of the self in blind sight in an im-proper state, without a name. The passage from self to ruins is invaded by recalling and absence simultaneously, both of which face the aporia of d'esistance.

Like heroic subjective agent we must prepare ourselves to invent the wholly other: "to prepare oneself for this coming (venue) of the other is what can be called deconstruction". One can say that deconstruction directs itself towards the wholly other, the impossible, the dream of what is not and which does not belong within the horizon of what presently prevails. Once again a "double gesture", a crisscrossing between what is there and what is yet to come, this experience is characterized by Derrida,

(...) to invent would then be to "know how to say "come" and to answer the "come" of the other. Does that ever come about? Of this event one is never sure.¹⁹

But this saying "come" signifies a state of knowledge that does not follow the already existing discourse but treats through it; it is constituted and dislocated at the same time. Therefore,

(...) the question "what is" belongs to a space (ontology and from it the knowledge of grammar, linguistics, semantics and so on) opened by a "come" come from the other.²⁰

This sense of "come" could not become an object, theme or representation, but an opening which could only be demonstrated in language such that it remains as the other of language that comes in the "step beyond" and "not beyond" language. This "other" manifests in the irreducible structure of difference that language houses in. Derrida describes,

' Constituting and dislocating it at the same time, writing is other than the subject, in whatever sense the latter is understood. Writing can never be thought under the category of the subject, however it is modified, however it is endowed with consciousness or unconsciousness, it will refer by the entire thread of its history, to a substantiality of a presence unperturbed by accidents, or to the identity of the selfsame proper in the presence of self relationship.²¹

Manifestation of "other" in writing continuously dislocates any reference to the self and hence any movement of idealization in the text shall inherently be fractured between "self" and the "other" in a perpetual absence of the both. Such a fracture appears as a kind of "fork", one of the side extended further than the other in such a way that when the "self" posits an "other", the "other" never comes and the self remains in a perpetual state of waiting, preparing itself for the other. This keeps the discourse open-ended,

Would it not at once cease to be the other? Would the event have arrived yet?
Would it not be struck by its interdiction (...) by its very arrival?²²

This question puts the "other" under "erasure". In the textual structuring of the conceptual oppositions, no concept can itself remain metaphysical; it has to efface itself in order to refer to the other. This erasure is the possibility of becoming of concepts within a frame of convention and rules. Therefore deconstruction invents the permissible and the possible, which is the inventiveness of a "human subject", invention in conformity with already established conventions. Two consequences shall follow from these; one bending such conventions in order to allow the other to come in the opening of such conventions and secondly, invention invents nothing new. Both these consequences follow because,

nothing comes to the other or from the other. For the other is not the possible. So it would be necessary to say that the only possible invention is the invention of the impossible (...).²³

This is how deconstruction gets embroiled into a paradox of the impossible which sets it in motion, by means of which deconstruction can let it come,

I am careful to say "let it come" because if the other is precisely what is not invented, the initiative or deconstructive inventiveness can consist only in the opening, in unclosetting, destabilizing foreclusionary structures so far as to allow for the passage toward the other. But one does not make the other come, one lets it come by preparing for its coming.²⁴

This perpetual non-presence of the other in the inventiveness of the other takes it outside the textual fabric within which deconstruction operates. The name or concept of something disappears in the shrouds of otherness which permanently delay the wholly other. Derrida says,

There is no such thing as a "metaphysical concept". There is no such thing as a "metaphysical name". The metaphysical is a certain determination or direction taken by a chain, one cannot oppose it to a concept, but to a process of textual labour and another enchaining.²⁵

The concept tends to disappear to efface itself, to make itself meaningless in the process of enchaining. It becomes a name sans name. It does so precisely to point to the possibility of the wholly other which never falls into presence. Deconstruction obeys strange syntax of the sans:

The same word and the same thing appears removed from themselves, subtracted from their reference and from their identity, fully continuous with letting themselves be traversed, in their old body, towards a "wholly other" dissimulated in them. But no more than in pas does this consist in a simple privation or negation, far from it It forms the trace or the step (pas) of the *tout autre* that is at issue in it, the re-treat of the pas, and of the pas sans pas.²⁶

Such a re-inscription is an act of circumscribing and circumventing the invention of something within the discourse, which carries the tradition or convention. Derrida puts it under the erasure of promise :

I will speak of a promise, then, but also within the promise.²⁷

The point here is to remain active in placing oneself within the commitment of meaning and being, but as soon as one re-inscribes such a commitment within promise, the promise already is stripped away. But such stripping away is the source of the injunction that produces an unconditional moment of affirmation. This stripping away is simultaneously a "sending" and a "returning" which is beyond the closure of representation. Both "sending" and "returning" is "unconditioned", as it lies beyond every determinate context or beyond determination of context in general, that is, it marks an absence of an addressee to whom "promise" of sending is made and to whom returns the promise. So, Derrida writes,

Following this, what remains is to articulate this unconditionally with the determinate conditions of this or that context The structure thus described supposes that there are only contexts, that nothing exists outside context ... the limit of the frame or the border of the context always entails as closure of non-closure The outside penetrates and thus determines the inside.²⁸

What it wants to mean is that differentially ordered signs are not preceded by any meaning, structure or idea; rather it constitutes itself into an idea that acts as general text to hold the possibility of irreducibility of structure of difference into textuality. Such a generalized structure of text representing the condition of possibility of textuality in general remains extra-textual. It can enforce a stricture and at the same time open the text to the heterogeneity in general. But a "text" in its relationship with such heterogeneity acquires a definite context on its giving itself to the world. Therefore "text" interlaces reference to history, world, reality, Being and especially to the other, all those that are not immediately experienced, but experienced as "differentiality"²⁹. Derrida considers such an experience as "textual" in the sense that it serves as a framework of accounting all the "structures" "as real",

What I call "text" implies all the structures called "real", "economic", "historical", "socio-institutional", in short: all possible referents. Another way of recalling once again that there is nothing outside the "text", this does not mean that all referents are suspended, denied But it does not mean that every referent and all reality has the structure of a differential trace ... and that one cannot refer to this "real" except in an interpretive experience. The latter neither yields meaning nor assumes it except in a movement of differential referring.³⁰

What it means is that the textual representation assumes a differential structure, which means that the reality is never constituted except reciprocally by representation. Within the textual structure of difference, the condition of possibility of representation in the originary absence of what is represented is otherwise presented as an empirical mark. Therefore, Derrida contends,

One must indeed speak of an originary trace or arche-trace. Yet we know that the concept destroys its name and ... all beings with trace. There is above all no originary trace.³¹

It is the space of arche-traces brought inside the horizon of presence that deconstruction takes place in the form of taking into account the limitless context. It is here upon the surface of a context that deconstruction takes place in the form of textualization, as an affirmative move and simultaneously it proceeds through the text to

uncover the lines of forces that order the trace structure within the text. Within the text, spacing of the traces is the "becoming-absent" and "becoming-unconscious" of the subject. The signification is formed within this hollow of difference between what is appearing in the text and the appearance. Derrida characterizes this difference as a "non-fundamental structure",

In such a structure(...) at once superficial and bottomless (...) the property is literally sunk (...) it passes into the other.³²

This non-fundamental structure of the text transforms the hierarchical structure between reality and representation and reverses it into its opposites. Production of such a structure of reversal is meant for instituting the difference into the text. By institution of such difference the text draws its closure around it in its relationship with what it means to say. Difference is thereby subsumed under meaning. This subsumption of meaning under difference does not enable a text to construct a meaning wholly but constructs it partially by taking resort to an ideality that marks a transition from a phenomenon to its condition of possibility. But this resorting to transcendental conditions of possibility is the return of a moment of unconditional activity forgotten in the construction of a text. Remembering the unconditionality is an irreducible opening of the text beyond its "closure" but this in itself does not free the text from subsumption under laws of production to which it shows its never inextinguishable fidelity. Derrida contends that the structure of difference also accounts for this fidelity by giving it an ontological status in terms of belonging to the law. What Derrida intends is to remove the fidelity of the structure of difference to the law of abstraction of the text by way of referring to the unconditional as well as to the conditions of possibility, none of which is present within the text. The double reference to "unconditional" (difference) and the condition of possibility (of knowledge) only issues out from a "text", instead of constructing the text themselves. Derrida argues that context articulates the conditions of possibility for experience in general and the context itself is conditioned by the unconditioned, by that which is independent of "a context in general". Derrida argues that such an "unconditioned" arises as the interruption and non-closure of any determined context. It is an injunction that transcends all contexts. Such an unconditioned paradoxically acts as the condition of possibility of texts in general and conditions it through difference that points to a differential matrix of generation of names and concepts produced as its effect,

The unnameable is not an ineffable Being which no name could approach: God, for example. This unnameable is the play which makes possible nominal effects, the relatively unitary and atomic structures that are called names, the chains of substitutions of names in which, for example, the nominal effect difference is itself enmeshed.³³

The eruption of the unconditional within the conditioned is an unnameable through difference signifying only a dynamic which can neither be re-called as a nostalgia nor be prognosticated as the ultimate, which is "never be" or "never is", but an absolute alterity which is never present but just an "indication",

It governs nothing, reigns over nothing, and nowhere exercises any authority, it is not announced by any capital letter. Not only is there no kingdom of difference, but difference instigates the subversion of every kingdom (...) which makes it

obviously threatening and infallibly dreaded by everything within us that desires a kingdom, the past or future presence of a kingdom.³⁴

Thus the irreducible opening of a text to the unconditional lies beyond every determinate context, even of the determination of context in general. The unconditional not only announces its presence in the opening of the text, it intervenes in the construction of a text from its very opening and forms a law that transcends the very determination of this context and context in general. The unconditionality needs to be articulated by way of opening the conditioned context to the indeterminable context of responsibility and this is how it is opened to the conditioned indetermination. The conditioned context is deferred in the moment of opening up the conditioned and the unconditioned context conditions it in different ways producing difference in the determined context. The unconditioned context affirms with a determination and the moment of affirmation bears an injunction that entails a non-closure in the text. The *forked paths of meaning* is therefore the possibilities opened up by the undecidability in language. This is how Borges' text is crucial to an examination of the following issues on the basis of which multiple possibilities of meaning opens up-

a. Through a meditation on the nature of reality, history, space and time as fictional realms with infinite possibilities the relationship between literary creation and the definition of reality is questioned. History and time as a labyrinth of alternate dimensions or possibilities is brought into play.

b. The idea of history as a single path or linear process is interrogated, posing instead the idea of history branching out in an infinite number of different directions at every point in time and space. Also every space-time node is projected as the centre of a system of branching or forking paths, an ever-recurring moment/place of choice with profound effects on and links to everything else.

c. Literary creation as a definition of the possibilities of the real deconstructs reality into plural- "realities", creating multiple literary worlds, multiple paths, multiple dimensions all occurring at once.

d. Borges' text is a statement of the game-like quality of the story as a puzzle and of the real, literal and symbolic labyrinths (labyrinth of Ts'ui Pên, labyrinth of the narrative, labyrinth of time and reality).

e. Various dimensions of time as it operates in a "labyrinth of infinite possibilities"; time as a network of simultaneously divergent and convergent forces/paths which are not absolute or uniform, put the element of "undecidability" into play.

f. A possibility of multiple themes of personal, racial, ethnic, and cultural identities in the context of capitalist and imperialist war and nationalistic conflicts also questions time and reality. Themes of racism and oppression of the cultural other and the desperate desire of the oppressed to be accepted by the oppressors (Richard Madden as an Irishman serving England, Yu Tsun as a Chinese man in the service of a Germany) open the narrative to innumerable fictional plot-structures.

g. Incidental "realities" versus "real" realities through the use of ironies, hidden and unsuspected connections/ coincidences heighten the sense of betrayal through illusive perceptions of reality, for example the city of Albert and Dr. Stephen Albert, Yu Tsun's great grandfather's labyrinth and Dr. Stephen Albert's re-creation of the labyrinth;

seemingly unrelated lives and fates linked by invisible ties; Yu Tsun's acknowledgment of his tragic error and misrecognition of the identity of Stephen Albert.

This is how one reads into the philosophy of infinite *forking paths* through Borges and Derrida contrasting it with the view that the author of an atrocious undertaking/text has already accomplished the task of imposing a fixed meaning into the text. Undecidability of meaning refuses to reassemble the detritus of authoritative traditions of interpreting texts, which privileges a given sense of real over other possible/alternative meanings.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Aporia is an inevitable absence of desired meaning or explanation in the case of an irresolvable internal contradiction or logical disjunction in a text, argument or theory.
2. By way of using Kant's maxim of universalizability in case of interpreting texts.
3. Derrida Jacques, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982): 121 Henceforth *MP*.
4. Derrida Jacques, *Speech & Phenomena and other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*. Trans. David Allison (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973):133. Henceforth *SP*.
5. *Ibid.*:85-6.
6. Derrida makes a distinction between "sense" and "writing", the former does not have an absolute origin, rather the origin of sense lies only in other signs; the latter is a structure of marks and graphemes in which sense enters only as a re-mark that leaves a trace, which is also an-other mark. Sense and Writing mutually inscribe and re-inscribe through a trace-structure. This trace-structure is called "proto-writing" by Derrida.
7. Derrida Jacques, *Raising The Tone of Philosophy, Late Essays by Immanuel Kant, Transformative Critique by Jacques Derrida*, Ed. Peter Fenves (Baltimore: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993):21. Henceforth *TP*.
8. Derrida Jacques, *Of Grammatology*, trans, Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak (Baltimore: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1976):29. Henceforth *OG*.
9. *SP*:85-6.
10. The term *symplokē* means *interweaving, interlacing, connection and struggle* etc. (Italics mine).
11. Derrida quotes this statement of Levinas from his book entitled, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. For Details, see Jacques Derrida, "At This Very Moment in This Work I Am" in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other* (Stanford: Stanford University Press,2007): 151.
12. *Ibid*: 151.
13. *Ibid*:158.
14. *Ibid*:179
15. Michel Foucault, "The Thought of the Outside" in *Aesthetics: Method and Epistemology*, Vol.2 Edited by James Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 1994): 167.
16. *Ibid*: 166. Italics mine.
17. In a simple assertion such as "I speak" threatens to erase the speaker from the consciousness of the rld, pronounces the death of the Subject in the subjectivity of speaking. Through its graphic signifier, it separates the phenomenon of "speaking" from the "consciousness" of the world to bounce back with the future appearance of an "I".
18. *OG*:46.
19. Derrida Jacques, *Reading de Man Reading*, (ed.), Lindsay Waters and Wlad Godzich (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1989): 52. Henceforth *RdR*.
20. *TP*: 166.
21. *OG*:68-9
22. Derrida Jacques, *Parages*, Galilee, Paris, 1986, p.66.Henceforth *P*.
23. *RdR*:60
24. *Ibid*.

25. Derrida Jacques, *Dissemination*, tans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: Uinv. Of Chicago Press, 1981):6.
26. *P*: 90.
27. H. Coward and Foshay T. (ed.), *Derrida and Negative Theology* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992): 84.
28. Derrida Jacques, *Limited Inc.*, trans, Samuel Weber (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1988):152-53. Henceforth *LI*.
29. *Differentiality* is the essential difference between the signifier and signified.
30. *LI*:148.
31. *OG*: 61.
32. Derrida Jácques, *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, trans. Barbara Harlow(Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1978):117.Henceforth *S*.
33. *S*: 81.
34. Derrida uses the metaphor of "kingdom" in order to speak of how difference can subvert "order" of a command structure. See, *MP*: 22.