



**Human Agency and the Epistemological
Vortex in Beckett's The Unnamable:
A Deconstructive Reading**

by

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DOI: 10.21608/AAKJ.2024.283403.1729

Date received: 17/4/2024

Date of acceptance: 14/5/2024

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in Beckett's *The Unnamable*: A Deconstructive Reading**

Abstract:

Derrida's deconstructive critique places Western ethnocentrism under erasure, and subjects its institutionalized structures and truth claims to an incessant freeplay of signs. Dismantling the teleological Hegelian methods of reasoning, deconstruction has managed to step outside the web of archaeological structures, a-priori reasoning, and the self-referentiality of Western rationalist thought. Meaning and interpretative strategies, within the framework of deconstruction, are part of a discursive formation that never suffocates cultural ruptures and discontinuities. The aim of the present research is to offer a deconstructive reading of Beckett's *The Unnamable*, pinpointing the intellectual impasse that confronts western metaphysics, and the metaphysical silence that afflicts postmodern and postmetaphysical writings. The text dispenses with the logos and with all fixed points of reference, and involves the reader in a quasi-philosophical monologue that acts as an epistemological inquiry into the philosophy of language and how linguistic metaphoricity disseminates meaning and shatters the arbitrary relation between sets of binary opposition. A piece of a self-reflexive critique, *The Unnamable* deconstructs its own ontological being and questions the soundness of its methods of epistemological inquiry. Functioning as an intertext and deconstructing the phenomenological moments experienced by the narrator, *The Unnamable* questions the accuracy with which we embrace many interpretative methods, and highlights the dangers of doubting the doubt and the challenges one confronts when coming across an epistemic and a reflexive deadlock.

Keywords: human agency, epistemological vortex, metaphysical silence, parergonality, aporia.

الإرادة الإنسانية والدوامة المعرفية في رواية "ما لا يمكن تسميته"

لصموئيل بيكيت: قراءة تفكيكية

ملخص:

تعامل النقد التفكيكي الذي أسسه جاك دريدا مع مركزية الفلسفة الغربية ومع النزعة العرقية التي تتغلغل في كياناتها المؤسسية وفي أفكارها الفلسفية ونجح في تقويض الكثير من المسلمات والتضادات الثنائية التي تأسس عليها الفكر الغربي، وقد رفض النقد التفكيكي أيضاً فلسفة هيغل المثالية ونزعتها إلى الشمولية وجنوحها إلى وئد نقاط الاختلاف في تفسير التاريخ، ومن خلال رفض الأساس الفكري الذي قامت عليه ميتافيزيقا الغرب أعلن دريدا خروجه عن هذا الإطار الفكري الذي بُني على التراكمات الفكرية التي يتم تحديدها من خلال فرضيات مسبقة والتي تشير إلى نفسها من خلال نفسها ولا تعترف بفكرة الآخر. وبناءً على هذا، قدم دريدا مفهوم جديد للمعنى ولاستراتيجيات تفسير المعنى قائم على الانفتاح على كل نقاط الاختلاف والغياب والتركيبات المتوازنة وليست المتسلسلة. ويهدف هذا البحث إلى تقديم قراءة تفكيكية لرواية "ما لا يمكن تسميته" لصموئيل بيكيت في محاولة لإلقاء الضوء على المعضلات الفلسفية والفكرية التي تواجه الفلسفة الغربية ككل، وعلى حالة الصمت الفلسفي الذي يمثل أكبر تحدٍ يواجه كتابات ما بعد الحداثة. وتأخذ رواية بيكيت القارئ إلى عالم مشكوك في وجوده، عالم لا يمكن تفسيره من خلال الفلسفات العقلانية ولا الفلسفات المثالية، ولكنه عالم يساعد القارئ على البحث المعرفي والخوض في مشكلات فلسفة اللغة وكيف يتشتت المعنى من خلال إشارة الدال إلى دال آخر وليس إلى مدلول واضح، فمن خلال كسر العلاقة الاعتباطية بين الدال والمدلول، نجحت رواية "ما لا يمكن تسميته" في إلقاء الضوء على عدم مصداقية الكثير من الفرضيات الأولية التي يقدمها لنا علم المنطق، وعلى القصور الشديد الذي يتغلغل في استراتيجيات تفسير المعنى وتفسير النصوص المختلفة.

1. Introduction

Western thought's obsession with the search for and the dependence on a logos that would guarantee the stability and the homogeneity of meaning has always shaped the epistemic fabric that governs the production of discourse and hence the epistemological network as a whole. This logos – the extra-linguistic point of reference that functions as the origin of meaning – has been the basis of ethnocentrism which has governed Western philosophy and its linguistic system of signification. Deconstruction, as a postmodern and a postmetaphysical philosophy, dismantles Western ethnocentrism with its system of binary oppositions, that, according to Derrida, is the offspring of a hierarchical structure that is built on arbitrary relationships that suffocate differences and points of rupture. Breaking the phonocentrism – logocentrism binary opposition, Derrida introduces a logocentrism that has freed itself from the grip of phonocentrism; a logocentric system that is no longer the reporting of speech, and that is in itself an independent system of signifiers.

Derridean deconstruction thus introduces a pattern of thinking that can “interrupt the processes of totalisation which reside at the core of such projects of construction, exposing the violences, contingencies and exclusions they are predicated upon” (Hirst 2). Derrida's deconstructive strategies towards ethnocentrism and Western thought's teleological reasoning have been well illustrated in his seminal book *Of Grammatology*, and in his famous article “Structure, Sign, and

Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences”. *Of Grammatology* dismantles the assumption upon which ethnocentrism rests, and is a deep investigation of the nature of language and of the soundness of the propositions on which many philosophical truths depend. The difficulty of reading *Of Grammatology* is attributed to the fact that Derrida introduces many assumptions that do not depend on earlier assumptions from other domains of knowledge in an attempt to escape from the web of a priori reasoning and teleological thinking. Derrida’s article explores the nature of structure, and how Western metaphysics has always been in search of a center, a logos that organizes this structure. This center, for Derrida, is the force that suffocates ruptures, hinders deep interpretations, and generates meanings and truths which rely on falsified elementary propositions.

The present research offers a deconstructive reading of Samuel Beckett’s *The Unnamable*, and casts light, through a close textual analysis, on the intellectual impasse one suffers upon the realization that one has to dispense with the center, the logos, and the arbitrariness of the linguistic system of signification. Confronted with an ambiguous narrator who is *apparently* dead, the reader finds himself in an “active sense of differing that never stops and therefore always delays the achievement of identity” (Lawlor 2). A text that deconstructs itself and that questions its own ontology, *The Unnamable* forces the reader to dispense with his premeditated assumptions and anticipations, and to adjust to new literary techniques, to new segments of writing, to new rhythms and an ambiguous

tone. Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and his article "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" are made use of in the course of this deconstructive reading of Beckett's *The Unnamable*, as a text that embodies the difficulty of stepping outside metaphysics if one is to truly criticize and question the premises through which metaphysics is verbalized and communicated.

2. Deconstruction and the Epistemological Vortex

Derrida's deconstructive approach occupies this interstitial space between the transcendental and the empirical, the theory and the praxis, and the logos and the absence of centers. According to Burgass, "like Nietzsche⁽¹⁾, Derrida co-implicates theory and practice under a third principle (parergonality)⁽²⁾ thus subverting the effective power of theory – if two terms are subsumed by a third, then neither can claim any power over the other" (67). Parergon, thus, is the third space or the third discourse that unites the theoretical framework and its practical application. Deconstructive discourse, functioning as a parergon, does not get involved in an epistemological investigation of the epistemic web of Western metaphysics, but rather questions its ontology. Habermas illustrates that,

Postmetaphysical thought does not dispute

determinate theological affirmations;

instead it asserts their meaninglessness.

It means to prove that in the system

of basic terms in which the Judeo-Christian tradition has been dogmatized (and hence rationalized) theologically meaningful affirmations cannot be set forth at all (12.)

Derrida's deconstruction thus highlights the meaninglessness and the falsification that have plagued the corpus of Western thought, but, at the same time, admits the impossibility of totally stepping outside the web of metaphysics. Derrida's work "constantly shows that it is not possible to crawl out from under the whole net of actual language, the language of one's own time and place, even if that 'point of a certain exteriority' may be attainable" (Hobson 16). In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida deconstructs the phenocentrism-logocentrism binary opposition, and goes further to deconstruct the logocentrism that decapitates the concept of writing, while, simultaneously, acknowledging the impossible of totally dispensing with metaphysics. Derrida illustrates that if grammatology, as the science of writing, is given

the most favorable hypothesis, [and] it did overcome all technical and epistemological obstacles as well as all the theological and metaphysical impediments that have limited it hitherto,

such a science of writing runs the risk
of never being established as such and
with that name (4.)

Having dismantled the phenocentrism-logocentrism binary opposition, Derrida works on a logocentric system that is not part of a binarism, and that, nevertheless, claims rationality and stems from a certain logos. This rationality, that seems to govern writing, for Derrida, “inaugurates the destruction, not the demolition but the de-sedimentation, the de-construction, of all the significations that have their source in that of the logos, particularly the signification of truth” (10). This process of *de-sedimentation*, for Derrida, is achieved when we dispense with all rational claims, and when we look at signifiers as referring to other signifiers and not to closed signifieds. He illustrates that when dealing with “the totality of determined signs... one must exclude any relationship of natural subordination, any natural hierarchy among signifiers or orders of signifiers” (Derrida 44).

The absence of the transcendental signified is what allows the deconstructive process to be initiated, and, hence, signifiers can *differ* and are *deferred*, achieving the Derridean *différance* that nullifies the posited outer reality imposed upon the linguistic system of signification. One is left with signifiers referring to other signifiers in endless chains of signifiers, and, moreover, confronted with “disunity of event and repetition [that] implies that there is no simple beginning of time, no origin; no matter how far we go back into the past, what appears

as an origin is always the repetition of something prior” (Lawlor 11). This incessant freeplay of signifiers, along with the absence of a closed signified, results in a metaphysical closure, the moment in which one has to dispense with the logos and with all the Cartesian rationalist claims.

In “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science”, Derrida tackles the change that has happened in the concept of structure. He cautiously calls this change an “event”. This event, for Derrida, “will have the exterior form of a *rupture* and a *redoubling*” (1). This rupture is the *aporia* – the epistemological paradox – that lurks hidden within all structures, and that should be given the chance to dismantle the structures in order to construct them again without depending on a logos or points of inevitability. And the redoubling is the freeplay of signifiers that allows other structures to be introduced without arbitrary relations of subordination imposed upon them. Structures, for Derrida, then, have to dispense with the center, and have to be prone to the freeplay of signs. Within the framework of Derridean deconstruction, structures should be introduced without a center that “balances and organizes the structure” and that, actually, does nothing but limiting “what might call the *freeplay* of the structure” (Derrida 1).

Deconstructing the claims of ethnocentrism and highlighting the *aporia* within ethnocentric structures that are subtle and institutionalized, Derrida is for an “absolute chance” in which “affirmation also surrenders itself to genetic indetermination, to the seminal adventure of the trace” (12).

Derrida's metaphysics of absence and the fecundity with which he produces arguments concerning the premises upon which Western metaphysics is built have actually radicalized the concepts of interpretation, meaning, and historicity. Liberating the signifier from the chains of binary oppositions and from its dependence on truth claims and the primary signified, Derrida is introducing deconstructive strategies that are not archaeological, that acknowledge metaphysical closure and points of rupture, and that are aware of their "linguistic, historical necessity and the simultaneous (and unrealizable) desire to leave metaphysics behind" (Zimmermann 124, in Bowen).

3. *The Unnamable* and the Epistemological Vortex

Beckett's *The Unnamable* is a text that explores the metaphysical closure suffered by writers during the process of writing when trying to escape the grip of the transcendental signified, the organized structure, and the logos that permeates the whole system of signification. From the very beginning, the reader comes across a title that is connotative of an absent signified. That which cannot be named, even by the writer himself, is that falsified posited outer reality that guarantees the stability of meaning and the suffocation of the freeplay of signs and of the interpretative process. And that which cannot be named is also an announcement of the failure of the linguistic system of representation to capture the truth of things, if there is any. The philosophical connotations of the title communicate "the devaluation of word 'language' itself, and how, in the very hold it has upon us, it betrays a loose vocabulary, the temptation

of a cheap seduction, [and] the passive yielding to fashion” (Derrida 6).

In *The Unnamable*, the reader meets an ambiguous narrator who is self-conscious of his failure, and who embodies a state of deep epistemological scepticism and ontological uncertainty. The narrator’s act of historicizing his condition is blurred and impeded by the transcendental thinking that envelops our system of representation. He begins his act of narration by a series of questions that embody perplexity and ontological loss: “Where now? Who now? When now? Unquestioning. I, say I. Unbelieving. Questions, hypotheses, call them that” (Beckett 27). Deeply sceptic of the ability of language to communicate a meaning, the narrator invites the reader to interact with him in his inability to go on with the arguments, and in his desire to deconstruct the claims of presence of Western metaphysics. Beginning the process of narration with the aforementioned series of questions, the narrator communicates this “deeply felt questioning of thought, language and the self, [that] is couched in the form of a quasi-philosophical inquiry and a parodied self-undermining novel” (Kennedy 149).

This extreme scepticism towards the act of writing creates a text that is deeply *self-reflexive*. Reflexivity, as used here, is not only a process of reflecting upon a wide range of intellectual methods and ways of reasoning. Reflexivity “suggests a further complexification and layering of experiences and thinking about experience. [Reflexivity] enables us to engage with core

assumptions and interpretative frames” (Kiipers 3). Immersed in this process of self-reflexivity, the narrator deconstructs the concept of a-priori knowledge and the rationalist power of reasoning. He says, “The best is not to decide anything, in this connection, *in advance*. If a thing turns up, for some reason or another, take it into consideration” (Beckett 27). Putting the concept of a-priori reasoning under erasure, the narrator brings to the forefront the importance of the points of rupture that “turn up” and that can actually deconstruct the whole argument presented. *The Unnamable* thus, as a piece of epistemological inquiry, invites the reader to get immersed in a process of reflexivity (*not only reflection*) that triggers deep questions about being, epistemology, and the underlying structures that codify our linguistic system of signification.

Beckett's *The Unnamable*, as an embodiment of postmetaphysical cognitive perplexity, further deconstructs the soundness of the arbitrary relations between sets of binary oppositions. The narrator says, “Can it be innate knowledge? Like that of good and evil” (Beckett 32). Deconstructing the power of the Cartesian cogito, the narrator, moreover, questions the credibility of good and evil binary opposition and, hence, the credibility of all truth claims of Western metaphysics. The narrator - in his act of deconstructing all binary oppositions - brings the second unprivileged term in life-death binary opposition to the forefront. Describing his condition of imprisonment within the jar – or maybe within the tomb – the narrator says, “For a collar, fixed to the mouth of the jar, now encircles my neck, just below the chin” (Beckett 61). Life and

death binary opposition is broken in the text, and the reader is actually listening to death commenting on life, and is further left in this interstitial space unable to determine whether the narrator is dead or alive.

A text that problematizes the methods of epistemological inquiry and methods of inference, *The Unnamable* draws the reader's attention to the fact that "the putting together of arguments, even in a scientific tradition, is affected by the particular scientific tradition and the particular language, national and cultural, it is occurring in" (Hobson 1). The narrator touches upon the problems of inference; he says, "Nothing else to say but the thing that prevents them from *finding*, they'd do better to think of what they're saying, in order at least to vary its presentation" (Beckett 97). The narrator's problematizing the process of *finding* and arriving to conclusions is actually a call to acknowledge the epistemic vortex created by the linguistic system of signification, and a call for an ontological revision of the soundness of our premises and our elementary propositions.

4. Metaphysical Silence in *The Unnamable*

Metaphysical Silence in *The Unnamable* is both indicative of the aporia that disrupts the homogeneity of epistemological and ontological reasoning, and of the "systematic imitation of diminishment and failure [that] pushes the writing itself towards painfully self-conscious failure" (Kennedy149). The reader is left with an ambivalent disembodied voice that cannot be

defined according to the linguistic rules of our system of signification and that lacks a clear nexus with its spatio-temporal reality. The disembodied voice's final aim is to "reach a final *silence* through its own excess of speaking: that incessant, compulsive written soliloquy that makes up the winding text" (Kennedy 139). The disembodied voice's fluctuation between silence and his insistence to go on with the quasi-philosophical exhortations embodies this metaphysical scepticism towards the epistemic web that produces writing, and a deep questioning of all truth claims upon which different discourses depend.

The disembodied voice says, "And at the same time I am obliged to speak. I shall never be silent. Never" (Beckett 27). The disembodied voice pinpoints the importance of the interstitial third space, this *parergon*, that allows a re-evaluation of the epistemic web and its premises. It says, "The search for the means to put an end to things, an end to speech, is what enables the discourse to continue" (Beckett 34). This interstitial third space is this gap between "the written being" and "the being written" (Derrida 18). And this gap is the linguistic input of the long, quasi-philosophical, and repetitive monologue that extends for more than forty pages with its accelerating rhythm and eccentric linguistic structures. Radicalizing the concepts of interpretation, elementary propositions formation, and logical argumentation, the disembodied voice communicates to the reader how the process of writing fails as far as truth claims are concerned, and how *différance* and temporality should pave the way for miscellaneous interpretations and for the liberation of

the sign. The narrator – the disembodied voice, or the torso in the jar – endlessly asserts his yearning to be liberated from this intellectual impasse, this metaphysical closure and silence, and to be able to verbalize a statement that corresponds to the reality of his situation: “I hope this preamble will soon come to an end and the statement begin that will dispose of me” (Beckett 37).

In *The Unnamable*, metaphysical silence, as the inability of our system of signification to meticulously communicate the exact meaning of a concept, is attributed to the metaphoric nature of language that increases the gap between the signifier and the signified. The disembodied voice says, “And yet I am afraid, afraid of what my words will do to me, to my refuge, yet again” (Beckett 37). Language, for the disembodied voice, destroys the serenity with which Western metaphysics has accepted many falsified realities and reductionist assumptions. Language, for him, is that endless process of differing, where the meaning is always susceptible to the freeplay of the signs. This linguistic indetermination is what actually shapes man’s reality and determines the way he verbalizes knowledge. Expressing this metaphysical silence, the disembodied voice says, “What am I to do, what shall I do... how proceed? By aporia pure and simple? Or by affirmations and negations invalidated as uttered, or sooner or later?” (Beckett 27). Aporia deconstructs the narrator’s affirmations and negations, and his argumentations and assumptions are modulated by the freeplay of signifiers, the structures that dismantle themselves, and the metaphoricity of language that erases the meaning the moment it is delivered.

5. Human Agency in *The Unnamable*

Deconstructive thought affirms the illusion of human agency, deconstructs the notion of the Cartesian cogito, and profoundly interrogates the taken-for-granted concepts of teleological thinking and transcendental reasoning. Derrida has always attempted to “lead us back to the experience that shows us that we do not have the power that we think we have. In the auto-affection of hearing oneself speak, we encountered this powerlessness when we recognized that other voices always contaminate my own voice” (Lawlor 12). Man’s power to achieve autonomy through his internal light of reason is put under erasure. And, within the framework of deconstruction, presence is never guaranteed, never simple, and is always deferred by a point prior and by the historicity of the situation.

In *The Unnamable*, the reader confronts a deconstructive cynicism towards human agency and the authorial voice through a text that functions as an intertext⁽³⁾ and that undermines its own arguments and its own ontology. According to Childs, “Intertextuality, with its endlessly receding network of debts and legacies, disturbs a casual belief in the uniqueness of the text and of the originality of the authorial consciousness” (122). The disembodied voice says. “Going nowhere, coming from nowhere, Malone passes” (Beckett 29), and it, moreover, affirms the influence Malone has over him: “I would hear him all the time, on my right hand, behind my back, on my left

hand” (Beckett 30). Intertextuality, in the text, is a self-referential process in which the unidentified narrator refers to the process of making the text, and also intertextuates other texts written by Beckett who is there and not there at the same time. Through intertextuality, the autonomy of the text is shattered, and the authorial voice is reduced to a weak voice which is entangled within a web of intricate and paralyzing relationships that have imprisoned him “at the circumference” with his eyes “always fixed in the same direction” (Beckett 30).

Human Agency is further deconstructed by the narrator’s phenomenological⁽⁴⁾ moments that never reach maturity, and that never succeeds in capturing the transcendental. “Whenever the narrator attempts to report the particulars of his present condition, something like the contours of infinity are being outlined” (Kennedy 143). The narrator’s phenomenological moments in the text break the binary opposition of the transcendental-empirical, and reveal a temporary truth that is neither transcendental nor empirical, but a quasi-transcendental, an interstitial space that claims no logos. The only truth that can be attained is that transient truth in which the transcendental merges with the empirical, the transient with the everlasting, and the beyond with the no beyond.

The phenomenological moment experienced by the narrator is thus a Derridean moment that brings about a deconstruction of human agency. Chin-Yi illustrates that for

Derrida “the transcendental exists only through the empirical in the dynamic relation of iterability, the transcendental is nothing outside the empirical” (Chin-Yi 16). The narrator’s phenomenological moments are, thus, the moments which announce his intellectual failure, and his inability to verbalize the particulars of his present situation in relation to a transcendental signified. The disembodied voice laments his surrender to this intellectual impasse: “Let them scourge me without ceasing and evermore... in the end I might begin to look as if I had grasped the meaning of life” (Beckett 80). His quasi-transcendental moment in which he *seems* to capture the essence of life is nothing but an echo of the disintegration inside his mind, and the inability of the linguistic system of representation to create a reality that meticulously corresponds to an ultimate truth.

6. Conclusion

Derrida's deconstructive critique places Western ethnocentrism under erasure, and subjects its institutionalized structures and truth claims to an incessant freeplay of signs. It dismantles the fixations that have permeated the corpus of Western metaphysics and exposes its truth and meanings to dissemination beyond the grip of teleological thinking and archaeological structures. Meaning and interpretative strategies, within the framework of deconstruction, are part of a discursive formation that generates different interpretations and perspectives, explores hidden power relations, and never allows a suffocation of cultural ruptures and discontinuities. Derridean methods of reasoning have acknowledged structures without centers, genealogies that favour *différance* and not identity or presence. Destabilizing the epistemological basis upon which many ethical and political knowledge rests, deconstruction has been regarded as a key solution for many political issues in the field of international relations. According to Hirst, Derrida's thought "offers an account of resistance which focuses on disrupting the roles and functions of ontology, through a conceptualization of 'deconstruction and/as resistance' " (Hirst 2).

The deconstructive reading of Beckett's *The Unnamable*, presented in this research, is an exploration of the intellectual impasse that confronts Western metaphysics and of the

metaphysical silence that afflicts postmodern and postmetaphysical writings. Dispensing with the logos that acts as a fixed point of reference and a guarantee of meaning, the text involves the reader in a process of experimenting with methods of reasoning and techniques of presenting logical argumentation. The quasi-philosophical monologue of the disembodied voice functions as an epistemological inquiry into the philosophy of language, and how linguistic metaphoricity disseminates meaning and shatters the arbitrary relation between the signifier and its signified. That which is referred to as the unnamable is never identified by the reader, nor by the narrator himself. It might be the absent signified, the unthinkable, the moment of metaphysical silence, or the genealogical structures that claim no centers or a-priori hypotheses.

A piece of a self-reflexive critique, *The Unnamable* deconstructs its own ontological being and questions the soundness of its methods of epistemological inquiry. The text occupies this interstitial space – this parergon – between the dismantling of structures and allowing the freeplay of signs to create other structures that are also susceptible to an incessant process of dissemination. *The Unnamable* – functioning as an intertext and deconstructing the phenomenological moments experienced by the disembodied voice – questions the accuracy with which we approach many cultural phenomena, and the calmness with which we embrace many interpretative methods and analytical techniques. Through its self-reflexive techniques,

the text highlights the dangers of doubting the doubt and the challenges one confronts when coming across an epistemic and a reflexive deadlock.

Endnotes

1. Nietzsche: Nietzsche's esoteric philosophy deconstructs the transcendental essence and discards all forms of teleology. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche attacks the logos pertaining to morality. He says, "What philosophers called 'the rational ground of morality' and sought to furnish was, viewed in the proper light, only a scholarly form of faith in the prevailing morality" (495). And in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche deconstructs the arbitrary and hierarchical structures of all binarisms. He says, "Values did man only assign to things in order to maintain himself – he created only the significance of things, a human significance!" (37).
2. Parergonality: "Parergon refers to the discourse of interpretation around the work that attempts to uncover the presence of the ergon/artwork in its concealed form. Inner meaning is used in an ambiguous way by Derrida, since he criticizes the different endeavours that have ensued in history to unveil ultimate Truth as a single determined entity, yet he acknowledges the process of interrogation which has taken on multiple forms and can be decoded as parerga" (Dreyer 2).
3. Intertextuality: According to Childs, intertextuality, as a poststructuralist and a deconstructive technique in literary texts, "was initially introduced by Julia Kristeva who envisaged texts as functioning along two axes: the horizontal axis determines the relationship between the reader and the text whilst the vertical axis contains the complex sets of relations of the text to other texts" (121).
4. Phenomenology: Chin-Yi comments on Derrida's reading of phenomenology. He says, "Derrida argues that the transcendental is nothing outside its iteration or repetition as the empirical. The

transcendental is nothing outside the empirical and has to be repeated with a difference through the distinguishing movement of the trace. The trace only retrospectively produces the transcendental and empirical” (24).

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