Abstract

Chapter One: The Thought of Friedrich Nietzsche

Nietzsche’s critical philosophy is in direct relationship with some other concepts of his philosophy such as his concept of man. The first step in discussing Nietzsche's concept of man and his definition of the ideal man is to know his ideas on the morals and how he looks at them. In *Genealogy of Morals*, he reveals on the shortcomings of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Nietzsche criticizes the Christian tradition’s concept of man based on its two main weak points: its idea of the passivity of man rather than his creativity, and its glorification of the suffering of man rather than his activity. Then, he introduces his concept of *ressentiment* and ultimately presents his argument of the reasons behind the invention of such concepts as *good* and *evil*.

The thesis at this point focuses on the question of suffering and the original sin as presented by Christianity. The feeling of being a sinner leads psychologically to a sense of guilt and suffering in Christian culture which deprives man of his creativity. It is here that Nietzsche presents his idea on the *asceticism* of the Christian man.

Moreover, in order to investigate Nietzsche’s concept of man more vividly the present study provides a reading of his concept of “ubermensch,” that is the Superman. Therefore, attempt is done to describe the characteristics of the Superman based on Nietzsche’s last writings, especially his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Man, in Nietzsche's
view, is considered as passionate, free, independent, creative, and full of emotions and enthusiasm. The Superman, subsequently, is hard, strong, forceful and creative. The Superman is “beyond good and evil”. He is not under the influences of the existing traditions, institutions, discourses and value systems.

Discussing Nietzsche’s concept of “will to power” is another step in a better understanding of his concept of superman. Thus, the research study here elaborates on Schopenhauer’s influences on him as well as his differences with Schopenhauer. The will to power, as some have misunderstood, is not the power over others; it is, however, the power one needs to overcome oneself.

Towards the end of the first chapter Nietzsche’s critical views on Socrates and modernity have been demonstrated in order to pave the way for discussing Post-Structuralist criticism of both Socrates and Modernity. Nietzsche’s criticism of Socrates, mainly observable in his *The Twilight of the Idols*, is based on his rejection of the reason and ethics as put forth by Socrates. Nietzsche believes that Socrates neglects man's passions, instincts and concerns in favor of a kind of rational restraint whose only aim is to seek knowledge. That is why Nietzsche regarded Socrates as a man of decline.

Nietzsche's *The Twilight of the Idols* is also dedicated to discuss the shortcomings of the thought of the different philosophers of the modernity. In the third section of this book, called "Reason" in Philosophy, Nietzsche tries to foreground the limitations of the pure reason of man on which most of the philosophers of modernity have relied. Here he satirizes this instrument, that is, the reason.
Chapter Two: Post-Structuralist Philosophy

Post-Structuralism is considered as a main branch of contemporary western philosophy. It has been highly influential in the different cultural and critical analyses of the last decades. There has always been a controversy over an all-including definition of the term “Post-Structuralism” and its relation to such other terms as “Deconstruction” and “Post-Modernism.”

In order to discuss the rise and the characteristic of the Post-Structuralist thought the present study provides a keen analysis of its intellectual backgrounds that are Russian Formalism, Elementary Structuralism (The Prague School), and Structuralism. Structuralism has been referred to in the thesis as a continental European and North American movement in the Human Sciences that had a deep influence on literary theory, philosophy, and man’s attitude towards the world in the middle part of the twentieth century.

Then, the theory of Post-Structuralism is analyzed by reference to both Jacques Derrida’s essay “Structure, sign and play in the discourse of the human sciences” and Roland Barthes’ book S/Z. Consequently, such terms as logocentrism, phonocentrism, transcendental signified, arch-writing, supplement and metaphysics of presence are introduced and defined.

The idea of the system in Post-Structuralism is criticized because it is believed that each system has been always considered to have a structure that is itself believed to have an imaginary center. Thus, the idea of de-centrism emerges according to which each centered and privileged part of the different binary oppositions becomes de-centered and hence unprivileged. On the other hand, Derrida’s coined concept of
*differance* brings to the mind the idea of the *relativity* of meaning. That is to say that it is here believed that the meaning is not fixed and it is always *deferred* and *different* from the previous meaning.

The present thesis, at this point, refers to the ideas of another Post-Structuralist thinker, Michel Foucault. The term *discourse* is under close consideration here, and to explain it in details one is supposed to first define such concepts as *episteme*, *power*, and *institution* in their modern context. Modernity, Foucault argues, ultimately established centered institutions that had their own different discourses and epistememes. Such institutions tended to centralize some discourses and, accordingly, to marginalize some other.

**Chapter Three: The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche and Post-Structuralist Theories: From Critical Philosophy to Applied Theories**

Chapter three is the core of the present study. Its argument is to show the influence of Nietzsche’s critical philosophy on Post-Structuralist philosophy and theory. Therefore, first the influence on Nietzsche’s stylistics and mode of argumentation on Derrida is demonstrated. Then, his treatment of one of the main binary oppositions in his framework of thought, especially in his last works, is discussed that is Christ/Anti-Christ.

This dual pair is so significant in Nietzsche’s thought that he chooses *The Anti-Christ* for the title of one of his books. *The Anti-Christ* is a work in which the reader faces a radical and revolutionary criticism on Christ and Christianity. Nietzsche’s criticism of Christianity and his
admiration for Buddhism are explained as a major part of his critical philosophy of the reversal of binary oppositions.

One of the main arguments of the present research is presented here. It wants to explore how Jacques Derrida’s Post-Structuralist critical theory on western traditional ideas on speech/writing binary is both in parallel with and under the influence of Nietzsche’s critical philosophy. Attempt is made here to introduce Derrida’s theory on speech/writing binary opposition on one hand, and the influence of Nietzsche’s critical philosophy on Derrida’s Post-Structural theory on the other hand. In other words, Nietzsche’s critical philosophy is transformed into an applied theory by Derrida.

The second part of the third chapter is concerned with the influence of Friedrich Nietzsche on another main Post-Structuralist thinker, Michel Foucault. Therefore, there is here an attempt to read Nietzsche’s approach towards different discourses of the nineteenth century. Rejecting epistemes and the consequent de-centering institutions by both Nietzsche and Foucault are here discussed.

Nietzsche’s criticism of modernity as long as a discussion on the origins of modernity in the philosophy of Descartes are presented in the next part. The reason for such a discussion is to pave the way for presenting another main argument of the thesis that is: how Foucault’s criticism of modernity that, according to him, ignores and even suppresses minority discourses, is under the influence of Nietzsche’s criticism of the philosophy of modernity?

That is why Michel Foucault’s theory on both the mechanism of modernity discourses and its ignorance of the discourse of the minority groups is the subject of last part of the third chapter. The main
discourses of modernity, he believes, were thought of as the centered discourses because of a special mechanism produced by the same discourses. Accordingly, minority groups of different social, medical, religious, and philosophical discourses of modernity have been forgotten in the historiography of the west.

Chapter Four: Three Examples of a Post-Structuralist Reading of Plato’s The Republic

The aim of this chapter is to present a critical reading of Plato’s The Republic based on a Post-Structuralist approach. Although this approach would ultimately be in parallel with Nietzsche’s criticism of Socrates, it is different from that of Nietzsche in that it provides a close reading that is full of specialized terminology of the contemporary critical theory and philosophy.

“Insistence on transcendental signifieds” is the first practical example of such a critical reading that aims at demonstrating Plato’s insistence on the transcendental signifieds in the first part of The Republic. “Morality,” for example, acts as a transcendental signified for Plato. Plato’s moralism and his views on man’s commitment to moral rules as well as the principles of ethics mentioned by Socrates at the time of his death are all reasons for considering morality as a transcendental signifies in the works of Plato. The other transcendental signified of the first part of The Republic is “justice,” that is defined and advocated by Socrates in his dialogue with Thrasymachus.

The second example of reading Plato’s The Republic from a Post-Structuralist approach is demonstrated in the thesis as Plato’s “desire for logocentrism in Part XII and XI of The Republic.” Part XII begins
with a differentiation between the Idea and the Actual. Here Socrates is discussing the positive characteristics of his Ideal State, and the logocentric preference of The Ideal to the Actual is present explicitly in the work. The superiority of the soul to body in soul/body binary opposition is another example of logocentrism in this book.

The last example of such a reading in the thesis is “a deconstructive approach to Plato’s views on arts and poetry in Part X” of The Republic. Having quoted Socrates’ ideas on mimesis, and the relation between art and truth, the present study also shows his ideas on the position of the artists and poets in such a State. This part of the thesis deconstructs Plato’s views on art and poetry.

Plato was the first writer in whose Republic the poets and artists were sent on exile. The study here deconstructs such ideas by asserting another argument: The truth in art and poetry is different from the truth in logic and mathematics. Plato was afraid of the destruction of his Ideal State that he sacrificed every thing for it. Concluding this part, one can say that Plato’s Republic was not a means for man’s happiness; it was rather the end in itself for the sake of which every thing was to be sacrificed.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Nietzsche’s critical philosophy and Post-Structuralist applied theories are thematically, methodologically and even stylistically close to each other. They are, however, different as far as the employed terminology is concerned. If shown properly, this similarity would pave the way for a practical application of a given philosophical text. The aim, however,
is not only to show an applied theory in philosophy but also to demonstrate how it works.

Two further conclusions from the above arguments are: a) the authenticity and originality of the critical thought provided by the philosopher (here Nietzsche), and the practicality of the applied theory presented by contemporary thinkers (here the Post-Structuralists). Nietzsche’s framework of thought is original not because of being manifested in Post-Structuralism. It is, however, original because of the critique for the first time of some institutions, philosophical traditions and epistemological concepts.

The analysis of the transformation of a critical philosophy into an applied theory is precisely what has been focused by the present thesis. This is in fact the exploration of two systems of thought that are, though different in form and terminology, identical in theme and content. To argue for the influence of the critical philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche on the Post-Structuralist theories becomes more important when one faces the large number of subjects influenced by such theories. Therefore, in order to evaluate one of the contemporary schools of western philosophy, that is Post-Structuralism, Nietzsche’s philosophy should be vividly scrutinized.