

# Deleuzian Critique of Freudian Conception of Desire

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## Abstract

*This research paper aims to explicate the Deleuzian critique of Freudian conception of desire. Freud explains desire in terms of lack and privation. He tends to determine the behavior of individual through findings of suppressed unconscious desire. Freud contextualizes repressed sexual desire under the cover of Oedipus complex and clinical case studies. Deleuze disagreed with the Freudian interpretation of desire passing through Oedipus complex and clinical case studies. For Deleuze, Freud fabricates the illegitimate connections of desire by tagging the oedipal triangle and fixed identities. He says, Freudian psychoanalysis imprisons desire and blocks the productive nature of desiring flows. Deleuze attempts to de-sexualize and de-personalize desire by exploring the nomadic, schizophrenic, productive and free-floating connections of desire. He believes upon the immanent function of desire rather than transcendent. Deleuze identifies five paralogisms i.e. (invalid arguments) in the Freudian psychoanalysis. Deleuzian critique seeks to liberate desire from closed family circle and identities assigned by Freud.*

**Keywords:** Desire, Schizanalayis, Familial, Oedipus complex, Paralogism.

## Introduction

Sigmund Freud was the founder of modern psychoanalysis; he determined the nature of human beings through his discoveries in the field of psychoanalysis. Freud developed many psychosexual theories to determine the identity of an individual. Discovery of Oedipus complex is one of them. Theory of Oedipus complex explains that child has suppressed unconscious sexual de-

sire for his mother and hatred feelings for father. Freudian theory of Oedipus complex describes desire as lack of something between individuals that seeks union of an object.

Gilles Deleuze is the post-structuralist thinker of the contemporary French Philosophy. He is the most popular and influential philosopher of the twentieth century. He was against imposed identities, uni-

The author is .....

versal truth, totalitarian and authoritarian structure of reality of the western culture. He uses many innovative terms like desiring productions, plane of immanence, line of flight and becoming. However, we see many reflections in his ideas inspired from the western thinkers, like Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, Marx and Freud.

He criticizes the Freudian interpretation of desire and attempt to liberate desire from fixed identities, oedipal triangle and other labels of psychoanalysis. He has a strong believe that desire is social rather than familial seems inspired from French slogan the personal is political. He explains historical development of the societies in the nexus of desire and desiring flows. For Deleuze, desire neither lacks anything nor identifies with any fixed structure. He interprets desire through the analogy of machine. Machine creates multiple connections and desiring productions. Deleuze explores schizophrenic character of desire, which is affirmative and productive instead of clinical schizophrenia i.e. (disease). On the contrary, Deleuze uses the term schizophrenia as flight of desire and productive unconscious. He believes upon the principle of difference and multiplicity. He seeks to replace repressed unconscious with desiring productions.

In this research article I have used collaborative works of Deleuze and Guattari, but I have been refereeing the name only Gilles Deleuze.

This research article deals through the five paralogism by explaining flaws and weaknesses highlighted by Deleuze against the Freudian interpretation of desire. In the

first Paralogism, I would discuss that how Deleuze refutes the Freudian interpretation of oedipal desire. In the second Paralogism, I will explore the Deleuzian idea that desire is inclusive rather than exclusive under the theme of disjunctive synthesis. In the third paralogism, I will discuss the productive nature of desire under the theme conjunctive synthesis of desire. In the fourth paralogism, I will discuss how Freudian psychoanalysis displaces the desire from its true becoming and connections. In the final paralogism, I will discuss how Deleuzian model of schizoid desire refutes the Freudian model of oedipal desire.

With the critiques of Freudian, case studies i.e. (Little Hans and The Wolf man). Deleuze encounters Freudian explanation of suppressed desire in favor of becoming and productive role of desire. In this search paper I will conclude that how Freudian interpretation of desire is in appropriate to determine the individual behavior with reference to Deleuzian critique of Freudian desire .

### First Paralogism

For Deleuze, Freudian psychoanalysis creates the dividing line upon the multiple intensities of desire and assigns lack between subject and object. This is the false reasoning and illegitimate usage of connective synthesis for Deleuze. Deleuze criticizes the Freudian oedipal theory of psychoanalysis, for him oedipal theory of psychoanalysis constructs illegitimate connection of the desire. Deleuze argues that Freudian psychoanalysis does not provide a reasonable solution

to deal the repressed desire of unconscious. It merely suggests giving up hostile feelings of father and submitting his authority. This is not the case for Deleuze; he believes that Freudian psychoanalysis blocks the essential nature of desire by imposing oedipal triangle. He explains desire through its immanent process of breaking and continuous flows of partial objects. "There we have a curious Paralogism implying a transcendent use of synthesis of the unconscious: we pass from the detachable partial objects to the detached complete objects, from which the global persons derive by an assigning of lack" (Deleuze, 2005 P. 81). Deleuze emphasizes upon the connective nature of desire through the part objects rather than whole. For Deleuze, desire forms the connections, and it invests first the partial objects. These partial objects are incomplete objects, i.e. (eye and face) as the connection of mouth with the lips is the partial connection of objects.

Child in his early developmental phase come into contact with partial objects like face, hair and eyes of mother what Freud call polymorphous connections. At this stage child does not aware from the complete objects i.e. (mother- father identity). Such partial and immediate connections of child are not only multifarious but heterogeneous as well. "On the flow and breakings connections in the case of child at her mother's breast, not only is a connection made that allows the flow of milk from breast to mouth but also this flow is periodically broken as the child stops sucking and swallows" (Adkins, 2007, p. 134). Deleuze says, psy-

choanalysis restricts the free and polyvocal connections of desire and reduces into oedipal triangle. Freudian psychoanalysis creates image of father and mother in terms of identity and representation. However, desire is impersonal and nomadic in its character always seeks new connections and creates new possibilities of life. He explains the nature of desire through connective synthesis. The connective syntheses of desire functions according the flows of the connections and breaking of the connections. Deleuze explains the formula of connective series like 'and then . . . and then . . . and then . . . An open-ended series '.

### Second Paralogism

The Deleuzian conception of disjunctive synthesis tells that desire works under the condition of inclusive rather than exclusive. Inclusive refers to intrinsic part of something thing, whereas exclusive refers to extrinsic part of something. According to Deleuze, psychoanalysis misconceives the logic of disjunctive synthesis because psychoanalysis explains the oedipal family on the exclusive grounds in relation to child and parents. Psychoanalysis describes, you are this or that, male or female, and nothing else. Deleuze concludes that psychoanalysis creates individual and personal identities of mother, father and child on the ground of exclusive use of disjunctive synthesis. On the contrary, for Deleuze the disjunctive synthesis functions through the series, either or...or.... or, by refuting the psychoanalytical interpretation. Disjunctive synthesis is breaking connections, functions without negating to

other connections. For example: during dinner if someone receive a call on telephone, in order to receive the phone call one has to break the connection of eating. Therefore, conversation on phone is a new type of connection develops during the dinner. "The flow of desire includes all the points through which it passes; the mouth of the child is at once also the breast to which it attaches; its body at one with the toys it handles, the images of animals with which it is fascinated" (Colebrook, 2002 p.113). In a similar way, Deleuze does not conceive disjunctive synthesis in terms of the contradictions, but a series of either, Or...Or. Or, that affirms the disjoined terms in spite of difference. From the Deleuzian perspective, the disjunctive synthesis functions through the singularities without any identity where one singularity connects to other singularity.

For Deleuze, the immanent disjunctive synthesis emphasizes upon the conception of becoming, which psychoanalysis has ignored. Psychoanalysis tell us that you are a man or woman, male or female in a sense of a demarcations. On the other hand, Deleuzian schizo-analysis says that there would be no sexual identity i.e. (homosexuality or bi-sexuality) but trans-sexuality. "The Schizophrenic is not man and woman. He is man or woman, but he belongs precisely to both sides, man on the side of men, woman on the side of women. He is not simply bisexual, or between the two, or intersexual. He is transsexual. He is trans- alive-dead, trans-parent child" (Deleuze, 2005 pp. 84-85). Deleuze argues that schizoanalysis believe upon becoming rather than gender description and fixed identities. Deleuze

identifies that Freudian psychoanalysis passes two conflicting messages; on the one hand, Oedipus tells that one can resolve the Oedipus complex by internalizing the father identity. On the other hand, Oedipus tells that one would fall into the oedipal complex if one does not obey the parental authority. "This become even more clear when Freud elaborates the entire historic –mythical series; at the one end the oedipal bond is established by the murderous identification, at the other end it is reinforced by the restoration and internalization of parental identity (revival of the old state of things at a new level)" (Deleuze, 2005 p. 89).

In this paradoxical choice for Deleuze, there is no way for unconscious to explore itself into multifarious dimensions and production. Oedipus complex appears to us both problem and solution, sick and healthy, neuroses and normal. In Deleuzian view, Freud had no plan to get away from father's authority and guilt. Hence, the real task of schizoanalysis is ensuring the process of becoming and encounters the process of oedipal triangulation via legitimate synthesis of disjunction.

### Third Paralogism

Deleuzian subject of conjunctive synthesis is nomadic, polyvocal and free mover whereas oedipal triangle postulates the illegitimate application of conjunctive synthesis instead of polyvocal and non-segregated usage of synthesis. The legitimate connection implies that desire is a nomadic subject that always seeks new territories and renews itself. Segregation always falls into categories of you, and me on the ground of racial,

gender, sex religion and ethnicity. Deleuze believes that there is an illegitimate application of desire of psychoanalysis applied in the name of oedipal family. The oedipal process promotes the univocal relation of the family.

This illegitimate application of desire shows the narrower role of the desiring productions. The Freudian application of desire marginalizes the individual and divides it into segments, race, culture, religion and ethnicity. "Fixed subjects of all kinds arise from an illegitimate use of the conjunctive synthesis that segregates one set of subjectivities from all the others and demands that an otherwise nomadic subjectivity (resulting from legitimate conjunctive syntheses) identify only with members of that restricted set: whites rather than blacks; men rather than women; Christians rather than Jews, and so forth. Instead of the "I am everyone and anyone" of the nomadic subject" (W.Holland, 2001 p.39).

The legitimate and polyvocal connection of the conjunctive synthesis of desire has no fixed identity in terms of class, race and family because it is trans-positional and nomadic. For Deleuze Freudian black mailing does not suggest the proper way to get rid from oedipal complex. Freudian psychoanalysis merely suggests, either you identify yourself with image of oedipal man or you give up all your sexual positions. For Deleuze this is not a solution but bearers against the productive nature of desire.

#### Fourth Paralogism

The displacement of desire is the fourth Paralogism of psychoanalysis. Psychoanaly-

sis displaces desire from its immanent nature by imposing oedipal identity. Deleuze explain flaws of the psychoanalytical representation of desire by refereeing the incest taboo. Psychoanalysis believes that we desire something because it is prohibited, if there is no prohibition there would not be desire. Psychoanalysis conceives that prohibition against incest is the birth of Oedipus complex. From Deleuzian perspective, this is not the real case and incest is not a problem. On the contrary, the real issue is the appropriate placement of desire. Deleuze argues, Oedipus is the trap of desire it restricts the nomadic subject by imposing the condition of prohibition against incest. Productive desire cannot be reduced to prohibiting, if the law tells us that one should not marry one's mother then one cannot logically infer that one has secret desire to marry one's mother. He says Oedipus is the fictitious product of the psychic repression that diverts the real and natural flow of desire.

In this way, psychoanalysis displaces the desire from its true flow and its affirmative nature. However, for Deleuze, Oedipus cannot be the true representation of the desire in this regard and pointed three errors made by psychoanalysis in the name of Oedipus. Deleuze identifies three errors concerning lack, law and signifier.

#### Fifth Paralogism

Freudian reductive analysis explores suppressed unconscious desire through oedipal triangle. For Deleuze desire does not function through structural and binary relation of mother and child. Desire functions through network connection of desiring ma-

chines. "We do not deny that there is an oedipal sexuality, an oedipal hetero-sexuality and homosexuality, an oedipal castration, as well as complete objects, global images, and specific egos. We deny that these are productions of the unconscious" (Deleuze, 2005 p. 82).

He denies the Freudian analysis of repressed unconscious desire in relation to fixed structure. For him desire simply is what it is, without identifying any structure. Deleuze comes up with the conception of schizoanalysis. The function of schizoanalysis is to de-oedipalize the oedipal structure. The schizophrenic flows forms multiple and productive connections in contrast to psychoanalysis. Therefore schizoid desire is the orphan and homeless.

### Critique of Freudian Case Studies Little Hans

Freudian case study of little Hans published in 1909, under the title 'Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-year old Boy'. At the age of three years, Hans was interested in the anatomical sexual difference and inclined to the widdling i.e. (urination). Hans was engaged in observing widdling activity of others. Such speculative and curious behavior becomes the cause of his phobia. Finally, his parents restrict him at home with threat of castration and horse bite." When he was three and a half his mother found him with his hand on his penis. She threatened him in these words. "If you do that I shall send for Dr. A. to cut off your widdler. And then what'll you widdle with" (Freud, 1953 p. 151).

The parental disapproval, fear of

castration and suppression of desire create the anxiety for Hans. Freud identifies the case of Hans with the general conditions of Oedipus complex "Hans was really a little Oedipus who wanted to have his father 'out of the way'; to get rid of him, so that he might be alone with his handsome mother and sleep with her." (Freud, 1953 p. 253). For Freud, Hans has close attachment to his mother and conceives father as an obstacle to him. According to Freud, the birth of his sister Hanna intensified his complex, now he conceives that his mother is sparing more time with his sister than him. However, the resolution of phobia takes place after the continuous conversation with Hans in consulting room of Freud. Father of Hans played a decisive role in liberating Hans from anxiety. Hans' father being an educated person helped Hans by psychotherapy to recover from phobia. Gradually Hans overcomes his fear because of two reasons; one is that he dreamt that the plumber would give him a bigger widdler. The second reason "It also corrected that portion of those thoughts which was entirely unacceptable; for, instead of killing his father, it made him innocuous by promoting him to marriage with Hans's grandmother. With this fantasy both the illness and analysis comes to end" (Freud, 1953 p. 273). Now he is not hatred to his father because during the conversation, his father accepts Hans's demands. Freud associates everything of phobia of Hans to attributes of his father.

Deleuze explains that Freud misinterprets the story of Hans and semblance between horse and father. Deleuze condi-



tioned the case of Hans with the becoming nature of desire. Hans was confined at his home and saw a horse in the street. For Deleuze, there was process of becoming of desire occurred in the unconscious of Hans, he wanted to become an animal. According to Deleuze, Freud did not consider other real options in relation to the little Hans, like prison in home, enjoyment of the street, freedom of horse, , activity of peepee-makers .

Deleuze argues becoming animal does not mean to become animal in real sense , but it is the flow of desire and the process of de-oedipalization, beyond the identity, leaves back the identified categories of father, mother and castration. For Deleuze, Freud gives wrong direction to this case study, and rendered it to the phobia and oedipal reduction. Freud could not understand the real relation of child and horse and blocked his line of flight, which seeks becoming horse. Deleuze relates becoming with the escape of desire from fixed structure. "Look at what happened to Little Hans already, an example of child psychoanalysis at its purest: they rooted him in his parents' bed, they radicled him to his own body, they fixed him on a professor Freud. Freud explicitly takes little Hans' cartography into account, but always only in order to project it back on to the family Photo" (Deleuze, 2005 p. 15 ).The phobia of the little Hans seeks to line of flight from barrier, photographed and imposed identity by the father and mother.

### The Wolf Man

Freud gives the name of wolf man to the

Russian wealthy person Seregei Pankeieff after analysis of his dream of the Wolf. Pankeieff reports his past memories to Freud. Freud writes under the sub-title "The Dream and The primal scene" in which Freud narrates the dream of Pankeieff. "I know it was winter when I had the dream, and night-time. Suddenly the window opened of its own accord, and I was terrified to see that some white wolves were sitting on the big walnut tree in front of the window. There were six or seven of them. The wolves were quite white, and looked more like foxes or sheep dogs, for they had big tails like faxes and they had their ears pricked like dogs when they pay attention to something. In great terror, evidently of being eaten up by the wolves, I screamed and woke up" (Freud, 1953 p. 498).

Freud attempts to explain his case through different interpretations. In the beginning, Freud traces the origin of dream in the book of fairy tales in which an individual experiences the stories about various animals in his early childhood memories. This might be the cause of animal phobia of Seregei Pankeieff. In relation to his dream, Freud brings many possible relations, for example, white wolves with undergarments of his mother, pack of seven wolves with the fairy tales, tree with the Christmas tree, father with the wolf and so on. Then Freud considers there would be some real happening apart from the fairy tales. "Our knowledge of his sexual development before the dream makes it possible for us to fill in the gaps in the dream and to explain the transformation of his satisfaction into anxiety. He thought that the attitude of the wolf in this picture

might have reminded him of that of his father during the constructed primal scene" (Freud, 1953 pp. 506-10). Freud concludes from the infantile neurosis of the Pankeieff that he had witnessed his parental intercourse a 'coitus' a 'tergo' i.e. anal sex, what Freud calls 'primal scene' which left a severe impact on his memory

Hence, once again Deleuze challenges the case study of wolf man with his second Plateaus 1914 one or several wolves. For Deleuze in this case psychoanalysis reduces infinite flows and multiplicities into the single representation i.e. Oedipus, castration and Father. From the Deleuzian perspective, the real problem with wolf-Man is the becoming-wolf in the sense of production, which is real in itself. Freud reduces Pankeieff's neurosis into Primal scene. Freud identifies his dream through the oedipal story and father as symbol of Wolf. On the contrary, Deleuze thinks that Freud close up the becoming nature of desire and its multiplicities under the cover of identities. "All that Freud sees only oedipal substitutes, regression and derivatives. In truth, Freud sees nothing and understands nothing. He has no idea what a libidinal assemblage is, with all the machineries it brings into play, all multiple loves. The Wolf-man will receive the psychoanalytic Medal of Honor for service rendered to the cause and even disabled veterans benefits "(Deleuze, 2005 pp .41-42). Here Deleuze describe that wolf cannot be the substitute of father but another mode of becoming. Freud eliminates the multiple connections of becoming that appear in the form of wolves and animals.

Deleuze emphasis that Freud brings

backs every situation into the trauma and neurological obsession and binds them with the fixed identity, unity and father. But this is not the real case. However desire has multiple possibilities and flows, to becoming wolf is one possible flow among many. In the dream of Pankeieff, the wolf is indicator of becoming and multiplicity. In Deleuzian view, the psychoanalysis failed to interpret the desire because it sees Oedipus in every connection and restricts very nature of becoming desire. Psychoanalysis explains everything in terms of personology. Albeit schizo-analysis, explain desire and unconscious through cultural, social and political configurations of the society.

## Conclusion

Deleuze criticizes that psychoanalysis blocks the productive nature of desire through the mythical representations. He conceives desire as a driving force behind every phenomenon and relationship from individual to society. He explains production of desire in terms of desiring machines. His entire focus was based on the anti-oedipal nature of desire. Deleuzian schizoid desire is true representation of desire that covers the socio-political and multiple connection of the society. The multiplicity of desire believes in heterogeneous options, network and becoming of desire. Deleuze prefers the conception of schizoanalysis instead of psychoanalysis, because schizoanalysis makes desire free from the boundaries of representation and personalization. He claims that Freud makes inappropriate placement of desire and ignores the becoming nature of desire and its productive connections.



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