

THE “KARL JASPERS FORUM” WEBPAGE, UPDATE 10 (2-12-2006)  
DERRIDA FOR JASPERS--TIT FOR TAT UPDATE

NOTATION: Postings this week on Herbert Muller’s Website include a Comment by Glasersfeld, and Bone, a Response by Muller, and a Ramona Fotiade piece used as a Target Article. The following Update is an attempt to make sense of why Karl Jaspers continues to be ignored. An attempt has been made below to relate and apply Jaspers to all these within a treatment of Ramona’s *Life After Deconstruction*.

**Tribute to Jacques Derrida**--This week’s posting on Herbert Muller’s Website included an apparent tribute to the passing of Jacques Derrida entitled “Life After Deconstruction”. The author is a second-recent University of Glasgow associate whose transcript was somewhat conscripted. I mean who, under pressure to publicize, would not be honored to be considered for posting on something so intellectually suggestive as a “Karl Jaspers Forum”? And what better emotional tactic to use then the demise of a French notable and frequent lecturer to the North America Philosophical Association to justify silencing the German Jaspers and exalt the German Heidegger!

**Mortality and Deconstruction**--Derrida’s passing a few months ago presented the opportunity for an exposé referencing immortality, a bit of playfulness relative to...deconstruction. Here, in the author’s understandably limited review of his mortal life, conceptualizations about life are exercised, though...coming to terms...was short regarding whether one lives to avoid dying or whether one lives for living but for immortal more than mortal reasons. Not only short on terms but also some apparent inaccuracies too for Plato’s Socrates did not learn how to die but how to live even in dying. But that is not the issue except in so far as Herbert can relate it to atheism—another opportunity offered by the obituary’s mere mention of Nietzsche’s alleged belief in the death of God.

**The Acid Test to Melt Jaspers**—There must be rhythm or reason for the passing tribute to be used as a Target Article. One reason it is useful is that the author, Ramona Fotiade, does not mention Jaspers. There’s no relevant reason to mention Jaspers by the Author in proper context, that is, outside the contextual-system used by a McGill associate and the sophist-like use of Karl Jaspers name. In keeping with the Derrida spirit, about which I know next to nothing except for the inconceivable absence of a Jaspers’ reference, the approval to post could have been best understood if Ramona heard a voice actually saying, “This is a Karl Jaspers relevant forum”. It seems that Herbert’s mission, in part, is to find and use budding or established authors who make no mention of Jaspers. It is reasonable to think this mission is self-defeating or self-outwitting—in the Derrida sense. Even a superficial scan of linguistics reveals the contradiction in a Karl Jaspers Website that avoids with great effort the primary works of Jaspers.

**The Theistic Jaspers**--It’s conceivable too that Ramona’s Article is being used as a reaction to *Karl Jaspers Applied’s* recent presentation regarding Jaspers’ leaning toward immortality and the conceptualizations involved, which the creation-perspective permits. It also offers Herbert the occasion to escape the responsible use of the theistic Jaspers.

The escape-area is in the loose word “deconstruction” and the leaping connections that can be made with “Structuralism” and “Constructivism”. There is a slippery gangway into atheism if one is inclined to be more certain than what quantum-agnostics might allow. “Deconstruction” has an expansive frontier, i.e., it is primarily indefinable and ineffable, unless simply applied to self-images and rationalizations such as propping up degrees of inferiority and superiority. Speaking of rationalizations: Why is the much earlier and influential Jaspers not mentioned? If one can read and be influenced by Heidegger and Husserl, why not Jaspers? The language barrier between French and German is not that great. There may be a greater cultural gap that amounts to an aversion for the emotional and rationale-exercise of the therapeutic words “a self suspended between itself and the Transcendent” (existenz), the essence of which was grasped by Huguenots. Why does “deconstruction” offer an escape? We have to do some leaping here to get muscle-toned for grasping connections, and prepared for a poetic song-and-dance routine.

**Glaserfeld comment** to Bone reverts to the idea that novelties are produced by genetic mutations; he is saying just enough to not oppose Muller and others Constructivists’ evolutionism. Glaserfeld makes verbal presumptions essential for the idea that God is nothing more than part of epiphenomena processes, radical constructs within a natural process of development. Here the lack of consistency outwit the rationalizations, for Glaserfeld states a misunderstanding has been cleared up by Bone; then he says there is a deep disagreement and speaks of “the theory of evolution” as dependent on what thinking and conceiving picks and connects out of the manifold.” This appears like doubletalk with little effort to avoid the logical singularity essential for systematic thinking. By his own admission Glaserfeld learned well during childhood, when he was not allowed to speak a native language, how to manipulate others through the use of language-spins, capitalizing on differences and restraints. One is struck with the realization that one of Glaserfeld’s objectives is to assist Herbert in keeping the contributions coming to his Website while attempting protect his (Glaserfeld’s) own image from the endearing supporting efforts for Herbert’s evolutionism and atheism. If Herbert and Glaserfeld cannot relate to Jaspers, even if it takes the risk of being humiliated, then revert to Vatican approved perpetual talk about popular Darwinism. It demonstrates that a natural ontologism, *theology of origin*, most have nothing philosophical to say, but presents a reversion to unending metaphysical talk about the complex manifold’s impassable. Hugh Bone’s comments at least tolerably bring out the worse of Glaserfeld’s epistemology and what the Herbert mission is willing to do to avoid Jaspers.

**Connecting “Deconstruction” and “Constructivism”**--The late Derrida apparently appropriated the term “deconstruction” while talking about the hazards an author confronts when an autonomous and authentic reader must interpret another autonomous person’s words of meaning. It’s so much a universally normal problem that when one disassociates the word from academic associations of personages (Husserl and Heidegger) one can simply say: “Oh, you mean to make sure one understands instructions, have the hearer repeat the instructions thrice in some form or another”. Abnormal misuse of his use of “deconstruction” can be diminished by pointing out that

he disclaimed it as encapsulating his thoughts. That disclaimer is consistent with an excuse for having a philosophical logic lacking in system enough to be functional. He has been interpreted as saying that the word resists definition. Well, so does reality. The proper use of phenomenology (the Husserl-Derrida meaningful connection by pure association notwithstanding) as a method simply leaves open the imperative for responsible interpretation. That's the methodical way Jaspers used the idea in dealing with the psychopathological, but he never allowed the method to become ontological in that science. For the normal use of phenomenology one would not avoid Jaspers works after reading them with a wishy-washy dismissal that an interpreter must be central—the essence of “Constructivism”. Central means one is responsible, not that one is licensed to claim credit for constructions that are so subjective to disavow the objective and real primacy in precursors.

**Tit For Tat--The Heidegger vs. Jaspers Connection**—Perhaps the primary reason the academic-eulogy is reduced to a Target Article is that a connection can be made to Heidegger, though Ramona makes only a vague reference through the use of “Heideggerian”. The Oxford Companion to Philosophy names Husserl as influential and “other acknowledged influence” includes Heidegger. Oxford also says Heidegger and his “structuralism” had a “major influence” on him, and that his deconstruction “deliberately” alludes to Heidegger’s deconstruction approach to the history of ontology. If he had read these two, how is it, if he had not, read Jaspers? Heidegger used the word “deconstruction” and in turn Derrida deliberately uses it and it becomes popular because of the meaning gained by association with Heidegger, who, as Gertrude Jaspers said, though scholastic he lacked systematic thinking. Undefined words are favored by the unsystematic, for the systematic lack of system offers escape from the manifold-complex. One should note again that this week’s postings on Herbert’s Website make no reference to Jaspers but there are several to Heidegger including direct and indirect references.

**Muller’s Mini-major Essay on Heidegger**—Herbert show this tendency to avoid Jaspers by using confusing verbalization spinning off from a poet’s verse containing the name of Heidegger. If a poet mentions Heidegger there must be something symmetrically determinable that an interpreter is obligated to respect and structure on. One has a feeling of obligation to applaud the dance whether the beauty is understood or not. But for the critic, there’s the obligation for seeing that Derrida can be suspected of taking privileges in avoiding associations (like with Heidegger) through the aporia (the impassable) of linguistic song-and-dance rhythm. One can persist in keeping conscience at a safe distance from clear and distinct ideas, and keep clear of consciousness, the seat of conscience, by reducing all to verbiage like “ongoing subjective experience”. The reduction from conscience and consciousness is then determined empirically and ethically good enough for structuring, for “radical constructivism”. Mathematical formulae, and I suppose this includes poetic measures and steps, can be helpful as Herbert shows in the use of Weedon’s rhythmic demonstration in prose-poem fashion. It is Jaspers not Derrida that can be credited with clearly showing poems end in aporia, and that such can be used to silence communication. There is no doubt that Jaspers cannot compete with efforts to distract from communication in the uniqueness of spinning street dancing.

**Heidegger Incommensurate with Jaspers**—It's inconceivable that Derrida was unaware of the Nazi issue, and the Jaspers' stance in comparison with Heidegger's. If Derrida had acknowledged Jaspers he would have had to also give credence to the causes of the rift between Mr. and Mrs. Jaspers and Heidegger. There were French translations available, such as *The Question of German Guilt*, *Man in the Modern Age*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of *General Psychopathology*, *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, *The Origin and Goal of History*, *Way to Wisdom*, *Reason and Anti Reason in Our Time*, and others. There is much lingering talk about the Jaspers/Heidegger friendship. It is a ruse. Here are some tit-for-tat counter weights. Jaspers describes a visit with Heidegger as a Gregorian chant whereupon Heidegger had to immediately return to Freiburg departing with the words "One has to join in". With thorough documentation it can be said that Heidegger was a member of the Nazi party and that he supported Hitler. There was "...Gertrude's deep mistrust of Heidegger's actions as a Nazi party member" (Kirkbright's *Karl Jaspers*, p. 151). Jaspers said, "Heidegger had been seized by an intoxication" (Ibid.) "Arendt" had failed to broker a reunion between Heidegger and Jaspers, and that Heidegger's complicity in the Nazis' control of the university was not something Jaspers could forgive (Ibid. p.235). Gertrud was aware of the need for distance from Heidegger and for higher purposes (Ibid. p.137). As early as 1925 Gertrud said "It is Heidegger's nature only to research with his mind on philosophy and religion. He is a scholar and a philologist, but he cannot represent anything systematically in his thought." (Ibid. p. 131).

**"Deconstruction" is no new creed**—Herbert, when the occasion presents itself, seems to repose in some presumed span of no-man's-land like that indefinable part of "deconstruction". That is the mystic-area; the abode of those preferred highly imaged ideas, distinctive enough to have epiphenomenal affects on consciousness where conscience is barren or inauthentic. The area includes that multi-linguistic-experience, claimed as an ongoing experience others might be unfamiliar enough about to be exploited. When one exploits linguistic differences as something absolute it becomes textualism, and anything from the more known and "advanced" tongue becomes part of the "ism" (all-sufficient suffix for refuge). The word "Pantextualism" has apparently been launched in a struggle for uniqueness by some critique of Derrida. One can probably make a case for all an all-exclusive subjectivism in talk about inclusive ongoing experience; the word in any sense of possible meaning cannot apply to Jaspers. His therapeutic use of ciphers avoids that "ism". The word "pantextualism" is probably close to if not borrowed directly from the religious and established meaning of bibliolatry. When one hears someone say, there is no word for it in English that captures its meaning, but it is captured in a Greek or French word, that is a secular form of bibliolatry, i.e., "pantextualism". We can simply disregard the word as just another academician's attempt to be original and, in this case, perhaps in competition with Derrida by a textual symbol. But if it is going to be used, it might apply to inventive if not vindictive vaguely connective spins off the mystic side of poetry. The more responsible transaction to the word is to simply agree with what the translators of Jaspers' *General Psychopathology* said, "Words which would fully convey [Jaspers'] exact meaning do not exist in either German or English".