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Lafontaine C, The Cybernetic Matrix of `French Theory' (2007) 1

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The Cybernetic Matrix of 'French Theory' (PDF Download Available). Available from:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258192414_The_Cybernetic_Matrix_of_French_Theory%27 [accessed Mar 13 2018].

This article aims to draw a portrait of the influence of cybernetics on soft science. To this end, structuralism, post-structuralism and postmodern philosophy will be successively analyzed in a perspective based on importing concepts stemming from the cybernetic paradigm (information, feedback, entropy, complexity, etc.). By focusing more specifically on the American postwar context, we intend to remind the audience that many soft science specialists were involved in the elaboration of this 'new science'. We will then retrace the influence of the cybernetic paradigm on structuralism. Starting with the historic meeting between Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss, we will illustrate that structural phonology is directly inspired by discoveries stemming from the informational model. In the same perspective, the conceptual borrowings of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan from cybernetics will be identified and analyzed. Then, we will address the matter of the relationship between postmodern theories and the cybernetic paradigm. The philosophical movement towards deconstruction, as well as Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, will be analyzed based on how they relate to this paradigm. We will also insist on the fact that the philosophy of Jean- François Lyotard's *La Condition postmoderne* is fully in line with the epistemological revolution launched by cybernetics.

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