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**Phenomenal speech: A reading through Jacques Derrida's
"Speech and Phenomena"**

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City University of New York, 1994

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PHENOMENAL SPEECH

A Reading *Through* Jacques Derrida's Speech and Phenomena

by

Peter E. Haaren

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Philosophy
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Entrance

I

Often wrongly construed as a merely literary exercise lacking relation to extra-textual reality, Jacques Derrida's practice of "deconstruction" can, in fact, affect certain "solid structures."¹ Here, the affected "structures" are the contexts within which an essay and its commentary are read. Generally, deconstruction works against a practice termed "logo-phonocentrism": the tendency to produce graphic marks and make such phenomena *proper*, make them "one's own," make them cohere with one's own "voice" or consciousness.² Derrida frequently characterizes phonologocentrism³ as an attempt to maintain -- by means of

¹ "It is because deconstruction interferes with solid structures, 'material' institutions, and not only with discourses or signifying representations, that it is always distinct from an analysis or a 'critique.'" Derrida, The Truth in Painting, p. 19.

² "The voice is consciousness." (80). All page numbers in parentheses without sigla refer to the text of Speech and Phenomena. Other frequently cited texts by Derrida and Husserl are identified by sigla and page number.

³ In "Freud and the Scene of Writing" Derrida refers to a "logo-phonocentrism" which is "the history of the possibility of symbolism in general...." (WD 197). Secure within an "absolute proximity" of voice, being and meaning, logo-phonocentric prose is neither problematized by nor reflexively concerned with its written status. Though Derrida most frequently refers to a "logo-phonocentrism," he does occasionally invert the constituents of the phrase and refer to a "phonologocentrism." As Speech and Phenomena problematizes the "hold" of consciousness and insofar as Derrida equates the "voice" [phonē] with consciousness -- "the voice *is* consciousness" -- the term "phonologocentrism" is most apt, conveying the priority accorded to one's inner, intentional voice or consciousness. What Derrida terms "the metaphysics of presence" thus involves, insofar as that metaphysics is conveyed through phonologocentric texts, two

external marks -- a close, controlled relation between one's voice/consciousness and meaning: one attempts "an absolute proximity of voice and being, of voice and the meaning of being, of voice and the ideality of meaning." (G 12). Any phonologocentric text thus evidences an author's intention to make manifest his or her own voice and maintain a relation to "the ideality of meaning." The way of deconstruction suggests, strangely, a consciousness which does not simply adhere to phonologocentric tradition.

According to one author deconstruction is "a putting-into-question of the root metaphysical prejudice which posits self-identical concepts outside and above the disseminating play of language."⁴ According to another, deconstruction effects "the displacement of philosophical categories and philosophical attempts at mastery."⁵ Put simply, deconstruction seems a textual practice which attempts to solicit or "shake-up" the totalizing and thetic claims which certain authorities make via phonologocentric texts. Though the realization of such practice may seem to

related traits: the development of a "logos" (word, calculation, reason) through fidelity to one's own "phonē" (sound, voice, consciousness). Insofar as a text is produced in accord with one's voice and is evaluated in terms of the logic which that voice develops, that text is phonologocentric.

"Phonologocentrism" is a relative trait; a mundane text is more or less phonologocentric. A typical philosophical text, due to logical rigor and a supposed fidelity to its author's consciousness, is more phonologocentric. Certain literary texts, such as Finnegans Wake or Glas, are less phonologocentric. There is, arguably, much "voice" in such texts, but the voice there is pluralized, multiplied into voices, so that a central, organizing voice is absent.

⁴ Christopher Norris, The Deconstructive Turn, p. 6.

⁵ Johnathan Culler, On Deconstruction, p. 28.

involve a destructive break from tradition, the 'con' of 'deconstruction' (marking its difference from mere 'destruction') implies the impossibility of any simple exit from phonologocentrism. Dependent on a tradition which it also works against, the way of deconstruction is thus caught in a "double-bind;" it must simultaneously violate and preserve phonologocentrism.

In "Differance" Derrida asserts: "We cannot refrain here from going by way of a written text, from ordering ourselves by the disorder that is produced therein...." (133). Derrida's general strategy -- "the aleatory strategy of someone who admits that he does not know where he is going" (TT 50) -- foregrounds "the disorder" of mundane, phonologocentric texts. A-thetic, following the implicit axiom that "there is no more path,"⁶ the deconstructive reading/writing of a text flaunts and adorns the contradictions, aporias, rhetorical moves and seemingly marginal details which haunt and fissure that text, disclosing its "disorder." It is not surprising, then, that such writing (a writing which turns within and against tradition) might finally and paradoxically attempt, in its mundane inscription, its own

⁶ Derrida, Aporias, p. 21. This lack of "path" or method is related to what might be termed the problem of no problem, that one can "no longer find a problem that would constitute itself and that one would keep in front of oneself as a presentable object or project, as a protective representative or prosthetic substitute, as some kind of border still to cross or behind which to protect oneself." Aporias, p. 12. Derrida's understanding of philosophy -- now -- as lack of a path or problem of no problem is related to what Althusser sought: "a nonphilosophical theory of philosophy," a theory which demonstrates how philosophy is simply "a path leading nowhere." (Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays, p. 22.) Finally, one may consider the lack of path or way as related to the passing of "the age of the thesis," insofar as a thesis (a thing placed or set down) requires space, path, a place to "take place."

disappearance.

An ambivalence towards writing seems to fund, even haunt, Derrida's texts. Several instances of such uneasiness are noted here. "Freud and the Scene of Writing" reflexively opens with a terse evocation of violence: writing is a "path" which is "broken, cracked, *fracta*, breached." (WD 200). The essay then ends with mention of a "hidden epigraph which has silently governed our reading" and closes, tellingly, with two citations from Freud. The first, from The Interpretation of Dreams, refers to "complicated machinery and apparatuses" which "in dreams stand for the genitals;" the second, from "Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety," notes that just as walking stops "as soon as walking becomes a symbolic substitute for treading upon the body of mother earth," so does writing cease as soon as it "assumes the significance of copulation." (WD 229). Derrida's writing reveals and veils a perhaps ecological plaint or lament: mundane writing is the work of a "complicated machinery" (synecdochical of a certain global technology) which threatens "the body of mother earth." In Of Grammatology Derrida carefully describes, and surely identifies with, Levi-Strauss' and Rousseau's understandings of writing as, respectively, an instance of "originary violence" and an extension of "that dangerous supplement," such that the history of writing (with its auto-affective and vile ends) is comparable with an equally ethno-centric "history of the road...the *via rupta*...form imposed on the *hyle*...the forest." (G 107). In "Plato's Pharmacy" the Egyptian god Thoth is identified as "[t]he god of writing," one who "cannot be assigned a fixed spot in the play," who "is slippery and masked, an intriguer and

a card...one who puts play into play." (D 93). As Toth's invention both strengthens and weakens human memory, writing is an indeterminate "pharmakon," both cure and poison. (D 93). Mundane writing seems to be a violent *imposition* of questionable value. It is not surprising, then, that "writing's case is grave." (D 103).

In sum, two double-binds haunt and disturb the practice of deconstruction. The first relates to the issue of *topos* or territory. As Derrida seeks "a non-site, or a non-philosophical site, from which to question philosophy,"⁷ his thought/writing logically requires the site of philosophy. Consequently, in "The Ends of Man" Derrida describes deconstruction as both the decision "to change terrain in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion" *and* "an exit..without changing terrain" which employs "against the edifice the instruments or stones available in the house...." (M 135). Accommodating those two tendencies, deconstruction employs a "double-writing" which limns the closure or border, *not end*, of phonologocentric tradition; such a writing plays and works through "rigorous, philosophically intransigent analyses, *and* by means of marks which no longer belong to philosophical space...." (M xxiv). Through a kind of border-writing, a porous writing, Derrida engages the topoi of philosophy and -- beyond "philosophical space" -- literature.

The second bind is more severe, for it involves the issue of *thesis* or track, an issue common to *all* mundane writing. The critique of phonologocentrism obviously requires the imposition of (more) phonologocentric prose; caught in that

⁷ Derrida, interview with Richard Kearney in Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers, p. 98.

bind, Derrida produces a writing which surreptitiously turns against itself and attempts to efface itself. Reading Derrida, one often encounters sentences which gesture, strangely, towards some "non-place" beyond or before any inherited language. In a recent interview Derrida speaks of a "reinscription of language in a network of possibilities" which "*are themselves not only human*."⁸ Such a "network" seems, simply, the experience of sheer phenomena, *before* one's phonologocentric understanding of an inherited language orders that experience. In a recent text Derrida refers to this experience or "non-place" as "*atopos* of God, the senseless, the absurd, the extravagant, the mad...."⁹

II

Derrida's thought -- his *writing* -- began in relation to the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. Phenomenology implies a defeat of writing which orients Derrida's project. Husserl's attempt to return, through writing, "to the things themselves" ("zu den Sachen selbst") was bound to fail, for the instant of mundane inscription, far from turning to such things, actually turns away from them. The

⁸ Derrida, "Eating Well: An Interview," in Who Comes After the Subject, p. 116.

⁹ Derrida, "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," in Derrida and Negative Theology, p. 96.

phenomenologist's description of the appearance of a real or an irreal "object"¹⁰ to consciousness is not, insofar as that description is written, the appearance *per se*; it is, instead, a sentence in a language, and one's experience (as writer or reader) of a sentence *in a language* is other than one's experience of pure or originary meaning. Jean-Francois Lyotard, in Phenomenology, succinctly describes phenomenology, in its attempt to describe and "attain the originary," as a vain and ceaseless "battle":

"Husserlian description *inaugurates* the grasping of 'the thing in itself' before all predication; this is why [phenomenology] never finishes correcting itself, erasing itself...it is a battle of language against itself aimed at attaining the originary.....In this battle the defeat of philosophy, of logos, is certain, since the originary, once described, is, as described, no longer originary."¹¹

Like Lyotard, Derrida appreciates the performative contradiction inherent in the phenomenological project, so that Husserl's vast corpus becomes, in a sense, debris of one's ludicrous attempt to write, fight the flux and attain "the originary."

Husserl had an exalted, even messianic, conception of the philosopher's task; the philosopher is "responsible for mankind" and the phenomenological

¹⁰ An "object," for Husserl, is anything which can be the subject of a predication. In Husserl's terminology, there are "real" and "irreal" or "ideal" objects. Real objects are temporally limited and may be immanent to consciousness (such as melodies and imagined centaurs) or transcendent to consciousness (such as cats and chairs). Irreal objects (such as the laws of logic, the truths of geometry and universals) are non-spatial and omni-temporal.

¹¹ Jean-Francois Lyotard, Phenomenology, p. 68.

"reduction" entails "a complete personal transformation, comparable...to a religious conversion." (Cr 15, 137). Though one cannot not sense derision in Derrida's view of phenomenology, another attitude may be discerned: a deep respect for Husserl, an almost elegiac view of Husserl's text as a final, exemplary manifestation of phonologocentrism. In Section 15 of The Crisis Husserl identifies phenomenology as the culmination of the Western philosophical tradition: "Our task is to make comprehensible the *teleology* in the historical becoming of philosophy....We are attempting to understand the *unity* running through all the [philosophical] projects of history....In a constant critique, which always regards the totally historical complex as a personal one, we are attempting to discern the historical task which we can acknowledge as the only one which is personally our own." (Cr 70). Derrida's understanding of phonologocentrism as the "unity running through" philosophy, his belief in the value of deconstructive practice and his often "personal" readings of "historical" texts (by which "the encyclopedic temptation becomes inseparable from the autobiographical" (SI 36)) are presaged by such passages.

In Section 56 of The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology Husserl mentions "a skeptical mood" which "crippled from the inside philosophical energy," so that philosophy "becomes a personal world-view...the summation of one's personal education." (Cr 196). Derrida takes Husserl seriously. The often excessive play and obscurity of Derrida's writing is a consequence of fulfilling, *in a certain way*, the phenomenological "reduction."

Through that fulfillment, Derrida actually performs "the crisis" which Husserl only describes. In the "Introduction" to Phenomenology Lyotard notes that a certain rationalism which studies "the given" per se (so as to more fully understand those fundamental grounds on which all sciences are based) motivates Husserl "to engage himself in the prerational." Lyotard then notes that "an imperceptible inflection can turn this prerationality into an irrationality, and phenomenology into a stronghold of irrationalism."¹² Orienting deconstruction, that almost "imperceptible inflection" occurs in the difference or divergence between (internal) subjectivity and (external) objectivity, i.e., between consciousness and its objects.

In "Structure and Genesis" Derrida describes phenomenological intentionality as "simultaneously productive and revelatory, active and passive." (WD 158). The undecidable nature of intentional life, its passivity and activity, evidences an uncanny truth: one's own consciousness both is and is not the source of a meaningful world; consciousness is both *constituting and constituted*. Following the truths of an active, creative consciousness and an already given world into which that consciousness is thrown, one is radically free to establish new, yet also bound to follow old, structures of experience and meaning. There is, then, a set of related binary distinctions: consciousness/world, subject/object, constituting/constituted, active/passive. Working against the existence of an objective world constituted independently of consciousness, phenomenology attempts to dissolve such distinctions. Husserl rejected what he termed "the duality

¹² Lyotard, Phenomenology, p. 33.

of finite substances" (i.e. a world of minds and bodies independent of one's consciousness) and sought, through the reduction, to disclose a "transcendental consciousness" which includes within itself the very possibility of a meaningful world. Having suspended engagement with ordinary worldly experience, transcendental consciousness is primary, and "[n]atural being is a realm whose existential status is secondary; it continually presupposes the realm of transcendental being." (CM 21). A disclosed, transcendental consciousness thus claims: "I can enter no world other than the one that gets its sense and acceptance or status in and from me...." (CM 22).

Unlike Husserl, Derrida understands transcendental consciousness as always already engaged with a certain species of worldly experience, for the reduction, as Derrida understands it, discloses a transcendental consciousness which is, paradoxically, "non-transcendent."

Derrida's early experiences with writing were literary: "[m]y first inclination wasn't really toward philosophy but rather toward literature...toward something literature accommodates more easily than philosophy."¹³ What might that "something" -- which literature "accommodates more easily" -- be? At an early age Derrida felt "an endless and impossible task... something like a lyrical movement toward confidences or confessions." (SI 34). Sensing that "task," he wrote prose-poems, maintained quasi-auto-biographical notebooks and "was absolutely bewildered at the possibility of consigning things to paper." (SI 37). Perhaps

¹³ Derrida, interview, Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal, p. 34.

literature accommodates a movement toward the confession that one's own "consignment of things to paper" is a vain and infinite task, an infinite attempt to empty oneself of something which is irreducible: consciousness, breath, *voice*. Perhaps literature, more than philosophy, accommodates a movement toward self-effacement and, as the literary text represents one's voice, a movement toward the effacement of that text, an exhaustion of its breath. Assuming Derrida's experience of those two movements, it is understandable that the vast number of "things" already consigned "to paper" -- "everything in our bildopedic culture" (PC 20) --- would be bewildering. Overwhelmed by "the archive" and the authority inscribed therein, consciousness might adopt and develop a certain "non-transcendence."

Derrida describes literature as a site of suspense: "[t]here is no literature without a *suspended* relation to meaning and reference." (SI 48). When consciousness transcends a text, one achieves the transition from material signifier to immaterial, signified meaning or reference. Foregrounding the play of textual phenomena, literature tends to problematize and even suspend that transition. Although any intelligible text, however literary, requires -- to be intelligible -- an eventual transcendental and intersubjective dimension, it is always possible to effect a *non-transcendental reduction*, one which first limits consciousness to the *phenomena* of the text: "one can always reinscribe in a literary space any statement" and "do a non-transcendent reading of any text whatever," so that "one can re-read everything as literature...." (SI 44, 47). Although no text can sustain resistance to a transcendental reading forever -- for "[a]bsolute resistance to such

a reading would purely and simply destroy the trace of the text" (SI 47) -- every text is, essentially and initially, a set of indeterminate signifiers, a weave of *things put on paper*. Construed as such a set or weave, any text may become literary and suspend "the 'thetic' naivety of the transcendental reading." (SI 45). Reconstructed as literature, any text ("a newspaper article, a scientific theorem, a snatch of conversation" (SI 45)) prompts consciousness to think through to what makes any thesis at all possible, tenable. For Derrida, the basis of the thesis is writing, essentially literary writing.¹⁴

Through a-thetic texts, Derrida attempts to demonstrate that a certain "interpretation of writing is peculiar and proper to philosophy," i.e. that the philosopher customarily considers writing to be a simple means of extending "a homogenous space of communication." (Lt 3). Such an understanding of writing is, however, false, for the meaning of any written word, insofar as that word is proffered to and understood by other persons, *is not* (assuming that that word is in fact functioning as writing, i.e. being read) present within its author's intentional consciousness. Writing, *a fortiori*, never simply extends a present, intended meaning. For Derrida, the sense of center or certainty which phonologocentric prose presupposes and perpetuates is, in fact, an illusion; the mirage of a

¹⁴ "Poetry and literature provide or facilitate 'phenomenological' access to what makes of a thesis *a thesis as such*. Before having a philosophical content, before being or bearing such and such a 'thesis,' literary experience, writing or reading, is a 'philosophical' experience which is neutralized or neutralizing insofar as *it allows one to think the thesis*; it is a nonthetic experience of the thesis, of belief, of position...." (SI 46). (Second emphasis mine).

homogenous, centered self simply lures writing on: "I always dreamt of writing a *self-centered* text; I never arrived at that point -- I always fall upon the others."¹⁵ Reinscribing philosophy within an essentially literary space, the effort and effect of deconstruction unleashes a difficult skepticism about *producing writing*. Working *against and within* phonologocentrism, against and within a current "diaspora of institutes and languages...the publications and techniques that follow on each other, procreating and accumulating themselves like capital or poverty,"¹⁶ against and within "the umbilical cord of the university,"¹⁷ against and within "the age of the professor,"¹⁸ against and within an entire tradition of thetic and capitalist exchange,¹⁹ Derrida writes and thinks of a certain "crisis": philosophical, phonologocentric authority derives from a mirage: *the image of one's voice*.

¹⁵ Derrida, "My Chances / Mes Chances," in Taking Chances: Derrida, Psychoanalysis and Literature, p. 31.

¹⁶ Derrida describes the philosophical community as such in "Violence and Metaphysics" (WD 19-80).

¹⁷ Nietzsche, cited by Derrida in "Otobiographies," in The Ear of the Other, p.35. 35.

¹⁸ Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition, p. 53. Lyotard claims that new technologies of communication and the transmission of information "are sounding the knell of the age of the Professor: a professor is no more competent than memory bank networks in transmitting established knowledge...."

¹⁹ "Or rather *the chief, the capital, the good(s)*." (D 81).

III

The trait which makes the way of deconstruction logically and philosophically perilous (a turning against tradition which requires, as it turns, that same tradition) involves *writing* words, an *active* mode of being. An effective solution to the mentioned double-bind would be to cease *producing* the image, to cease mundane writing. Obviously manifesting "crisis," Derrida's written thought - "dispatches without destination" (PC 73) -- suggests such cessation. In his long "Introduction" to Husserl's late essay "The Origin of Geometry," Derrida notes an "endeavor" which would "rediscover the poetic value of passivity." (OG 102). That endeavor, exemplified by the equivocal and "vertical"²⁰ texts of Joyce, is contrasted with Husserl's endeavor: "to reduce or impoverish empirical language...to the point where its univocal and translatable elements are actually transparent...." (OG 103). Though both endeavors proceed from a grandiose anti-historicism and "will 'to awake' from the 'nightmare' of 'history'," Joyce's attempt involves a readerly reaping or appropriation of "all empirical culture," continuing his

²⁰ Roland Barthes, in Writing Degree Zero, describes the "word" of writing as having a "vertical project": "Fixed connections being abolished, the word is left only with a vertical project, it is like a monolith, or a pillar which plunges into a totality of meanings, reflexes and recollections: it is a sign which stands. The poetic word is here act without immediate past, without environment, and which holds forth only the dense shadow of reflexes from all sources which are associated with it." Writing Degree Zero, pp. 47-48. The "verticality" of Joyce's words is exemplified by Derrida in his "Two Words for Joyce," an essay which elaborates on the semantic and tonal resonances within "he war," a single incipit from Finnegans Wake.

"personal education" through a "generalized writing" which "circulates throughout all languages at once...." (OG 102). Such a writing, evident in Finnegans Wake, assumes empirical cultures and languages and "accumulates their energies, actualizes their secret consonances, cultivates their associative syntheses instead of avoiding them...." (OG 102).

"The poetic value of passivity" connotes a certain openness, a receptivity to empirical languages and cultures. Obviously, in the case of Joyce (or anyone who writes), that passivity is finally evidenced through an active mode (i.e. mundane writing). Key, however, is the fact that a consciousness which writes from such receptivity first experiences, in its initial openness, language as opaque, *non-transcendent phenomena*. Husserl's endeavor, exemplary of philosophy, attempts a univocity derived from a consciousness which must finally be closed to the multiplicities of empirical languages and cultures, a consciousness which actively works within one language (the German within which Husserl wrote), so that that language is experienced as *transcendental speech*. Husserl's philosophical endeavor evidences a main trait of phonologocentrism: "absolute proximity...of voice and the ideality of meaning." (G 12). Unlike Husserl's endeavor (a resolute effort to hear/understand ("entendre") one's own voice/consciousness with and within one's own language, one ideality), Joyce's initially involves a certain open *reading*, a free and associative *scanning* which does not immediately internalize (and transcend) the essential non-transcendence of external marks. The writer for whom "the encyclopedic temptation becomes inseparable from the

autobiographical" (SI 36) first experiences *a receptivity which does not adhere to phonologocentric tradition, a curious scanning which breaks (from) the image of one's own voice.*

IV

In "Violence and Metaphysics" Derrida writes of "a thought" which "summons us to depart...perhaps from every site in general, and to move toward what is no longer a source or site....but toward an *exhalation*, toward a prophetic speech...." (WD 82). Although Derrida refers to the thought of Emmanuel Levinas, it is possible to read that "summons" within Derrida's texts. In "Force and Signification" Derrida contrasts "force" and "form": "*Form* fascinates when one no longer has the force to understand force from within itself. That is, to create." (WD 5). Creative force tends "to defy or lift the law" and grant a "freedom to say everything" (SI 36, 38). Derrida's writing is infused with the force of speech, with the candor of a free-speech latent within writing.²¹ Derrida's writing -- formed from a thought which "means nothing" (P 49) -- finally refutes itself, ceases itself,

²¹ Few commentators have acknowledged the voice lodged within Derrida's texts. An exception is Dennis Tedlock: "Derrida uses too many rhetorical questions, too many exclamation points, too much underlining, too many parenthetical remarks: those things our grammar school teachers beat out of us. The same teachers who earlier made us stop moving our lips (and our bodies) when we read....Derrida has a put a lot of *voice* into his writing. He hypostatizes writing with the voice." Tedlock, "Beyond Logocentrism: Trace and Voice Among the Quiché Maya," in The Question of Textuality, p. 330.

indicating a speech which is phenomenal, a speech which incorporates attributes usually displaced into writing: deliberation, ruse, authority.

In Positions Derrida refers to Speech and Phenomena as "perhaps the essay which I like the most." (P 29). Subtitled "An Essay on Husserl's Theory of Signs" and focused on Husserl's "First Logical Investigation," Derrida's essay is not a conventional exposition of such a theory; instead, Husserl's text (in the most inclusive sense, for Derrida refers to various texts from all stages of Husserl's philosophical career) is used as a "point of departure" and carefully "misread" by Derrida.

Though any erroneous interpretation of a text is a misreading, not all misreadings are errors. Harold Bloom describes misreading as "an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation."²² According to Bloom, the mis-reader or "strong reader" experiences a "dilemma," as he "wishes to find his own original relation to truth, whether in texts or in reality (which he treats as texts anyway)" and "wishes to open received texts to his own sufferings."²³ The tension between one's own "truth" and the plural, already inscribed "truths" of opened and received texts prompts "creative corrections" of past texts by a consciousness. Insofar as each consciousness is "inescapably involved in bringing about that which appears to be happening,"²⁴ *every reading*

²² Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence, p. 30.

²³ Bloom, A Map of Misreading, pp. 3-4.

²⁴ John Wheeler, cited by Arkady Plotnitsky in Complementarity: Anti-Epistemology After Bohr and Derrida, p. 101.

of a text is, initially, a misreading or "swerve"²⁵ from its author's supposed intentions. A genuine misreading involves, however, some sort of gain, some "power" or "surprise"²⁶ for the one who misreads. Insofar as Husserl's host-text is carefully cited and creatively read in a way which orients it towards its guest's own interests, Derrida's reading is, generally, a misreading. In certain instances Derrida *does* err and attribute to Husserl theses and themes which are not evident (or are not explicitly evident) in the phenomenological text: Husserl's quest for "the essence of language," an absolute opposition between "expression" and "indication," the view that mundane writing is a species of indicative sign, an identity of consciousness and an inner, "phenomenological voice," the phonologocentric effort to "protect" the "dignity" of that voice. In other instances Derrida does not exactly err, but appropriates certain phenomenological notions and develops them in surprising ways: the "enigmatic doctrine of parallelism," the absolute "interweaving" of expression and indication, the existence of a "pre-expressive sense" which orients consciousness *before* linguistic predication, the constitution of "archi ecriture" through the work or play of "retention" and

²⁵ In the "Introduction" to The Anxiety of Influence Bloom stresses this initial, essential "swerve" or *clinamen*: "I take the word from Lucretius, where it means a 'swerve' of atoms so as to make change possible in the universe. A poet swerves away from his precursor, by reading his precursor's poem, so as to execute a *clinamen* in relation to it." (AI 14).

²⁶ In the first chapter of Wallace Stevens: The Poems of Our Climate Bloom aligns "surprise" with "power": "It means the *pathos* of Power, the sudden manifestation of the vital will....a seizure...." Bloom, The Poems of Our Climate, p. 5.

"protection."

Following Derrida's suggestion that that essay may be key to his general project and strategy, it is read through, read to reveal an "archi ecriture" which i) solves or dissolves the distinction between self and world and ii) prompts the release of phenomenal speech. With that exorbitant dissolve and end, the production of mundane writing fades. The production of such writing (always more or less phonologocentric) only presupposes and perpetuates "the metaphysics of presence," i.e. an experienced divergence between self and world which prompts the self to intelligently and *presently* use a language in an attempt to order that experience, solve that divergence. Abandoned along lines of "archi ecriture," the consciousness limed in Speech and Phenomena experiences a world reinscribed within "literary space," a "a vast museum of strangeness"²⁷ wherein *speech is phenomenal*.²⁸

Toward such a world, the following is a close, sequential reading of Speech and Phenomena. As Derrida must often raise his voice or voices against "someone

²⁷ "A Vast Museum of Strangeness" (attributed to Giorgio de Chirico: "To live in the world as if in a vast museum of strangeness....") is the title of Chapter Seven of Louis A. Sass's book The Paradoxes of Delusion: Wittgenstein, Schreber and the Schizophrenic Mind, p. 86. It is suggested that Derrida's essay makes, however implicitly, the same directive.

²⁸ So that speech *appears* and appears to be of the same density, the same specificity, as writing. The experience of such speech is strange, pathological. Roland Barthes, in Barthes by Barthes, seems to describe that experience: "I have a disease: I *see* language....I imagine seeing what I am hearing. Hearing deviates to scopia: I feel myself to be the visionary and voyeur of language." Barthes by Barthes, p. 161.

within me who kills with a burst of laughter" (PC 80), his writing proceeds at a pace which foregrounds, beyond coherence and logical consistency, the performative and formative potential of language. Assuming that pace and potential, one cannot conceive of a written meaning which exists independently of its inscription; consequently, "there is no outside-the-text," and the signified is always co-extensive with the pace or place of its signifiers. To apprehend and extend an athletic way of thinking and writing which actively resists summary formulation, it is necessary to go, closely, "by way of a written text" and follow "the disorder produced therein." (133).

Speech and Phenomena has engaged other authors. J. Claude Evans, in Strategies of Deconstruction, has effectively argued that Derrida's reading of Husserl involves massive error and is "a reading that so distorts the text it is supposed to be interpreting," that it "cannot...establish anything at all concerning that text."²⁹ Evans carefully notes specific instances where Derrida distorts Husserl's text, demonstrating that Derrida's way of deconstruction cannot possibly be of relevance to the phenomenological project. Evans faults Derrida for "not getting Husserl right," yet he fails to acknowledge that Derrida has no intention of offering a correct exposition of Husserl. Cogent and very attentive to the letter/laws of Husserl's thought, Evans' attack on Derrida's essay exemplifies a mode of writing which perpetuates "the myth that research connects with the revelation of

²⁹ Evans, Strategies of Deconstruction, p. 143.

meaning."³⁰ Although Evans' book is sub-titled "The Myth of the Voice," there is no discussion of why Derrida might have "projected" that "myth" into Husserl's text or how the voice -- "*la voix*"³¹ -- is related to a mode of subjectivity which Derrida contests. In sum, Evans' reading of Speech and Phenomena does not follow and appreciate the essay in relation to Derrida's unusual project. Other authors (such as John Caputo, Roy Boyne and Christopher Norris) have offered summary readings of Speech and Phenomena which stress certain obvious points: that Derrida "seeks to show the necessity of signs at the heart of transcendental life,"³² that the "experience of the moment of presence is *indefinitely postponed, infinitely deferred....*,"³³ that "it is pointless to ask what *différance* means...unless one is prepared...to find out the difficult way."³⁴ Curiously, it is on that last point that previous commentaries on Speech and Phenomena fail: authors tend to simplify, summarize and take the easy way with a text which is particular, complicated and "quantified." Such authorized readings (as they derive from and perpetuate an authoritative book-culture which Derrida's work actually contests)

³⁰ Cohen, Academia and the Luster of Capital, p. 7.

³¹ Speech and Phenomena is, of course, the English translation of La voix et le phénomène, a perhaps unfortunate translation, in that it fails to convey the contrast between the active, intentional "voice" and passive, unintentional "phenomena." "Voix," in French, can also mean and be translated as "opinion, judgment, vote," a fact which further aligns it with thetic consciousness.

³² Caputo, Radical Hermeneutics, p. 126.

³³ Boyne, Foucault and Derrida: The Other Side of Reason, p. 94.

³⁴ Norris, Derrida, p. 15-16. An exception to such simplifying accounts is Manfred Frank's account in What is Neo-structuralism?, pp. 215-244.

also fail to discern the essay's covert call for a cessation of mundane prose and a release of phenomenal speech.

Basically, Derrida's essay is treated as a "readymade," an already "*existing, present piece*" upon which commentary may make "a sure play." (WD 292).³⁵ Facing the essay, commentary neither deigns nor feigns to complete its own theses; rather, through a gesture of apparent defeat, commentary falls upon and upwards on already made words. *In synch* with the essay, commentary constantly cites and defers to already made words, so that it is difficult to determine "what is Derrida" and "what is the author." Limited to a "sure play" over an already "given and existing piece," quantified over a text which is not (of) its own (making), the following commentary reads, rewrites and re-thinks the essay and its steps towards "p.s," towards a speech which is *post-script*.

In "Wholly Otherwise"³⁶ Emmanuel Levinas aptly refers to La voix et le phénomène as "exceptionally precise...yet so strange" and notes "a purely literary effect, a new *frisson*, the poetry of Derrida." Derrida's prose is precise, honed through the process of "poesis." Like much poetry, Derrida's essay foregrounds its

³⁵ In "Structure, Sign and Play" Derrida recommends "the joyous affirmation of the play of the world and of the innocence of becoming, the affirmation of a world of signs without fault, without truth...offered to an active interpretation....And it plays without security. For there is a *sure* play: that which is limited to the *substitution* of *given* and *existing, present* pieces." (WD 292). Off and "without security," affirmative play *mines* the text and simultaneously prompts its other: negative work which *minds* the text. The following commentary is a mine-full and mind-full reading of host-text by guest-consciousness.

³⁶ In Re-reading Levinas, pp. 3-8.

written status and develops a fusion of various theses, ruses, voices and texts. Much like poetry, Derrida's writing issues from a perhaps vain passion ("to write is to have the passion of the origin"³⁷) and occurs through the rite of his "rhizome."³⁸ As Derrida proceeds with a certain aphoristic energy, an often bewildering text results, a text which works and plays at the very limits of intelligibility. To read "through" Derrida, it is necessary to *not* engage in such a rite. Assuming a flow of "the rhizome," assuming a consciousness which may always devolve into written revolution, it is necessary to receive and read, fully, the quanta of the relevant text. Against traditional authorial tendencies, the following commentary is limited to and determined by already made textual quanta, so that "here as elsewhere, the units of measure are essential," and we "*quantify writing*."³⁹

Ordered by the essay, the commentary follows its steps from the

³⁷ Edmond Jabes, cited by Derrida in "Ellipsis" (WD 295).

³⁸ In "Rhizome" Deleuze and Guattari contrast "arborescent," "tree-centered" thought with "the ruptures and proliferations of the weed or rhizome." Thetic, always "in place," "tree-centered thought" involves "a logic of reproduction": around "an objective pivotal unity," around an organized, organizing consciousness or trunk, "the tree...hierarchizes tracings." The rhizome, however, "is altogether different." As a subterranean stem with roots at its lower surface and shoots at its upper surface, the rhizome -- unlike the tree -- "has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things...*intermezzo*." "Rhizome," in A Thousand Plateaus, p. 25. Unlike the tree, the a-thetic rhizome does not turn toward "a lost or impossible presence;" unlike the tree, the rhizome forms "*a map and not a tracing*." Starting, charting an uncharted terrain, the rhizome "pertains to a map that must be produced." A Thousand Plateaus, p. 12.

³⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus p. 4.

"Introduction" to the final chapter, "The Supplement of Origin." Summarizing certain moments of the commentary (especially those moments which exceed standard explication) may provide access to the essay's labyrinth.

1. In the "Introduction" Derrida mentions the basis on which philosophy, traditionally, is conceived: "presence." Before noting the three traits which work against presence (repetition, time and intersubjectivity) two modes of presence are discerned: spatial and temporal presence. In the jargon of phenomenology, the former mode is related to the apprehended "irreal" or ideal object, while the latter is related to the subjectivity which apprehends that object.

The "Introduction" offers a condensed and somewhat confusing account of the phenomenological reductions. Derrida first notes that the phenomenological and transcendental reductions (which purport to lead consciousness to epistemic states which are pre-predicative or pre-linguistic) are, insofar as such reductions are effected within an "inherited language," incoherent. Derrida suggests that a truly reduced consciousness would conjure and use a language radically unlike any inherited language. Husserl's "doctrine of parallelism" is related to Derrida's understanding of the reductions. Generally, Derrida reinscribes transcendental experience (which Husserl describes as "a precise parallel" to empirical experience) within its empirical parallel; such reinscription involves construing the *transcendental* reduction -- *not* the phenomenological reduction -- as a reduction to a flux of appearances void of determinate meaning. There is, then, an infusion or rush of phenomena within transcendental consciousness, so that sheer

phenomena has a constituting value: before expressive "Meaning" (or the presence of a signified), "pre-expressive Sense" (or the experience of a signifier) occupies and orients consciousness. In relation to language, Derrida implies that the seemingly inessential aspects of a language may be significant.

In the final paragraphs of the "Introduction" *two* "voices" are discerned. One voice, the voice which Derrida essays against, maintains presence and consciousness: "The voice is consciousness." (80). Phonologocentric authority, exemplified by the author of phenomenology, attempts to maintain "an essential tie between *logos* and *phone*," between an inner voice and its external, written calculations. As the French word 'conscience' may be translated as 'consciousness' and 'conscience,' such a voice warns (in Husserl's example of monologue): "You have gone wrong, you can't go on like that." *Another voice*, a voice distinct from the "phenomenological voice," would proffer that phenomenal speech which Derrida invokes or indicates at the end of the essay: "It remains, then, for us to *speak*, to make our voices *resonate* throughout the corridors in order to make up for the breakup of presence." (104).

2. "Chapter One" is focused on the two types of sign which Husserl discerns in the "First Logical Investigation." A brief review of that "essential distinction" reveals an aspect of Derrida's strategy: where Husserl notes "distinctions," Derrida generates binary oppositions which then become solved. "Expressions" are linguistic signs which intend to communicate something; an expression, fully experienced within one's own consciousness or "sphere of ownness," is

intentionally given. "Indications" are experienced "objects" or "states of affairs" in the world which prompt consciousness to conceive of other, probable or possible, worldly objects or states of affairs. In Saussurean terms, expressions are comparable to the "signifieds" or concepts words convey, while indications are comparable to the "signifiers" or "sensory contours"⁴⁰ of words, the phonic/graphic *matter* of language. An "indication" is inessential, and often unintentional, "debris" which falls beyond the "hold" of consciousness: sounds and shapes of words, a gesture made while speaking, a slip of the tongue or pen, an agrammatical sentence, one's "style" of writing, the "grain" of one's voice. Unlike expressions (which subsist within consciousness), indications are worldly phenomena.

Husserl acknowledges that a mere indication may be transformed into an expression. Misreading Husserl, Derrida construes expressions and indications as mutually exclusive types of sign; the supposed opposition between expressive consciousness and indicative phenomena must then be solved. In ways and words which resist summary, "archi ecriture" becomes the "writing" which solves that opposition. The phenomenological attempt to return to and describe apprehension of "the things themselves" fails, as the "proto-writing" of sheer phenomena always comes between, is always already between, consciousness and its objects. Against the claims of phenomenology, consciousness is always mediated by "archi ecriture," so that Derrida may finally claim "there never was any perception" and

⁴⁰ In Section 8 of the "First Investigation" Husserl writes: "A word only ceases to be a word when our interest stops at its sensory contour...." (LI 278).

"the thing in-itself always escapes." (103).⁴¹

In relation to "Chapter One," commentary refers to the earlier essay "Form and Signification." Through that essay, an affiliation is made between the indicator-aspect of the indicative sign and what Husserl terms in Ideas (Section 124) "perceptual" or "pre-expressive sense." Commentary also describes, through "Form and Signification," a virtual "writing-machine," an apparatus which reflexively marks the phenomenological text.

At the end of "Chapter One" a chiasmus is formed. Throughout the essay Derrida plays on the terms "life" and "death," terms which may be cast as respectively active and passive modes of being. Mundane writing, traditionally, is related to a certain activity or "life." A writer, in the usual ethos of prose, actively expresses and affirms, via writing, his or her intentional consciousness. Similarly, reading is related, within the usual ethos, to a certain passivity or "death." Reversing the traditional association of writing with life, Derrida terms *writing* "the process of death at work in signs." (40). Reading, by implication, is then associated with the "process" of life. Here, there's a chiasmus: there may be, in reading, activity and life; there may be, in writing, passivity and death. Philosophy, as traditionally produced (i.e. written), remains unaware and wary of such a

⁴¹ This basically Kantian point is, of course, nothing new. Henri Bergson, for example, succinctly presages Derrida's view: "The individuality of things escapes us....we do not see the actual things themselves; in most cases we confine ourselves to reading the labels affixed to them....The word....intervenes between it [the thing] and ourselves....We live in a zone midway between things and ourselves, externally to things, externally also to ourselves." Bergson, Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic, p. 151.

chiasmatic possibility.

3. "Chapter Two" follows Derrida's *valorization* of what for Husserl is of secondary importance: the indicative sign. Insofar as Derrida considers writing to be a species of indicative sign, there's a futility in Husserl's "task": it is not possible to be rid of the indicative, be rid of writing, for any phonologocentric "reduction" or devaluation of indication is wrought through an indicative medium (i.e. writing). After a detailed description of what, exactly, constitutes the indicative sign for Husserl (an actually experienced "object" or "state of affairs" which motivates consciousness to believe in the possibility of some other object or state of affairs), a detour is made through other texts by Derrida ("Signature Event Context," Of Grammatology), clarifying Derrida's understanding of writing as an "auto-affective" "supplement."

Commentary then notes intimations of "archi ecriture," a "writing" composed of instances of what Derrida terms "the sign in general." It is argued that that "general" "sign" derives from a conflation of the indicative sign (comprising actually experienced indicator and surmised indicated) with Saussure's linguistic sign (comprising signifier and signified). Through that conflation, any spatio-temporal phenomenon may (*qua* linguistic signifier) indicate an indeterminate signified and so attain linguistic status, while linguistic expressions may (*qua* indicator-aspect of an indicative sign) motivate consciousness to believe in, or entertain, a *surmised* meaning, object or state of affairs. Through "the sign in general," the experience of the text and the text of experience become strangely equivalent, equally open

to an incessant interpretative scanning. An associative consciousness which flows from indicator/signifier to merely surmised indicated/signified works or plays against the metaphysics of presence. At the close of the commentary that consciousness wanders through a "vast museum of strangeness."

4. "Chapter Three" follows Derrida's very detailed characterization of "the phenomenological voice," a "voice which may remain silent," a voice which sustains the illusion of "meaning as soliloquy." Some such voice, co-extensive with intentional consciousness, funds the phonologocentric text, a text woven of seemingly expressive signs. In words and ways which again resist summary, Derrida contests the objectivity which the silent voice achieves. Due to its inevitable "sensory contour," any expressive sign remains "caught up in" or "interwoven" with indication, i.e. remains, actually, an instance of "the sign in general."

5. "Chapter Four" develops an odd, counter-intuitive notion: that a kind of writing (involving, like mundane writing, repetition of a signifier and reproduction of a signified) inheres within "solitary mental life." Derrida refers to "the sign in general" and claims that, with the experience of such a sign, "the difference between reality and representation does not take place." (51). Derrida claims that presence, the presence of any object within consciousness, is an *effect* of representation. It is in this chapter that Derrida explicitly aligns indication and writing with "death": there is, within the presence of life, the absence of death, an irruption of death within life which results in what Derrida terms "non-presence" or "an ultra-

transcendental concept of life." (15). The relationship with death (which generates non-presence) prompts an "altered" relation to the metaphysics of presence. In a certain way, such metaphysics continues to be read, and signified concepts remain legible. Insofar as conceptual objectivity is the *effect* of a deathly writing however, mundane writing appears "sous rature," effaces itself. The erasure of mundane writing reveals "archi écriture," a "writing" co-extensive with one's experience of sheer phenomena.

6. In "Chapter Five" Derrida attributes to Husserl the difficult thesis of a consciousness which immediately (without mediation, without the experience of signs) apprehends meaning. Such a consciousness, transparent and simply present to itself, is (insofar as it would ascertain and authorize those claims or theses which phonologocentric authorities traditionally make through the "life" of mundane writing) the main target of Derrida's essay. Throughout the chapter Derrida refers to Husserl's late text "Internal Time Consciousness," transforming the phenomenological categories of "retention" and "protention" into an elementary divergence between consciousness and world which Derrida terms "différance." Gradually, it becomes evident that "différance" relates (to) that "archi-écriture" in or by which phonologocentric discourse fades.

7. "Chapter Six" focuses on Derrida's "projection" of a certain "voice" into Husserl's text. With that focus and diagnosis, psychoanalytic terms are introduced. Commentary claims that the voice which Derrida essays against is an "introjected" paternal voice, the inner voice of one's "ego ideal." Through a reading of Freud's

"On Narcissism," it is argued that the ego ideal becomes "the voice of consciousness/conscience," an agency which mediates relations between one's empirical ego and the idealized, specular figure of the "ideal ego," a narcissistic remnant of infantile omnipotence. Unlike the ego ideal (formed through an essentially prohibitive, paternal voice), the ideal ego develops through one's early relations to an essentially maternal environment. A retained relation to the ideal ego prompts the imposition of an "archi ecriture" which supports an altered consciousness. Commentary refers to "a reciprocal, empathic acceleration of gazes" between infant and its maternal environment, claiming that such gazing might strain the voice of the ego ideal, causing it to "shatter" and be scattered throughout one's surroundings. It is at that point that the silent voice of the ego ideal may be "seen," so that mute phenomena "speaks."

8. In "Chapter Seven" Derrida refers to a passage from Edgar Allen Poe's "The Strange Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," a passage which serves as an epigraph to the whole essay. In that passage M. Valdemar, mesmerized upon his death-bed, shouts, "now - *I am dead*." The sentence 'I am dead' entails a performative contradiction. Before expiring "in nearly liquid mass...of detestable putrescence," Valdemar *impresses* his interlocuter with speech: "it impressed me...as gelatinous or glutinous matters impress the sense of touch." Suspended between "life" and "death" before actual death, Valdemar's plight, his contradictory shout, parallels the performative contradiction entailed by the *written* sentence 'I am alive.' Like the philosopher who writes, Valdemar proffers words which are, *qua*

phenomena, "dead to" his voice, beyond his consciousness, lost in "destinerrance."

The integrity of written philosophy, the security of phonologocentrism, results from a relation which *seems* symbolic, i.e. which seems to involve an exchange of texts, thoughts, theses. Instead of extending such a relation, might not mundane writing extend an essentially *imaginary* relation, and so, as deposited tain wherein certain drives virtually coalesce, involve an imposition, a violence? Now, if one writes only of that which one does not know well, if "we write only at the frontiers of knowledge, at the border which separates our knowledge from our ignorance and transforms the one into the other,"⁴² might not mundane writing (concerned with one's own knowledge and ignorance) be construed as excrescence, idle debris? A whole era or error of especial, expressive subjectivity has been constituted through a valorization and territorialization of such writing; the academy, the archive and the vast exchange which thrives between those two centers (center of speech, site of booked speech) would be *affected*, imperiled, menaced, *if* writing were such a vain, mirroring act.

Regarding writing, Derrida's essay suggests such a view, a view related to Lacan's "L-Schema." According to Derrida, the 'a' of "differance" "is not read; it remains silent, secret and discrete, like a tomb." (132). Lacan's "l'objet petit a" -- be it breast, gaze, voice, feces or written graphemes -- is an object of phantasy which sustains an "Imaginary Relation," an "auto-affective" relation wherein

⁴² Deleuze, Preface to Difference and Repetition, p. xxi.

consciousness seems to see, hear/understand and "order" itself.⁴³ A reader, turned writer, experiences the site/sight of "difference" as "l'object petit-a," an external locus of psychic drives. Seduced by a "pyramidal silence" which all booked texts show, consciousness may, by the 'a' of "difference," mime what it sees and fall into writing. In Lacan's "L-Schema" the Imaginary Relation sustained between ego (a) and its fantasy object (a') is bisected by the "Symbolic Relation" which inheres between the Unconscious (A) and the Subject (S). The former relation, in its instants and insistence, forecloses the latter. In relation to writing and consciousness, Lacan's schema illustrates two mutually exclusive lines of attention; thus: "I have seen it all, and I write, and I have seen nothing."⁴⁴ As the practice of writing perpetuates a relation which thwarts a consciousness informed by the Other, as written, narrow language uselessly hones a consciousness already "at home,"⁴⁵ it is possible, then, to cease writing and return to the rigors of reading, understanding and speech. Obviously exorbitant and "unheard of," that possibility is implied by Derrida's essay. At the close of the commentary, Freud's patient Dora -- as she reads in a dream from an exitless book -- embodies the

⁴³ "We cannot refrain here from going by way of a written text, from *ordering* ourselves by the disorder produced therein...." (133). With and against Derrida, commentary suggests another method or experience -- that we disorder ourselves by the *order* of the written text.

⁴⁴ Ashbery, Flow Chart, p. 214.

⁴⁵ Samuel Beckett -- a writer to whom Derrida "very close...too close" (SI 60) - - 60) --begins his Texts for Nothing with "voices" which "all have the same voice, the same ideas, All you had to do was stay at home. Home. They wanted me to go home." The way of deconstruction generally understands written philosophy as *nostalgia*, homesickness, the desire to be at home everywhere.

altered consciousness which follows that possibility.

Derrida's essay implies an end. Though one surely realizes the impossibility of such an end,⁴⁶ the *afflatus* or *hybris* of that end remains inscribed, however implicitly, in the text of Speech and Phenomena. Fortunately or unfortunately (or without any relation to fortune at all), the following commentary makes the implicit explicit.

⁴⁶ In "Tympan" Derrida refers to the "false exit" of Speech and Phenomena (M xviii). Such an exit from writing, such a refusal to continue to work and play with and within the practice which has formed and informed science and culture, would be fatal transgression, "the way of Icarus." (104).

The Introduction

Dense and allusive, the "Introduction" requires a slow, patient reading. Derrida first introduces, but does not explicitly thematize, his target: "presence," the presence of the phonologocentric "voice" and of an objectivity which that voice sustains. Certain traits counter presence: repetition, time and intersubjectivity. Just mentioned in the "Introduction," those traits are developed through the essay's course, culminating in "archi ecriture" -- an "irreducible nonpresence" which has "a constituting value." (6). Finally, through an appropriation of Husserl's "enigmatic doctrine of 'parallelism'," Derrida intimates the essay's end: a place or state wherein *mundane* writing ceases.

Initially

Suggesting¹ ambivalence, the essay starts: "The Logical Investigations (1900-1901) opened a path which, as we know, the whole of phenomenology has followed." (3). There is ambivalence, for the sentence may be construed as a claim concerning *content* or as a claim concerning *form*. Read the first way, Derrida asserts a continuity of certain phenomenological themes. Read the second way, Derrida asserts that the Investigations *initiated* phenomenology, that Husserl wrote

¹ Fortunately or unfortunately, this word, this verb ['to suggest'], occurs frequently throughout this commentary. This is due, perhaps, to Derrida's adopting a "doctrine of *suggestion*, of undecided allusion." (Derrida, "Mallarmé," in Acts of Literature, p. 120.

and that his writing "opened a path," a "breaching" which "the whole of phenomenology...followed."²

Though trivially true (as that which "opens" or initiates "a path" must precede whatever "follows" it), the latter reading accounts for the seemingly gratuitous "as we know" of Derrida's first sentence. "We know" -- we *see* -- that as one writes, one imposes "a path." The third sentence of Derrida's first paragraph identifies, in more abstract terms, the same formal continuity: "In the Crisis...the conceptual premises of the Investigations are still at work, notably when they concern all the problems of signification and language in general." (3). It will become evident that such "problems of signification" are also problems of writing.

² Writing as making or breaking a "path" is a recurrent concern. In "Freud and the Scene of Writing" Derrida compares Freud's 1895 Project with the later "Note on the Mystic Writing-Pad" (1925); the inner, neural writing ("Niderschriften") posited in the Project is later realized through a "writing machine," the "mystic writing pad." Both models of the psyche involve "Bahnung," pathbreaking: "Breaching, the tracing of a trail, opens up a conducting path which presupposes a certain violence...The path is broken, cracked, *fracta*, breached." (WD 200).

In Of Grammatology, apropos of Levi-Strauss's ethnocentric "penetration" into the "'lost world' of the Nambikwara," Derrida compares writing with road-making: "one should meditate upon the following together: writing and the possibility of the road...the history of writing and the history of the road, of the rupture, of the *via rupta*, the path that is broken, beaten, *fracta*." (G 107). Both writing and road are, for Derrida, "form imposed on the *hyle*" and involve "the energy of the *graphein* as the originary effacement of the proper name." (G 108). Writing, like the road, sets self in motion and prompts "an effacement" of that self's property/propriety, placing the proper name within a system: "From the moment that the proper name is erased in a system, there is writing...." (G 108).

Finally, from the blurb on the back of The Postcard: "You find yourself, you, yourself, on its *path*." (my emphasis).

The second paragraph cites the distinction which yields "conceptual premises" "at work" throughout the phenomenological text. Chapter One of Husserl's "First Logical Investigation" is devoted to "Essential Distinctions." In Section One of that chapter Husserl notes an ambiguity regarding the term "sign": "Every sign is a sign for something, but not every sign has 'meaning,' a 'sense' that the sign 'expresses.'" (LI 269). Husserl then distinguishes between "expressions" and "indications." The former are signs which "have meaning" and "express" "a sense," while the latter "*do not express* anything, unless they happen to fulfill a significant as well as an indicative function." (LI 269). Derrida claims that the coherence of Chapter One of the "First Investigation" results from the distinction made between expression and indication; moreover, the "essential distinctions" of Chapter One "rigorously command all the subsequent analyses." (4).

Derrida then asks: "In terms of what question are we to accept and read this apparently so portentous distinction?" Before response, there is digression, establishing the context within which the whole essay must be read. Derrida refers to a "before" before the "First Logical Investigation," claiming that Husserl, "before proposing this purely 'phenomenological' distinction between two senses of the word 'sign,'" effects a "phenomenological reduction," thus establishing "the necessary absence of presuppositions" by "bracketing" all already-constituted knowledge.³ Husserl fails to realize that his *use* of a language, his "point of

³ Derrida alludes to Section 7 of the "Introduction" to the Logical Investigations. In that Section Husserl recommends suspending ontic commitment to the special sciences. Husserl formulated the phenomenological reduction in Ideas I (1913),

departure in the '*Faktum*' of language," is itself a presupposition. For Husserl, "the '*Faktum*' of language," his contingent use of a natural language is not a meta-physical or epistemological presupposition, as the truths disclosed by phenomenology will be universally valid. For Derrida, Husserl uses a particular natural language and presupposes (i) that that language can constitute and convey universal truths; (ii) that the intentional states upon which truthful language supervenes remain valid "whether or not there exist any languages...whether men or nature really exist." (4).

Does Husserl posit intentional states which remain invariant and valid, even without man, nature or language? Derrida cites Section 54 of *Ideas*: "All empirical unities, and therefore also psychological mental processes, are indices pointing to concatenations of absolute mental processes." (I 128). Cursorily read, the passage from *Ideas* suggests commitment to a realm of invariant intentional states ("absolute mental processes") independent of embodied, psychological processes.⁴ Assuming that commitment and considering it in relation to presupposition (ii)

after the *Investigations*, so Derrida here uses "reduction" in a non-technical sense.

⁴ In Section 54 of *Ideas* Husserl writes: "Certainly a consciousness without an animated organism...without a psyche, a consciousness which is not personal, is imaginable." (I 127). In Section 49 ("Absolute Consciousness as the Residuum After the Annihilation of the World"), Husserl writes: "while the being of consciousness...would indeed be necessarily modified by an annihilation of the world of physical things, its own existence would not be touched....[N]o real being, no being which is presented and legitimated in consciousness by appearances, is necessary to the being of consciousness itself." (I 110). In such passages Husserl *imagines* a constituting "transcendental consciousness," a consciousness independent of corporeality. That which is imaginable is not necessarily actual.

above, a paradox results, for an intentional state requires some material medium within which that state is realized.

Considering Husserl's text more carefully, the paradox dissolves, as it states that incarnate "psychological processes" "point towards" "absolute mental processes." To point towards something does not entail the existence of that thing. Husserl does not posit an independent realm of meanings *per se*; such a realm is not possible without "empirical unities" whose "psychological processes" "point towards" and so constitute that realm.

Derrida's criticism is directed at presupposition (i): Husserl assumes a natural language and presumes that his phonologocentric use of that language will constitute and convey philosophical truths. Derrida contests a prevalent presupposition: that a phonologocentric text may constitute and convey philosophical truth. For Derrida, a natural language always entails the equivocation of metaphor, thus complicating univocal truth. In the "Exergue" to "White Mythology" he writes: "[M]etaphor seems to involve the usage of philosophical language in its entirety...the usage of so-called natural language *in* philosophical discourse... the usage of natural language *as* philosophical language." (M 209).

Finally refining the posed question ["In terms of what question are we to accept and read...?"], Derrida asks, "do not phenomenological necessity, the rigor and subtlety of Husserl's analysis, the exigencies to which it responds...conceal a metaphysical presupposition?" (5). More specifically: do not the "rigor" and "subtlety" of Husserl's mundane writing constitute phenomenology "from within"?

"Presence"

Husserl's writing composes phenomenology. That writing derives from "presence,"⁵ "the source and guarantee of all value." (5). More or less phonologocentric, mundane writing perpetuates presence. "Archi ecriture" counters and alters presence. Defining presence, Derrida alludes to Husserl's "principle of principles," given in Section 24 of Ideas: "[E]very originary presentative intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition...." (I 44). Based on that "principle," presence is characterized as "the present or presence of sense to a full and primordial intuition." (5). Traditionally, the presence of sense or meaning⁶ prompts the experience of "noesis" ('thought'). Respecting, adhering to such presence, phenomenology is composed, "controlled."

A long paragraph distinguishes between objective presence and subjective presence. (9). There is the objectivity of that which is known; Derrida describes such presence in spatial terms: "the proximity of what is set forth as an object of an intuition." Objective, known presence requires a subjective, knowing presence, "a temporal present which gives the clear and present intuition of the object its form." Subjective presence *is* consciousness, and consciousness "means nothing other than the possibility of the self-presence of the present in the living present."

⁵ Certain terms of Derrida's ("archi ecriture," "differance") are quoted throughout the commentary. Other somewhat more familiar terms of Derrida's, Husserl's, Freud's, etc. are quoted or not quoted according to context.

⁶ Throughout the Investigations Husserl treats "Sinn" [sense] and "Bedeutung" [meaning] as synonymous.

Consciousness or "self-presence" is determined with and within one's awareness of time, one's "own" time. In the presence of a "temporal present" an objective presence is given a linguistic "form." Derrida identifies consciousness with "solitary mental life" and a "voice" which gives objects linguistic "form." The time of subjectivity -- the subject's own time -- is protected and extended by the phonologocentric text: "Every time this element of presence becomes threatened, Husserl will awaken it, recall it and bring it back to itself in the form of a telos...an Idea in the Kantian sense." (9).⁷

"Controlled" by presence, the phenomenological text is caught in a "double-bind." Derrida notes Husserl's vain attempt to move beyond metaphysics, citing a passage from Section 60 of the Cartesian Meditations: "[W]hat we have here [in phenomenology] is anything but metaphysics in the customary sense, a historically degenerate metaphysics....Phenomenology's purely intuitive, concrete and also apodictic mode of demonstration excludes all 'metaphysical adventure,' all speculative excesses." (5-6). Husserl wished to supersede traditional metaphysics, yet the "phenomenological critique is metaphysics itself," for phenomenology presupposes

⁷ In Derrida's "Introduction" to his translation of Husserl's "Origin of Geometry" he relates "an Idea in the Kantian sense" to "the object of an ideation" which, unlike the object of an intuition, is constituted by transcendental consciousness. The Kantian "Idea" is a "regulative...thought unity...which never phenomenolizes itself." (OG 137). Like the "thing-in-itself," the Kantian "Idea" cannot be intuited, for it is not phenomenal; it does not appear. Derrida later claims that "[t]here is no ideality without an Idea in the Kantian sense at work" (9). As a principle which limits and regulates pure reason, the Kantian "Idea" prescribes "the infinity of permissible repetitions" which an object may assume; it determines "the presence of an object" which may "be indefinitely repeated as the same." (9).

that objective and subjective presence can, through a natural language, constitute and convey philosophical truth.

Against Presence

Three traits counter the "founding value of presence" and limit the "authentic metaphysics" of phenomenology: repetition, temporalization and intersubjectivity. The objective presence of the "noetic object"⁸ is "ideal." Ideality, however, is derived from repetition; ideal content is an *effect* of repeated phonic/graphic form. Paradoxically perhaps, the ideality of the noetic object is empirically constituted: through contingent "acts of repetition," through repeated phonic/graphic forms, a noetic object becomes present. Considered one way, that presence "*does not exist*," is "*not real or is unreal*." (6). The noetic object, the *meaning* of a cognitive, intentional act does not "ex-ist," does not stand-out in the world. Considered otherwise, the noetic object in fact ex-ists, for that object is "*indefinitely repeated*" only "*in the identity of its presence*," and identity, in order to be recognized as such, requires an actual repetition of phonic/graphic form. Presence is thus undecidable, shifting between abstract inexistence (or subsistence) and mundane existence (or actuality). Such undecidability is a main trait of what Derrida later terms "the sign in general." (23).

⁸ A "noetic object" or "noema" is that to and through which noetic activity is directed. Noetic acts entail noemata: "There is no noetic moment without a noematic moment that belongs specifically to it." (I 226).

Husserl acknowledges the necessity of repetition; in fact, "degenerate metaphysics involved "blindness to the authentic mode of *ideality*, to that which *is*, to what may be indefinitely *repeated*." (6). For Husserl, however, "the ideality of ideality" remains what Derrida terms "the *living present*, "the self-presence of transcendental life," a "living presence" which all meaningful acts of repetition must, in order to be meaningful, "reactivate." Within Husserl's "philosophy of life," Derrida will insinuate "a nonlife, a nonpresence...an ineradicable nonprimordiality" which problematizes the reactivation of meaning.

"The movement of temporalization" and the "constitution of intersubjectivity" are mentioned in the "Introduction." Subsequent chapters develop those "two decisive moments of description." Within the "movement of time" and "the constitution of intersubjectivity" "an irreducible nonpresence" is discerned "as having a constituting value." (6). In relation to temporalization (one's internal consciousness of time), there is a "necessary transition" from what Husserl terms "retention" to "*re-presentation*." In relation to intersubjectivity (one's consciousness of an other person), there is a transition from simple awareness of the other as an animate organism to "*ap-presentation*," by which, according to Husserl's "Fifth Cartesian Meditation," "the other ego" becomes "fashioned in me" and "*another monad* becomes constituted in mine." (CM 90, 115). Derrida stresses these "transitions," so that the two "modifications" or alterations of "presence" -- "*re-presentation*" and "*ap-presentation*" -- "bifurcate" presence *a priori*. Here, by a phrase ("something that happens to presentation...by bifurcating it *a priori*"), Derrida suggests the

imposition of "archi ecriture," a proto-writing which becomes a new *a priori* condition for one's experience of time and the other.

Potentially disruptive of mundane writing, such proto-writing did not thwart Husserl's phonologocentric composure, and the vast phenomenological text remains to be read: "This [modification of presentation] does not impugn the apodicticity of the phenomenological-transcendental description, nor does it diminish the founding value of presence." (7). Though an *a priori* "modification" and "bifurcation" of presence occurs within consciousness due to the re-presentation of time and the ap-presentation of the other, that *a priori* "nonpresence" need not rupture the order and integrity of a phonocentric text. Respected and read, "the founding value of presence" need not be threatened. Here, in lieu of a disruptive, anarchic "archi ecriture," "the phenomenological-transcendental description" remains to be read, heard and understood.⁹

⁹ Though the imposition of "archi ecriture" will eventually be understood as thwarting the sending of more mundane, phonologocentric text, such proto-writing need not thwart respect for and reception of those texts already present. Composed *within* "archi ecriture," an other text may occupy consciousness. The "modification of presentation" imposed by time and intersubjectivity, need not alter, bifurcate, or distort -- need not interrupt -- the received text; it may *leave* it as it is. Wittgenstein's remarks on the "results" of philosophy describe this (non) effect of "archi ecriture": "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language....For it [philosophy/"archi ecriture"] cannot give it [language] any foundation...It leaves everything as it is." Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, p. 49.

In sum, "archi ecriture" allows "undecidability."¹⁰ On one determination, "it leaves everything as it is," and the mundane text is present, read and realized. On another determination, however, "archi ecriture" marks "an irreducible non-presence," so that the received text is interrupted, misread and rewritten in a way which discloses the "irreducible void" beneath it. In the practice of "deconstruction," these determinations form one: i) we read, repeat and "mind" the text; ii) we misread, alter and "mine" the text.¹¹

Husserl's "Decision"

Derrida asserts that "[t]he concept of metaphysics" must "be made precise" and that the "excessive generality of this question" must be "narrowed." (7). Though it's difficult to discern which "question" Derrida refers to, an actual question is soon posed: "[H]ow can we justify the *decision* which subordinates a reflection on the sign to a logic?" (7). *That* question -- invoking Husserl's lived "instant of decision"¹² to investigate the logic of meaning and write the Logical Investigations

¹⁰ Derrida introduces "undecidability" in his "Introduction" to his translation of Husserl's "The Origin of Geometry." (1962). In a note to that "Introduction" he writes: "[U]ndecidability has a revolutionary and disconcerting sense, it is *itself* only if it remains essentially and intrinsically haunted in its sense of origin by the *telos* of decidability -- whose disruption it marks." (OG 53). The "telos of decidability" remains inscribed, however covertly, within undecidability.

¹¹ "I always write *on* the support, right on the support but also on the subject. Expected result, it deforms it." (PC 27). "Support," here, is the relevant text, while the "subject" is the writer who "deforms" or is "deformed by" the text/support (depending on how one parses the impersonal pronouns of the last cited clause).

¹² In an epigraph to "Cogito and the History of Madness" Derrida cites Kierkegaard: "The Instant of Decision is Madness." (WD 31).

-- cannot be answered. The unanswerable question soon prompts three very general questions: "[I]f the concept of sign precedes logical reflection...from whence does it come?" "Where does the essence of the sign...come from?" "What gives a theory of knowledge the authority to determine the essence and origin of language?" (7). An assumption guides the barrage of questions; Derrida distinguishes between "the sign" (or "the concept of the sign") and "logic" or ("logical reflection") and assumes that Husserl subordinates "the sign" to "logic." According to Derrida, Husserl's interest in logic foreclosed a full "reflection on the sign." Husserl determined "the logos from logic,"¹³ and the phenomenological appreciation of language was limited by that determination. Considering the etymological derivation of "logic" from "logos," the project of a purely "logical investigation" would be *a fortiori* impossible: "logic" requires "logos."

Suggesting a futile quest, these questions, *Derrida's questions*, result from a misreading of Husserl's text. At no point in the "First Investigation" does Husserl purport to investigate the "essence and origin of language." For Husserl, language is an unproblematic given, a "tool" with which to investigate the "essence of cogni-

¹³ "Logos" and "logic" share the same Greek root "lōgein": 'to gather,' 'to reap,' 'to read.' The Greek noun "logos" is the complement of that verb. "Logos" had numerous meanings in ancient Greek, ranging from 'speech, saying' to 'reason, reckoning, calculation,' and 'ratio.' Etymologically, "logos" is prior to "logic;" the latter English word derives from the Late Latin adjective "logicus" which was in turn derived from the Greek adjective "logikos." (Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English, 347). Surely aware of the "etym" shared by "logos" and "logic" ("lōgein": 'to gather,' 'to reap,' 'to read'), Derrida suggests that by "determining the logos from logic" Husserl inverted the words' proper etymological order.

tion."¹⁴ Derrida projects into Husserl's text a quest for "the essence and origin of language." Husserl, in fact, never makes any "*decision* which subordinates a reflection on the sign to a logic," for his text does not "reflect" on the sign at all.

Having implied a primacy of "logos" over "logic," Derrida describes Husserl's project of an "*a priori* grammar"¹⁵ as an attempt to extract "the purely logical" from the "purely grammatical." Without argument or specific reference to the "meta-empirical" laws of the "Fourth Investigation," Derrida simply states that a "meta-empirical grammar is not sufficient to cover the whole extension of language's *a priori*." By attempting to discern "the logical *a priori* within the general *a priori* of language," Husserl "designates...the dignity of a telos, the purity of a norm and the essence of a destination." (9).

Derrida soon qualifies his previous questions: "We do not impute such a *decision* to Husserl; he explicitly assumes it...The consequences of this are limitless." (7). Writing with and within a language, Husserl is uncritically phonologocentric; he "explicitly assumes" that a contingent, natural language can constitute

¹⁴ J. Claude Evans, in Strategies of Deconstruction, details this aspect of Derrida's misreading. Evans notes that "Husserl is interested in the essence of cognition, of the logical, and is interested in language only qua medium of cognition." Evans, Strategies of Deconstruction, p. 12.

¹⁵ In the "Fourth Investigation" Husserl proposes an "*a priori* grammar" and attempts to delineate "*a priori* laws which determine the possible forms of meaning." (LI 493). The "meta-empirical laws" of such a grammar would explicate our ability to distinguish between evident absurdity and total senselessness. [A contradictory claim ('The square is round') is absurd, while a concatenation of words which is not well-formed ('Or think green the') is senseless.]

and convey necessary, philosophical truth.

The Reductions

In the same paragraph Derrida makes another, more nuanced, criticism: "Husserl never raised the question of the transcendental logos, the inherited language in which phenomenology produces and exhibits the results of its reductive operations." (7-8). This charge refers to the "epoche" or "reduction" by which "transcendental consciousness" is purportedly disclosed as the constitutive origin of meaningful phenomena. Not thematized in the Logical Investigations, the "reduction" or "epoche" is described in Ideas, Section 32, as a "method of parenthesizing" which "put[s] out of action the general positing which belongs to the essence of the natural attitude." (I 61).¹⁶

¹⁶ Though it is possible to discern three reductions in Husserl's text (the "phenomenological," the "transcendental" and the "eidetic" reductions) this commentary concerns two: i) the phenomenological or, in Derrida's phraseology, "psycho-phenomenological" reduction, by which one's own consciousness remains as "phenomenological residuum;" ii) the transcendental reduction, by which the "transcendental consciousness" of the "absolute ego" is disclosed as constitutive of meaningful phenomena. The third, eidetic reduction makes the realm of ideal objects "present" to consciousness; by virtue of the "pure *eidos*," consciousness transforms *things into meanings*. The eidetic reduction also extends the "transcendental ego" beyond one's own *de facto* ego, so that the individual ego exemplifies a universal, transcendental consciousness. Explicitly introduced in Husserl's later writings (cf. Cartesian Meditations and The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology, CM 69-70; Cr 146-152), the eidetic reduction involves two phenomenological concepts implicit throughout Husserl's later texts: the ideality of objective meaning and the universality of transcendental consciousness. In Speech and Phenomena Derrida refers to the "eidetic reduction" just twice (2, 30). Throughout the essay, he conflates the eidetic reduction with the transcendental reduction; thus, all references to the transcendental reduction also refer to the objectivity and universality which the eidetic reduction discloses.

The "natural attitude," for Husserl, includes and is uncritically involved with spatio-temporal things. Consciousness, in "The World of the Natural Attitude," experiences, through "different modes of sensuous perception," things which are "simply there for me." (I 51). *Like* Cartesian doubt,¹⁷ the "phenomenological epoche," as described in Section 32 of Ideas, "keeps me from *using* any judgment that concerns spatio-temporal existence." (I 61). Through that reduction, consciousness makes no judgment about -- neither asserts nor denies -- spatiotemporal things.

In Section 57 of Ideas Husserl refers to a "transcendental reduction," a reduction which discloses "a transcendency within immanency." (I 133). By that second "epoche" consciousness returns to and realizes its constituting role: spatiotemporal things become meaningful through a transcendental, "meaning-bestowing" consciousness. In Section 44 of the Cartesian Meditations Husserl describes one's "sphere of ownness" as the locus of transcendental consciousness: "This reduction to my transcendental "sphere of ownness" has an unusual sense.

¹⁷ The phenomenological reduction suggests Descartes' doubt regarding the existence of the external world, a doubt generated (in the "First Meditation") by the possibility that one is asleep. In the Cartesian Meditations Husserl notes his debt to Cartesian method: "Descartes inaugurates an entirely new kind of philosophy." Through Cartesian doubt and the requirement for absolute certainty, "philosophy takes a radical turn: from naive objectivism to transcendental subjectivism." (CM 4). Unlike Descartes, Husserl does not substantialize the ego (i.e. does not infer 'I exist' from 'I think'): "Descartes introduced the apparently insignificant but actually fateful change whereby the ego becomes a *substantia cogitans*." (CM 24). Because the "bracketing" of the external world is *sustained through the transcendental reduction*, the transcendental ego does not become a separate, existing substance or thing in a world of meanings; it is the source of the world and its meanings.

In the natural, world-accepting attitude, I find differentiated and contrasted: myself and others. If I 'abstract'...from others, *I alone* remain." (CM 93). In sum, the reductions require refraining from any judgment regarding, belief in *or use of* spatio-temporal things: "we can quite freely exercise this peculiar epoche, a certain refraining from judgment...from belief.....I exclude all sciences relating to this natural world...I make no use of the things posited in them." (I 59, 61).

Derrida's understanding of the reductions is complex. Generally, he suggests that the "transcendental reduction" to one's "sphere of ownness," the reduction to one's consciousness as source of a meaningful world, is preceded by and sustains the "phenomenological reduction." "Phenomenological" and/or "transcendental," the "reduction" would require that one refrain from using language, for Derrida considers language as spatio-temporal phenomena, i.e. as transcendent, *other*¹⁸ *things*.¹⁹ Composed *for* the reductions, Husserl's analyses make judgments with, believe in and so *use* language. There is thus a contradiction between Husserl's avowed "absence of presuppositions" and his use of an "inherited language."

¹⁸ An other is simply any person or object or state of affairs distinct from, other than and transcendent to consciousness. Later, it will be necessary to introduce Lacan's notion of the "Other," i.e. the Unconscious.

¹⁹ Through a conflation of Saussure's linguistic sign and Husserl's indicative sign, Derrida materializes language. As indicator aspect of an indicative sign, the signifier aspect of each the sign is "materialized," becoming a phonic/graphic thing. Derrida's misreading of Husserl implies that even the inner speech or voice of consciousness requires such things.

Toward an altered language, Derrida first notes that, within the phenomenological text, "the question of the transcendental logos, the inherited language in which phenomenology produces...its reductive operations" is "never raised." (8). Derrida equates "the transcendental logos" with "the inherited language," suggesting that the complicity of that "transcendental logos" with "inherited language" be questioned, be "broken": "The unity of ordinary language...and the language of phenomenology is never broken in spite of the precautions, the 'brackets,' the renovations or innovations." (8). Both languages remain "within the compass of rationality;" both, "in the most traditional manner," establish "the essence of language" by assuming that "the logical" is "its telos or norm." The "language of traditional metaphysics" (which Husserl's text exemplifies) remains within a rational "compass" ["l'horizon"], "tied" to a logical end. To actually suit and serve a consciousness which has rigorously followed the reductions, language must be *altered, severed from presence*.

Life/Death

Contingent "acts of repetition" make presence present. Acts of repetition may remain within consciousness or may be externalized through spoken or written signs. Internal or externalized, such acts require signs. Through a mundane writing which refers to a "proto-writing," through a communication between the two ("archi ecriture...essentially communicates with the vulgar concept of writing" (G 56)), each internal or externalized act of repetition entails a signifier which

evidences "a certain relation of an existent to his death...." (10). Here, "it is too soon to tell," too soon to narrate how and why the sign -- qua signifier -- relates "an existent to his death." (10).

Derrida asserts: "It [phenomenology] is a philosophy of life." (10). In a long paragraph, through rhetoric, phenomenology becomes charged with life and light: "[t]he unity of living, the focus of 'Lebendigkeit' diffracts its light in all the fundamental concepts of phenomenology." (10). 'Life' ("vie") occurs nine times in the paragraph; 'living' ("vivre") occurs five times, and it is evident that Derrida suspects this "life," questions its *turning from death within death*, its troping²⁰ within the deathly medium of mundane writing. Because a written sign might always "not arrive at its destination,"²¹ because writing immediately *breaks* (from) the intentional consciousness which proffers it (existing beyond the empirical life which produced it), Derrida aligns writing with death or "absence." Written, "the presence of life" results from an "absence." Both life and death, however, derive from the "nonpresence" of a more primary writing which is "the medium for this

²⁰ Here, Derrida considers the "fundamental concepts of phenomenology" ("Leben," 'Erlebnis,' 'lebendige Gegenwart, Geistigkeit,'" 'living,' 'experience,' 'living present,' 'spiritual life') to be tropes or "metaphors" and claims that "[t]he common root that makes all these metaphors possible...[is] the concept of *life*." (10-11).

²¹ "Understand me, when I write, right here, on these innumerable post cards, I annihilate not only what I am saying but also the unique addressee that I constitute....the very idea of destination includes...the idea of death....you are the proof...that a letter can always not arrive at its destination. (PC 33).

play of presence and absence." (10).²²

By "a very Husserlian gesture" (i.e. the "gesture" of decision, a "gesture" which makes and maintains distinctions), two modes of "life" become "radically heterogeneous": empirical life is opposed to transcendental life. (10). The formulation of that heterogeneity, however, derives from a mundane writing which refers to "archi ecriture." A "common root" relates (to) "archi ecriture." The "common root" which makes and maintains the distinction between the "empirical" and the "transcendental," the "root" which *lives through and beyond* the distinction, is "the concept of *life*." With a shift of emphasis, the phrase becomes "*concept* of life," now remarking its contingent formulation: "life" is a formed "concept," a written, absent presence. "Concept of *life*" marks the transcendental. The shift of emphasis -- "*concept* of life" -- marks the empirical conception of any such "life." By a change of graphic form, the distinction between transcendental and empirical is made. Such non-semantic, purely graphic instances of "the sign in general" evidence "archi ecriture."

Wrought through one "root," the "empirical" and the "transcendental" become "two names" which sustain "a simply...metaphorical relation." Whatever its modality, the "presence" of life results from the "absence" of a mundane writing

²² Formulations such as "the presence of life' results from 'an absence'" or "indication is...the process of death at work in signs" seem "pragmatic contradictions," as contents mentioned in those formulations ['absence,' "process of death"] contradict the presence or life of the written forms used to convey those contents. "Archi ecriture" issues from the pragmatic contradiction of a writing which presents its own absence, a writing which marks its own effacement.

which refers to the "nonpresence" of "archi ecriture," a live(ly)/death(ly) writing, an "ultratranscendental" "language." Evoking that "language," Derrida writes: "language is properly the medium for this play of presence and absence," a medium wherein life ("presence") and death ("absence") "play" and are one. With and within that language, one maintains "a relation of *parallelism* between the purely mental [i.e. contingent mental acts]...and pure transcendental life." (11)

"Parallelism"

In Chapters Two and Three Derrida again notes Husserl's concept of "parallelism." In Chapter Two that concept is related to the "essential distinction" between expression and indication: "Does not the concept of *parallelism*...already present itself here in the form of a relation between two modes of signification?" (30). In Chapter Three that concept is related to Section 8 of the "First Logical Investigation" ("Expressions in Solitary Mental Life") and the "reduction to the monadic sphere of *Eigenheit*['ownness']" in the Cartesian Meditations, "a reduction by which "the psychic is parallel to the transcendental." (40-41). Mentioned only twice after the "Introduction," Derrida's whole essay involves, however covertly, the "doctrine of parallelism."

In Section 14 of the Cartesian Meditations Husserl distinguishes between "transcendental phenomenology" and a "purely descriptive psychology of consciousness," noting that it would be "a great mistake" to understand phenomenology as "nothing else than...psychological descriptions based on purely

internal evidence." (CM 32). By virtue of the "epoche," "this world, with all its objects...derives its whole sense and existential status...from me as the transcendental ego." (CM 26). Distinct from a "purely descriptive psychology of consciousness," descriptions made by the transcendental ego will have necessary and *a priori* -- not merely contingent and *a posteriori* -- meaning. Husserl then notes, however, that a "pure psychology of consciousness" is a "*precise parallel*" to "transcendental phenomenology."

Such parallelism is soon qualified. Husserl claims that the two approaches to consciousness, though parallel, remain distinct. Doing descriptive psychology, "we have data belonging to the world...data taken as psychic components of a man." (CM 32). Within the "phenomenological epoche," the whole world "is not accepted as actuality...only actuality-phenomena." (CM 33). Doing transcendental phenomenology, there is "parallel data" which has the same "content," but such "data" is "reduced;" it is not "taken" as "belonging to the world."

Though the "epoche" requires suspension of belief in the external world, Husserl notes that it does not annul or abolish that world: the "manifold *cogitationes*" of consciousness remain and bear "within themselves" relations to the world, so that "the perception of this table still is, as it was before, precisely a perception of this table." (CM 33).²³ Through the "epoche," the relation between

²³ A "cogitatione" is the unity of conscious thought and the object of that thought: "Each *cogito*, each conscious process...'means' *something or other* and bears in itself, in this manner peculiar to the *meant*, its particular *cogitatum*." (CM 33).

a thought and its object is fixed; each intensive act of the "cogito" "bear[s] within itself its *cogitatum*." Suspension of belief in the actual world thus reveals "the fundamental property of consciousness: to be consciousness *of* something." (CM 33). Making "the being of the pure ego and his *cogitationes*" primary, the "epoche" reveals "natural being" as "a realm whose existential status is secondary," a realm which "continually presupposes the realm of transcendental being." (CM 21).

Derrida doubts that there are two *distinct* domains; the distinction between the "transcendental" and the "empirical" is a distinction without a difference, a distinction produced by..."nothing."²⁴ Derrida asks, "What will distinguish ...the

²⁴ Throughout these paragraphs (11-15) Derrida suggests two "parallel lines" - - mundane mentation and transcendental consciousness -- which are wrought through a distinction, a distinction wrought by "nothing," i.e. by the "absence" of mundane writing.

Throughout this commentary, the material aspect of "the sign in general" (the indicator/signifier) is referred to as a 'thing,' an object or state of affairs which has been cathected with psychic energy, becoming there for the psyche. Out of "nothing," come such things. In Freudian terms, the thing is that which derives from the "wish." According to Freud, wishes, unlike needs (which are satisfied through bodily action), are linked to "memory-traces," memories. In dreams and madness, "the wish" activates "memory-traces" which produce a phantastic or hallucinatory thing. In dreams and madness, conscious, secondary processes regress to unconscious, primary processes so that "a thought...a thought of something that is wished, is objectified in the dream, is represented as a scene." Freud, Interpretation of Dreams, p. 534. Though not explicitly phantastic or sceneic, the secondary processes of intentional consciousness remain organized or oriented by a wish: "Thought is after all nothing but a substitute for a hallucinatory wish." Freud, *ibid.* p., 567. Like Freud, Derrida appreciates the Unconscious and considers it determinative of psychical reality. Like Freud, Derrida understands thought as derived from wishes, wishes most directly satisfied by phantastic representations of things. In practice, Derrida thus tends to avoid engagement with texts at the intentional, conscious level of the secondary processes; he reads and writes texts as scenes composed by the primary processes of "wishes" which generate things. In these introductory paragraphs Derrida suggests, through Husserl's text, an

immanent domain of the purely psychic from the transcendental?" (11). More specifically, what will distinguish the phenomenological reduction from the transcendental/eidetic reduction? If an "eidos" present to transcendental consciousness derives, ultimately, from contingent "psychological experience," if the identity of any ideal object requires mentation with and within a language, then "the transcendental" and the "purely psychic" are fused. The separation of transcendental/eidetic ideality from that which the phenomenological reduction suspends ("the region of the world opposed to transcendental consciousness"), the separation of "signified" from "signifier," the separation of meaning from *the phenomena of language* -- becomes impossible, for "transcendental experience" requires "a fund of eidetic presuppositions," a "fund" finally found within some empirical language.

According to Husserl, "phenomenological psychology" and "transcendental phenomenology" derive from differing attitudes, different modes of consciousness. Within the "natural attitude," the external world exists and mental states remain causally related to that world. Certain intentional acts seem to leave the natural world, as when I deliberately "busy myself...with pure numbers and their laws" and so enter "the arithmetical world." (I 54). Husserl also claims: "*The arithmetical world is there for me only if, and as long as, I am in the arithmetical attitude. The natural world, however, the world in the usual sense of the word is, and has been,*

hallucinated scene. Husserl's doctrine of a "parallelism" between the mental and transcendental becomes a dream of two lines, *scene of two lines*, two things derived from "nothing."

there for me continuously as long as I go on living naturally." (I 54). Through the first, phenomenological reduction, I refrain from any judgment about an external world, and the external world is "bracketed." No proposition about that world "is accepted by me; none gives me a foundation." (I 61). Through the first "epoche," consciousness is limited to a meaningless splay of phenomena. Through the second, transcendental reduction, consciousness realizes that the sense or meaning discerned within phenomena is given through the intentional, "sense-bestowing" acts of one's "pure ego" or "transcendental consciousness." Through the second "epoche," meanings are granted to beings. The distinction between a "phenomenological psychology" and "transcendental phenomenology" may be understood as the transition from one reduction to the other, from one attitude to the other.

In two terse sentences Derrida refers to these differing attitudes as though they are distinct domains: 1. "[T]he dependence of the purely psychic upon transcendental consciousness, as proto-region, is quite singular." It is "singular" because: 2. "The domain of pure psychological experience incorporates the total domain of what Husserl terms transcendental experience." (11, translation altered). Read closely, the sentences imply a fusion of domains. In the first instance, the "purely psychic" is based on or derives from "transcendental consciousness;" in the second instance, the "purely psychic" "incorporates" or includes "transcendental consciousness."

Imagine a figure on a ground. In the first instance, "transcendental consciousness" may be understood as the figure, for "transcendental consciousness" is the "proto-region" or source from which the "purely psychic" develops. In the second instance, the "purely psychic" may be understood as the figure, for it is "incorporated" by "transcendental consciousness." Be it "psychic" or "transcendental," the figure occurs on the ground; the nature of the figure follows from one's attitude. The shift or transit from one attitude to the other is "a difference in fact distinguishing nothing...a difference which, without altering anything, changes all the signs." (11).²⁵

²⁵ The difference between "psychological experience" and "transcendental experience" does not alter anything, yet it "changes all the signs." The term 'sign' immediately suggests spoken or written discourse. Regarding the signs of such discourse, the "shift" from the contingent and psychic to the necessary and transcendental (and vice versa) does not change any trait of the phonic/graphic sign per se, yet that "shift" "changes" or transforms "all the signs." This "change" may be understood in terms of "literary" and "philosophical" discourse. Derrida recommends a freedom which "changes all the signs." Literary discourse generally involves language which is "performative" and does not convey objective content, while philosophical discourse generally involves language which is "constative" and conveys objective content. Concerned with contingent, psychological experience, literary discourse does not seem to involve timeless and *a priori* truths (which philosophical discourse purports to disclose). Conversely, philosophical discourse does not seem to involve contingent, "psychological experience." Derrida's approach generally involves a "mixing of genres," so that literary discourse is 'mined' for its philosophical, constative content and philosophical discourse is 'mined' for its literary, performative content. Whatever its apparent status, a discourse remains always already undecidable, posing the possibility of "freedom itself," of being construed -- by "a difference which...changes all the signs" -- as philosophical or literary.

Derrida's characterization is apt, as the "difference" between attitudes, between ways of reading signs, does not change the signs per se. The "reader" is free to construe the relation of the "purely psychic" and the "transcendental" either way, depending on his/her attitude. Derrida terms that "difference" "freedom itself." (11). Without that "freedom," "transcendental phenomenology would be destroyed in its root." Schematized here, the undecidable relation between the "purely psychic" and the "transcendental" does *not* destroy that "root." It opens it.

Two "egos" develop along two lines. (11-12). The "purely psychic ego" and the "transcendental ego" are identical duplicates; neither of the two is a secondary, "ontological double." As neither ego is accorded primacy, each regards its other, equally: the transcendental self or ego is the "absolute spectator of its own psychic self" and "the psychic self...confronts the absolute transcendental self." (12). Although "my transcendental ego is radically different from my natural and human ego," that difference is distinguished "by nothing," by the nothing that is writing. Wrought into being "by nothing," either "ego" is "but a theoretical image and metaphor."

Though each ego is produced and composed through a language, there is "no language" which can "calculate or examine the operation by which the transcendental ego constitutes and opposes itself to its worldly self." (12, translation altered). Like the shifting attitude which "reads" the "purely psychic" within the "transcendental" [or vice versa] and "changes all the signs," one's alteration between egos cannot be "calculated" (cannot be effected or expressed) through

any natural language.

Derrida then notes "the enigmatic concept of 'parallelism,'" a "surprising 'parallelism'" by which phenomenological psychology and transcendental phenomenology "incorporate" and "inhabit" each other. (12). Through that engima, the two lines or egos may "war."

"Nothing" + "Language" = "War"

The "enigma" is "nothing." A long paragraph starts with "This *nothing....*" and ends with "...language" (12-14), marking a trajectory between two points ("nothing," "language"), two nodes through which the whole essay issues. In "Structure, Sign and Play" Derrida recommends "the affirmation of a world of signs without fault, without truth...without origin" (WD 292). The futural, monstrous "writing" ("architecture")²⁶ which risks that affirmation results from a fusion of "nothing" and "language."

The sentence elaborates (on) "nothing." It is "nothing" -- space -- which "distinguishes the parallels." "Explication," or "language...developed in the service of truth," occurs within that space, marking a place against "deformation." Having implicitly defined philosophical texts in general ("language...freely developed in the service of truth without being deformed by some real contact"), Derrida then claims that "this *nothing*," this *potentially philosophical space*, "arises" "when the *totality*

²⁶ "[T]he future can only be anticipated in the form of an absolute danger. It is that which breaks absolutely with constituted normality and can only be proclaimed, *presented*, as a sort of monstrosity." (G 5).

of the world is neutralized and is reduced to its phenomenal being." (12). Such neutralization would seem to follow from the phenomenological reduction, for it is that reduction which "brackets" belief in an external world and limits consciousness to awareness of mere phenomena. Derrida claims, however, that the "operation" which reduces "the *totality* of the world to its "phenomenal being" *"is that of the transcendental reduction,"* not *"that of the psycho-phenomenological reduction."* (12). The claim implies an infusion or rush of phenomena within transcendental consciousness: the phenomenal world is disclosed within transcendental consciousness, *before* such consciousness constitutes objective meaning. Derrida asserts that the "pure eidetic of psychic experience," i.e. the description and determination of the forms which that experience takes, requires "the existence of the world in the form of that worldly region called *psyche*." (13). The "pure" descriptions of transcendental phenomenology require worldly words, words which are, initially and essentially, mere phenomena. Construed as phonic/graphic *phenomena*, words essentially lack the objective meanings which transcendental consciousness constitutes. If transcendental consciousness is found with and within such phenomena, then that consciousness is, *initially*, phenomenal.

The domain of an altered, transcendental consciousness requires a certain worldly region, *a matrix of mere phenomena*. Through the first "epoche" (as traditionally understood), the "totality of the world" is neutralized, and consciousness, insofar as it has "passed through" that first, "psychophenomenological reduction," "concerns no determined existence, no matter of empirical fact." (12). Through the

second "epoche" (as traditionally understood), phenomenal experience is given meaning by a constituting, transcendental consciousness. Against Husserl (and against all traditional interpretation), Derrida asserts that it is the *transcendental* reduction, which "neutralizes" the world and reduces the world to its phenomenal being, thus suggesting another, alternative "epoche" which discloses an "ultratranscendental concept of life." (15). Constituted via an "archi ecriture" which happens throughout the world, that "ultratranscendental concept of life" subsumes and comprehends "the immanent domain of the purely psychic" and "the total domain of...transcendental experience." (11).

An altered consciousness sees and reads a text simultaneously "alive" and "dead" in "that worldly region called *psyche*." Access to that "region" occurs through the "operation" -- the alternative "epoche" -- just described. *Effects* of "archi ecriture," the binary pairs "language/nothing," "life/death," "the transcendental/the purely psychic," "presence/absence" become parallel lines distinguished by "nothing." Distinguished by space, "transcendental consciousness is *nothing more and nothing other* than...psychological consciousness." (13).

The parallel lines make "more mysterious still...the meaning of the *mental* and of mental *life*." Any contingent life, any "*worldliness*" which, through living, maintains "*transcendentality*" becomes "mysterious." Each life "parallels" the transcendental, equalling the "full scope" of its domain, yet each "purely psychic" life (on its own contingent line) does not merge "in some total adequation" with the transcendental. Each empirical life remains aligned along a line distinct from,

though parallel to, its transcendental line.

"Transcendental psychologism" does not acknowledge and respect that linear distinction.²⁷ Against a transcendental domain constituted by each contingent psyche, Derrida -- following Husserl, *respecting* Husserl -- asserts: "we must maintain the precarious and fragile distance between the parallels; against it [the distance between the parallels] we must ceaselessly direct our questions."

²⁷ In Section 14 of the Cartesian Meditations Husserl refers to "transcendental psychologism" as resulting from a "failure to distinguish" between the "*precise parallels*" of "pure psychology" and "transcendental phenomenology." (CM 32). Such erroneous "transcendental psychologism" may be understood by reference to Kant. Insofar as both Husserl and Kant attempt to overcome naive objectivism, they propose transcendental philosophies, philosophies which "in opposition to prescientific and scientific objectivism, [go] back to knowing subjectivity as the primal locus of all objective formations." (Cr 99). Husserl claims, however, that Kant (though "a source of profound stimulations") failed to discern the constituting role of the *transcendental* ego, thus remaining "far from accomplishing a truly radical grounding of philosophy." (Cr 99). Failing to fully effect the transcendental "epoche," Kant fuses the *phenomenal or psychological* ego with the pure or transcendental ego. Throughout Kant's "Transcendental Deduction," the "categories" (or "pure concepts of understanding") derive from "subjective sources." (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A97.) All of "our representations," as "modifications of the mind," must "belong to inner sense." (Critique of Pure Reason, A99.) By mistakenly construing that "inner," psychological ego as the source of the "categories," Kant makes the error of transcendental psychologism: identifying the constituted transcendental with each particular, contingent ego or psyche. Husserl does not construe the particular ego as the constituting source of transcendental, meaningful experience; for Husserl, that source is -- already, *before the individual ego* -- transcendental. Derrida appropriates Husserl's notion of a truly transcendental ego and radicalizes it, so that the two parallels [of "pure psychology" and "transcendental phenomenology"] fully merge. Husserl was also attentive to that "merger." In the Cartesian Meditations, Section 14, Husserl notes that the distinction between psychology and transcendental philosophy is a preliminary constraint: the "precise parallels" "must at first be kept strictly separate." (CM 32).

(13).²⁸ Suggesting the two reductions and a third, alternative one, Derrida writes: "if the world needs the *supplement of a soul* (shown by the transcendental epoche), the soul, which is in the world (shown phenomenological epoche), needs this *supplementary nothing* which is the [ultra] transcendental and without which no world would appear." (13). "This supplementary nothing" produces a paradoxical soul: an empirical soul within the world and a transcendental soul outside of the world. Sustaining one's worldly/unworldly soul, marking its incessant transit between the empirical and transcendental, "this supplementary nothing" is, most generally, the "text" of sheer phenomena, "archi ecriture."²⁹ Because transcen-

²⁸ The general methodology of "deconstructive criticism" respects, through strange augmentation, the "precarious and fragile" distance between the parallels, i.e. between the transcendental and the purely psychic. By stressing a supposed "priority of language to meaning" and urging "that the word carries with it a certain absence or indeterminacy of meaning" (Hartman, "Preface" to Deconstruction and Criticism, vii-viii), deconstructive readings foreground the degree to which a given text may deviate from and problematize its author's initial intentions. Such augmentation generates fusion, as the secondary or guest-text often "takes off" from the primary or host-text, so that the boundary between "host" and "guest" becomes fused. Because deconstructionist readings focus on the marginal, contingent aspects of the "host," such readings demonstrate the degree to which the purely psychic may interrupt and interpret the transcendental. A line lacking univocal meaning, a profusion of psychic lines, thus *implicitly prompts and respects its other line*: the transcendental.

²⁹ Mundane writing as "supplement" is developed in Of Grammatology, Chapter Two, Part II. Derrida asserts: "The sign is always the supplement of the thing itself." (G 145). The sign takes the place of the thing. The "supplement" is "an *exterior* addition," an outer form which "adds itself...a surplus" which "adds only to replace...and insinuate itself in-the-place-of...as one fills a void." (G 144-145). Regarding Rousseau "in the play of the mirror image," Derrida refers to a "speculary dispossession which...deconstitutes me," a "law of language" which is a "power of death in the heart of living speech," a power which "opens as much as it threatens the possibility of the spoken word." (G 141). The logic of the "supplement" dominates so-called "literary writing." As a substitute, "literary" writing adds (itself) to space; it is that which *works* sheer phenomena within space into

dental psychologism assumes that the transcendental derives from the purely psychic, it does not acknowledge and does not appreciate the "supplementary nothing" within life, within the world, within received texts -- a "nothing" which "changes all the signs."

Ending a movement from "nothing" to "war," Derrida refers to a "transcendental disquietude of language," a "war" which "is also the origin and residence of language." (14). Such "war" results from the analogical essence of language, an essence which "the enigmatic concept of parallelism" demonstrates. Parallel lines entail each other; each is proportionate to its other, the analogue of its other. The paired parallels of "language/nothing," "life/death," "the transcendental/the purely psychic" are produced through articulation, a process which divides, a *temporal* process which *spatializes*. With articulation, there is distinction, a "distance" between lines.

To maintain that distance, it is necessary to augment and intensify the process of articulation, to make that process ceaseless, so that the distinction of each line prompts, continually, its apposite, opposite line. As each empirical line continually prompts its transcendental line, each transcendental line continually

one's own, one's own authorized place. The "supplementary nothing" of "archi ecriture" constitutes experience in general, supplementing it. In "Signature Event Context" Derrida argues that the three "essential predicates in a minimal determination of the classical concept of writing" ["iteration," "breaking force" and "spacing"] are "found in all language, in spoken language...and ultimately in the totality of 'experience.'" (Lt 9-10). Not limited to literary experience, the "speculary dispossession" and "power of death in the heart of living speech" inheres, through "archi ecriture," within "the totality of 'experience.'".

prompts its empirical line.³⁰ The prompting of the transcendental (signified) by the empirical (signifier) occurs through "incorporation," receiving each experienced line, each general "mark," and encrypting it within oneself.³¹ While "incorporating"

³⁰ Here, the 'empirical line' and 'transcendental line' may be understood, respectively, as signifier and signified of Saussure's linguistic sign. The empirical signifier necessarily prompts its signified, and the transcendental signified necessarily prompts its signifier. Because the two lines or aspects of the sign fuse, no "pure" transcendental signified nor pure empirical signifier ever occurs, as every signified prompts its signifier, and, with time, that signifier evokes other signifiers/other signifieds.

³¹ In "Signature Event Context" Derrida claims that the "mark" of writing is "found in all language, in spoken language...and ultimately in the totality of 'experience'...." (Lt 10). He then mentions a "possibility of disengagement" which "belongs to the structure of every mark." (Lt 12). Engagement with a mark -- which disengages that mark from its context -- involves an appropriation which first incorporates and encrypts that mark.

"Incorporation" is a fundamental instinctual aim which Freud posits in Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality. In distinction to "identification" (by which the ego recognizes an other as other and develops an empathy for that otherness), "incorporation" does not involve a judgment regarding the other. Focused on the portals of sensory experience, incorporation forms the basis upon which identification later develops. Incorporation "takes in" and consumes the other, voiding the other of its objectivity, thus making the other "safe" within the self. In The Language of Psycho-analysis Laplanche and Pontalis define "incorporation" as a "process whereby the subject, more or less on the level of fantasy, has an object penetrate his body and keeps it 'inside' his body." It is a "mode of object-relationship which [is] characteristic of the oral stage." (Language of Psychoanalysis, 211.)

The incorporated object or mark becomes a *thing* within the Unconscious. Derrida, in his Foreword ("Fors") The Wolfman's Magic Word, notes a "rigorous demarcation" between incorporation and introjection, a "boundary...indispensable to the localization of the crypt, for it surrounds, within the Self (the set of introjections), the ... foreign area of incorporation." (Fors, xvi.) Before it is heard/understood (and thus made conscious), the text of experience is disengaged and incorporated within the Unconscious wherein its marks are "encrypted": "The thing is encrypted...in the Unconscious." In relation to an Unconscious reading/reaping of the text/field of experience, the "Self [is] a cemetery guard....He makes the rounds like a proprietor, but only the rounds." ("Fors," xxxv).

empirical lines, the self or ego knows no other, no "distance" between it and (what seem to be) its lines. (13). The transcendental results from the initial confusion of that experience. The prompting of the empirical (signifier) by the transcendental (signified) occurs through "projection," sending each transcendental line, each general "mark" outward and appreciating it within the other.³² While "projecting" transcendental lines, the self or ego knows the other, the "distance" between it and its lines. The empirical results from the initial confusion of *that* experience. The "enigmatic doctrine of parallelism" thus involves incorporations and projections, receptions and sendings, a constant change of lines.

The "distance" *between* lines must not suit or become "some thing or moment of the world," for such reification would not "be attentive to," not continually attend to, a "renewal of the notion of 'transcendental.'" Ostensibly referring to "Husserl's renewal" of the transcendental, Derrida invokes a particular, peculiar "renewal," a "notion of the transcendental" involving centripetal and centrifugal forces which incorporate and project lines: a force which takes lines *in* and receives outer lines within and a force which makes lines *out* and sends inner lines

³² Laplanche and Pontalis define "projection" as an "operation whereby qualities, feelings, wishes or even 'objects,' which the subject refuses to recognize or rejects..are expelled from the self and located in another person or thing." Though "projection" is "a defence of a very primitive origin...at work especially in paranoia," it also occurs "in 'normal' modes of thought...." (Language of Psycho-analysis, 349). The 'projection' referred to in this commentary is a variant of such an "operation," a variant with a key difference: the subject *does* recognize the expelled "qualities, feelings, wishes or...'objects.'" Thus intentional, such 'projection' is more akin to an artistic or scientific "project": the affirmative exercise of meaning, a signified which is *sent through the Other to the other*.

without. Fixing the distance *between* lines through a "third term" which mediates between the empirical and transcendental, forming a synthesis of lines, would *arrest* the process of articulation, stop production and "extinguish the light at its source." (13). Through a preserved and perservering "light at its source," "language never escapes analogy." The Distances between analogues, between lines, make language "light at its source," and "having arrived at this point," "language...ought...to assume its own destruction and cast metaphor against metaphor."

Derrida notes that the imperative ("language...ought...to assume its own destruction") has been formulated, yet that imperative has not been realized, not been performed. "Casting metaphor against metaphor," (ab)using an always already used language, a "renewal of the 'transcendental'" prompts "war," "destruction" and "disquietude." If "this war of language against itself" is realized, then the *issue* of language, the origin of language "will be thinkable." (14).

Peace

Finally, there may be a "strange unity of these two parallels," a peaceful "unity" of pure psychology and transcendental phenomenology. (14). Derrida first refers to Section 14 of the Cartesian Meditations, noting Husserl's concept of "parallelism." Reifying that notion, Derrida posits two parallel lines, "one of which is in the world," while "the other [is] outside the world." (14). Not in this world, that second line is still not "in another world," for it is, as any parallel may be, "*along-side, right next to the other.*" Construed as distinct "lines," the psychic and the

transcendental are mutually exclusive. When one attends to one's own psychic experience, then the transcendental is absent. When one attends to transcendental experience, then one's own psychic experience is absent. As one actually lives, however, the two seemingly mutually exclusive experiences merge, for living -- participating with and within a meaningful world -- involves rapid oscillation between the purely psychic and the transcendental.³³

Derrida then cites Husserl's description of "'seemingly trivial nuances' which 'make a decisive difference between right and wrong paths...of philosophy'" and recommends a "discussion" or discourse which will "incorporate these protected nuances," a way with words which will "*consolidate in them its own possibility and*

³³ Briefly, the "purely psychic" is construed as idiosyncratic, unique, *purely one's own: the incorporated signifier*. It is of an energy, an impetus which motivates "incorporation": *fascination*, a fascination derived from "differance." In the essay "Differance" Derrida notes the affinity which "differance" has with Negative Theology, the tradition which refers to God through negation or denial. In "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," he -- having described "differance" as that which "exceeds even the order and structure of predicative discourse" -- then notes his being "fascinated" with "the movements of negative theology," movements which involve "the experience of fascination in general." ("Denials," 74, 82). "Differance" - with its silent, seen "a" -- will be understood as deriving from and re-marking a certain fascination with and within the Imaginary. Considering and citing the Pseudo-Dionysius's "Mystical Theology" in "Denials," Derrida notes a "rarefication of signs," a fascination with "'symbols' which 'demand more words than the rest.'" ("Denials," 80). Informed by "differance," Derrida's way (his attention to the text at its very *letteral level*) involves a similar focus. The "mystical union" with that which is "beyond Being," a "union" which prompts one to scan all "lines" of this world, engages the "purely psychic" and its tendency to, through the Imaginary, "incorporate" others. In contrast to the unique, Imaginary and "purely psychic," "the transcendental" engages, through the Symbolic, the other. In terms of communication, the purely psychic is that which motivates one to *send* "lines," while it is by virtue of the transcendental that one *receives* "lines." Living involves blending the purely psychic and the transcendental.

rigor." (14). The recommendation may be understood in relation to an "ultratrascendental life," an inclusive lifeline which finds "in them" -- in nuanced lines or signs -- its "own possibility and rigor."

Having noted "the strange unity of these two parallels," Derrida now names that unity which "refers the one to the other": "*life*," the "ultratrascendental concept of life" which subsumes -- as it effects -- the opposition of "life and death." Positing, dividing itself along two parallel lines, "life" per se is never sundered by those lines. Life produces lines through a process which need not involve intentional consciousness: "One finds out quickly...that the sole nucleus of the concept of *psyche* is life as self-relationship, whether or not it takes place in the form of consciousness." (14). "Psyche" (Gk. "*Psukhe*," goddess of breath) is breath, a living breath which produces and sustains "all the divisions." Derrida's phrase "One finds out quickly enough..." ["On s'aperçoit en effet tres vite..."] is, in its reflexive formulation, apt; one finds *in oneself and by oneself* that one's psyche, one's *breath*, "is life as self-relationship": "ultratrascendental life" is the irreducible relation of self to self. The last phrase of the sentence ["whether nor not it takes place in the form of consciousness"] situates that such "life" beyond the distinction consciousness/unconscious. Simple breathing comprehends both psychic domains: "'Living' is thus the name of that which precedes the reduction and finally escapes all the divisions which the latter gives rise to." (15). Living does so because "it is its own divison," *producing "its own opposition to its other."* (15, my emphasis). "Determining 'living' in this way," one locates "the origin of the insecurity of dis-

course." Such "insecurity" is "precisely the point where it [living] can no longer *assure its possibility and rigor within the nuance.*" (15). Here, Derrida locates a "point" which is not sure of, not secure within, the nuance between the purely psychic and the transcendental. That "point" as a "concept of *life*" which is "ultratranscendental." Comprehending life and death, it is a life that "has never been inscribed in language," one which "requires *another name.*" (15).³⁴

The "Phenomenological Voice"

"Self-consciousness appears only in relation to an object, whose presence it can keep and repeat." (16). Self-consciousness, the capacity for consciousness to reflect on itself and "take the ego" as "theoretical image," occurs only in the presence of a repeated, maintained identity, an "ideal object," i.e. the ego as object. The ego is an object which is inwardly voiced, and the presence of that object requires a language; "it is never perfectly foreign to...the possibility of [a] language." (15). Here, Derrida marks his difference from Husserl; the latter wanted "to maintain...an originally silent, 'pre-expressive' stratum of experience," a silent "stratum" which guides and determines consciousness, a "stratum" *before* language. Against Husserl, Derrida maintains that such a "stratum" is not tenable, for

³⁴ That "other name" is "differance," source of a "proto-writing without a present origin." (146). Introducing "differance" in "Differance," Derrida claims that its "silent, secret and discreet" "a" is "like a tomb....a tomb that (provided one knows how to decipher its legend) is not far from signaling the death of the king." With "differance," life "passes through" death, signals "the death of the king" and becomes "ultratranscendental."

"the possibility of constituting ideal objects belongs to the essence of consciousness" and such objects are "historical products;" thus, consciousness and language are "more and more difficult to discern." Following Derrida, the insinuation of that language within consciousness (the "contamination" of consciousness by language) will introduce "nonpresence and difference (mediation, signs, referral back, etc.) in the heart of self-presence." (15).

The penultimate paragraph of the "Introduction" involves the "phenomenological voice." Derrida first claims that the "difficulty" -- the intertwining of language and consciousness -- "structures the whole of Husserl's discourse." (16). Fascinated with that "difficulty," alluding to the complex analyses which will exhaust that fascination, Derrida asserts: "we ought to recognize the work involved therein;" i.e., we ought to recognize, read and re-cognize the effort of Husserl's discourse. The "work" of the phenomenological text derives from a "necessary privilege" which Husserl grants to the "*phone*," to a sound, inner voice which the author of phenomenology "exploit[s]...with the greatest critical refinement." (16). Producing a philosophical, phonologocentric text requires "an original affinity with the logos," a silent, voiced language sustained within one's "sphere of ownness,"³⁵ a language protected there, producing "there," producing "presence," the "presence" of

³⁵ The phrase "sphere of ownness" is used by Husserl in Section 44 in the "Fifth" of the Cartesian Meditations. It follows from "a peculiar kind of epoche" through which "*we disregard all constitutional effects of intentionality relating immediately or mediately to any other subjectivity.*" (CM 93). Reduction to one's "sphere of ownness" suggests a "transcendental solipsism" (CM 89), and the "Fifth Meditation" is Husserl's laborious attempt to account for intersubjectivity in relation to that "sphere."

(its) work. In order to write works, in order to compose the phenomenological text, Husserl must "bracket" "the sonorous substance...the physical voice...the body of speech in the world." (16). By the "phenomenological voice," "the body of the word" is transformed: the initially inert signifier is "charged," activated into a signified. Inner sound makes "the *Körper* [inert body] a *Lieb* [animated body], a *gestige Leiblichkeit* [spiritual flesh]."

The "phenomenological voice" involves "the language of *words*." (16). A long sentence ("Of course, what one accords to the voice is accorded to the language of *words*, a language constituted of unities -- which one might have believed irreducible, which cannot be broken down, joining the signified concept to the signifying 'phonic complex'") presages the *imposition* of a certain medium - - "archi ecriture" -- a medium wherein the "unities" of "words" *are* "broken down," into the phonic/graphic phenomena of which such unities are formed.

Foreclosing an Other voice, the phenomenological text is entranced, controlled by an inner voice which exerts "a sort of 'hold' throughout phenomenology." (16). Derrida claims that such a "hold" is "habitually sanctioned" by "the philosophy of the history of philosophy," a "history" and "hold" discerned "in the first of the *Logical Investigations*." (16). The voice which hears and understands itself "in the absence of the world" -- a voice which is wholly "solus ipse" -- is projected by Derrida into Husserl's text. From that initial projection, the essay develops *another voice*, a voice not void of writing, not void of phenomena.

The Other "Voice"

The final three paragraphs of the "Introduction" attend to the equivalence which Derrida essays against, an equivalence made explicit in Chapter Six: "The voice is consciousness." (80). Derrida notes an "oblique and laborious, tenacious endeavor of phenomenology to protect the spoken word." (15). The phenomenological text "protects," with "tenacious effort," "an essential tie between *logos* and *phone*." Husserl's text does not contest or question that "essential tie," "for consciousness owes its privileged status...to the possibility of the living vocal medium." (15, translation altered). The paragraph then turns, evoking, in return, the closure of the essay. Derrida refers to the indiscernability of language and consciousness as "a difficulty," a difficulty which "calls for a response." In response, one perhaps speaks (through the essay) "the voice [*a voix*]," a resonant voice or way which "make[s] up for the break-up of presence." (104).

Closing the essay, Derrida writes: "It remains, then, for us to speak, to make our voices resonate...." (104). Assuming the "difficulty" of a consciousness ridden with language, the "difficulty" of a consciousness never severed from language, an Other voice responds, filling language with "ultratranscendental" breath. That responsive and resonant voice, "richly and profoundly enigmatic in all that it seems to answer," is (as it is assumed to be) distinct from the "phenomenological voice" which Derrida projects into Husserl's text. Although the distinction between resonating "responsive voice" and silent "phenomenological voice" (which "continues to speak and be present to itself...in the absence of the world") is not explicitly made by Derrida, it is not

now possible, without that distinction, to misread the essay, to read it *through*, to mistake the essay and make its "false exit" (seemingly) true.

Chapter One

"Sign and Signs" marks the "essential distinction" Husserl makes in the first paragraph of the "First Investigation": within the genus "sign" ("Zeichen") there are two species of sign: *expression* ("Ausdruck") and *indication* ("Anzeichen"). The sign is thus "split." That splitting is effected with written, *indicative* signs, but the author of the phenomenological text does not attend to that fact. "Taken up" with a voice which writes, the phenomenologist neglects reflection upon the medium he employs and imposes; he does not ask, as Derrida will, "*What...is a sign in general?*" (23). Husserl's text exemplifies a "metaphysics of presence," and the production of such metaphysics neglects its written origins. A "metaphysics of presence" survives, *composed* within that neglect.

Two Signs

Both expressions and indications are signs, but the latter sign fails to immediately convey a meaning or sense. On Derrida's characterization, "there are signs that express nothing....an indicative sign is deprived of *Bedeutung* or *Sinn*;" indications or indicative signs are distinct from expressions; 'expression' and 'indication' name "two heterogeneous concepts." A more attentive reading of reveals, however, that Derrida misreads Husserl's text. Husserl writes: "[S]igns in the sense of indications (notes, marks, etc.) *do not express anything*, unless they happen to fulfill a significant as well as an indicative function." (LI 269). Here, in the "First Investigation" -- first paragraph, fifth sentence -- Husserl introduces the

phrase "significant function," a function whereby a sign "has 'meaning,' a sense which the sign 'expresses.'" By virtue of a "significant function" an indication is "charged" and *does express something*; without that "function" an indication "does not express anything." By claiming that expression and indication are "two heterogeneous concepts," Derrida fails to acknowledge that indications may become "charged" and be changed into expressions.¹

Derrida then claims that the indicative sign, though void of meaning, "is not without signification." Alluding to Saussure's notion of the linguistic sign, Derrida notes that *any* sign entails its "signified": there is "no signifying without the signified." Having attributed to Husserl the view that the indicative sign *is* void of meaning, Derrida now grants that sign "*signification*": "there can be no sign without signification, no signifying without the signified." (17). "Signification," here, does not refer to an expressed, objective meaning, but to a trait of the "sign in general." Signification, in contrast to meaning, need not involve objective content. A mark in general -- an instance of "the sign in general" (a color, a scent, a gesture) -- may attain 'significance.' As one author notes, "deconstruction hopes to found a

¹ In the first paragraph of Chapter Three an expression is described as "a sign charged with meaning." (32).

new possibility for truth...to extend the limits of meaningfulness itself."² That extension or "possibility" involves the inclusion of non-discursive, pre-linguistic significance. Constituting "archi ecriture," "the sign in general" involves signs, which, though not "charged," are "not without signification," not without a certain value for whatever consciousness sends or receives such signs.

Circular "Vouloir-dire"

Next, Derrida notes a problem involving the translation of Husserl's term "Bedeutung" ['meaning']. Though in German one may "say without absurdity that a sign...is without *Bedeutung*...as in English one may say that a sign has no meaning," it is not possible in French to say, without contradiction, that "un *signe* manque ['lacks'] *signification*." (17). Similarly, though in German one may describe an expression as "ein bedeutsame Zeichen" ['a meaningful sign'], that phrase cannot be translated into French, as "signe signifiant," without redundancy. To avoid contradiction within a natural language, Derrida proposes a "solution" poised "between commentary and translation" and translates "Bedeutung" by the common, yet salient, phrase "vouloir-dire" ['want-to-say']. Derrida's translation is strategic, for the translation of "Bedeutung" by "vouloir-dire" ['want-to-say'] implies that "Bedeutung" ['meaning'] "has an irreducible tie to the possibility of spoken language." (18). Derrida then claims that Husserl "reserved" for "spoken language" "the power of expression exclusively -- and thereby pure logicity." The

² Harvey, Derrida and the Economy of 'Differance,' p. 28.

"irreducible tie" of meaning to "the possibility of spoken language," the "tie" of meaning to "wanting-to-say" also "ties" the "want" of speech with logicity. The telos of speech is logicity.

Derrida's solution to a problem of translation prompts another problem. "Bedeuten" ['to mean'] is "to want-to-say;" it is both "*what* a discourse [and what] somebody *wants to say*." (18). Here, Derrida attributes to Husserl the view that the meaning of a discourse or text follows from the "want-to-say" experienced by the consciousness which proffers that discourse or text. A discourse or text simply expresses one's *inner*, intentional experience. A person *experiences* a "want-to-say," and a discourse/text *manifests* that "want-to-say." The former "want" may be described as "original," while the "want" of the latter is "derived." Derrida implies a logical "circle," for the meaning or "vouloir-dire" of a discourse or text derives, circularly, from a person's "own" meaning or "vouloir-dire." Meaning is thus, initially, an internal, subjective "property;" moreover, that "property" evidences a certain propriety; it adheres to one's own "voice." Gradually, the essay suggests, by "the sign in general," a *significance* which does not derive from one's "own" "vouloir-dire," a value which "breaks" (from) the circuit of "vouloir-dire."

Detour ("Welcome to the Machine")

Next, Derrida cites from Section 124 of Ideas. (19). The citation is prefaced by brief reference to Frege who, as "everyone knows," distinguished between

"Sinn" ['sense'] and "Bedeutung" ['meaning' or 'reference'].³ Husserl, in the Logical Investigations, does not distinguish between "Sinn" ['sense'] and "Bedeutung" ['meaning']; in Section 15 of the "First Investigation" Husserl writes: "Meaning is further used by us as synonymous with 'sense.'" (LI 292). In Ideas Husserl distinguishes between "Sinn" ['sense'] and "Bedeutung" ['meaning'], but that distinction, as Derrida notes, "does not at all have the same function as for Frege." (19). Husserl conceives of meaning as proper to "the ideal sense of *verbal* expression," while sense is pre-expressive, pre-linguistic and pertains to "the whole noematic sphere right down to its nonexpressive stratum." (19).⁴

³ Here Derrida suggests Husserl's commitment, unlike Frege, to extra-linguistic and extra-semantic "presence" as the reference of a sentence. According to Frege, the "Sinn" or sense of a sentence is a thought and the "Bedeutung" or reference of a thought is its truth-value. For Husserl a sentence refers to an extra-linguistic "Sachlage," a state-of-affairs in the world.

⁴ J. Claude Evans, in Strategies of Deconstruction, notes that Derrida's characterization of "Bedeutung" -- as that term is defined in Ideas, Sec. 124 -- is incorrect. Evans claims that Husserl does *not* limit "Bedeutung" to linguistic expression: "Husserl does introduce the terms *bedeuten* and *Bedeutung* in terms of 'the linguistic sphere, that of expressing,' but it quickly becomes apparent that this is intended merely as a way into a field of phenomena that have no intrinsic relation to language....[T]he term 'meaning' in the phrase 'logical or expressing meaning' has no intrinsic relation to language at all." (SD 30). Noting Husserl's citation of John Stuart Mill in the "Introduction" to the Logical Investigations: "language is evidently one of the principle *instruments* or *helps* of thought," Evans notes that Husserl -- qua logician and epistemologist -- similarly conceived of language as an instrument or tool of thought. In sum, logical thought may surely occur without the aid of language, and Husserl's notion of "Bedeutung" may apply to such thought. Evans claims that Derrida, by limiting "Bedeutung" to linguistic acts, distorts Husserl's text.

Though Evans' characterization of "Bedeutung" is faithful to Husserl's own intentions, his criticism may be faulted on two points. 1. Evans assumes a too-narrow notion of language or the linguistic. When he claims that Husserl's

In Chapter Three, "Meaning as Soliloquy," Derrida again refers to Section 124 of Ideas, noting that the "stratum of expression" is, as Husserl states, "unproductive," for it merely "mirrors" or duplicates "a sense which is to be transformed into meaning and expression." (33). Through these references, Derrida alludes to his essay devoted to Section 124 of Ideas, "Form and Meaning."⁵ Certain passages from "Form and Meaning" require commentary, as Derrida's understanding of "perceptual" or "pre-expressive sense" orients the main essay.

The opening paragraphs of "Form and Meaning" note Husserl's attempt to "reawaken it [metaphysics] to the essence of its task," to correct "adventurous," "degenerate" metaphysics and "return to the critical project of 'first philosophy.'" (107). For Derrida, phenomenology attempts a "critical purification" of metaphysics; Husserl "reinscribes" Greek terms ("eidos," "morphe") into German, *the* "language of phenomenology," hoping to "disengage the original concepts...from later and supervenient metaphysical interpretations." Yet, as the first sentence of the essay

"linguistic" introduction of "bedeuten" and "Bedeutung" is "intended...as a way into a field of phenomena that have no intrinsic relation to language," Evans construes "language" as a contingent, natural language and seems unaware that Derrida, following Saussure, understands language as any "structured system." (Saussure, Course in General Linguistics, p. 10). The silent and unseen, "system" of logical thought would thus be "a language." 2. More importantly, Evans fails to note "architecture" is, precisely, the "system" or medium within which thought -- all thought -- occurs. Derrida notes in a recent interview that that system is not particular to man, not anthropocentric: "...if one reinscribes language in a network of possibilities that do not merely encompass it but mark it irreducibly from the inside, everything changes....These possibilities or necessities without which there would be no language, *are themselves not only human*." (Derrida, "Eating Well: An Interview," in Who Comes After the Subject?, 116).

⁵ Collected in Speech and Phenomena, pp. 107-128.

notes, the phenomenological critique of metaphysics "in fact only...restore[s] it [metaphysics]." (107). Husserl "labors always to restore a *primordial* sense" to certain terms, "a sense which *began* to be perverted at the time of its inscription into the tradition;" thus, though Husserl "goes against the *first* thinkers, against Plato and Aristotle," the phenomenological critique remains "intrametaphysical." (108).

In the opening paragraphs of "Form and Meaning" Derrida attributes to Husserl a "modernist" attempt to supersede metaphysical tradition and "make it new." There is, then, an opposition between "two writings": Husserl's attempt "to restore a primordial sense to these terms" is written, inscribed against another, plural inscription (the archives of philosophy) which "perverted" that sense. Husserl corrects metaphysics, yet that correction involves "a concept of form" which will, in a still metaphysical move, "appeal to the evidence of a certain source of sense." Simply put (and anticipating an appreciation of Derrida's essay as a "literary," agonistic effort), the origin or "source of this sense" seems a certain writing agent named 'Edmund Husserl,' an agent "whose medium can only be the language of metaphysics." (108). Derrida's objection, then, is clear: phenomenology criticized metaphysics, yet restored metaphysics through the authority of a certain subjective origin, an origin who, writing *within metaphysics*, imposed phonologocentric prose. Remaining within metaphysics, the phenomenological text also remains dominated by the "concept of form," a concept which "cannot fail to effectuate a certain subjection to the look." "The look" or glance grants "evidence," implying "a

subjection of *sense* to seeing, of sense to the sense of sight...the concept of every phenomenological field." (108-109). Derrida's language here plays on the etymology of "phenomena" (Gk. "phainein," 'to appear,' 'to show'); phenomenology respects and is fascinated by that which appears, that which is "put-on-view." (109).

In the essay's first section, "Meaning in the Text," Derrida notes his focus: Section 124 of Ideas, "The Noetic-Noematic Stratum of the 'Logos'."⁶ Within that focus, there is "the metaphor of the stratum." (110). Husserl posits an "expressive stratum," "a stratum of expressive signifying and a substratum of the expressed." (I 296, 297). Summoning more metaphor, Husserl then warns against "the metaphor of stratification": "expression is not something like a coat of varnish...a piece of clothing covering it [the substratum] over." (I 297).

Section 124 is described by Derrida as "a discourse on *the* logic of speech," a discourse on one's transit from the "pre-expressive stratum of perceptual sense"

⁶ The adjective "noetic" refers to the process of "noesis" or thought, i.e. conscious, intentional acts which bestow "sense" on "hyletic data" [on sensory material]. The adjective "noematic" refers to the "noema" or intentional object of a noetic act, i.e. the object which a noetic act intuits/constitutes. In Section 88 of Ideas Husserl explains noetic apprehension of "noemata" in terms of "sense": "every intensive mental process...includes in itself something such as a 'sense.'" (I 213). Husserl then claims that pre-predicative perception "has its noema" and that such a "noema" is equivalent to "perceptual sense," "the *perceived as perceived*" (I 214). In Section 124 Husserl again refers to a "perceptual sense" which is potentially "*expressible by means of significations*." (I 295). Perceptual experience, by virtue of its "sense," may be expressed and so achieve, as an expression, "logical signification." Thus Husserl writes: "'Expression' is a distinctive form which allows for adapting to every 'sense'...and raises it to the realm of the 'Logos,' of the 'conceptual' and 'universal.'" (I 295).

to the "stratum of expressive signifying." Derrida argues that Husserl's use and simultaneous distrust of "the metaphor of the stratum" evidences "a profound uneasiness over the descriptive fidelity of speech." (110). As the phonologocentric text presents, supposedly, a transcription of speech, the text inherits that "profound uneasiness."

A demonstration of that "uneasiness" occurs in the third section of the essay, "The Limiting Power of Form." Derrida first describes the "expressive stratum" as "a *medium...an element* and a *means*, an ether that accepts the sense and a means of giving it conceptual form." (120). Ideally, linguistic expression achieves "an overlapping or *coincidence* with the nonexpressive stratum of sense." (121). Ideally, the expression of sense is "unproductive," for such expression simply "mirrors" perceptual sense: expression "has the distinction...of mirroring every other intentionality...." (I 295). Husserl's sentence, however, continues and through that continuance taints the "mirroring" stratum of expression. While "mirroring" a noetic act, the mirroring medium has "its own colors," "imprinting on it [the intentional act] its [the mirroring medium's] own form of 'conceptuality.'" (I 295). There is thus a "double effect of the medium." (119). In one way, the "mirroring medium" of expression reflects or copies pre-expressive sense, but expression may also effect "the blank imprint of the concept" within the "pre-expressive substratum." (119). Husserl consequently notes in Section 126 a "difference between *complete* and *incomplete expression*," for "it is not necessary that the superstratum be expressively extended over the whole substratum." (I 299). Placed

over the "perceptual substratum," the expressive "superstratum" might not be isomorphic with "pre-expressive" noetic acts, so that an expressed meaning fails to convey its "perceptual sense." Thus, Derrida claims that an always possible "incompleteness of expression" "affects the entirety of our speech." (120). Due to "an essential shift" which may "prevent [expression] from ever bringing out the stratum of sense," the relation between the stratum of sense and the stratum of expression is problematized, and "meaning will never be the duplicate of sense." (121). It is also possible that the expressive stratum may, as it "imposes the blank imprint of the concept," exercise new functions within the "pre-expressive substratum," so that linguistic expression affects (and perhaps even effects) "perceptual sense." The two "strata" thus become fused: there is a confluence between perceptual and linguistic domains, a blending of phenomena and words expressed "for" the presence of that phenomena.

In terms of the main essay, pre-expressive phenomena becomes expressive speech, and expressive speech becomes pre-expressive phenomena. For the phenomenologist (whose "patience and attention to detail should...disentangle the confusion"), such *becoming* is not suitable. A "profound uneasiness over the descriptive fidelity of speech" results, and the phenomenological text's dense "play of metaphors" evidences such "uneasiness," marking "the origin of the insecurity of discourse." (15). Derrida assumes that "uneasy insecurity" and solves it with a *writing-machine*.

Derrida's solution is *indicated* in Section 124, with the first word of its first sentence: "*Interwoven* with all the acts considered before [perceptual acts] are the expressive act-strata." (I 294, my emphasis). Husserl asserts that expressive acts are "interwoven" with perceptual acts. Derrida seizes on Husserl's use of one word "verweben" ('interwoven,' 'intertwined'): "The *interweaving* (*Verwebung*) of language, of what is purely linguistic in language with the other threads of experience, constitutes one fabric." (111). Noting "this metaphorical zone" implied by "Verwebung," Derrida then distinguishes between "warp" and "woof," between fixed, vertical threads (the warp) and horizontal threads (the woof) which cross and merge during the weaving-process. Derrida's "textual metaphor" of expressive warp and pre-expressive woof replaces Husserl's "geological metaphor" of strata, for a woven text better demonstrates how the expressive stratum, the Logos, is not simply founded upon the pre-expressive substratum. Expressive and pre-expressive "threads" are "interwoven" and mesh, so that "the warp cannot be distinguished from the woof." (111). Through one valorized word ("*Verweben* here means *texere*"), a pervasive text results, fusing and *comprehending* the expressive and pre-expressive strata, speech and phenomena.⁷

⁷ Beyond the book, the writing-machine generates the experiential field: "I would like to demonstrate that the traits that can be recognized in classical, narrowly defined concept of writing are *generalizable*. They are valid not only for all orders of 'signs' and for languages in general but...beyond semio-linguistic communication, for the entire field of what philosophy would call experience." (Lt 9).

The mixture of warp and woof intimates "archi ecriture." As "the woven fabric" involves a "blending" of pre-expressive sense and expressive meaning, "archi ecriture" involves a "blending" of phenomena and speech, indication and expression. Alluding to the main essay, Derrida claims that the "nonexpressive" or "pre-expressive" threads are of an "*indicative* nature." Through "the controlled system of a sort of text," the "discursive," expressive threads of the warp blend with the "nondiscursive," pre-expressive threads of the woof. Gathered together, warp and woof are "wholly signifying," so that "*the nonexpressive threads are not without signification.*" (112).⁸

"Thrown" into an *indicative matrix*⁹ consciousness is *impressed* by pre-

⁸ To appreciate the degree to which Derrida creatively misreads Husserl's text, it is necessary to cite the two relevant sentences in full: "This texture is all the more inextricable in that it is wholly signifying: *the nonexpressive threads are not without signification.* In the Investigations Husserl has shown that their signification is simply of an *indicative* nature." Here, Derrida imposes a distortion/transformation of Husserl's text. Husserl does not posit "expressive" or "nonexpressive" "threads," and, *a fortiori*, the Investigations does not relate the notion of indication with such "threads." Derrida implies that the "nonexpressive threads" (or Husserl's "substratum" of perceptual sense) are indications and that the "expressive threads" (or Husserl's "stratum of expression," the stratum of expressed meaning) are expressions, potential [i.e., voiced] or actual [i.e., spoken] instances of "vouloir-dire." In ways yet to be detailed, Derrida aligns expression with intentional consciousness and aligns indication with an absence of intention and consciousness. Comprehended and solved through Derrida's "textual metaphor," the relevant distinctions -- sense/meaning, indication/expression, unintentional/intentional, unconscious/conscious, phenomena/speech -- blend and end.

⁹ Heidegger writes: "Throwness ['Geworfenheit'] is neither a 'fact that is finished' nor a fact that is settled. Dasein's facticity is such that *as long as* it is what it is, Dasein remains in the throw...sucked into the turbulence...." (Being and Time, p. 223). Heidegger generally argues for "authenticity" and considers the already constituted indicative matrix to hinder such authenticity. In words and ways which will gradually become evident, the essay recommends a certain acceptance

expressive sense, "a kind of blank and mute writing." (117). The impression of that writing follows from more metaphor. Ignoring Husserl's "warning" ("these figures of speech....must be adopted with caution...their application might easily lead one astray" (I 295)), Derrida strays and develops "a kind of writing and a mirror," a "mirrored writing." Ideally, linguistic expression is an "unproductive, transparent medium" which simply duplicates pre-expressive sense. Acknowledging that condition, Husserl writes: "Anything 'meant as meant,' anything meant in the noematic sense...pertaining to any act...is *expressible by means of 'significations.'*" (I 295). Glossing Husserl's text, Derrida writes: "Everything therefore is in principle capable of being said; everything must be able to be brought to the conceptual generality that properly constitutes the logicity of the logos." (116). Through Husserl's text, Derrida claims that expressed thought ("the logicity of logos") requires a kind of a writing, for the "transparency" of the expressive medium "must have have some consistency...in order to *express.*" (117). An expressive "consistency" must first be "*impressed*" so that it may express. That "consistency" is wrought from Husserl's text. Describing the expressive "act-stratum" in Section 124, Husserl writes: "every noematic act-sense, and consequently the relationship to objectivity lying within it, is 'conceptually' stamped on, *impressed on*, ['sich auspragt'] the noematic correlate of the expressing." (I 295). Citing that passage, Derrida notes Husserl's use of "sich auspragt" ('to strike, to stamp, to impress')

and use of the indicative matrix which "Dasein" is always already in, an acceleration of our "thrownness" therein.

and claims: "expression must let itself be *impressed* by sense....The sense must be *inscribed*....The expressive noema must present itself as a blank *page*." (117, my emphasis). Expressive medium and pre-expressive sense are, respectively, page and stylos.

Misreading Husserl's epistemological terminology, Derrida produces a writing-machine. For Derrida, the productive locus of the logos is sense, not expression: "the inscription of sense upon the expressive noema makes it [the expressive noema] *readable*." (117, my emphasis). Conveyed through a "blank and mute *writing*," such sense, however, presupposes a prior, even more primary meaning: "it is *in fact* necessary that the systematic order of meaning somehow impose its own sense on that sense." (118). The "writing-machine" induces "archi *écriture*." Through "syntactic or other rules," a primary "order of meaning" somehow informs the sense which the pre-expressive stratum receives. Given through perceptual sense, that informative, more primary "order of meaning" ("archi *écriture*") is not bound to the circuit of "vouloir-dire." Simply *received*, perceptual sense, wrought through "archi *écriture*," precedes and exceeds the circuit of productive and intentional "vouloir-dire," the weal of mundane writing.

Line in Speech

"We return to the text." (22). Derrida notes that the distinction between indication is *functional*, not substantial. A phonic/graphic event is indicative or expressive by virtue of the relation which consciousness has to that event: "the

same phenomena may be apprehended as an expression or an indication, a discursive or a non-discursive sign, depending on the intentional experience which animates it." (20). Here, in the idiom of Husserl, Derrida refers to "intentional experience." After commentary on "Form and Meaning," it is evident that intentional experience cannot be purely intentional: sense "writes" *before* the production of expressions, before signs become "charged with meaning." Wrought through a "proto-writing" which informs all experience, sense effects/affects intentional consciousness, "opening" consciousness to the "non-discursive sign," to "the sign in general," to *a line which lies within speech*.

Derrida finds that 'line' within Husserl's description of "communicative speech." In the first paragraph of the "First Investigation" Husserl notes that "meaning in communicative speech is always interwoven (*verflochten*) with an indicative function." (LI 269).¹⁰ Here, again, Derrida focuses on one word:

¹⁰ Husserl claims that expressions in "communicative speech" function as indications for two reasons. 1. Within such speech, spoken words are audible, sensory phenomena. In Section 2 of the "First Investigation" Husserl asserts that an indication is "a thing;" more specifically, an indicative sign is "a thing...deliberately and artificially brought about" so that it "stands for" some other "object or state of affairs." (LI 270). As phonic material which "stands for" some "object or state of affairs," the spoken word is indicative. 2. When the other speaks, his or her mental acts "charge" words with meanings. Hearing the other's spoken words, I sense phonemes and perceive words, but I cannot experience the other's mental acts. His or her words thus *indicate* mental acts removed from my direct intuition. In Section 7 of the "First Investigation" Husserl characterizes spoken or written words as "intimations." In "communicative speech" the auditor "perceives the intimation in the same sense in which he perceives the intimating person." (LI 278). Both person and word are first perceived; on the basis of such perceptions the auditor "intuitively grasps" the existence of the person and the mental acts which the spoken "intimations" indicate. The auditor, however, cannot *experience* the other's own mental acts; such acts, like the speaker who manifests

"interwoven," and its chain of associations: "verflochten," "interwoven," "involved," "caught up in": "The discursive sign, and consequently the meaning, is always involved, always *caught up in* an indicative system." Then, with strange emphasis, "Caught up is the same as *contaminated*." (20).

Like the "interweaving" of sense and meaning, Derrida considers the "interweaving" of expression and indication to be a "*de facto* necessity," a necessary "entanglement." Husserl, however, must adhere to a *de jure* "possibility," "a rigorous distinction of essence." (20). Derrida's terse sentences imply the series of binary distinctions he essays against: necessity/possibility, *de facto/de jure*, existence/essence, indication/expression, phenomena/speech. Aware of an intolerable "contamination," the phenomenologist -- via the phonologocentric text - - must write and rout out the contaminating element: indication. It is not possible to fulfill that imperative, for indication is an *existing, de facto necessity*. Expression, in contrast, is an *essential, de jure possibility*.

Such distinctions derive from Husserl's essential "*decision*."¹¹ Very aware

them, are "grasped" on the basis of "an inadequate, though intuitive, presentation." (LI 278). An "adequate presentation" would be an experience of truth. In communicative speech both intimation and "intimating person" become "a presumed being, to which no truth corresponds at all." (LI 278).

¹¹ Husserl, as a decisive, phonologocentric writer, fails to "go through the ordeal of the undecidable." "The undecidable" is "not merely the oscillation or the tension between two decisions....The undecidable remains caught, lodged, at least as a ghost -- but an essential ghost -- in every decision, in every event of decision. Its ghostliness deconstructs any assurance of presence....A decision that didn't go through the ordeal of the undecidable would not be a free decision...it would not be just." Derrida, "The Mystical Foundations of Authority," in Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice, p. 24.

of those distinctions, Derrida construes them as oppositions, dualisms wherein one term is granted primacy.¹² Such hierarchical, "unjust" dualisms "depend entirely on language...on the validity of a radical distinction between indication and expression." (21). Here, Derrida refers to the natural language which Husserl used. The non-freedom of phonologocentrism results from a non-awareness of the "archi-écriture" which is lodged within any natural language. Secure within a natural language, the *untenable telos of pure expression* prompts one to compose and authorize a phonologocentric text. That telos organizes and imposes "the very space of phenomenology," an authorized "space" of the intentional, the essential, the *de jure* and the possible.

Two short paragraphs suggest the essay's essential conclusion: *speech becomes phenomenal*, for "the spoken word...is but a form of gesture," a "gesture" like the "gestures" which compose a mundane text. (21). The conclusion results from a distortion of Husserl's text, a misreading evident when Derrida claims that "the discursive sign [the sign proffered in communicative speech], and *consequently the meaning*, is always involved, always *caught up* in an indicative system." (20, first emphasis mine). Surely, what Husserl terms "the mere sound pattern" or "the expression physically regarded" functions as an indicative sign, but that does *not* entail that the *meaning* of the sign is also "caught up in an indicative system." Against Husserl, Derrida comprehends expression as indicative; indicative lines lie

¹² "[I]n classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful co-existence of a *vis a vis*, but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other...or has the upper hand." (P 41).

within speech, for language (be it actual or imaginary) is always involved in a communicative context, a communicative "agon," *even when that context and agon is limited to one's "sphere of ownness."* Such a comprehension is, Derrida concedes, "just what Husserl contests."

An Untenable Essence

Derrida attributes to Husserl the pathos of a quest for "the unshaken purity of expression." Husserl must "demonstrate that expression is not a species of expression," and that demonstration appeals to "a phenomenological situation in which expression is no longer caught up in this entanglement." (22). Derrida notes that that "situation" is "already adumbrated in the 'First Investigation,'" when Husserl writes: "*Expressions function meaningfully even in solitary mental life, where they no longer serve to indicate anything.*" (LI 269). The "unshaken purity of expression," the essence of expression, is found in a "space" seemingly "without communication": in one's "sphere of ownness," in "the completely muted voice of 'solitary mental life.'" With that "voice" within one's own "sphere," "the relation to a certain *outside* is suspended." By the "transcendental reduction," however, another "outside," another objectivity is disclosed "inside": the "objective ideality" of the ideal object "which stands face to face with the meaning-intention, the *Bedeutungintention.*" (22). Derrida terms such simultaneous suspension and disclosure a "paradox" which composes and eventually disrupts "the phenomenological project in its essence." (22).

The "paradox" may be understood in terms of inner and outer "sides." The relation of transcendental consciousness to "objective ideality" is "presence" -- "the *presence* of the present...objectivity in presence" -- an objective presence which takes space in the time of subjective presence: a "self-proximity, an *ownness*." (22). Derrida notes that such subjective presence "is not a simple *inside*," for the inner life of one's "sphere of ownness" hears/understands "a relation to a beyond...to an outside in general."

Derrida then refers to Section 49 of Ideas: "Absolute Consciousness as the Residuum After the Annihilation of the World." The reference suggests a hearing/understanding which happens "though there might no longer be any world." (109). Here, reading *with* Husserl's Ideas, Derrida evokes the "ultra-transcendental concept of life" mentioned in the "Introduction." (15). Such a "concept of life" -- insofar as it has *passed through* indication and "the process of death at work in signs" -- survives beyond "the Annihilation of the World."

The essay here makes a "double gesture." First, Derrida writes *against* Husserl, suggesting that, through a suspension of "the relation to a certain *outside*," "solitary mental life" and its "language without communication" will not be tenable. Then, noting that this suspension "does not eliminate...a relation to an object....a relation to a beyond and outside in general," Derrida writes *with* Husserl, finding within Husserl's text evidence for an "ultratranscendental concept of life." Writing *with* and *against* other texts involves a "double gesture, according to a unity which is both systematic and of itself divided." (P 41).

About Doubling

Derrida's ambivalent way (both "against" and "with" Husserl's text) suggests what Derrida terms a "Double-Reading" or "Double-Writing." A reading or writing which is "double" marks the "closure" -- not "end" -- of metaphysics. Throughout his work Derrida "deconstructs" the phonologocentric integrity of certain metaphysical texts, yet he insists that one cannot ever exit the "ether" or epoch of metaphysics. In Positions, in response to the question "Can there be a surpassing of this metaphysics?," Derrida responds, "There is *not* a transgression," not "a pure and simple landing into a beyond of metaphysics." (P 12). Through the trouble of doubling texts, Derrida's relation to "metaphysics" may be termed "undecidable."¹³

In Of Grammatology Derrida stresses that linguistic sign, as unity of signifier and signified, entails "the difference between the sensible and the intelligible," and that the signified, the "intelligible face" of the sign, "remains turned toward the word and the face of God." (G 13). Even in relation to a *practiced* grammatology: "it is not a question of 'rejecting' these notions ['the difference between the signifier and the signified,' 'between the sensible and the intelligible']; certain differences remain, *for now*, necessary, for "at least at present, nothing is conceivable for us without them." (G 13). As "the age of the sign is essentially theological," it may never *end*. "Its historical *closure* is, however, outlined." That "closure" is already

¹³ An "undecidable proposition" is one which, "given a system of axioms governing a multiplicity, is neither an analytical nor deductive consequence of those axioms, nor in contradiction with them, neither true nor false." (D 219).

out on lines, in phonologocentric texts to be minded and mined.

"Double-Reading" or "Double-Writing" develop (through) the "closure of metaphysics," a closure clarified by reference to the early essay "*Ousia and Gramme*" (M 31-67). In that essay Derrida investigates Heidegger's attempt in Being and Time to convey how "Dasein's Being finds its meaning in temporality,"¹⁴ a temporalized meaning which would "shake the 'vulgar concept' of time." (M 31). Opening Section 6 of Being and Time ("The Task of Destroying the History of Ontology") Heidegger claims that for Dasein "the question of the meaning of Being" remains in a past which "has become quite forgotten." (BT 43). Heidegger seeks an "ontological understanding" "which is rooted in Dasein's ownmost Being," *before* Greek ontology -- "the ancient way of interpreting the Being of entities" (BT 47) -- was obscured and "*onta*" became "reduced to something self-evident -- merely material for reworking," (BT 43). The present obscurity of Being, its status as "the emptiest and most universal of concepts" (BT 21), results from a failure to understand and *appreciate* temporality, a lapse which occurs when "[e]ntities are grasped in their Being as 'presence'" and "are understood with regard to a definite mode of time -- the '*Present*.'" (BT 47). Heidegger claims that, since Aristotle, time has been understood as one entity among other entities; time is that *within* which and *for* which entities "show themselves" and are "interpreted with regard to the Present...conceived as presence." (BT 48). The ontological tradition *conceptualizes*

¹⁴ Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 41. In this section all citations from Being and Time are marked by the sigla 'BT' and page-number within parentheses.

the Being of beings in terms of the "present;" insofar as "[t]he question of Being does not achieve its true concreteness until we have carried through the process of destroying the ontological tradition," the "hold" of "presence" [the "vulgar concept of time"] must also be destroyed.

"*Ousia and Gramme*" is subtitled "A Note on a Note from Being and Time." In an extended note [xxx] to the penultimate section of the book (Sec. 82, involving the genesis of the "vulgar concept" of time, from Aristotle to Hegel), Heidegger claims that Hegel's "conception of time has been drawn directly from the 'physics' of Aristotle." (BT 500). Very basically, Heidegger alleges that in the Jena Logic and Encyclopedia Hegel follows a classical determination of time given by Aristotle in Physics IV, and so conceives of time as a series of punctual and present instances. Both texts evidence the ontology which Heidegger seeks to "destroy," an ontology which privileges the "nun" ('instant') or "jetz" ('now'), a primacy of "ousia,"¹⁵ the substantial presence of that which *is*.

Derrida argues that Heidegger fails to understand that these texts of Aristotle and Hegel, "like every text of metaphysics," contain "*both* the so-called 'vulgar' concept of time *and* the resources that will be borrowed from the system of metaphysics in order to criticize this concept." (M 60). In the first section of "*Ousia and Gramme*" Derrida states his "ambition" regarding the note: "to extend it a bit...according to two motifs." First, Derrida will "read in it...the Heideggerian

¹⁵ In Book Zeta of The Metaphysics Aristotle considers various aspects of "being" and asserts that each is understood as "being" in one, primary sense: "ousia." Derrida aligns "ousia" as "presence."

question about *presence* as the ontotheological determination of the meaning of Being." (M 33-34). By the first "motif" Derrida reads and follows Heidegger's attempt to question that which, from Parmenides to Husserl, has "never been put into question": "the privilege of the present." (M 34). Like Heidegger, Derrida asks, "has not the entire history of philosophy been authorized by the 'extraordinary right' of the present? Have not meaning, reason and 'good' sense been produced within this right?" (M 38). Summarizing that ontology which Heidegger wished to "destroy," Derrida asserts, "the experience of thought and the thought of experience have never been dealt with anything but presence." (M 38). The second "motif" involves "a direction not opened by Heidegger's meditation." In contrast to the first "motif," this unopened direction attends to the issue of writing and "the hidden passageway that makes the problem of presence communicate with the written trace." (M 34). Derrida notes that that "hidden passageway" "appears, and yet is elided, in the texts of Aristotle and Hegel." (M 34). Derrida discerns in those texts "a dialectical negativity" by which "the no-thingness of time" (time is "no-thing, because the now is not a part of time, for the now is always constituted by past retentions or future protentions) "is accessible only on the basis of the Being of time." (M 51). Thus: "time as nothing can be thought only according to the modes of time, the past and the future." Paradoxically, the presence of time is in the absence or "no-thingness" of the now. Derrida demonstrates that Heidegger fails to appreciate those moments of "dialectical negativity" in Aristotle and Hegel and that Heidegger's text itself adheres to a "metaphysics of presence"

by "appealing to a less narrow determination of presence from a *more narrow determination* of it [i.e. writing], going back from the present to a more original thought of Being as presence." (M 65, my emphasis). In contrast to a simple "destruction" of ontology, one may, by the "second motif" (the issue of writing and its "hidden passageway"), attend to *letteral evidence within the metaphysical text, graphic marks which evidence both the impossibility of ever exiting that text and the impossibility of ever maintaining its conceptual claims*. Just schematized here, the "two motifs" involve "two hands, two visions, two ways of listening...two texts." (M 65).

"*Ousia* and *Gramme*" notes a "double-gesture," an immanent and extrinsic critique, one which remains within the metaphysical text and simultaneously goes against it, beyond it. The first move adheres to the relevant text, while the second move discloses "the point of a certain alterity with respect to the totality of the logocentric epoch." (G 161). These "two visions" or "ways of listening" occur simultaneously, *at once*, effecting "double" and "undecidable" prose. Ideally, the double reading/writing of "deconstruction" remains upon and limns the border of an always specific "closure" (specific to a certain text and its conceptual claims, its supposedly "closed" totality). The end of such a "double gesture" seems to be "a non-site, or a non-philosophical site, from which to question philosophy."¹⁶ One author describes the "double-gesture" in terms of mimesis and castration. In a first,

¹⁶ Derrida, "Interview" in Kearney, Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers, p. 108.

mimetic instance, "the text analyzed is to be borrowed...reproduced as if deconstruction were merely a doubling commentary;" in a second, castrating instance, "certain spaces are made in the text...a certain 'track' is left in the 'original' text....These re-marks are cuts in the text."¹⁷ The "double gesture" thus simultaneously "mirrors" and "cuts" the text it reads and writes. Perhaps the first sentence of Joyce's Ulysses mentions the tools of deconstruction, devices for mirroring/cutting: "a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed."

"The Sign In General"

Husserl "seems to repress, with dogmatic haste." "*the sign in general*." (23). Starting the "First Investigation," Husserl proposes "a radical dissociation between two heterogeneous kinds of signs." (23). In order to continue his text, to sustain the dissociation and pursue the untenable essence of expression, Husserl (and one who reads *with* Husserl) presupposes an understanding of the word 'sign.' Only on the basis of an understanding of the noun 'sign' (which the adjectives 'expressive' and 'indicative' modify) can the distinction between indicative sign and expressive sign be made and maintained.

Derrida claims that the "question" or issue of "the sign ["Zeigen"] in general," *before* bifurcation into expressive sign ("Anzeigen") and indicative sign ("Hinzeigen"), "points to the invisible." (23). The significance of the word 'sign' is not simple and a full *appreciation* of its significance "takes" indication and all the

¹⁷ Harvey, Derrida and the Economy of 'Difference', p. 29.

mistakes indication makes possible. Had Husserl turned to full, reflexive consideration of the meaning of the word 'sign' per se, then the phenomenological project, the attempt to return to and describe "the things in themselves," would have ceased, for such a "return" would actually always be a *turning* with and within language. Assuming such turning, Husserl's isolation of a "logical *a priori* of pure grammar" within the "general *a priori* of grammar" is not possible, for the former must be realized, *literally, by means of* the latter.¹⁸

Though Derrida asks, "*What then is a sign in general?*," no immediate answer is given ("We do not propose to answer this question here for various reasons." (23)). Derrida, in fact, never explicitly answers that question, and the meaning of "the sign in general" remains unthematized. Here, Derrida attends to the first clause of the second sentence of the first paragraph of the "First Investigation": "Every sign is a sign for something...." Husserl's "essential distinction" ("but not every sign has 'meaning,' a 'sense' that the sign 'expresses'") follows, immediately, from that *first* claim: a sign is *for* something. Derrida construes that "for" as "being-for" or "being-in-the-place-of" and terms it a "structure of substitution or

¹⁸ In the "Introduction" Derrida distinguishes between "the *logical a priori* of language" and "the general *a priori* of language." (9-10). For Husserl, the former would determine those rules "which enable us to recognize whether or not a discourse is...a discourse," i.e., the logical rules which meaningful discourse, implicitly, follows. In the "Fourth Investigation" Husserl begins to develop "the old idea of a universal...*a priori* grammar," the "*a priori* laws which determine the possible forms of meaning." (LI 493). By "the general *a priori* of language" Derrida simply refers to the expansive domain of "archi ecriture," thus including illogical, irrational, even inhuman, instances of "language." Thus, it is in principle not possible "to isolate the *logical a priori* of pure grammar in the general *a priori* of grammar" (24), for the former is not isolated from, not insulated from, the latter.

reference." A sign, then, is a *substitute* for an object, a substitute which *refers to* that object, and "the sign in general" evidences those two related traits. Abruptly, Derrida then claims that the "structure" of the "sign in general" "points to the invisible."¹⁹

"The sign in general," before it is modified or "split" into indication and expression, first substitutes for and refers to the "invisible." What, within Derrida's text, does "the invisible" substitute for and refer to? "The invisible" seems a substitute which refers to the scene of Husserl's own "scene of *writing*," the once visible, empirical context within which his writing figured (a context which rarely figures within the phenomenological text).²⁰ Derrida then claims that "this '*Zeigen*'

¹⁹ This passage suggests numerous moments within Derrida's texts when "the voice of the oracle" (as Derrida terms it in "Of An Apocalyptic Tone...") interrupts discourse, in an often apocalyptic tone. Within the context of the essay, the "invisible" may be understood as that which is most proper, closest to oneself, and is thus, from a philosophical viewpoint, most improper, that which the philosopher must be most closed to; it is "the ear of the other [which] says me to me and constitutes the *autos* of my autobiography." (Derrida, Ear of the Other, p. 51). Simply put, the "invisible" is a reflexive and auto-biographical element or "tone" conspicuously absent from Husserl's text. This "invisible" may also be understood in relation to the "apeiron" (the 'unlimited'), that which has no "arche," no foundation *because it is unique*. In his "Introduction" to "The Origin of Geometry," Derrida cites Husserl's "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science: "the singular is eternally the *apeiron*.' Phenomenology can recognize with Objective validity only essences and essential relations." (OG 48). Idiomatic, the "apeiron" and personal is marginal, outside of and "parergonal" to the philosophical text, *invisible* to the philosopher.

²⁰ There are, of course, passages which evidence Husserl's empirical context. In Section 2 of the "First Investigation," for instance, the now false belief that "Martian canals are signs of the existence of intelligent beings on Mars" is given as an example of indication. (LI 270). Later, when describing "The Natural Attitude and Its Exclusion" in Sec. 27 of Ideas, Husserl describes his "*field of attention*," and notes that he can let his "attention wander away from the writing table...out

[and "the invisible" to which it points] is the place where the root and necessity of all 'interweaving' of indication and expression is manifested." (24). The "transcendental ether" which sustains the phonologocentric text requires that "place" and its contingent, natural language. As noted, the phenomenologist remains oblivious to the "tain" of that language.²¹ The "scene of writing" ("the root...of all interweav-

through the unseen parts of the room which are behind my back, to the verandah, into the garden, to the children in the arbor." (I 52). He also notes "*a world of goods, a practical world,*" wherein "physical things stand there as objects of use, the 'table' with its 'books,' the 'drinking glass,' the 'vase,' the 'piano.'" (I 53). Later in *Ideas*, when positing the "noema" (the "Really Inherent and Intensive Components of Mental Processes") in Section 88, Husserl considers "with pleasure a blossoming apple tree." (I 214). (The "noema" of the perceived tree exists independently, for the tree "can burn up, be resolved into its chemical elements, etc. But the sense --the sense of *this* perception, something belonging necessarily to its essence-- cannot burn up; it has no chemical elements, no forces, no real properties." (I 216)). In relation to Derrida's essay and this commentary, a striking acknowledgement of empirical context occurs in Section 100 of *Ideas* where Husserl writes of "the Dresden gallery and of our last visit there: we walk through the halls and stand before a picture." (I 246). Husserl's "visit" to the Dresden gallery "frames" Derrida's essay, as that passage from *Ideas* serves both as an introductory epigraph and orients the essay's concluding paragraphs. The reference to the "Dresden gallery" also suggests Husserl's "link" to Freud, a link relevant to commentary on the essay's final paragraphs. Both Freud and Husserl attended Franz Brentano's lectures in Vienna; both published important texts at the turn of the century [*The Logical Investigations*, *The Interpretation of Dreams*]; moreover, both write of the "Dresden gallery," the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen. Freud's patient Dora [*Dora: An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* (1905)] visited the museum, and her visit informed the "second dream" which was central to Freud's analysis of her hysteria. The gallery, Dora and her "second dream" figure, much later, in commentary.

²¹ In *Dissemination*, in a passage from "Outwork" which contests the possibility of "a breakthrough toward radical otherness," Derrida refers to "the tain of the mirror." A "breakthrough toward radical otherness...always takes *within philosophy*, the *form* of an aposteriority or an empiricism. But this is an effect of the specular nature of philosophical reflection, philosophy being incapable of inscribing (comprehending) what is outside it otherwise than through the appropriating assimilation of a negative image of it, and dissemination is written on the back --

ing"), however, becomes "invisible," for Husserl chose "the logical character of signification as his theme" and believed that he could "isolate the *logical a priori* of pure grammar in [or 'by means of'] the general *a priori* of grammar." (24). By that belief, exemplary of philosophical belief in general,²² Husserl is "resolutely engaged" with *one* modification of the sign: "*Hinzeigen*...not *Anzeigen*." Husserl will privilege and write within the structure of expression or expressive reference ("*Hinzeigen*") not indication ("*Anzeigen*"). Indication (co-extensive with the domain

the *tain*-- of that mirror." (D 33). In Positions Derrida distinguishes "dissemination" from polysemia, as the latter's many meanings still adhere to the semantics of a "classical ontology." Dissemination "interrupts totalization," so that "no series of semantic valences can any longer be closed or reassembled." "Lapidarily: dissemination figures that which *cannot be* the father's....Try to control the turns of this proposition, and...you will find (mark) and lose (margin) the limit between polysemia and dissemination." (P 46, 86). More specifically, in relation to Lacan's notion of the Symbolic, Derrida claims that "dissemination" "escapes it and disorganizes it, makes it drift, marks its writing, with all its implied risks, without letting itself be conceived in the categories of the 'imaginary' and the 'real.'" (P 84). In the "Outwork" section of Dissemination Derrida asserts that, as a "first effect" of dissemination, "[r]esponsibility and individuality are values that can no longer predominate." (D 6). Later, writing against the tertiary term of the Hegelian dialectic: "Dissemination *displaces* the three of ontotheology....[t]hese marks can no longer be summed up or 'decided' according to the two of binary oppositions nor sublated into the three of speculative dialectics." (D 25). Returning to the "mirror," "dissemination" is written on and with its "tain," not "on its inverted specter. Nor in the triadic symbolic order of its sublimation." (P 33). Finally, "dissemination" seems the productive, poetic way in which *one* may "misread," write and extend a text -- a way *with* the tain, with that liquified tinfoil which, while making mirroring possible, ultimately foils philosophical reflection.

²² In the Phaedo Socrates expresses essentially the same, foundational belief when he explains, "So, in my own case, I was afraid that my soul might be blinded altogether if I looked at things with my eyes or tried to apprehend them by help of the senses. And I thought that I had better have recourse to the world of definitions and seek there the truth of existence." (Phaedo E 99). Generally, Derrida essays against "the world of definitions."

of empirical experience) is...*to be avoided*.

Producing Truth

Totally undecidable, the "sign in general" is still *productive*. In a key paragraph comprising two dense sentences, that productivity is stressed. (25). Derrida cites from Section 124 of Ideas ("logical meaning is an expression"), refers to Section 2 of the "Introduction" to the Logical Investigations ("there is theoretical truth only in a statement") and claims that Husserl "resolutely concern[s] himself with linguistic expression as the possibility of truth." (25). This first sentence tersely evidences Husserl's attention to the productivity of the sign, a productivity which, though "it has no truth in itself," initiates and maintains "the movement and concept of truth." (25). Then, with the second sentence, Derrida posits a "whole itinerary which ends in 'The Origin of Geometry'" (and begins, presumably, with the first paragraph of the Logical Investigations), an "itinerary" through which Husserl gives "growing attention to that which, in signification, in language and in inscription...*produces* truth or ideality, rather than simply *records* it." (25). The second sentence renders "signification," "language" and "inscription" equivalent, suggesting "archi ecriture." Husserl's repressed awareness of "archi ecriture" -- wrought through a "movement of the wand"²³ -- evidences a "reversal"

²³ "The movement of the wand is rich with all possible discourses but no discourse can reproduce it without impoverishing and deforming it." (G 234).

of the "traditional procedure." Here Husserl -- *Derrida's* Husserl -- is appreciated as a writer, as one who "has *written what* he has written....has written that writing...is not originally subordinate to the logos and to truth." (G 19). Problematizing truth, tending to void the phonologocentric text, such reflexive writing roots to "archi ecriture."

Chiasmus

The final paragraph of Chapter One begins: "But this last move is not simple." Attention to that which "*produces* truth," attention to the "movement of the wand" is problematic. It is, Derrida claims, "our problem," a problem evidenced by the presentation of writing.²⁴

The paragraph suggests, in relation to "transcendental *life*" and "the process

²⁴ The *presentation*, the *present tain shown* (of) writing, poses a problem, "our problem." One purpose of mundane writing is to summarize or organize -- to represent -- thought. Regarding that purpose in the introductory "Outwork" of Dissemination Derrida writes: "The question astir here, precisely, is that of presentation." (D 3). A main issue of the essay is, reflexively, the "presentation" of *writing* and the impossibility of ever summarizing or organizing writing. In "Outwork" (a feigned preface), the possibility of a preface is contested. Written "after the fact," purportedly summarizing "*three* 'essays' whose itinerary it would be time, after the fact, to recognize; whose continuity and underlying laws could now be pointed out...whose overall concept or meaning could at last...be squarely set forth" (D 3), "Outwork" dismantles and dismisses the possibility of a summary, organized preface. Insofar as it "makes the future present" and "reduces the future to the form of manifest presence" (D 7), insofar as it *presages* that which was written and is *to be* read, insofar as it presupposes "the signifier's *simple* exteriority to 'its' concept" (D 3), the preface would confirm and convey a "metaphysics of presence." Exemplary of summary organization, the preface reduces the *labor and chance* of one's own reading. Noting that "this last move is not simple" and "is our problem," Derrida reflexively refers to the difficulty of writing such a reading, the difficulty of the essay and this, its commentary.

of *death* in signs," a chiasmus. Derrida identifies "two motifs" within phenomenology: "the return to an active constitution of sense and value, to the activity of *life* which produces truth in general through its signs" and "another factor" which "confirm[s] the classical metaphysics of presence." (26). The chiasmus turns on the terms 'life' and 'death.' In the "Introduction," phenomenology is characterized as "a philosophy of life," for "[t]he ultimate form of ideality...is the *living present*, the self-presence of transcendental life." (6). Now, closing Chapter One, such "life" is related to that which "although it has no truth in itself -- conditions the movement and concept of truth." "Life" is aligned with that "activity" which "produces truth...through its signs."

The "active constitution" of all meaning or signification requires (even within one's "sphere of ownness") indication. Derrida later terms indication "the process of death at work in signs." (44). Inevitably involving indication, the "life" and "activity of a *life* which produces truth and value... through...signs" entails "the process of death at work in signs." Written, sent beyond the authorized "hold" of a presently voiced consciousness, the "specificity of writing" is orphaned, errant²⁵, "adrift in the threat of limitlessness." (G 6). In sum, the "life" which "*produces*" truth prompts a certain death.

²⁵ "Writing is not an independent order of signification; it is weakened speech, something not completely dead....it simply signifies little....This signifier of little, this discourse that doesn't amount to much, is like all ghosts: errant." (D 143).

The second "motif" is not "simply juxtaposed" to the first "move" or motif.²⁶ Here, Derrida refers to "another factor" distinct from, but not simply opposed to, the productive genesis of meaning or significance: the "adherence of phenomenology to classical ontology." Closing the "Introduction," Derrida mentions a "hold" ("prise") "at work from the start, in the first of the 'Logical Investigations.'" The privilege of consciousness is a "hold" maintained by "the excellence of the voice." (16). Closing Chapter One, Derrida notes "the adherence" ["l'appartenance," 'belonging,' 'pertinence'] "of phenomenology to classical ontology."

A "classical ontology" will "subject sign to truth, language to being, speech to thought and writing to speech." (24). More schematically (and with reference to Heidegger's notion of the merely ontic), a "classical ontology" affirms the "presence" and truth of "beings;" thought presents the truth of those "beings," speech presents the truth of such thought, and writing re-presents the truth of

²⁶ In note 5 (25) Derrida relates that first "move" ("the return to an active constitution of sense and value...the activity of a *life* which produces truth and value... through...signs") to Bergson's, Nietzsche's and, especially, Heidegger's critique of classical metaphysics, a critique which, insofar as it "belongs to the unity of a historical configuration," "continues metaphysics." That continuance is, Derrida notes, "one of the most enduring themes of Heidegger's meditation." (25). Derrida refers to the metaphysical problems of the "hermeneutic circle" ("the precomprehension of the sense of a word"), the primacy of the present ("the privilege of the question 'what is...?'") and in Of Grammatology claims that "a logocentrism is not totally absent from Heidegger's thought, perhaps it still holds that thought within the epoch of onto-theology, within the philosophy of presence, within philosophy *itself*. This would perhaps mean that one does not leave the epoch whose closure one can outline." (G 12). Seemingly referring to Derrida's own position, the final sentence of note 5 ["This [Heidegger's supposed "escape" from metaphysical problems] does not mean, of course, that one escapes them [metaphysical problems] afterwards"] also pertains to Heidegger, to *any one* who writes and sends.

speech. Derived from the *lived* experience of "beings," truth is preserved at all "stages" within such a gradient, "classical ontology," but the "presence" of that truth diminishes with the transition from being, through thought and speech, to writing. In Of Grammatology and in his essay on Hegel's "dialectical semiology," "The Pit and the Pyramid," Derrida cites a passage from Aristotle's De Interpretatione which succinctly states the relations between experience, speech and writing implied by a "classical ontology": "Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience and written words are the symbols of spoken words. Just as all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds, but the mental experiences, which these directly symbolize, are the same for all as also are those things of which our experiences are the images." (G 11, M 75).

In Of Grammatology Derrida refers to a "classical ontology" maintained by "the concept of the sign itself, and the distinction...between [its] signifying and signified faces." (G 72). In relation to the "*signatum*" (the "signifying face" of the sign), "[t]he *signatum* always referred, as to its referent, to a *res*, to an entity created or at any rate first thought and spoken, thinkable and speakable, in the eternal present of the divine logos and specifically in its breath." (G 73). There is thus, within true thought, a participation with "the divine logos," a participation with "its breath." There is a sense, then, in which phonologocentrism is also a "pneumato-centrism." Finally, in "The Double Session" Derrida describes the adherence of the phonologocentric book to a "classical ontology," a "metaphysics of presence": "*Logos* must indeed be shaped according to the model of the *eidos*;

the book then reproduces the *logos*, and the whole is organized by this relation of repetition, resemblance (*homoiosis*), doubling, duplication, this sort of specular process and play of reflections where things (*onta*), speech and writing come to repeat and mirror each other." (D 188).

"Adherence" to a classical ontology is maintained by consciousness, by the "hold" which intentional, *living* consciousness -- through "the excellence of the voice" -- exerts. The term 'death' does not figure in Derrida's description of this other "factor," this "adherence." However, insofar as it is "another" "juxtaposed" "factor," life's opposite is evoked. An "adherence" to classical ontology occurs *without* "the activity of a life which produces truth" and involves a certain "death," a lack of productive movement. Such seeming "death" or stasis is, as the final sentence of Chapter One asserts, exactly what "interests" Derrida: "It is with this adherence that we have chosen to interest ourselves." Unlike the production of writing, an "interest" in "this adherence" requires the "hold" of intentional consciousness, a certain activity and life.

In the first instance, a certain "life" writes and "dies," for writing makes marks which function beyond one's empirical consciousness. Severed from the intentional consciousness which produced it, the written is "dead to" its origin. In the second instance, a certain "death" reads and "lives," for reading takes marks and "charges" them, changes them into meanings which function within one's transcendental consciousness. Revived through the consciousness which consumes it, the read text is "alive at" its end. Thus, there is chiasmus: the "life"

which writes "dies" and the "death" which reads "lives." At the cross(ing) of read and written lines, an "ultratranscendental concept of life" perhaps issues.

Chapter Two

"The Reduction of Indication" is brief, a brevity which belies a *valorization* of indication. Derrida's first sentence in the original text refers to the "l'appartenance," the "adherence," of phenomenology to classical ontology" noted at the close of Chapter One.¹ That "metaphysical" "adherence" or "attachment" is "evidenced in...the extrinsic relation of the indicative sign to expression." (27).

Threatening Tasks

Derrida notes that Chapter One of the "First Investigation" contains only three paragraphs describing "*the essence of indication*," while eleven paragraphs are devoted to expression. Husserl's emphasis on expression follows from his "concern...to secure ["de serrer," 'to grasp, to grip'] the originality of expression." Due to that "concern," Husserl's "treatment of indication must be brief...'reductive.' Indication must be set aside ["ecarter": 'averted,' 'dispelled'], 'reduced' as an extrinsic and empirical phenomenon." (27). Derrida's language here suggests a nearly moral imperative which follows from the "contamination" of expression and its "vouloir-dire" by an "indicative system." (20). Although indication is "closely related to expression" (especially, as Husserl acknowledges, in "communicative speech"), although it is "empirically interwoven with expression," Husserl is obligated to "reduce" indication. For reasons which soon become obvious, "such

¹ David Allison first translates "l'appertenance" as "adherence." (26). Here, beginning Chapter Two, he chooses "attachment" in lieu of "adherence," though the latter word, with its phonic connotations ['add-hear-ance'], is more apt.

a reduction is difficult," even impossible. So Derrida writes, with probable sardony: "it [the "reduction" of indication] is only apparently accomplished at the end of the third paragraph. Indicative functions...continually reappear further on, and getting rid of them will be an infinite task." (27).²

Considered grammatologically, "tâche" ('task') evokes "tache" ('spot,' 'stain,' 'blot'). Husserl may then be the "philosopher of infinite spots or stains." Considering Derrida's construal of mundane writing as a species of indicative sign, the grammatological evocation is apt: "getting rid" of indication, *by means of writing*, will be "infinite," impossible, for "tâche" and "tache" are co-extensive; the philosopher's "tâche" entails the "tache" of writing.

In Of Grammatology the task/stain of writing is related to "sin." For Saussure, Derrida claims, "[w]riting would have...the exteriority that one attributes to utensils;" writing would be "an imperfect tool...a dangerous, almost maleficent, technique." (G 34). Saussure's "vehement argumentation" against writing, against "contamination by writing, the fact or threat of it," basically "aims at...a sort of stain and primarily at a sin....the inversion of the natural relationship between the soul and the body through passion." (G 34). Derrida then reflexively notes Male-

² Published the same year as Allison's translation of La Voix et le phenomene (1973), Maurice Natanson's study of Husserl [Edmund Husserl] is subtitled "Philosopher of Infinite Tasks." Aware of the liberties which Allison sometimes takes in his translation, the phrase may seem to allude to Natanson's book. In the original text, however, Derrida mentions "une tâche infinie," an "infinite task." Perhaps Natanson had read Derrida's essay, though he makes no reference to it in his book.

branche's understanding of original sin as "inattention, the temptation of ease and idleness, by that *nothing* that was Adam's 'distraction'....one gave into *ease*..." (G 35). Writing remains a technique, evil as it corrupts the soul, allowing its lapse into ease, the easy "painting of sounds."

If, as Derrida argues, the "'Verflechtung'" ('interwovenness') of indication and expression is "absolutely irreducible," if indication and expression are "in principle inextricable" and indication is "essentially internal to the movement of expression," then "Husserl's whole enterprise" is "threatened." (27). The "threat" -- "threatening" because it is written, read and *seen* -- is both the "tache" and "tache," the task and stain, of writing. Seemingly unlike the "candor of speech" (wherein "[m]y words are 'alive' because they *seem* not to leave, not to fall outside me, outside my breath, at a visible distance") the written word "leaves," "falls" in the "visible distance," "outside my breath." (76).³

Indication

Derrida's next paragraph expounds the "essence of the indicative sign" and, through a footnote, relates that "essence" to the written phenomena. First Derrida

³ Derrida here imputes to Husserl a kind of "all or nothing" logic and desire. Derrida *polarizes* Husserl's text and thought into two mutually exclusive modalities: the "contamination," absence or "nothing" of writing and the purity, presence or "all" of the voice. The "myth" of the voice (and it is a myth, for as the essence of expression, the "voice" orients the quest which Derrida projects into Husserl's text) guarantees "presence." Perhaps the oppositions discerned within Husserl's text reveal Derrida's own fixation on metaphysics and his need to essay against ideality, so that Derrida may remain a strange metaphysician still under the sway of the opposition: all or nothing.

asks, "What is an indicative sign?" and states that such a sign may be "natural" or "artificial." (27). A "natural" indicative sign involves a causal relation between indicator and indicated; footprints in the snow are caused by -- and so indicate -- the presence of animate life. An "artificial" indicative sign involves a conventional relation between indicator and indicated; vertical movement of the head indicates, by convention, affirmation.⁴

⁴ Misreading Husserl's text, Derrida conflates indication and indicative sign. Having noted that the "indicative relation" is evidenced by "a brand" that "is the sign of a slave" as a "flag" [is] the sign of nation," Husserl asserts that "the concept of indication extends more widely than that of a mark." (LI 269). As examples of *indication* Husserl then cites "Martian canals" which "are signs of the existence of intelligent beings on Mars" and "fossil vertebrae" which "are signs of the existence of prediluvian animals." (LI 270). Thus, that which Derrida terms a "natural" indicative sign is actually -- in Husserl's terminology -- indication. Husserl then notes that those "things, events or...properties" which are "*deliberately produced* to serve as such indications" "are called 'signs.'" (LI 270, my emphasis). The mark of a slave or the flag of a country are -- in contrast to footprints in the snow or canals on Mars -- indicative signs which are "deliberately and artificially brought about." In the third paragraph of Section 2 Husserl notes an "essential unity" or "essence of indication." First, "[a] thing is only properly an indication if and where it in fact serves to indicate something to some thinking being." (LI 270). Husserl notes that in such instances there is a "pervasively common element" or "common circumstance": "the fact that certain objects or states of affairs of *whose reality someone has actual knowledge* indicate...*the reality of certain other objects or states of affairs...the reality of one is experienced...as motivating a belief or surmise in the reality of the other.*" (LI 270). Both indications and indicative signs manifest a basic conditional structure wherein the antecedent/indicator is actually experienced, while the consequent/indicated is implied and possible; in both instances an actual indicator motivates belief in a possible indicated.

Insofar as indications per se are not "deliberately produced," they are *not* signs. Derrida's understanding of indication as a "natural" indicative *sign* is salient, for it "opens" the entirety of phenomenal experience -- of experienced existents in general-- to the possibility of *significance*.

Derrida then notes that the distinction "between nature and convention" does not divide "the unity of the indicative function." (28). "Natural" or "artificial," the indicative sign always involves the "essence of indication": an actually experienced indicator "motivates belief" in a possible indicated. Derrida construes such "motivation" ("Motivierung") as that which impels "passage": "it is what moves something such as a 'thinking being' *to pass* by thought from something to something else." (28). Such a general concept of motivation "may concern any object...or state of affairs;" *any* object or state of affairs may motivate thoughtful passage *from* something *to* something else. Importantly, that passage "always links an *actual* consciousness to a *nonactual* consciousness," i.e. a thing present to consciousness motivates, and serves as motive for, some other "object or state of affairs" not present to consciousness.⁵

Both indicating thing and indicated "object or state of affairs" are "known," though only the former is actually experienced. For Husserl however, knowledge need not involve actual experience, as Derrida notes that Husserl, "to designate the category of the known," uses the inclusive terms "Sein" ('being') and "Bestand" ('subsistence'), terms which need not imply "Dasein" ('factual existence') and "Realität" ('reality'). For Husserl, *both* indicator and indicated -- in an instance of apodictic demonstration -- may be "ideal objects" which subsist or have being

⁵ An indicator is always a determinate 'thing,' in contrast to the object or state of affairs, the "something else," which that 'thing' indicates. The motivating 'thing' is always actually experienced, while the object or state of affairs which it indicates is always, *at the moment of indication*, not actual.

("Sein") without factual existence ("Dasein") in the world of "empirical existents." Derrida notes that the difference between "Bestand" ('subsistence') and "Dasein" ('factual existence') "matters a great deal for Husserl," for a certain form of indication ("Beweis," "apodictic demonstration") occurs between subsistent, "ideal objects" only. That difference "matters a great deal" for Derrida also, for "architecture" -- the condition for "Hinweis" ("indicative allusion") and "Beweis" ("apodictic demonstration") -- effects existence and subsistence, actual and possible, real and ideal.

Indicative Writing

In the second sentence of the chapter's second paragraph, after noting peculiar examples of "artificial" indicative signs ("the chalk mark, the stigmata, all the instruments of conventional designation"⁶), Derrida makes an important note which reflexively marks Husserl's text, his essay, this commentary and mundane writing generally. Insofar as indication requires certain 'things' *"of whose reality ('Bestand') someone has actual knowledge"* which indicate and motivate *"a belief"*

⁶ The "examples" allude to Husserl's text. "The chalk mark" evokes Section 7 of Ideas where Husserl distinguishes between "Sciences of Matters of Fact and Eidetic Sciences." Geometry, as a "pure eidetic science," is also "pure of all positings of matters of fact": "The *geometer* who draws his figures [with chalk] on the board produces thereby factually existing lines on the factually existing board. But his experiencing of the product...no more *grounds* his geometrical seeing of essences and eidetic thinking than does his physical producing." (I 16). The "stigmata," understood etymologically [Gk. "stiezien," 'to mark,' 'to brand'], refers to Sec. 2 of the "First Investigation" where Husserl cites, as an example of an indicative sign, "a brand" which is "the sign of a slave."

or surmise in the being" of other objects or states of affairs, Derrida claims that Husserl "would have been able to cite writing in general" as a species of "artificial" indicative sign. The graphemes of any written text are deliberately produced marks, *visible*, experienced indicators which may motivate belief in possible objects or states of affairs. Though Husserl would have acknowledged the indicative status of writing ("it cannot be doubted that, for Husserl, writing is *indicative* in its own sphere"), that fact "poses a formidable problem," prompting Husserl's "prudent silence."⁷ The phenomenological text, in order to be phonologocentric and philosophical, cannot engage in, cannot devolve into, reflexive awareness of its written status. The graphemes of phonetic writing indicate phonemes; the phonologocentric text reflects and effects (the) hearing (of) coherent expressions. A reflexive awareness of *that* indicative process would break the phonic "mirror" which a phonologocentric text is. Why?

⁷ As already noted, Derrida misreads Husserl by construing indication and expression as mutually exclusive functions. In a certain limited sense, writing is -- *initially* -- indicative; i.e. written marks have an "intimating function": they are "intuitively taken" to intimate or refer to the writer's "own" mental states. [Cf. "First Investigation" Section 7]. Like linguistic utterances, writing -- phonologocentric writing -- *may, and most frequently does, become expressive*. In that case, written, indicative signs do not merely intimate mental states, but also express the objective meanings of those states, i.e. the intentional objects of those states. Throughout the essay Derrida, however, construes expression as phonic and subjective; *he relocates the objectivity of meaning within the subjectivity and "auto-affection" of "hearing oneself speak."* Husserl, would *not* have considered writing to remain a species of inexpressive, indicative sign; if it were such a sign, then writing would be no more than "uncharged" graphemes, marks void of objective meaning, marks intimating someone's subjective, mental states.

I.B.S. -- Breakage

In "Signature Event Context" Derrida notes three "essential predicates" implied (but repressed) by the "classical [phonologocentric] concept of writing." 1. A written sign "is a mark which subsists." Persisting beyond its "moment of inscription," a written sign may be "iterated"⁸ without and beyond the empirical consciousness which produced it. 2. Once iterated, a written sign "carries with it a force that breaks with its context." Due to that "breaking force" ["force de rupture"], a written sign "can always be detached from the chain in which it is inserted," "abandoned to its essential drift" and "grafted" into another context. *Lifted* from its initial context or "chain," a written sign may always function *otherwise*, i.e. in ways other than those intended by its author. 3. Once iterated, detached and placed within another chain or context, a written sign evidences "spacing" ["espacement"], the "differance" which, for Derrida, makes meaning possible.⁹ Spacing makes a given written sign distinct from other intratextual elements and "from all forms of present reference...objective or subjective."

⁸ "Iteration" or "iterance" -- a sign's essential repeatability -- is the key predicate. In "Signature Event Context" Derrida introduces the term and notes its probable etymology: "My communication must be repeatable -- iterable -- in the absolute absence of the receiver....Such iterability (*iter*, again, probably comes from *itara*, *other* in Sanskrit, and everything [involves]...the logic that ties repetition to alterity) structures the mark of writing itself...." (Lt 7). Essentially iterable, any sign is, through repetition, both identical to and other than itself.

⁹ "[T]he difference that brings out phonemes and lets them be heard and understood itself remains inaudible." (133). Writing, however, spatializes and makes that difference visible. The "gross spelling mistake" and "pyramidal silence" of the neologism "differance" (combining the senses of 'to differ' and 'to defer') thus displays "time's becoming-spatial or space's becoming-temporal." (143).

Displayed in space, there as a *thing*, the written sign remains essentially irresponsible to an "objective" goal or "telos," irresponsible to a "subjective" origin or "arche." Reduced to "the emergence of the mark," the written sign, qua grapheme, is a-telic, an-archic and cannot be "superseded" or "reduced" "in the 'Aufhebung' of a dialectic."¹⁰ (Lt 9-10).

Iteration, breaking force and spacing suspend subjective and objective "presence,"¹¹ suspend "arche" and "telos." A reflexive awareness of those three predicates alters the "classical concept of writing," for, with that awareness the writer knows that no reader ever fully *coheres* with the authority of writing. The written sign effects such non-coherence, as any written sign necessarily and immediately occurs, beyond one's "sphere of ownness," in space. Once read, the written sign is iterated, "grafted" into other contexts wherein its essentially spaced marks merge with others: other origins, other ends.

Iteration, breaking force and spacing are not limited to "written communi-

¹⁰ Here, Derrida suggests "The Pit and the Pyramid," his critique of Hegel's "dialectical semiology" (M 69-108). In that essay Derrida contests Hegel's notion of the sign as sublating and mediating between the sensible and the intelligible, a mediation achieved by the "sound" (of the) voice.

¹¹ In the "Introduction" Derrida characterizes these "two related senses" of "presence": "The proximity of what is set forth as an object of an intuition, and the proximity of the temporal present which gives the present intuition of the object its form." (9). In a note to "The Pit and the Pyramid" these "two related senses" are described, respectively, as "two criteria: objectivity and interiority...idealization has as its meaning (from Plato to Husserl) the simultaneous confirmation of objectivity and interiority....Ideal objectivity maintains its identity with itself, its integrity and its resistance...no longer depending upon an empirical sensuous exteriority." (M 93). The "empirical sensuous exteriority" of writing, qua indicative sign, menaces objective "presence," its "ideal objectivity" within consciousness.

cation in the narrow sense," but inhere within "all language, in spoken language...in the totality of 'experience.'" (Lt 10). Extended beyond "the classical concept of writing," these three predicates effect and affect speech and experience. Awareness of these predicates *within one's speech* evidences a lack of coherence, a lack of coincidence, the absence which prompts writing.

Derrida's analysis of Rousseau in Of Grammatology is an extended investigation of that absence: "when speech fails to protect presence, writing becomes necessary." (G 144). Reading through Rousseau's texts (Emile and The Confessions), Derrida discerns an ambivalence over the issue of writing; Rousseau simultaneously "valorizes and disqualifies writing." (G 142). Like education, cultivation and masturbation (each a "way of compensation" ["suppleance"] by which man corrects or "makes up for" ["suppleer"] a state of ignorance, wildness or deprivation), writing belongs to, and is exemplary of, a "system of substitution." The supplementarity of writing "determines in a certain way all the conceptual oppositions within which Rousseau inscribes the notion of Nature." (G 145). Writing "makes up for" and corrects an ignorance, wildness and deprivation, an absence experienced within speech. Essentially supplemental, "classical" writing attempts to control and "master" the insecurity intrinsic to speech. Writing is "urgently" "added" to speech; it "make[s] speech present when it is actually absent." (G 144). Yet, as "the critical response to a situation of distress," writing is also "a dangerous means, a menacing aid." (G 144). Here, Derrida "grafts" Rousseau's characterization of auto-erotism as a "dangerous supplement" ("If once he acquires this

dangerous habit ['supplement'] he is ruined") to the issue of writing. Like auto-erotism, writing is a "supplement" which "'cheats' maternal 'nature;'" writing betrays "the candor of speech" and is a seduction which leads one astray, off into the "imaginary." (G 151). Displayed in space: "The danger is that of the image." (G 151). Rousseau, however, also terms writing/auto-erotism a "fatal advantage": "Seduced by this fatal advantage, I did my best to destroy the good constitution which Nature had restored to me...." Though it "cheats" or betrays natural speech, writing has the advantage of restoring and supplementing speech, restoring and supplementing Nature. Though it implies absence,¹² writing, "in its own sphere," "cumulates and accumulates presence" and "promises the reappropriation of that of which speech allowed itself to be dispossessed." (27, G 144, 142).

As a "fatal advantage" and/or "dangerous supplement," mundane writing is "undecidable." The phonologocentric writer is secretly ambivalent towards writing's undecidability. Within a culture of "authorities who demand an author, an / capable of organizing a narrative sequence,"¹³ such ambivalence is repressed, for "*blindness to the supplement* is the law." (G 149). The author of the phonologocentric text remains "blind" to the supplemental and undecidable nature of that text. The author/authority follows the "law."

¹² "Absence of the signatory...absence of the referent. Writing is the name of these two absences." (G 42).

¹³ Derrida, "Living On, in Deconstruction and Criticism, p. 98.

In contrast to the phonologocentric author, one who "writes otherwise"¹⁴ accepts and appreciates the undecidability of writing. "Writing otherwise," one *uses* the iteration, breaking force and spacing encountered in speech, proffering a writing which is *oriented by/toward the Other*.¹⁵ Thus oriented, such a writing - following the covert (non)law of writing -- does not "cohere."

Closing the note, Derrida claims that the graphemes of a "nonphonetic writing" "would take the place of expressive discourse and *immediately connect* with the 'meaning.'" (28, my emphasis). If the "essential predicates" of a "minimal determination of the classical concept of writing" were sufficient for writing, such writing would not achieve objective meaning. Nonphonetic and non-objective, such a writing would remain mere marks: mute, sheer phenomena. The note's final sentence refers to the possibility of immediately meaningful graphemes within a non-phonetic writing as a "problem" which is "not here," though it does pertain to

¹⁴ "The issue is to deconstruct practically the *philosophical* opposition between philosophy and myth, between *logos* and *mythos*. Practically...this can only be done textually, along the lines of an *other* writing, with all the implied risks." (P 53).

¹⁵ Tending toward, attending to, attempting to word the Other (the Unconscious) involves a certain "lifting": the "displacement" which occurs in the Freudian "dreamwork." Lyotard, in "The Dreamwork Does Not Think" notes that "*transposition* would be an adequate translation of 'Enstellung' ['displacement']; a piece is taken out here and replaced somewhere else....such an operation cannot fail to have recourse to a spatial dimension." By displacement within the dream, a textual "piece" or "fragment" is "lifted," carried through space, "above the text": "to erase a fragment from one place on the page...and put it elsewhere...demands that the extract move *above* the text." ("The Dreamwork Does Not Think, in The Lyotard Reader, pp. 22-23). *Lifted* by the Other, writing "Otherwise" reflects and effects the trance of a space not limited by intentional consciousness.

"the wider horizon of this essay."¹⁶

Problem, Solution

The "problem" of nonphonetic writing becomes a "solution," for such a writing "solves" the traditional distinction between *a priori* logical relations and *a posteriori* facts. Husserl's text affirms that distinction. Section 3 of the "First Investigation" distinguishes between "Hinweis" or "indicative allusion" and "Beweis" or "apodictic demonstration," noting that his characterization in Section 2 was

¹⁶ "We are not insisting upon this problem, but it does belong to the wider horizon of this essay." The possibility of a fully "nonphonetic writing" is -- *qua writing here* -- impossible, for no intelligible, mundane writing does not, eventually, involve the interiorized speech of a certain voice, unless that "writing" is purely formal or syntactic, as in mathematics or a Fregean "Begriffsschrift." (With "archi ecriture" Derrida suggests such a purely formal writing, but that is not the mundane writing which occurs here, heard here.) Within "the wider horizon of this essay," throughout Of Grammatology for example, Derrida seems to desire, to "dream of" a non-phonetic writing: "the originary and pre- or meta-phonetic writing that I am attempting to conceive of here..." (G 79). In an interview, Derrida speaks of "this idiomatic writing whose purity I know to be inaccessible, but which I continue...to dream about." Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal Vol. 10 No. 1). In the sentence just cited from Of Grammatology, Derrida acknowledges that such writing "leads to nothing less than an 'overtaking' of speech by the machine." (G 79). There is thus an awareness that an "originary and pre- or meta- writing" is only "dreamt-of," an asymptotic limit. The final sentence of "Of Grammatology as a Positive Science" acknowledges that limit: "Grammatology, this thought, would still be walled-in with presence." (G 93). Opening that Section of the book, Derrida asks, "On what conditions is a grammatology possible?" and then asserts that the "possible condition" for "grammatology" "turns into a condition of impossibility," for "[g]raphematics or grammatography ought no longer to be presented as sciences; their goal should be exorbitant when compared to *grammatological knowledge*." (G 74). Grammatology (which, in practice, becomes "graphematics or grammatography") becomes a "blind tactics or empirical errance," allowing -- as Derrida admits in "The Time of a Thesis" -- "the aleatory strategy of someone who admits that he does not know where he is going." (TT 50).

overly general, for it "applies as much to the 'demonstration' of genuine inference and proof as to the 'demonstration' of indication." (LI 271). "Indicative allusion" or "Hinweis" involves experience of at least one mundane existent: "one thing indicates another...belief in the one's existence [serves as] an empirical motive or ground -- not necessary but contingent -- for belief in the existence of the other." (LI 272). "Apodictic demonstration" or "Beweis" involves "insight" into ideal relations: "An ideal rule is revealed which extends its sway beyond the judgments here and now united by 'motivation.'" (LI 271). Through three related paragraphs (28-29) Derrida expositis the analysis Husserl gives in Section 3, posing Husserl's distinction, in "classical terms," as "truths of reason" and "truths of fact." (29). The final, third paragraph simply claims that "this indispensable distinction between 'Hinweis' and 'Beweis'...pose[s] a problem." The "problem" is that of inner thought, of accounting for a "language of thought."¹⁷ Although the demonstration or communication of "insight" into a logical proof or inference requires phonic/graphic form, one's own "insight" into "truths of reason" remains invisible, unheard. Derrida wishes to account for noncommunicated, insightful thought, logical and non-phonetic thought, *within one's "sphere of ownness."* Accounting for such thought

¹⁷ Jerry Fodor, in The Language of Thought, posits a "private language" or "internal code" to account for our "higher cognitive processes" as well as "the familiar achievements of infrahuman organisms and children." (LOT 56). Though Derrida, unlike Fodor, does not develop careful arguments for such a "language," he intimates that there is such a language. Also unlike Fodor (whose ontology remains essentially Cartesian, i.e. that there is an outer reality which our inner "representations" more or less accurately depict), Derrida "argues" that "the difference between reality and representation, between the veridical and the imaginary...has already begun to wear away." (51).

within one's "sphere of ownness" is a "problem." The "medium" within which *both* "Hinweis" and "Beweis" occur, the visible/invisible medium of "archi ecriture," solves that problem.

From the terms "Hinweis" and "Beweis" Derrida abstracts "Weisen" ("showing") and asks, "What can be meant by 'showing in general'?" (29). That question evokes another question "which we raised earlier apropos of 'the 'Zeigen' in general": "*What then is a sign in general?*" (23).¹⁸ Like "the sign in general," before bifurcation into "expressive reference" ("Hinzeigen") and "indicative reference" ("Anzeigen"), "showing in general," before bifurcation into "Hinweis" ("indicative allusion") and "Beweis" ("apodictic demonstration"), prompts a question: *what does the sign show?* The sign shows (*qua* thing found in the field of experience) "archi ecriture," a proto-writing which solves the distinction between "truths of reason" and "truths of fact," as it may "write" signs "in the inwardness of one's own body," signs which do not require "any surface displayed in the world." (79). Without speech, without evident demonstration, an invisible, aphonic "archi ecriture" effects *both* "truths of reason" and "truths of fact."

¹⁸ Here, Derrida transforms the verb "weisen" ('to show') into a noun (just as "zeigen" ('to point to,' 'to show') was transformed into a gerund or noun.) [In the original text Derrida refers to "la structure generale du 'Zeigen'" and "la monstration ('Weisen') en generale" (VP 25, 31)]. For Derrida, the sign evidences a "structure of substitution or reference" (23); it is that thing which takes place "in the place of" (and so points towards) some other, possible object or state of affairs.

The Valorization of Indication

A long paragraph (29-30) begins with an apparent non-sequitur; abruptly, Derrida claims: "We now know in fact that...the whole of psychic experience...contains only indicative concatenations." "We now know" no such thing; Derrida is simply anticipating the "fact" of a pervasive, aphonic "archi ecriture." The paragraph's second sentence asserts that "the indicative sign falls outside the content of absolutely ideal objectivity ...outside truth." (30). In terms of Husserl's text, the assertion is false, for it assumes that indication and expression are mutually exclusive functions. As already noted, indicative signs -- the phonemes and/or graphemes of linguistic signs-- may become "charged with meaning," function as expressions and so attain "ideal objectivity." Derrida, however, is concerned with (and preoccupied by) the spoken or written sign in its initial state: *limited to an initial "intimating function," the indicative sign indicates only the presence of an other's subjective mental states, not the objective content of those states.*

The indicative sign, then, is *the evidential mark of/for an other's subjective experience of meaning.* Thus, when Derrida notes that "this exteriority...this extrinsic character of the indicative sign is inseparable from the possibility of all the forthcoming reductions," he refers to Husserl's own scene of writing; Husserl's *marks* are the necessary condition for "all the forthcoming reductions."

Next, Derrida notes that "indicative signification in language,"¹⁹ involving "empirical existent[s] in the world," "falls subject to the 'reductions.'" The "factuality, worldly existence, essential non-necessity" of one's scene of writing or speaking, involving "the sensory contours" or "sound-patterns" of words,²⁰ is indicative, so that "scene" must be "reduced." The *initially indicative* "sensory contours" of words may be "reduced," but does that entail that "the whole of psychic experience...contains only indicative concatenations"?

Derrida's opening claim attains credibility when, later in the paragraph, he refers to the "conceptual differences" of "fact/essence...worldliness/transcendentality" and "the concept of *parallelism*." Those differences and that concept were noted in the "Introduction" (11-15). There, Derrida appropriates Husserl's "enigmatic doctrine of 'parallelism'" and asserts that the "parallelism" of psychic act and transcendent meaning is determined and sustained by a "difference which, without altering anything, changes all the signs," a "difference" "in which alone the possibility of a transcendental question is contained," a "difference" allowing "freedom itself," a "fundamental difference...without which no other difference in the world would...make any sense or appear."

¹⁹ "Indicative *aspects* of language" would be more correct. The transcendental reduction would "bracket" the phonic/graphic aspects -- the essentially contingent elements -- of linguistic expression.

²⁰ In Section 8 of the "First Investigation" Husserl writes: "A word ceases to be a word when our interest stops at its sensory contour, when it becomes a mere sound-pattern." (LI 278). Following Husserl here, a word, *in order to be a word*, cannot remain merely indicative; a word must attain objective meaning.

(11). Here, the "concept of 'parallelism'" is termed an "opposition," a problem which is prefigured by or "opened up in" "a *divergence* [*écart*]" between two kinds of signs." (30). As indication and expression are mutually exclusive functions, so are the "parallel" domains of the "purely mental" and "pure transcendental life" opposed. "Indicative allusion" ("Hinweis"), involving "concatenations" of contingent, indicative signs, occurs within worldly, mental life. "Apodictic demonstration" ("Beweis"), involving "ideal necessities which are permanent and which persist beyond every empirical *hic et nunc*," occur within transcendental life. Derived from a fusion of "Zeigen" ('Pointing') and "Weisen" ('Showing'), "archi ecriture" effects both mundane mentation *and* transcendental experience; "archi ecriture" comprehends "Hinweis" and "Beweis," blends the worldly with the transcendental, and so includes the "parallel lines" of "fact/essence... worldliness/transcendentality." "Archi ecriture" is "this *nothing* that distinguishes the parallels...nothing without which no explication, no language could be freely developed in the service of truth...." (12). If "indicative concatenations" refers to a pervasive and constant "archi ecriture," then "the whole of psychic experience...contains only indicative concatenations."

The ontological status of such "concatenations" is undecidable. "Archi ecriture" is neither *simply* worldly nor transcendental; it is both, simultaneously. The entirety of "empirical existents in the world" is indicative. *The world is the site of indicative signs*. Seemingly opposed to "indicative concatenations," "the phenomenological voice" "continues to speak...to *hear/understand itself* in the absence of the world." Constituting transcendental experience, *the voice is the*

source of expressive signs. Worldly and transcendental, effecting both "indicative allusion" and "apodictic demonstration," "archi ecriture" is site and source.

Reduction In Speech

The penultimate paragraph of Chapter Two turns "from commentary to interpretation." (31). In order to follow that turn, indication and expression must again be construed as opposed, exclusive functions. Implying an argument, Derrida offers an "interpretation": *if* "the question" ["Does not the concept of *parallelism*, which defines the relations between the purely psychic -- which is in the world -- and the purely transcendental -- which is not -- and which sums up the whole enigma of Husserl's phenomenology, already present here in the form of a relation between two modes of signification? (30)] is answered affirmatively, i.e. if the "parallel lines" of mundane and transcendental life are already wrought through "a divergence between two kinds of signs," so that indication remains mundane while expression sustains transcendental experience, *then* one must "conclude," "against the express intention of Husserl," that "the simple practice of the spoken word" already entails "the 'reduction.'" Derrida refers, presumably, to an alternative reduction.²¹

Derrida suggests a unique "reduction," a radical reduction which discloses the condition for the possibility of any worldly or transcendental, real or irreal object or state of affairs. Gasche, in The Tain of the Mirror, identifies "archi ecriture" with "inscription" and claims that "inscription is the reduction of the phenomenological reduction." (TM 159). The necessary condition for the "ideal Objectivity and identity" of any word is thus an aphonic "writing." "The simple practice of the spoken word" thus "reduces to" a "writing within speech," a writing *before* speech:

Anticipating the essay's end ("It remains, then, for us to *speak*, to make our voices *resonate*..."), Derrida aligns "the spoken word, the power of expression," with this "reduction" and an "ultratrascendental" consciousness which that "reduction" discloses. Derrida's "interpretation" implies this "reduction" is "already...at work in the most spontaneous act of spoken discourse" (31); the alternative "reduction" is placed in speech, found within a *phenomenal speech* which grants an altered, "ultratrascendental" consciousness. Wholly against Husserl, this "reduction" -- *Derrida's reduction* -- thus refers (us) to the cessation of more mundane writing.²²

"[T]his conclusion would constitute...the 'truth' of phenomenology." (31). "This conclusion," this *fusion* of writing and speech, would also "contradict the express intention of Husserl" for two related reasons: 1. Phenomenal speech comprehends "the existence of a pre-expressive and prelinguistic stratum of sense." Though Husserl "believes in" some such stratum ("which the reduction"²³ must sometimes disclose by excluding the stratum of language"), phenomenal speech, evidencing "a writing within speech," already contains that stratum; every

"archi ecriture."

²² Such cessation marks the disintegration of a mundane, writerly "form of support," a disintegration of 'booked,' phonologocentric consciousness. "Now, a certain form of support is in the course of disappearing, and the unconscious will have to get used to this, and this is already in progress." (PC 105).

²³ Unlike the previous paragraph, reduction, here, is not placed in quotation marks. Derrida now refers to Husserl's reduction, *not* that unique "reduction"...already at work in the most spontaneous act of spoken discourse."

thing is included within "the stratum of language." 2. Phenomenal speech continually involves non-expressive elements. The identity and repetition of given "sound patterns" require an "indicative web." More obviously, speech is often accompanied by bodily gestures, as it issues from bodies. Though "there is no expression and meaning without speech," though "discourse would not be possible without an expressive core," "not everything in speech is 'expressive.'" Traces of "an indicative web" remain with and within phenomenal speech.

In sum, Derrida *valorizes* indication. Within a necessarily still phonologocentric writing, that valorization *remains a tendency*.²⁴

²⁴ "The essence of philosophy provides no ground precisely for peculiarities," Hegel, cited at the outset of "Tympan." Derrida attends to "the sensory contours" of words, to "peculiarities" within philosophical texts. Such attention *tends* to read, "to go" against phonologocentrism. *Within* a bibliopedic culture ["people charged with the carrying of the mail, the guardians of the letter, the archivists, the professors... journalists, today the psychoanalysts, the philosophers...who are all that at once, and the literature people" (PC 51)] a total break from phonologocentrism is impossible; the total valorization of indication would entail cessation of more text; it must -- *within the text* -- remain an *asymptotic limit*. Writing readings which *tend* "to go" against phonologocentrism, Derrida also reads and writes against traditional, intentional "intelligence...the name of the power which produces a sign by negating the sensory spatiality of intuition." (M 89). In "The Pit and the Pyramid" (M 79-108), the Hegelian "Aufhebung" is defined as a "releve," an intentional, intelligent 'lifting' of space into time: "the releve ('Aufhebung') of space is time." (M 89). In lieu of temporalizing space, Derrida *tends* to spatialize time. A total valorization of indication would entail a total spatialization of time, so that there would be "the 'overtaking' of speech by the machine." (G 79). In "The Pit and the Pyramid" such a "machine" produces "mute writing," a writing which is "released from the voice and from every natural language." (M 105). In silence and violence, that writing ["archi ecriture"] "overtakes" and takes over the self present in speech: "The silence of this writing and the space of calculation would interrupt the movement of the 'Aufhebung,' resist the interiorization of the past...the *relevant* idealization...the re-appropriation of the logos in self-presence and infinite parousia." (M 105). Against an essentially phonic, temporal intelligence, Derrida *tends and attempts* to "think without *releve*." (M 107). Finally, he concedes:

"The Sign in General"

The "sign in general" derives from a conflation of Husserl's indicative sign and Saussure's linguistic sign. As signifier/indicator, any thing ("*of whose reality someone has actual knowledge*") indicates "*the possibility of certain...objects or states of affairs.*" (LI I 270). Like an indicator, the sensory aspect of such a thing is an actually experienced phenomenon. Like a signifier, that aspect entails a "concept" in consciousness.²⁵

Through the "sign in general," any indicator is a signifier (and any signifier is an indicator); any indicated is a signified (and any signified is an indicated). Those identities imply: (i) that any indicator of an indicative sign -- any "object or state of affairs" which becomes a 'thing' for consciousness -- refers, qua signifier, to the signified of a linguistic sign; (ii) that the signified, qua indicated, remains -- in the instant of indication -- an unactualized *possibility*.

So there is, at the end, "an indicative web," a network which supports and pervades speech, writing and all instances of "the sign in general." Within experience in general, all things may also be signs "for" consciousness, signs

"thought is this *re/leve*;" thus, "[w]e must still machinate its presentation" and produce more text. (M 106, 107).

²⁵ "Concept" is Saussure's synonym for "signified": "A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern." (CGL 66). Importantly, in Saussure's diagram of the sign (CGL 98), the "concept" is placed over the "sound pattern," seemingly showing the primacy of the signified over the signifier.

which -- being indicative -- indicate mere possibilities. Determinate meaning within consciousness becomes, by the space of the "web," forever deferred.²⁶

²⁶ In "White Mythology" Derrida refers to an "enigmatic division" or "interval which makes scenes and tells tales." (M 239). That "division" derives from the "pleasure" which Aristotle, in Rhetoric I, discerns in "mimesis": "Since learning and wondering are pleasant, it follows that such things as acts of imitation must be pleasant -- for instance painting, sculpture, poetry -- and every product of skillful imitation...." Involving a "resemblance which is not an identity" (a lion may be like the sun, but the sun is not a lion), the experience of "mimesis," the experience of metaphor, "yields pleasure only on the condition of giving us to see in action that which nonetheless is not seen in action...." (M 239). Throughout "White Mythology" Derrida "argues" that "[a]bstract notions always hide a sensory figure," that "[p]hilosophy is this process of metaphorization which gets carried away in and of itself." (M 210, 211). The upshot of the demonstration is that every natural language is ridden with metaphor, that metaphor [that which is "proper to man" (M 246)] constitutes phonologocentric language, for language (like the analogy which constitutes a metaphor) aims at "univocity...the *telos* of language." Speech and Phenomena suggests that experience in general is wrought through "architecture," through instances of an aphonic "sign in general," signs which function both linguistically and indicatively. The logical space, the spatio-temporal space between indicator and indicated -- *spaces within the web* -- open experience in general to metaphorization and "this energetic absence" or "enigmatic division" which "makes scenes and tells tales."

Chapter Three

"Meaning as Soliloquy" involves "a voice which may remain entirely internal." (33). Through Husserl's text, Derrida posits an internal voice as the source of expressive discourse. Throughout "Meaning as Soliloquy" Derrida investigates that "voice," the target of his essay. With "Geist" ('spirit') as its basis, the voice opposes the mundane, indicative matrix.

Three Traits of Expression

Derrida begins with a supposition: "Let us suppose that indication is excluded." (32). With that exclusion, "expression remains."¹ Derrida then asks and answers: "What is expression? It is a sign charged with meaning." A sentence summarizes assertions made in the "Introduction": "Meaning doubtless comes to the sign and transforms it into expression only by means of speech, oral discourse." (32).² Derrida then claims that the meaningfulness of expressions "can

¹ Derrida continually construes expression and indication as mutually exclusive functions; they are not. The meaningful use of uttered and/or written language requires an indicative aspect which may simultaneously function expressively. Without that expressive function, the use of language never achieves objectivity.

² In the "Introduction" Derrida makes claims which prepare the reader for the assumption which orients the essay [that the meaningfulness of an expression requires a phonic substance, a "voice"]: "the substance of expression -- which best seems to preserve ideality and living presence in all its forms is living speech, the spirituality of the breath" (10); "consciousness owes its privileged status...to the possibility of a living vocal medium" (15); "the privilege of presence as consciousness can be established...only by virtue of the excellence of the voice." (16). Throughout the "Fifth Investigation" ["On Intentional Experiences and their Contents"] Husserl asserts that the meaningfulness of an expression requires certain "mental acts": "what makes an expression an expression are...the acts

be explained only" through three traits: 1. exteriorization, 2. intention and 3. the "phenomenological voice" which speaks with and within "solitary mental life."

1. Expressions are meaningful because they adhere to, add to, a "classical ontology" which maintains a distinction between things, consciousness and language. Consciousness first experiences "the things themselves," first perceives a pre-expressive sense within phenomena, and then turns to language in order to express and communicate those first experiences. Suggesting the etymology of 'expression' ["ex" ('out') + "premere" ('to press')], Derrida asserts, "ex-expression is exteriorization": "it [expression] imparts to a certain outside a sense which is first found in a certain inside." (32). "Outside" refers to the *intersubjective* space wherein an "imparted" expression "figures." "Inside" refers to the *intrasubjective* space wherein intentional consciousness exerts and experiences its inner "voice."

The inner/outer distinction is complicated; actually, "the outside is neither nature, nor the world, nor a real exterior relative to consciousness." More precisely,

attaching to it." (LI 583). Such acts need not be privately voiced or actually spoken. In Chapter Two of the "First Investigation" ["Towards a Characterization of the Acts which Confer Meaning"] Husserl distinguishes "meaning or meaning-intention" from a "merely sounded word." Contra Derrida's interpretation, Husserl does not assert a nominalism which identifies voiced, spoken or written word and thought. For Husserl, understanding is "a peculiar act-experience" which "*shines through the expression*," thus lending it "meaning and a relation to objects." (LI 302, my emphasis). For Husserl, the experience of understanding a word's meaning is wholly *independent* of that word's "sensory contour": "living... understandingly, we perform no act of presentation or judgement directed upon the sign as a sensible object, but another act...which relates to the thing [i.e. the object] designated. *It is in this sense-giving act-character...that meaning consists.*" (LI 303, my emphasis). According to Husserl's text, neither voice nor speech nor writing are essential to the mental acts which achieve objective meaning.

the "outside...is that of an ideal object." (32). In order to be *meaning-full*, an expression must intend and achieve reference to an "ideal object."³ The first "outside" (the outside of intersubjective space) is again evoked, as Derrida's next sentence refers to two "outsides": the outside of the "ideal object" and the more obvious "outside" of intersubjective space: "The outside is then ex-pressed and goes forth beyond itself into another outside...." That second "outside" (of intersubjective space) is then immediately qualified and "turned inside," for the expressed "outside" of the "ideal object" "...is always 'in' consciousness." (32, my emphasis).

The play of "inside" and "outside" (of an ex-pressed "outside" which "goes forth beyond itself into another outside, which is always in consciousness") may be understood through a sentence from Of Grammatology. Apropos of the spoken, "living word," Derrida writes: "The ethic of speech is the *delusion* of presence mastered." (G 139). Expressive speech follows an ethic: habitually uttering words which serve one's intentional consciousness. The essay's next sentence notes the basis for that ethic: "expressive discourse...has no need of being effectively uttered in the world." (32). In the "Introduction" Derrida discerns two modes of "presence": "the proximity of what is set forth as an object of intuition and the proximity of the temporal present which gives the clear and present intuition of the object its form."

³ "Each expression not merely says something, but says it *of* something: it not only has a meaning, but refers to objects." (LI 287); "Every expression... names or otherwise designates something." (LI 290); "In meaning, a relation to an object is constituted. To use an expression significantly, and to refer expressively to an object...are one and the same." (LI 291).

(9). Exteriorized through expressive speech, the former, outer presence requires the latter, inner presence, and that inner presence ("the temporal present which gives the clear and present intuition of the object its form") is intentional consciousness, a consciousness which is voiced: "the voice *is* consciousness."

(80). The ethic or habit of speech involves the "delusion" of mastering the presence of the object through the presence of a consciousness/voice which determines that object's linguistic form. During speech (the result of the voice), the speaker masters intrasubjectivity (through the voice) and masters intersubjectivity (through expressive speech). Thus, the *spoken* outside of intersubjective space is, by virtue of the *voiced* outside of the ideal object, always intrasubjective, always "in" consciousness.

A brief, transitional paragraph summarizes "what 'expression' means for Husserl" (i.e. what expression means for *Derrida's* Husserl and the cause/course of the essay).

1. Expression is an exteriorizing act which goes "beyond-itself" when the voice speaks. With speech, expression attains and masters two outsides: that of the object and that of intersubjective space. Both outsides eventually return to and are "in' consciousness," for the "presence" of speech is assured by "auto-affection": the circuit of hearing/understanding one's own speech. The expressive act "can remain in itself" only through the "phenomenological voice."

2. "Expression is a voluntary exteriorization" which requires "the intention of a subject," an intention which "animates" the sign. (33). With communicative

speech, an intention becomes exteriorized and "absolutely explicit." The voice makes an intention even more explicit, more evident to consciousness, for that voice "may remain entirely internal." With and within one's "sphere of ownness," the voice which authorizes expressions need not "resonate" in the world.

Unlike expressions, the indicative sign is bound by two worldly "limits": the phonic or graphic "body of the sign" and an "existence in the world" which that sign refers to. Unlike the indicative sign, expressions are essentially unlimited. As meaning is "an ideality existing nowhere in the world," the voice "may remain purely internal" and produce a text without referents, a text related to "nowhere in the world."

3. Exteriorized expression requires "spoken thought." Without such thought, an expression remains indicative. Expressive discourse *is* oral discourse; it involves listening to and hearing -- *not reading* -- the voice, source of discourse. (34).⁴ Derrida cites from Section 5 of the "First Investigation": "All speech and every part of speech...shall count as an expression whether or not such speech is actually uttered or addressed with communicative intent." (34). He then claims that "the physical incarnation of the meaning, the body of speech...is...foreign to the nature of expression as such, foreign to that pure intention without which there would be no speech." (34). Derrida's claim is a non-sequitur, for the cited text

⁴ "Only [oral] discourse is subject to a *Deutung* ['interpretation'], which is never primarily reading, but rather listening." (34).

stipulates that "*all speech and every part of speech*" is expressive; "all" and "every" refer to the entirety of speech, including its "sensory contours." When Derrida claims that "the whole stratum of empirical effectiveness...the factual totality of speech, thus belongs to indication," he misreads Husserl's text.

Finally, there is opposition: expression is voluntary and imposed *by* consciousness, while indication is involuntary and imposed *on* consciousness.⁵ Again against Husserl, Derrida claims that the "effectiveness, the totality of the events of discourse, is indicative." The pragmatic context and effects of any discourse are "in the world." Unlike pragmatic fact, unlike the indicative matrix, an expression is voluntary, thus unworldly. Effecting expression, the voice evidences an "explicit teleology": pre-expressive sense becomes ex-pressed and "*raised* to the realm of 'Logos'" "only in a meaning [*vouloir-dire*] which is none other than a wanting-to-tell-itself proper to the presence of sense." (35). Any thing that is the object of an intentional experience may become, through the voice, the subject of an expression. Phenomenology, oriented by a "concept of intentionality," "remains caught up in the tradition of a voluntaristic metaphysics," which is, "perhaps," "*metaphysics as such.*" (34).

⁵ The distinction between expression and indication may be understood in relation as a more basic distinction between meaning and sense, a distinction which finally figures, simply, as sendings and receivings. Expressions, derived from one's voiced experience of meaning ("*vouloir-dire*"), are *sent*. Indications, initially involving perceptual and pre-expressive sense, are *received*. Meaning is produced, imposed *by* consciousness. Sense is given, imposed *on* consciousness.

"Geist": Essence of Voice

The transition from perceptual sense to conceptual expression, from intentional object to expressed subject, requires an "agency" which effects that transition. Though not mentioned in Husserl's text, Derrida uses the term "Geist" ('spirit,' 'will') to name that which effects (without necessarily exteriorizing) "vouloir-dire" or meaning. "Geist" orients the active yet not necessarily actualized, "heard" yet not necessarily uttered, voice which may "speak" and intend a relation to an "outside," i.e. an "ideal object." As "pure spiritual intention" and "animation," "Geist" sustains the unity of a word *before that word is imparted to another "outside."* Without "Geist," the voice is void of intentionality and meaning: "everything that escapes the pure spiritual intention, the pure animation by *Geist*...is excluded from meaning." (35).

"Geist" excludes the indicative matrix: "facial expressions, gestures, the whole of the body and the mundane register...the visible and spatial as such." Confronting voice/consciousness, the indicative matrix or field of experience opposes "Geist." The opposition between "Geist" and "mundane register" confirms, for Derrida, "the opposition between body and soul," an opposition which "has always been at bottom the case in the philosophy," a "case" which "depends entirely upon an interpretation of language." For Derrida, philosophy affirms an "opposition between body and soul," and that opposition is a linguistic effect, the result of "an interpretation of language." Derrida then claims: "visibility and spatiality as such could only *destroy* the self-presence of will and spiritual

animation which opens up discourse." Here, Derrida's "rhetoric of threat"⁶ affirms that opposition, posing the bodily and indicative against the soulful and expressive. As body destroys "Geist," the indicative matrix arrests expressive discourse. Derrida writes: "Visibility and spatiality as such destroy the self-presence of the will and spiritual animation which opens up discourse. *They are literally the death of that self-presence.*" (35).

In Section 5 of the "First Investigation" Husserl "sets aside" "a sense of 'expression' not relevant for our purpose." (LI 275). Only expressions which follow from an intention to "put certain 'thoughts' on record expressively" are true expressions. Husserl's definition "excludes facial expression and the various gestures which involuntarily accompany speech without communicative intent," gestures which "are not phenomenally one with...the consciousness of the man who manifests them." (LI 275). Regarding those "gestures," Derrida asserts: "[t]hey do not have anything to say, for they do not *want* to say anything." (35). He then claims that the exclusion of "gestures and facial expressions would certainly hold *a fortiori* for preconscious or unconscious language." Perhaps such a "preconscious or unconscious language" can be spoken, for "one can speak without knowing." (89). Here, there's a possibility which does not concern Husserl: that there may be "preconscious or unconscious" language within voiced speech, that there may be *spoken phenomena which do not derive from the voice*. Not intended

⁶ "Derrida's entire rhetoric of threat is..crucially dependent on his introduction of the threat of "contamination" in chapter 1....[T]his rhetoric of threat...is Derrida's, not Husserl's." Evans, Strategies of Deconstruction, p. 62, 68)

to be put "on record," the phenomena of non-conscious, spoken language would be involuntary, gestural, "off of the record" and in an indicative matrix wherein any indicated/signified -- at the instant of indication/signification -- remains an "unactualized possible." (The indicative matrix is "a breeding ground for disorderly elements," a "slum" of "unactualized possibles."⁷) In that matrix, through the gap between indicator/signifier and indicated/signified, a "writerly reading" may occur.⁸

Voice and Interpretation

Derrida's attack on the expressive voice is soon qualified. In a carefully nuanced paragraph (36), he concedes that phonologocentrism cannot be totally overcome. Necessary for producing and sending expressions, the voice/consciousness is also necessary for the reception and eventual interpretation of indications. During "communicative speech," the hearer must *initially* take the speaker's words as indications.⁹ The understanding which characterizes effective

⁷ Quine, "On What There Is," in From a Logical Point of View, p. 4.

⁸ Productive understanding is akin to Roland Barthes' notion of "writerly reading." As characterized by Barthes in his introduction to S/Z, "writerly reading" inaugurates a certain freedom, an option to the "poor freedom" whereby a reader is "plunged into a kind of idleness...either to accept or reject the text." As an alternative to "accepting" (accommodating, agreeing with) or "rejecting" (foreclosing, arguing against) the text, a "writerly reading" is productive and realizes "the goal of literary work": "the goal of literary work is to make the reader...a producer of the text." (Barthes, S/Z, p. 4) Though Barthes' remarks are directed to mundane literature, such "writerly reading" is, via "archi ecriture," applicable to experience in general.

⁹ As Husserl writes in Section 7 of the "First Investigation": "all expressions in *communicative* speech function as *indications*. They serve the hearer as signs of the 'thoughts' of the speaker, i.e. of his sense-giving inner experiences." (LI 277).

speech requires, however, that heard words do not remain merely indicative. A hearer must interpret and "transform" heard words, so that those words achieve meaning.

Here, however, Derrida is not concerned with the indicative status of words in "communicative speech;" he attends to mute "gestures." If a non-phonetic, visible and unintentional gesture made during speech is eventually interpreted and given meaning by the hearer, then that meaning derives from the hearer's voice. Interpretation of "the nonconscious, the involuntary and indication in general" always "makes a latent expression *heard*, brings a meaning out of what was still held back." (36). The meaning of a gesture requires voice/consciousness, for "[g]estures mean something only insofar as we can hear them." (35). In all interpretative practice, there is some voice, as indicative and non-expressive signs "mean something only insofar as they can be made to say what was murmuring in them." (35). Interpretation of the indicative, "mundane register" (including visual, sculptural, musical, athletic and all non-discursive signs), as it is voiced and discursive, is always somewhat phonocentric. Thus, as the indicative matrix

Though Husserl does not state that such "spoken expressions" are only *initially indications*, his description of "expressions as they function in communication" implies that spoken language, which "the hearer intuitively takes," tends towards - through "analogical appresentation"* -- an expressive function, for "the hearer perceives the speaker as manifesting certain inner experiences, and to that extent he also perceives those experiences themselves." (LI 277, 278).

* Described in the Cartesian Meditations, Sections 50-53, "analogical appresentation" is "a kind of making 'co-present' of the other (the speaker) within one's (the hearer's) 'sphere of ownness.'"

is read and interpreted, one never completely eludes the voice, the "hold" of consciousness.

The "Hold" of Expression

A brief paragraph acknowledges the "hold," the value, of expression. (36). The distinction between expression and indication is made and maintained through language; thus "Husserl draws a boundary which passes...within language in general." The distinction between indication and expression requires -- *in order to be heard/understood as a distinction* -- expression. Here, a prevalence of expressive consciousness or conscious expression is noted.¹⁰ The distinction between expression and indication is now cast as a distinction between *explicit* and *implicit* expression; all indication covertly "calls for" an expressive consciousness. It is in fact impossible to attain consciousness of indication per se.¹¹ Pure indication is a asymptotic limit: beyond it, consciousness is not. There will then be "impure expression." (40).

¹⁰ Through expression, a voice/consciousness is heard/understood (and/or through voice/consciousness, an expression is heard/understood). The essay insistently (con)fuses the relation between voice and expression. In a sense, an expression, to be heard/understood, requires the voice; in another sense, the voice, to be heard/understood, requires an expression. Without the "hold" of the voice, an expression remains indicative and empty; without the "hold" of an expression, the voice remains uninformed and blind.

¹¹ If (i) "the voice is consciousness" and (ii) to be conscious of x is to intend x, then intending (or attending to) an instance of indication requires the voice/consciousness.

Suspension of the other

Spoken and heard, written and read, linguistic signs *in use* are phonic/graphic which -- to be meaningful -- require interpretation. Linguistic signs that are heard/read are thus, *initially* linguistic signs "in the broader sense" [i.e. indications]. Confronting consciousness, such signs are always other. Derrida then asserts that "in the relation to the other" indication is "irreducible." The essence of expression, the pure "medium of expressivity," the linguistic sign "in the strict sense," "is" [i.e. would be] discovered only through a suspension of the other.

In the second section of the chapter (37-47) Derrida limns that attempted suspension. Words spoken and heard in oral discourse cannot be the pure "medium of expressivity," for such words remain indicative. Husserl -- *Derrida's Husserl* -- must then posit "the nonphysical side of speech," a "side" profoundly "inside," found with and within the voice. Maintaining that "inside side" requires excluding "everything that belongs to the *communication* or *manifestation* of mental experiences," for such "communication" or "manifestation" involves phonic/graphic indication. (37).

Derrida mentions "the move which justifies this gesture [of exclusion]," the "metaphysical tenor" evidenced by that "move" and "themes" which "arise therein." Those "themes" suggest that the separation of expression from indication "could be called" "the immediate non-self presence of the living present" ["la non-presence immediate a soi du present vivant"] (37). A certain "nonpresence," then, takes place and precedence within the "living present." Such eruptive "nonprese-

nce" combines traits essential to indication: "worldly existence," the "natural or empirical," "sensibility" and "association."

Indication within speech is described by Husserl in Section 7 of the "First Investigation": "all expressions in *communicative* speech function as *indications*. They serve the hearer as signs of the 'thoughts' of the speaker..." (LI 277)]. Derrida, with emphasis, glosses the text: "*All speech inasmuch as it is engaged in communication and manifests lived experience operates as indication.*" (37-38). According to Section 7 of the "First Investigation," "expression is 'originally framed' to serve the function of communication." Yet Derrida repeatedly projects into Husserl's text a "quest" for a pure "medium of expressivity;" thus, "expression itself is never purely expression as long as it fulfills this original [communicative] function." (38). Communication and the relation to the other must thus be suspended; only then "can pure expression appear." (38).

Derrida describes "what happens in communication." (38-39). First, audible phonemes or visible graphemes are "animated through the sense-giving acts of a subject." Involving sensory phenomena, such animation "cannot be pure and complete" and must "traverse, and to some degree lose itself in, the opacity of a body." (38). Secondly, sent audible or visible signs are "destined to manifest an experience to another." Such manifestations are an "irreducible mediation," necessarily involving "every expression in an indicative operation." Indication thus takes place "whenever the sense-giving act, the animating intention [of the other] is not fully present." (38). Finally, the other who speaks simultaneously experienc-

es "sense-giving acts" which are not and cannot be "present to me." Manifestation and communication of the other's "lived experience" requires, "in order to be made known to me," "a physical side," i.e. the "nonpresence" of an "indicative operation." (39).

Implying conceptual continuity within Husserl's text, Derrida then refers to the "Fifth Cartesian Meditation," Section 44, where Husserl posits the "sphere of ownness," "the transcendental, monadic sphere of what is my own." (39). Assuming that "sphere," an other's experienced mental acts are essentially "closed to me." Hearing and understanding an other's spoken words, I achieve an "analogical appresentation" of that other's experience; my knowledge of the other's mental acts is *produced* through analogy with my own mental experience: "The hearer perceives the speaker as manifesting certain inner experiences, and to that extent he also perceives these experiences...he does not, however, himself experience them, he has not an 'inner' but an 'outer' percept of them." (LI 278). The hearer *perceives* certain words which manifest and indicate mental acts, but the speaker's *experience* of those acts remains beyond the hearer's "sphere of ownness." Assuming mutually exclusive "spheres" of "self-presence," each "other's ownness" "is closed to me" (39).¹²

Before actual speech and a lapse into indication, "pure expression" is present. Derrida implicitly opposes one's own, "full" experience of expression to the

¹² Suggesting solipsism, "sphere of ownness" evokes the final words of the Cartesian Meditations, a quotation from St. Augustine: "Do not wish to go out; go back into yourself. Truth dwells in the inner man." (CM 157).

"empty" perception of expressions which are in use and thus indicative. A "primordial intuition" of "pure expression" cannot occur with communication, for "we have no primordial intuition of the presence of the other's lived experience." (40).¹³ Taken by that opposition, Derrida devalues the "presence" of "pure expression" and valorizes the "nonpresence" of the other; the other imposes a "nonpresence," a limit. Within the other's "sphere," *my expressions are indications, my experiences are perceptions, and my presence is a nonpresence*. Relating to that limit, fascinated with it, Derrida recommends a discourse which somehow is no longer *simply* phonologocentric, no longer an issue of consciousness. Without that limit, it is not possible to respect, relate to and attempt to word the other. Without that limit, the other is voided and "the *delusion* of presence mastered," *the delusion of self-presence*, takes place, imposing its texts and effects.

Essentially closed to each other, we speak or write, and our always indicative discourse involves "manifestations" which "render nothing present." (40). Sendings of one's mental acts "effectively exile...self-presence in indications." Sent from one's own "sphere," sent beyond one's influence, discourse is actually oriented to and oriented by the other, and, *in the ear/eye/mind of the other*, the meaning of the sign, *the sound/sight/time of the sign is necessarily instantly altered*.¹⁴ Including and overwhelming the "whole surface of language," indication

¹³ The implied opposition is an instance of the "all or nothing logic" which critics have discerned in Derrida's writing.

¹⁴ Appropriating the transcendental reduction, Derrida identifies the time of the sign with the meaning of the sign. Meaning requires the mediation, time.

becomes "the process of death at work in signs."¹⁵ As "the relation to the other...makes indication irreducible," that relation also makes death irreducible: "as soon as the other appears, indicative language -- another name for the relation with death -- can no longer be effaced." (40).

In sum, the manifestation and communication of mental acts always involves nonpresence and death, and "the relation with the other as nonpresence is...impure expression." Derrida then claims that "to reduce indication and reach pure expression...the relation with the other must...be suspended." (40). To discern "pure expression," Husserl must avoid indication, avoid the other.

To evidence Husserl's supposed quest for "pure expression," Derrida cites from Section 8 of the "First Investigation": "[E]xpressions play a great part in uncommunicated, interior mental life. This change in function plainly has nothing to do *with whatever makes an expression an expression*...when we live in the understanding of a word, it expresses something and the same thing, whether we address it to somebody or not...[A]n expression's meaning, *and whatever else*

¹⁵ Derrida does not explain the sudden formulation ["indication...is the process of death at work in signs"]. Two possible explanations: 1. Indication requires at least one mundane existent, at least one finite thing within spacetime; thus indication, entailing finitude, is a "process of death." 2. More simply, "death" seems a trope for a loss of "pure active intention," for a nonpresence which insists wherever/whenever signs are sent and received. Derrida later posits "death" as the condition necessary for meaning per se. Suggesting the "two absences" of writing - - "absence of the signatory...absence of the referent" (G) -- he asserts that "the death of the writer and/or the disappearance of the objects he was able to describe -- does not prevent a text from 'meaning' something. On the contrary, this possibility gives birth to meaning as such, gives it out to be heard and read." (93).

pertains to it essentially, cannot coincide with its feats of intimation." (LI 279). The emphasized phrases suggest an elusive "something" or "whatever" which "makes an expression an expression" and "pertains to it [expression] essentially." Not thematized by Husserl, that "something" or "whatever" is the "phenomenological voice." Suggesting the direction of Husserl's quest, Derrida asserts that in "solitary mental life" "the pure unity of expression...should at last be restored to me." (41). Through a "reduction to the interior monologue," where "the physical event of language...seems absent," one "*should*" find expression "restored." For Derrida, the imperative cannot be fulfilled. With and within "interior monologue," the "physical event" of language, the "nonpresence" of language, *is present*, and "the pure unity of expression" is never discerned, forever deferred.

Indication Within

A brief paragraph suggests the possibility of communication and indication *within one's own "sphere."* (41). Assuming Husserl's view, Derrida asks whether, through inner monologue, "I communicate nothing to myself?" Within one's "sphere of ownness" a deliberate linguistic manifestation of mental experiences may occur, but, through such manifestation, "I learn nothing about myself." Because there is no alter there (no other to communicate to), there is no communication. Communicating nothing, monologue is superfluous, meaningless.

Unlike Derrida, Husserl "dismisses" the possibility of meaningless, superfluous discourse and communication within one's own "sphere": "Shall one

say that in soliloquy one speaks to oneself, and employs words as signs, i.e. as indications of one's own inner experiences? I cannot think such a view acceptable." (LI 279). One's own "solitary mental life," according to Husserl, does not and cannot involve "words as signs." In communicative speech, words *are* signs. With and within one's "sphere of ownness," there is no speech; there are no signs, not even useless, superfluous signs. Thus, for Husserl, the indicative and manifesting function of signs is "reduced,"¹⁶ voided within one's own "sphere."

That voidance is decisive, for the distinction between expression and indication cannot be made and maintained "if the ideal or absolute solitude of subjectivity 'proper' still [needs] indications to constitute its own relation to itself." (42). For Derrida, subjectivity *does need* indications which "constitute its own relation to itself." Subjectivity needs its signs: "In the end...only an indication is truly a sign," and "the need for indications simply means the need for signs." (42). Subjectivity, traditionally, ex-presses and ex-teriorizes its "own" properties through the production and imposition of initially indicative signs. Now (as ever) at *an end*, subjectivity discovers those constitutive signs in an already-produced, indicative matrix, i.e. the world. An indicative subjectivity is maintained, sustained, tain(t)ed with and within the remains, the debris, of expressive subjectivities, phonologocentric authorities.

For Husserl, subjectivity does *not* need indications to be present to itself.

¹⁶ "The whole theory of signification...would collapse if the *Kundgabe/Kundnahme* function [the manifesting or intimating function] could not be reduced in the sphere of my own lived experiences." (42).

In Section 8 of the "First Investigation" Husserl notes that in soliloquy "words function as signs as they do everywhere...everywhere they can be said to point to something," but the "pointing" which occurs in "solitary mental life" is not the same "pointing" which occurs in mundane indication. In the latter instance, at least one mundane existent motivates "something such as a 'thinking being' to pass by thought from something to something else." (28). In the former instance, "the existence of the sign" *does not motivate* "the existence of the meaning."¹⁷ In Saussurean terms, "solitary mental life" does not involve "passage from...the signifier to the signified." (42). For Husserl, signs in soliloquy do not require an actually experienced signifier/indicator which, by association, motivates consciousness "to pass by thought" to a possible, "real" or "irreal," indicated. Through soliloquy, there is a unity of signifier and signified, a "presence" before all distinctions.

Displaced Imaginations

Within that presence, Husserl distinguishes between "actual" and "imagined words": "in soliloquy...we are...content with imagined rather than with actual words." (LI 279). Husserl further distinguishes between such "imagined words" and

¹⁷ The "pointing" which occurs within "solitary mental life" is thus comparable to "Beweis" (or "apodictic demonstration"), as opposed to the "general motivation" involved in "Hinweis" (or "indicative allusion"). In "apodictic demonstration" there is no passage, no "motivation," involving any "empirical *hic et nunc*." (29).

their "imagined representations" ["Phantasievorstellungen"]¹⁸: "In imagination a spoken or written word floats before us, though in reality it has no existence....The imagined verbal sound, or the imagined printed word, does not exist, only its imaginative presentation does so." (LI 279). According to Husserl's description, language within "solitary mental life," *imagined language*, is unique, for there the sign "is" (simultaneously) "not," not fissured into two aspects, not signifier and signified, not essentially indicative.

With and within "imagined words" an expression is fully realized. Derrida describes that realization: "when expression is *full*, nonexistent signs *show* significations that are ideal (and thus non-existent) and certain (for they are presented to intuition)." (43). Non-existent and ideal, "imagined words" maintain a meaning (the object of a noetic act) within "the certitude of inner existence." That "certitude" derives from intuition, the mode of consciousness through which objects are given to consciousness.¹⁹ Here, the two determinations of presence are evoked: the objective presence of meaning requires the subjective presence of intuitive consciousness; the expressed, objective "outside" requires the expressive, subjective "inside." Following Derrida, those two presences are actually nonpresen-

¹⁸ Or: "imagined representations." Though "Vorstellung" is translated as "presentation" throughout J.N. Findlay's English translation of Logische Untersuchungen [a translation which Derrida's essay, with this exception, accords with], Derrida insistently and strategically translates "Vorstellung" as "representation."

¹⁹ Emmanuel Levinas describes "intuition" as "[t]he mode of consciousness or of representation through which we enter into contact with being...." (Levinas, The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology, p. 65).

ces which render ex-pressive practice vain.

Through Husserl's text, Derrida limns a *displacement* of words. He first notes that an "imaginary representation"²⁰ of a word does not require that word's "empirical occurrence." (44). He then distinguishes between "the imagined word" and "the imagination of the word." The "*imagination* of the word" (an "imaginary representation" intrinsic to the word, an "imaginary representation" which is the "power" of that word) is not an "*imagined* word," i.e. need not involve that word's phonic/ graphic "image." The difference between the "imagination" intrinsic to a word and an "image" of that word is "simple and subtle": the latter is mundane (derived from pronounced or inscribed, *indicative* words); the former is not in/of the world, not derived from phonic/graphic experience.

Through the essay, the "imagination of the word" is displaced from one's own consciousness and *found in the world*. The last few paragraphs of Chapter Three convey such displacement. Derrida claims that "the imagination of the word" "exists," or subsists, only "insofar as it is lived" in the "sphere" of "subjective experience." (44). There is thus a reduction of "the relative existence of the transcendent [external] world." Referring to Husserl's critique in Ideas of "a classical psychology of the imagination" [i.e. of a psychology for which words are "picture-signs" which prompt images resembling referents], Derrida notes that the

²⁰ Husserl writes: "In imagination a spoken or printed word floats before us, though in reality it has no existence. We should not...confuse imaginative presentations...with their imagined objects. The imagined verbal sound, or the imagined printed word, does not exist, only its imaginative presentation does." (LI 279).

"imaginative presentation" of a word, the "imagination of the word," is *not* (for Husserl) an image, *not* "one reality duplicating another reality." (46). Like Saussure, Husserl discerns "the expressive value of a 'signifier' only in the form of the 'sound-image,'" an "image" produced by the voice. Unlike Saussure (for whom the "signifier" is "a reality whose sole originality is to be internal"), Husserl's text, radicalized by Derrida, does not internalize meaning. Mined by Derrida, Husserl's text implies that the phenomenological notion of perceptual and pre-expressive sense already "inscribes" a meaning, before the voice, without the voice. *The imagination of the word recovers its "trace" in pre-expressive sense, a sense wrought through "archi ecriture."* The originary, pre-expressive experience of meaning does not "belong to [the] reality" of one's own voice. (47). Meaning is not of inner realm, not constituted by the presence of an "owned" voice.

Referring to Section 102 of Ideas, Derrida then asserts that the "noematic content" [of an expression] "is a nonreal component of the experience [of that expression]." (47). Already constituted within the world, "the irreality of inner discourse is thus a most differentiated structure," a *structure of differences*. Through that "structure" ("the whole surface of language," "death at work in signs") "the imagination of the word" leaves the "hold" of consciousness and remains...to be wrested from the indicative matrix.

Chapter Four

"Meaning and Representation" demonstrates the existence of representation (not "presentation," not "presence") within one's own "sphere." Through *referral* to presence and *repetition* of presence -- through representation -- meaning is known, seemingly present within one's own "sphere." Realizing representation requires indication. Insofar as indication involves "motivation" from one actually experienced thing to some other object or state of affairs, representation entails time, a time which displaces and displays one's own presence of mind.

Review

Derrida reviews two "arguments" for the absence of indication in "solitary discourse." (48). 1. There is no "genuine communication" within one's own "sphere." There, communication is represented, merely imaginary: "I can at most imagine myself...represent myself as manifesting something to myself." Thus, in "inward speech," only "imaginative representations" occur. 2. "In inward speech, I communicate nothing to myself *because there is no need of it.*" There is no other there, no other's demand; thus there is no purpose, no "*finality*" within one's own "sphere." There, "[t]he existence of mental acts does not have to be indicated because it [that existence] is immediately present to the subject in the present moment."¹

¹ These "arguments" are a paraphrase of sentences from Section 8 of the "First Investigation": "One of course *speaks*...even in soliloquy, and it is certainly possible to think of oneself as speaking....But in the genuine sense of communication, there is no speech...one merely conceives of oneself as speaking and communicating. In a monologue words can perform no function of indicating the existence of mental acts, since indication would there be quite purposeless. [T]he acts...are themselves experienced by us at that very moment." (LI 279-280).

Regarding those "arguments," Derrida then notes "some very diverse questions, all concerned with the status of *representation* in language." (49). Such "questions" reduce to two ways in which "representation" may be understood: as the "repetition or reproduction of presentation;" as "what takes the place of, what occupies the place of, another *Vorstellung*." (49).² Even within "inner speech" (the language of "pure expression") Derrida discerns representation and (by its "re") *repetition* and *referral*.

"The Inside and/is the Outside"³

Derrida returns to the first argument: "In monologue, nothing is communicated; one represents oneself as a speaking and communicating subject." Within soliloquy there is no communication, no indication; there are only "representations," yet, through *repetition of* and *referral to* once present realities, a certain outer "structure" inheres.

Implying an imaginary, "inner language," Husserl's description of soliloquy applies "the fundamental distinction between reality and representation to language." Derrida claims, against Husserl, that "it is impossible...to rigorously distinguish" between "representation and reality" within language. Derrida simply

² Throughout the essay Derrida translates Husserl's term "*Vorstellung*" (related to the verb "*vorstellen*," 'to put or place in front of') with "representation." Though more accurately and commonly translated by "presentation," Derrida uses "representation," as its "re" suggests "repetition" and "referral," traits which work against presence.

³ "The Outside and the Inside" ["*Le dehors et le dedans*"] is the title of the sub-section of *Of Grammatology* which details Saussure's phonologocentrism and devaluation of writing. (G 30-44). The French pronunciation of "et" is indistinguishable from "est;" thus, without mundane writing and with "archi ecriture," 'the outside is the inside.'

asserts, without argument, a fusion of reality and representation within language: the distinction between "representation and reality" "happens *in*" language: "language alone -- *is* this." (49-50).

Such terse claims suggest Derrida's earlier description of language as "the medium for this play of presence and absence." (10). Through its "play," language (entailing repetitive of signs) *produces* presence or absence. The first claim seems reasonable: the "play of absence and presence" "happens in language."⁴ The second claim ("language alone is representation and reality") is implausible, unless and until "archi ecriture" (a "writing" wrought with and within experience in general) is assumed. With such writing, *by* its writing, the distinction between "representation and reality" "*is*" language.⁵ Experience in general becomes a text or language, for, if the compound term 'reality and representation' is given the value 'language,' then experienced reality *per se is language*.

⁴ Derrida considers *natural language* intrinsically representational; through repetition and referral, a given language represents "presence" or "absence." Within a given language the distinction between reality and representation is made and maintained. Derrida conceives, then, of a "ur-language," a "supra-representational medium" (a "meta-language") which contains and so comprehends the distinction (made in the "object-language") between reality and representation. That meta-language is "archi ecriture": the pervasive, proto-writing which "solves" the distinctions (oppositions) which Derrida discerns (produces) within (with) Husserl's text.

⁵ The original text reads: "...que dans le langage la représentation et la réalité ne s'ajoutent pas ici ou là pour la simple raison qu'il est impossible au principe de les distinguer rigoureusement. Et l'on n'a sans doute pas dire que cela se produit *dans* le langage. Le langage en général est cela. Lui seul." Another translation of the last three sentences: "And though one can without doubt say that this is produced in language, language itself is this." In both the French and English the reference of the demonstrative pronoun "cela" ('this') is indeterminate, as it may refer to both the adding or 'joining' ("s'ajoutent") of representation and reality within language and the impossibility of distinguishing ("les distinguer") between reality and representation within language.

Derrida then makes a simple argument for repetition within both imagined and real language. He refers to Saussure's linguistic sign and notes that the signifier or "sound pattern" of that sign may remain within consciousness. If a signifier is exteriorized, its phonemes or graphemes must, in order to be recognized, repeat "a formal identity," i.e. phonic/graphic substance must evidence, through repetition, recognizable form. Less obviously, a signifier which remains internal (the signifier of an "imagined word") must also repeat such an identity. Whether or not words are exteriorized to the outside of intersubjective space, one's *intrasubjective* conception and personally "effective" use of words also requires repetition, for "[a] sign is never an event....[a] sign which would take place but 'once' would not be a sign." (50). Such repetition creates access to the outside of ideal objects, access to an outside "which is always 'in' consciousness." (32). Within the "presence" of "solitary mental life," there is thus repetition: "I must from the outset operate (within) a structure of repetition." (50).

That "structure of repetition" is the basis for ideality. A given word, in order to be *that* word, derives its formal identity through a repetition of that word ('apple' is the repetition of apple), a repetition which presupposes a relation of similarity ('apple' is similar to apple), a *similarity* (the ordered graphemes 'a,' 'p,' 'p,' 'l,' 'e' and 'a, p, p, l, e' are similar to each other) *which does not exist in the world*. The identity of a word (its similarity to itself) is therefore ideal, but "the locus of ideality in general" is repetition, the substantial repetition essential to representation. Derrida then appropriates three terms from Husserl's text; representation may be construed as "Vorstellung" (representation, or presentation, in general), "Vergegenwärtigung" ("reproductive repetition") and "Repräsentation" (in the sense of a substitute which refers to its real or ideal

object).⁶

Construed most generally, representation *is* "Vorstellung": 'putting or placing something' ["stellen"] 'before' ["vor"] consciousness. Such positing determines entities for consciousness, discerns "figures" from "grounds." (Such "figuring" is basic to *any* (human, infra-human or extra-human) consciousness aware of outer reality.) Essential to experience in general, "representation as 'Vorstellung'" is *a fortiori* necessary for the "effective use"⁷ of signs; thus, the "structure of representation" inheres everywhere, even within the silent process which translates pre-expressive, perceptual sense into "the realm of 'Logos.'"⁸

⁶ "Vorstellung" is the "presence" (though Derrida understands it as the "re-presence," any such "presence" must be "re-presented") of a percept, entity, object, word or idea to consciousness. When Derrida claims at the end of the essay that "[t]here never was any 'perception,'" it is assumed that consciousness of a percept requires recognition of a "formal identity" and, thus, the repetition essential to representation. In Section 44 of the "Fifth Logical Investigation" Husserl identifies thirteen types of "Vorstellung." "Vegegenwärtigung" seems related to the sixth definition. Husserl considers seeing an actual church and "seeing" it within memory or in a painting or drawing; in the latter case there is "an 'idea,' a presentation" of the church. (LI 654). J. Claude Evans (Strategies of Deconstruction, pp. 78-79) notes that the third sense of "Vorstellung," "Repräsentation," seems related to the eighth definition. Considering a photograph, Husserl sees that it "recalls an original" and is also "its representative, in a manner its surrogate." (LI 654). "Vorstellung," here, involves "the surrogative function of signs," the "structure of substitution" essential to the "sign in general." (23). Variants of "Vorstellung in general," "Vegegenwärtigung" suggests the reproductive *act* of representation, while "Repräsentation" suggests the substantial *fact* of representation; thus, an instance of representation is a performed materiality.

⁷ Derrida refers to an "'effective practice' of language," to using words "effectively," and to an "'effective' speech" (49, 50, 51); the first and last phrases refer to actual, exteriorized speech, while "effectively [using] words" may occur within one's own "sphere."

⁸ The "process" described in Section 124 of Ideas, a process through which a perceived ("meant as meant") sheet of white paper, a percept, is "expressed" and conceptualized within consciousness: "[A]fter first seizing upon something perceptually, we effect an explicating of the given....[I]f we have 'thought' or 'asserted,' 'This is white,' then a new stratum is co-present, unified with the

The "primordially repetitive structure" of representation comprehends "the distinction between 'effective' speech and the representation of speech." (51). Valorizing the "repetitive structure" of speech and voice, Derrida claims that "the difference between...simple presence and repetition has already begun to wear away" ["commencé à s'effacer," 'to efface itself']. Common to both "imaginary speech" and "effective speech," common to the presence of voice and the nonpresence of signs, the "repetitive structure" fuses "imaginary speech" and "effective speech," fuses voice with phenomena. Once so phenomenized, the voice is overwhelmed by "the sign in general," and "the veridical and the imaginary" merge: "'effective' language is just as imaginary as imaginary speech and...imaginary speech is just as effective as effective speech." (51). "Archicriture," composed of instants of the "sign in general," affirms that merger, that lack of distinction. Evidenced everywhere, the "sign in general" *is* reality/representation: "within the sign [in general] *the difference* [between reality and representation] *does not take place*." Through phonologocentric texts, the "history of metaphysics" attempts to maintain that difference, "to save presence and to reduce or derive the sign." (51).

Phonologocentrism "confirms...the very obliteration of the sign [in general]" and affirms a "a philosophy of intuition and presence," a "classical ontology." Derrida identifies "*the* philosophy and history of the West" as the maintenance of "intuition and presence," a maintenance which marks the sign "from its origin and to the core" with a "will to derivation or effacement." Against phonologocentrism, Derrida seeks "to eliminate a concept of signs whose whole

purely perceptual 'meant as meant.' Anything 'meant as meant,' anything meant in the noematic sense pertaining to any act...is *expressible by means of 'significations.'*...*Logical signification is an expression....*'Expression' is a distinctive form which allows for adapting to every 'sense' and raises it to the realm of 'Logos,' of the *conceptual*..." (I 295).

history and meaning belong to the adventure of the metaphysics of presence." Against an ontology which "obliterates" the "sign in general," Derrida recommends restoring "the original and nonderivative character of signs." He then refers, obscurely, to "the movement" of a "schema" which may exacerbate and exhaust phonologocentrism, a "movement" which "*happens inside language when the closure of metaphysics is announced.*" (52, my emphasis).

Derrida now introduces the term "deconstruction." With the "deconstruction" of the distinction between "real presence" and "presence in representation" (i.e. between presence without representation and presence as the "assured, consolidated, constituted *effect* of repetition and representation"), "a whole system of differences" is "solicited." Specifically, "the distinction between the represented and the representative...the signified and the signifier" is inverted, so that the represented/signified becomes *the effect* of the representative/signifier. Presence is representation: "Vorstellung" "depend[s] on the possibility of re-presentation....The presence-of-the-present is derived from repetition." (52).

There is, thus, a return to and revision of the "argument" for indication in one's own "sphere." The "inward speech" of soliloquy grants access to the "outside" of ideal objects, an "outside" "which is always 'in' consciousness," an intrasubjective "outside" which supports and perpetuates the "ethic of speech." Such inner speech requires, however, in order to be voiced, repetition, the repetition of words *already experienced* within an *intersubjective* "outside." The inner act of repetition requires outer fact: phonic/graphic substance makes *all* formal repetition possible. "The inside is the outside."⁹

⁹ An active outside renders the inside passive, so that -- in the cited words of Jabes and Merleau-Ponty -- "*Words choose the poet*" and "My own words take me by surprise and teach me what I think." (WD 64, 27). Seemingly having language, subjectivity is actually "had by" language, made through a language

Death in Presence

Derrida discerns death in presence, deduces death from presence: "To think of presence as the universal form of transcendental life...before my birth and after my death," to "imagine an absolute overthrow of the content of every possible experience" entails a "relationship with *my death* (my disappearance in general)...." (54). Awareness of that "relationship" effects an altered relation to the "metaphysics of presence."

Death results from repetition. The presence of the sign (of the signifier, of the signified and of the "irreal object")¹⁰ "depends entirely on...acts of repetition." Essentially repeated, the sign exists through a similarity which "*does not exist* in the world;" thus, the "being" or "hold" of ideality "is proportionate to the power of repetition," a "power" which exists in the world. Resulting from repeated signs, presence requires phonic/graphic substance, real "matter" in which ideal "form" inheres. Traditionally, the "metaphysics of presence" ignores that requirement.

There are two modes of presence: the "ideal 'ob-ject' which stands in front of, which is present before the act of repetition" and the temporal presence of consciousness "determined on the basis of the living present...the now as

which overcomes and claims consciousness: "To undergo an experience with something...means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us....To undergo an experience with language...means to let ourselves be properly concerned by the claim of language by... submitting to it." (Heidegger, On the Way to Language, p. 57). With the imposition of an autonomous and active "indicative web" or "network" of language, there may be within consciousness the installation of a "schizophrenic screen": "[W]e will suffer from this forced extraversion of all interiority, from this forced introjection of all exteriority....we have entered into a new form of schizophrenia....an over-proximity of all things...the absolute proximity to and total instantaneousness with things...[the subject] becomes a pure screen, a pure absorption and resorption surface of the influent network." (Baudrillard, The Ecstasy of Communication, pp. 26-27).

'source point.'" (53). Derrida then produces a paradox, for the "being" of ideality seems "one with the determination of being as presence."¹¹ Simply put, "being as presence" 'is,' and "being as ideality" 'is not,' for ideality involves a similarity which "does not exist in the world," yet because "pure ideality is always that of an ideal 'ob-ject'" "present" to a "present" consciousness, "being as ideality" also paradoxically is.

The produced paradox is "solved" through "death": the being of the ideal object requires one's own death. "The present alone is and ever will be," and to achieve the "presence of ideality," to achieve *the presence of an object which simultaneously is/is not*, I "must transgress...my own empirical existence, factuality, contingency, worldliness, etc." (54). In the *instant* of sending or receiving meaning, "beyond my empirical existence," "*the present is*." One's death thus "lurks in this determination of being as presence." Phonologocentrism, or "the sign in metaphysics," attempts to reduce "the visible and spatial as such" and eliminate "this relationship with death, which yet produced signification." Composing/composed of graphemes, the finitude of the mundane text (evidencing the "visibility and spatiality" which "destroy...self-presence"), reflects one's own finitude. Such a "death," however, remains a tendency. Unable to simply, totally leave the "metaphysics of presence," one still reads and writes inscriptions which impose presence, yet "death" now "lurks" within all inscription, prompting an Other presence.

Altered States

"A relationship to presence in general" requires "my disappearance in general."¹² "Presence in general" refers to the voiced meanings of phonologocentric texts. Wrought by certain authorities, such meanings fuse the two modes of presence: the spatial presence of the ideal object and the temporal

presence of the subject who wrote. Paradoxically, in order to hear/understand the meaning of writing, it is necessary for one to pass through a "generalized disappearance." Through the experience of sending/receiving meaning, subjective consciousness "dies" and is altered, found out there, in the letters it writes or reads. At the moment of writing/reading meaning, "[t]he appearing of the / to itself is...a relation with its own possible disappearance."

One's "disappearance in general" becomes the condition for the presence of an altered transcendental consciousness. (35). Against a transcendental consciousness which "could be freely developed in the service of truth without being deformed by some real contact," contact with the mundane text's finitude reflects the finitude of consciousness. (12). One cannot move (with Husserl, with philosophy generally) from the "*I am* to the determination of my being as *res cogitans*," and "*I am immortal* is an impossible proposition." Unlike an infinite, constituting transcendental consciousness, an altered, transcendental consciousness is constituted through the always limited and finite "process of death at work in signs."

The necessary condition for all ideality is repetition, a "power of pure repetition." The essay fuses that "power" with another "power" which "liberates" "imaginative reproduction" from "empirical perception." (55). In Ideas Husserl considers both imagination and memory "under the general concept of 'representation' ('*Vergegenwärtigung*')," a "reproductive repetition" which may function in the absence of actual perception, thus inducing "a purely fictitious object." Husserl considers memory thetic (as it always refers to a particular experience), while imagination may develop freely, beyond thetic memory, beyond "empirical perception." All imagination still requires, for its "material," percepts within memory. Misreading Husserl, Derrida suggests a fusion of memory and imagination.

In Section 111 of Ideas Husserl describes imagination as a "neutralizing operation" which "modifies a positional re-presentation...which is memory." (I 260). Derrida asserts that both imagination and memory require a "primordial structure of repetition," a "structure" also necessary for linguistic signs. Insofar as any act of imagination or memory involves repetition, there is a certain "language" intrinsic to such acts. With memory, imagination and perception, the language of "archi ecriture" overwhelms "empirical perception," so that: "there never was any perception." (103). The passage through death has power: perception, imagination and language converge. Through such convergence, there is no perception.

"Wrought By Fiction"

Fully realized, that convergence has consequences: it renders the inner speech of "solitary mental life" idle, unreal. The words of "communicative speech" also become unreal. Through such "unrealities," consciousness realizes its phonic /graphic echo/reflection within experienced reality per se. No longer constituting, consciousness is *altered, found out in the world*.

Against fiction, Husserl's text asserts the reality of a certain inner speech; Derrida thus finds the "First Investigation" "disconcerting." (56). In Section 8 of the "First Investigation" ["Expressions in Solitary Life"] an instance of soliloquy is given: "'You have gone wrong, you can't go on like that;'" Husserl claims that "there is no speech in such cases...one merely conceives of oneself as speaking and communicating." Words in "communicative speech" serve as signs for a speaker's mental states; such words are indicative. Not oriented to an other, the inner words of soliloquy are not indicative; they are only imagined and "fictitious." Husserl thus asserts that "inner speech" is unreal, idle. Misreading Husserl, Derrida insists that "a purely expressive and non-communicative discourse can

effectively take place in 'solitary mental life.' (56). Derrida's assertion follows from focus on the final sentences of Section 8: "In a monologue words can perform no function of indicating mental acts, since such indication would there be quite purposeless. For the acts in question are themselves experienced by us at that very moment." Glossing Husserl, Derrida then distinguishes between two modes of inner speech: "inside the pure interior...certain kinds of speech can effectively take place," while other kinds of feigned, "communicative" speech "would remain purely *fictitious*...." (56). The former "acts" would involve "pure expressions" immediately present to consciousness, while the latter "speech" would be merely imagined. If, as Derrida insists, "every sign whatever is of an originally repetitive structure" and if "[t]he sign is originally wrought by fiction,"¹⁰ then the distinction between an "effective" inner speech and a "fictitious" inner speech is "threatened." Originally fictive and repetitive, the sign ("the sign in general") generates a (con)fusion of inner and outer realms, for "there is no sure criterion by which to distinguish an outward language from an inner language...." (56). With "the hypothesis of an inward language," a related (con)fusion occurs, for "there is no sure criterion by which to distinguish...an effective language from a fictitious language."

Derrida thus considers "inner speech" "fictitious," wrought through "acts of indicative communication...between the self taken as other and the self taken as self..." (56). The voidance of inner speech suggests that instances of "solitary mental life" already inhere within outer speech: that which is "there" is already "heard," already "here." Through such "heard" instances, the purpose of

¹⁰ Abruptly, Derrida affirms: "*The sign is originally wrought by fiction*," though no argument leads to the claim. Perhaps the "fictitious origin" of the sign follows from the formal identities of the signifier and of the signified, ideal similarities which "*do not exist* in the world." (52). Derrida's affirmation would then more accurately be: "The sign is originally wrought by ideality."

expressive subjectivity is always already fulfilled, ended, already wrought.

Avoiding a consciousness so wrought, Husserl assumes, within inner speech, a distinction between "the subject as he is in his effective experience" and "the subject as he represents himself." (57). To maintain that distinction, Husserl "must suppose a difference" which does take place. Derrida asserts that "the primordial structure of repetition" inheres in "all acts of signification," so that "effective speech" and "self-representation" merge. From that merger, objectivity and subjectivity occur, simultaneously, with and within the same worldly medium.

Chapter Five

"The self-presence of experience must be produced in the present taken as a now." (59). Indication, involving "psychic motivation" from one actually experienced thing to another surmised object or state of affairs, entails time and is opposed to that "now." For Husserl, contingent mental acts within one's own "sphere" are punctual and do not involve indication, implying an absence of time. Within the subjective "now" of meaning, subjective act and objective content merge. Against the time of indication, there is a *unity* of thought and consciousness. Immediately present, the act/signifier *is* the content/signified, and the instant of presence does not take time. In Section 8 of the "First Investigation" Husserl writes: "In a monologue words can perform no function of indicating the existence of mental acts, since such indication would there be quite purposeless. For the acts in question are experienced by us at that very moment ['im selben Augenblick']." Characterizing the "now" of that moment at the close of the previous chapter, Derrida claims that "the present of self-presence would be as indivisible as the *blink of an eye*." Throughout "Signs and the Blink of an Eye" Derrida complicates the "indivisible present," "closing" any instantaneously open eye/I: "There is duration to the this blink, and it closes the eye." (65).¹

¹ The English translation of "clin d'oeil" ["blink of an eye"] evokes the familiar homonym I/eye. Though the French cannot pun on 'eye' and 'I,' reference to the human eye marks subjectivity. As Lacan remarked in "Book I" of The Seminar: "The eye here is, as so often, symbolic of the subject." (S I 80).

Now, Here

"Signs and the Blink of an Eye" opens with an acknowledged presupposition: "the force" of Derrida's demonstration "presupposes the instant as a point." (60). That "instant" or "point" seems confirmed by Husserl's text, as Derrida translates "Augenblick" ('moment of the eye,' 'glance') with "instant," an instant "as indivisible as the blink of eye." Actually, Husserl consistently notes the temporal, "real" character of contingent mental acts; meanings per se (the ideal objects which such acts apprehend) are omni-temporal and "irreal."

Another, more covert presupposition orients the chapter. Though "Augenblick" describes the immediacy of ideal objects to consciousness, Derrida implicitly shifts the reference of "Augenblick" from the presence of such objects to "self-presence," i.e. from static, irreal objects to the temporal and subjective consciousness which apprehends those objects. By implication, Derrida attributes to Husserl the difficult thesis of a voice/consciousness which apprehends meaning instantaneously (and instantaneously apprehends that instantaneous apprehension, a consciousness which can reflect (on) itself and so "ground" itself *ad infinitum*, a reflexive consciousness which does not "take time"): "self-presence must be produced in the undivided unity of a temporal present...." (60). Derrida then relates such "self-presence" to an absence of signs: "[s]uch a perception...of self by self in presence would be the case where 'signification' in general could not occur." Void of signification, the instant of "self-presence" entails "*nonsignification*." Derrida strategically conflates "nonsignification" with Husserl's "principle of principles,"

claiming that the phenomenological notion of "primordial intuition" is "the experience of the absence and uselessness of signs."²

"Signs and the Blink of an Eye" focuses on Husserl's Phenomenology of Inner Time Consciousness, a dense text describing "the inside of time." Derrida first terms Husserl's analysis of time "admirable," noting that Husserl did "break with a concept of time inherited from Aristotle," that he recognized that "no now can be isolated as a pure instant," and that his analysis reveals how each "instant" is actually extended, involving an "irreducible spreading-out" into the past (by "retentions") and the future (by "protentions").

After acknowledging that Husserl's text *does* demonstrate that no instant is simply and punctually "for-itself," Derrida cites passages which, in contrast, convey adherence to a punctual "here" and "now." In a note to the chapter Derrida cites passages from Husserl's text which contrast "intuitive acts and contents" with

² Derrida's characterization of "intuition" requires comment. In a sense, it is not incorrect to claim that Husserl's notion of intuition ("the principle of principles") implies an *absence* of signs. Derrida, however, claims that intuition also evidences the "uselessness" of signs, implying that intuition excludes signs. In Section 24 of Ideas Husserl distinguishes between "theory" and "originary data." The *statements* composing elementary color-theory, for example, require signs, but the *experiences* which provide "originary data" and "intuitive backing" for such statements are not per se significative. One can understand that 'blue is the complementary of yellow' and that 'blue and yellow together yield green,' but such statements lack "intuitive backing" unless visual experience authenticates them. Intuition is that mode of consciousness through which phenomena is apprehended, providing access to the intentional correlates of the real or irreal objects which certain signs stand for. When Derrida describes Husserl's "principle of principles" as "the presence of sense to a full and primordial intuition" (5), he confuses such access with the objects of meaning per se. Though a *moment* of intuition per se may be void of signification, such moments are essential, providing "intuitive backing" for the authentic use of signs.

"significative acts and contents." First, he cites from The Phenomenology of Inner Time Consciousness; Husserl claims that significative or symbolic representation "only represents the object voidly...by means of signs or images." Next, Derrida cites from Section 43 of Ideas; Husserl asserts: "between perception on the one hand and...symbolic representation by means of images or signs...there exists an unsurmountable eidetic difference."³ Such passages suggest an opposition between intuition and signification, that intuition involves a punctual presence or "authenticating perception" which eludes or excludes signification.

Whatever its innovations, Husserl's description of time remains "thought and described on the basis of the self-identity of now as point, as a 'source-point.'" (61). That "basis" or "point" is *the time in which Husserl wrote*. "The self-identity of the now as point" does *not* refer to the content of Husserl's analysis, but to the very form (phonologocentric prose) which conveys that content. Conveyed through mundane writing, the phenomenological method requires a "source point," "the basis" on which Husserl's "self-presence" wrote (of) time.

A sentence stresses that time: "In phenomenology, the idea of primordial presence...of 'beginning,' 'absolute beginning' or *principium*, always refers back

³ In the note [#1] Derrida tellingly cites a sentence from the next paragraph of Section 43: "We collapse into nonsense when...we completely mix up these modes of presentation with their essentially different constructions." (61). Though Husserl's sentence does *not* refer to the distinction between "perception" and "symbolic representation," Derrida's juxtaposition suggests that it does. Through Derrida's essay, the "two modes of presentations" which Husserl *seems* to refer to ["perception" and "symbolic representation"] *do* "collapse," i.e. the presence of authenticating perception is fused with the absence of symbolic representation.

to this 'source-point.'" (62). Derrida then offers a collation of passages which attest to a temporal presence, "a nondisplaceable center, an eye or living core, the punctuality of the real now." First, from Section 10 of ITC: the "'modes of...an immanent temporal object have a beginning...a source-point.'" Then from Sections 11 and 16: "'the now apprehension is...the nucleus of a comet's tail of retentions,'" and "'a punctual phase is actually present.'" Finally, Derrida quotes from Section 81 of Ideas: "'The actual now is necessarily something punctual and remains so...a form that persists through continuous change of matter.'" Concluding, he refers back to the last two sentences of Section 8 of the "First Investigation" ["In a monologue words can perform no function of indicating the existence of mental acts, since such indication would there be quite purposeless. For the acts in question are themselves experienced by us at that very moment"] and claims that the "actual now," "punctual phase," "source-point" and "now-apprehension" all derive from the "'im selben Augenblick' we began with." (62).

Citing texts, Derrida produces a target, an "eye": "the unity of a temporal present." (60). The determined "source-point" *is* "self-presence," a mode of presence described in the "Introduction" as "the proximity of the temporal present which gives the clear and present intuition of the object its form....self-presence in consciousness." Such presence is subjective and temporal: it is one's own presence of mind in time. Such presence, which "'persists through a continuous change of matter,'" *is* the subjective certainty of the author(ity) who produces phonologocentric prose. The "eye" of Derrida's target, then, is an intrasubjective

"source-point" void of signification, *the* "basis" on which phonologocentric, philosophical discourse is produced: "the present-now...defines the very element of philosophical thought, it is *evidence* itself, conscious thought itself...." (62). Against Husserl's "self-presence," Derrida recommends "a meditation on nonpresence" which "remove[s] every possible *security* and *ground* from discourse...." Such a "meditation" would "get at the core of consciousness" by appreciating "a region that lies elsewhere than philosophy...."(62).⁴

⁴ In "Differance" Derrida claims: "The questioning of the authority of consciousness is...always differential." (149). A "meditation on nonpresence" which questions consciousness allows and follows "the movement of differance," an essentially specular, spatial "movement" which displaces and displays consciousness.

In relation to indication, "differance" suggests the gap or difference between indicator and indicated, a space wherein productive, "writerly reading" may occur. Through that space, all is essentially written or scripted in a proto-writing which always is elsewhere, as "differance" places consciousness out on lines which go off to a future and/or back to a past. Along such lines, consciousness is not "now," not "here." In lieu of the present, consciousness attends to a past which will be in the future and a future which was in the past. Derrida thus contrasts Husserl's understanding of time with Freud's. Husserl writes: "'It is certainly an absurdity to speak of a content of which we are 'unconscious,' one which we are conscious of only later.'" (63). For Husserl consciousness entails a present "being-conscious;" insofar as any object of consciousness always occurs in the present, it is absurd to posit unconscious objects which elude the intentionality of consciousness. Freud's theory of psychic repression requires that there be unconscious content which eludes the presence of intentional consciousness. Beginning the essay "The Unconscious," Freud writes: "the essence of the process of repression lies, not in putting an end to, in annihilating, the idea which represents an instinct, but in preventing it from becoming conscious." (OM 167). Latent until realized, unconscious contents remain within the general psychical system, affecting the present, intentional consciousness which is only part of that system. Derrida's mention of Freud suggests an appreciation of a time wholly other than the "instant," the traditional time of philosophy.

Not Now, Not Here

Though Husserl's adherence to "self-presence" is stressed, Derrida soon discerns another strain within Husserl's text, and the "simple self-identity of the present" is solicited, problematized. Derrida claims that ITC "demonstrates and confirms throughout the irreducibility of re-presentation to presentative perception...." (64).

Husserl's analysis of internal time consciousness accounts for our consciousness of temporal, immanent "objects." Husserl considers a melody: listening, we in fact hear "only the particular tone which is actually present." (TC 278).⁵ How is the complete melody constituted out of discrete, successive tones? Husserl claims that constitution of the melody derives from the functioning of memory and expectation: "that the expired part of the melody is objective to me is due...to memory, and it is due to expectation which looks ahead that, on encountering the tone actually sounding, I assume that there will be more of the melody." (TC 278).

Husserl's analysis continues: "We cannot rest satisfied with this explanation...for everything said until now depends on the individual tone." (TC 278). Memory and expectation both presuppose individual tones, and Husserl seeks to determine the constitution of such tones. Attending to a single tone as temporal, immanent object, Husserl notes its "ever new now," though "the tone actually

⁵ Citations from Husserl's text in the next two paragraphs are from a shorter version of The Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness, "The Lectures on Internal Time Consciousness from the Year 1905" ["TC"].

preceding is changing into something past." How, while "changing into something past," is the identity of the experienced tone maintained? Husserl claims that the objectivity of the enduring tone is constituted in "an act-continuum which in part is memory, in the smallest punctual part is perception, and in a more extensive part expectation." (TC 278). He then identifies three traits necessary for the constitution of any temporal, immanent object: "primal impression," "protention" and "retention." The first term refers to the immediate consciousness of a tone *now*. "Protention" refers to the expected sound of a note before that note is actually heard. "Protention" proceeds, on the basis of the note which is present, to a note which is expected to follow. The expectancy of the anticipated note is not derived from a mental act within consciousness; it is intrinsic to the "ever new" temporal object *per se*. "Retention" refers to the retained sound of a note after that note has actually been heard. Unlike protention (which may have as its objects notes which are intended but which were not intuited), retention requires heard, retained notes. Regarding any consciousness of a "tone now," Husserl writes: "this consciousness is engaged in continuous alteration. The actual tonal now is constantly changed into something that has been...." (TC 280). The "primal impression" or "punctual phase" of the "tone now" is therefore "an ideal limit, something abstract, which cannot be anything for itself." Husserl then concludes that the "primal impression" cannot be maintained by consciousness; it is ideal.

Radicalized by Derrida, Husserl's description of internal time consciousness informs the related notions of "différance" and "trace." Derrida first notes Husserl's

description of "primary remembrance." He cites from Section 17 of ITC: "'if we call perception the act in which all 'origination' lies...then *primary remembrance is perception*. For only in primary remembrance do we see what is past.'" (64). Throughout ITC Husserl distinguishes between "primary remembrance" and "secondary remembrance." "Secondary Remembrance" refers to the reproduction of a past presence through active recollection; such remembrance occurs through an intentional, imaginative act. Since "it pertains to the essence of time...that...it is consciousness of what has just been," any "now" is actually always of what has just passed. "Primary remembrance" pertains to that immediate past which is necessary for any "now." Be it secondary or primary, remembrance overwhelms the "source-point," the authorial "now."

Citing Husserl, Derrida notes "a continual transition from perception to primary remembrance": "'perception and non-perception continually pass over into one another.'" (65). Against a simple adherence to presence, Husserl's text now evidences the "continuity of the now and the not-now, perception and nonperception." (65). Certain consequences follow from that continuity: "As soon as we admit this continuity of the now and the not-now...we admit the other into the self-identity of the 'Augenblick;' nonpresence and nonevidence are admitted into the *blink of the instant*." Then, in an apparent non-sequitur, Derrida asserts: "There is duration to the blink, and it closes the eye." (65). "Duration," here, refers to the fact that apprehension of the "now" involves "a comet's tail of retentions," "traces" which are not "now" one's own. The "now" -- supposed source of expression -- is not, as

"traces" of a retained past and an expected future occur, enough to close the eye/I.

From "Differance" to "Trace"

Derrida begins to thematize an other, essentially non-phonetic writing. It is based on indication: a basis which is always *out there*.⁶ Radicalizing Husserl's notions of the retention and protention which constitute any object "now" present to consciousness, Derrida notes a "nonpresence and otherness." Any object "now" present requires repetition, as consciousness of that object involves a voice which, in order to be heard/understood, necessarily repeats signs. Prior to the voice, given through the mundane matrix into which each consciousness is "thrown," such signs are originally *not* of one's own "sphere." The general otherness or alterity of signs is founded on the "trace"⁷: "the possibility of re-petition in its most

⁶ Unlike expression, indication occurs in the world. Husserl describes the "essence of indication": "A thing is only properly an indication if and where it in fact serves to indicate something to some thinking being....certain objects or states of affairs *of whose reality someone has actual knowledge* indicate...*the reality of certain other objects or states of affairs*, in the sense that...*belief in the reality of the one is experienced...as motivating a belief or surmise in the existence of the other.*" (LI 270). Taking that description fully, all experienced phenomena ["objects and states of affairs"] are potentially indicative, things which may indicate "the reality of certain other objects or states of affairs." Based in/on an experience, the indicative sign is always already there, transcendent to consciousness.

⁷ "Trace" terms the retentions and protentions which constitute any "now;" "trace" is also the basis for any past or future object. The term ("trace") occurs throughout Derrida's early essay on Levinas, "Violence and Metaphysics," and refers to a "future," a "beyond" which is "*present* at the heart of experience": "present not as total presence but as a *trace*." (WD 95). Throughout "Differance," the temporal aspect of "trace" is stressed: "trace" "relates no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past...[constituting] what is called the

general form," a repetition which divides "the pure actuality of the now," a repetition which closes one's eye.

In Of Grammatology "trace" is identified with "differance": "*The (pure) trace is differance.*" Like "differance," the "pure trace" is an *a priori* condition for the presentation of any object "now": "It [differance/pure trace] does not depend on any sensible plenitude....It is...the condition of such a plenitude." (G 62). The trace may remain "pure" or, through the *detour* of a medium, become mundane, become phonic/graphic. Spoken or written (made mundane), the trace evidences "the arbitrariness of the sign" (the arbitrary relation of signifier and signified), an arbitrariness which is necessarily "instituted" (established by force, maintained through convention) and is "unthinkable before the possibility of writing" and its "spatial *distribution* of signs." (G 44). The instituted, mundane "trace" is essentially "immotivated;" it has no "'natural attachment' to the signified within reality." (G 46). Claiming that "the rupture of 'natural attachment' puts in question the idea of naturalness rather than that of attachment," Derrida then refers to "the framework of the instituted [mundane] trace" as "the possibility common to all systems of signification" and claims that "grammatology," as "science of the immotivation of the trace," will "give us the assured means of broaching the de-construction of *the greatest totality* -- the concept of the *episteme* and logocentric metaphysics...." (G

present...." (143).

46).⁸

There before (one's own) experience, the "trace" displaces the phenomenological "principle of principles: "Such a trace is...more 'primordial' than what is phenomenologically primordial." (67). Subsuming "narrow and derivative writing," the "trace" is a pervasive, *experiential writing*: experience writing (of) experience. Found in an indicative matrix which is always transcendent to consciousness, "this trace or difference" "prevents us from...a simple self-identity." (68).⁹

Though the two terms are often fused, "difference" is the source of the "trace." (It is) the "*movement* of difference" (that) is the "trace." Prefacing the essay "Difference," Derrida claims that "difference" is "neither a *word* nor a *concept*." (130). It is the condition for "a writing within [mundane] writing," a condition which "precedes and sets up the opposition between passivity and activity." Derrida notes that the '-ance' ending of "difference" evokes the "middle voice," the mood of verbs

⁸ Apropos of such "broaching," one author writes succinctly of "Derrida's anti-epistemology" and a "structure of traces...located in the transcendental space that legitimates (or, rather, delegitimizes) knowledge." (Pavel, *The Feud of Language*, pp. 72). Like "difference," the "pure trace" seems the means of "a procedure that would remove every possible *security* and *ground* from discourse," a procedure that becomes "a meditation on nonpresence." (62-3). Another author describes "trace" as "the *minimal structure* required for the existence of any difference... any relation to alterity." (Gasché, *The Tain of the Mirror*, p. 139) Contrary to Gasché's claim that Derrida's work does not imply an aesthetic valuation of experience in general, "trace" or "archi ecriture" *can* effect the "fluidization...of all oppositions" and a "transcendental poetry."

⁹ The trace makes "primordial" "the nonself-identity of presence." (68). The final two chapters of the essay describe the impossibility of "*simple* self-identity" with and within "trace" or "archi ecriture."

"undecided between active and passive." (137).¹⁰ Source of "passivity and activity," "differance" is the condition for experience in general, a condition which remains silent, primarily seen.¹¹

Though Derrida terms "differance" the "becoming-spatial" of time and the "becoming-temporal" of space (so that "protowriting, prototrace or differance...(is) (both) spacing (and) temporalizing"), the introductory paragraphs of "Differance" stress the *spatial* aspect of "differance." For example: there is the "silent writing of its a" which "*points out* the irreducibility of temporalizing" and "refers to...the origin or production of differences," an "origin" whose "locus or operation will therefore be *seen*" within "the alphabet and most of the *speculations* that have concerned themselves with it [the alphabet]," "speculations" to be viewed and consumed through "a gross spelling mistake" which "we can always erase or lessen" but which "remains purely graphic...written or read," a "silent mark," "a tacit monument," a "pyramidal silence." (129-133, my emphases). Though the 'a' of "differance" *indicates* the differing/deferring which makes speech possible and "the difference between two phonemes which enables them to exist and operate" (a

¹⁰ Greek and Latin verbs in the "middle voice" assert that the subject does something and, in the process, is also affected; for example, the Greek "luei ton hippon" is 'he unties the horse,' while the "middle voice" of "luetai tone hippon" is 'he unties the horse and by doing so affects himself.' The "middle voice" involves auto-affection and, in French, reflexive verbs such as "je me lave" ('I wash myself') "tu te taire" ('You silence yourself') are based on that voice. "Differance," evoking the "middle voice," suggests an "auto-affection" which written philosophy represses: "philosophy has perhaps commenced by distributing the middle voice...into the active and passive voice, and has itself been constituted in this repression." (137).

¹¹ Though Derrida terms "differance" the "becoming-spatial" of time and the "becoming

difference which "itself remains inaudible") the visible trait ('a') of "differance" refers to the differences evident in all modes of "writing": "cinematography, choreography...pictorial, musical, sculptural 'writing'...athletic writing...military or political writing...." (G 9). Finally written and read,¹² "differance" is the generative principle of an expanded semiosis.

Seen, the 'a' of "differance" (as signifier/indicator, as experienced thing) thus *indicates* the non-word and non-concept "differance," source of a primary "trace" manifest throughout phenomena. Unpronounceable in French, the purely graphic distinction between "differance" and "difference" "cannot be heard" ["entendre"] and is "also beyond the order of understanding," beyond intentional consciousness.¹³

¹² Introducing the speech (of) "Differance," Derrida refers to his textual support: he turns to the basis of his "talk": "this will refer irreducibly to a *written text*, a text governing my talk, a text that I keep in front of me, that I will read and toward which I shall try to lead your hands and eyes." He then gives an apt formulation of his practice: "We cannot refrain here from going by way of a written text, from ordering ourselves by the disorder that is produced therein -- and this is what matters to me first of all." (133).

¹³ Eluding hearing/understanding, indicating the mundane, indicative matrix, the 'a' of "differance" *shows* "the process of death at work in signs." Derrida explicitly aligns that "silent a" with death through reference to Hegel's comparison of a sign's sensory aspect to an Egyptian pyramid: "The 'a' of differance...is not heard; it remains silent, secret and discreet, like a tomb." (132). Source of speculation, the 'a' of "differance" *indicates* one way of deconstructive practice, a way which "has the effect, if not the mission, of liberating repressed '*jouissance*....'" (SI 56). In relation to writing readings of phonologocentric texts, attention to/accentuation of "differance" mines "death" and "disorder" from those texts: "It [the a of differance] is a tomb that (provided one knows how to decipher its legend) is not far from signalling the death of the king." (132). "The death of the king," the severing of the phonologocentric text from its author's ["king's"] intentions, results from the abysmal aspect of the "double-gesture" which characterizes "deconstruction": "to change terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion...brutally placing oneself outside...affirming an absolute break...." (M 135).

Showing that "[t]here is no purely and strictly phonetic writing," "differance" allows "a blind tactics" with and within textual, graphic *phenomena* ("(punctuation, spacing, etc.)") which survive beyond an author's voice/consciousness.

"Differance" generates speculation: it seems (of) a mirror. The locus of "differance" remains *seen* ("it is written or read"). In sight of a mirror, there is a merging of active seer and passive seen; "differance" (with its middle voice) marks the timespace of such mergers. As such, "differance" seems the mirroring surface which Lacan describes in "The Freudian Thing": "the smooth surface of death, the quasi-mystical limit of the most rational discourse in the world...." (E 124). Generating the necessarily unique retentions and protentions which constitute mergers of seer and seen, "differance" marks the supra-rational and idiosyncratic basis of any "rational discourse," a *desire* for merger which funds all discourse.

"Neither word nor concept," "differance" seems a mood: the instant of interest, of cathexis, the moment when one is taken with some object, so that the object becomes indicative, becomes a thing. Generating "traces" (protentions and retentions which extend before and beyond the object "now"), "differance" *lets speculation happen*, and a "charge" changes the tain of phenomena into meaning.¹⁴

¹⁴ "Differance" might be described as a moment of passion, the moment when consciousness is 'moved' by some 'thing.' One author describes passion as "a pleasure that we no longer perceive," an impassioned pleasure which is "at the origin of thought" and describes "differance" as "the grounding of meaning" which (somehow) implies "the absence of ground," so that "differance" is "its own differance." (Nancy, "Elliptical Sense," in Derrida: A Critical Reader, p. 37) Nancy continues: "If meaning had a ground, if it did not (have to) call and name itself, it

An "approximate semantic analysis" of "differance" yields the directions of its charge. The French verb "différer" (to differ), derived from the Latin "differre," has two related senses. There is the sense of postponement, a sense conveyed by the English verb 'to defer': "the action of postponing until later...the taking account of time...in an operation that implies an economic reckoning." Derrida appends to "postponement" a series of associated terms: "a detour, a respite, a delay, a reserve, a representation" and construes those terms as "temporalizing": "'To differ' in this sense is to temporalize, to resort, consciously or unconsciously, to the temporal and temporalizing mediation of a detour that suspends the accomplishment or fulfillment of 'desire' or 'will'...." The sentence continues: "...or carries desire or will out in a way that tempers their effect." (136). Derrida's qualification suggests terms from Freud's metapsychology: the "primary processes" of desire are postponed, tempered through the "secondary processes" of language, and the temporalizing "detour" through the linguistic medium is a "binding," culturalizing course. Though Derrida cites Freud ("the long indirect road to pleasure" mentioned in Beyond the Pleasure Principle), "differance" generally suggests an avoidance of unpleasure and a sustained "postponement" of desire/will, so that desire/will simply *suspends* all relation to present intuition.

"Differance" as "temporalizing...detour" has two implications. (i) A "detour"

would have no more meaning than the immanence of water in water....Differance is... appeal, request, seduction, imploring, supplication. Differance is passion." ("Elliptical Sense," 39). "Differance" starts motivated mentation; differance is *curiosity*.

requires a medium wherein that detour occurs, and one medium is, frequently, mundane writing. Such writing, as signs for words pronounced by the voice, remains phonologocentric. Nevertheless, within "narrow and derivative" writing the 'a' of "differance" appears, re-routing writing in other directions. "Differance," prompting recourse to the detour of mundane writing, also prompts, *within mundane writing*, "archi ecriture" an end of mundane writing. (ii) Desire/will informs "vouloir-dire" ('want-to-say'). Resorting to a "temporalizing...detour" suspends the relation of desire or will to an object. Fulfillment of a meaning-intention by intuition secures the meaning-fullness of an initially indicative sign, charging that sign with meaning, changing it into an expression. Indications, in contrast, function without "insight," without authenticating intuitions. Involvement with the detour of mundane writing (a species of indication) marks a suspension of intuition, so that "vouloir-dire" fails to say/attain what it wants to say/attain. As the domain of writing is an "indicative web," writing marks a severance of intuition and language, so that language, as writing, functions without "insight." The "nonword" "differance" thus *indicates* an "indicative web," a space of suspended time.

There is also the spatial sense of "difference," a sense conveyed by the English verb 'to differ,' to be different than and thus discernable from. Exaggerating Saussure's observation that "in language there are only differences *without positive terms*," Derrida describes language as a "network of oppositions." "Differance" thus indicates the spatial differences, the differing, at work within the linguistic "network": "interval, distance, *spacing* occur among the different elements and occur actively,

dynamically...with a certain perseverance in repetition." (137). Though the site of "differance" is spatial, sight of that site temporalizes, takes and makes time. Thus, "differance" "(is) (both) spacing (and) temporalizing." (143). Joining time and space, "differance" indicates the "*polemos*" of space and time in language, on language, a "war" within language which wears language out.

The two senses of "differance" term *a priori* conditions necessary for experience and cognition in general. Awareness of any object entails a space distinct from (differing from) that object's space, a space wherein the object is re-presented. Awareness of any object entails a time distinct from (deferring from) that object's time, a time wherein the object is re-presented. Through "differance," there is a spacetime wherein the object is translated, mediated by retentions and protentions. Source of a curious world, the spacetime of "differance" spreads "traces" out (the "movement of differance"), allowing and alloying an essentially personal philosophy. Seamed by "differance," "experience in general" becomes material (for that) philosophy.¹⁵

¹⁵ Derrida's essay indicates the possibility of a philosophical *practice* which would not make the detour through "narrow and derivative" writing. Such a practice would evidence two traits: i) spontaneity ii) the "personal education" of each consciousness engaged in that practice. (The first trait is mentioned in Antonio Gramsci's Prison Notebooks: "It is essential to destroy the wide-spread prejudice that philosophy is a strange and difficult thing just because it is the specific intellectual activity of a particular category of specialists or of professional and systematic philosophers. It must first be shown that all men are 'philosophers,' by defining the limits and characteristics of the 'spontaneous philosophy' which is proper to everybody." (Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, p. 323) The second trait involves a "crisis" which Husserl describes in Part III of The Crisis of European Sciences: "More and more a skeptical mood spread which crippled from the inside...philosophical energy. The history of philosophy is substituted for

"Lit et Rature"

Throughout Chapter Five, Derrida stresses the role of retention in the constitution of the present: "the presence of the present is...the bending-back of a return...the movement of repetition...." (68). With the "bending back of a return," consciousness *signs* present time, and the "now" is an achievement, an effect realized through retained instances of "the sign in general." Whatever its object, consciousness of time requires a retained "now," a signed "now." The movement of retention, the movement *of the past in the present*, "is irreducible in presence or in self-presence." As the past signs the present, and the source of "the sign in general" is the indicative matrix into which each consciousness is "thrown," the role of retention remains other than consciousness. "Older than presence," (t)here before presence, retention "procures for [presence] its openness." The role of retention constitutes, "opens" and alters consciousness. Prior to "the presence of the present," "traces" of retention constantly detain self-presence and "prevent...simple self-identity 'im selben Augenblick.'" As the presence of consciousness is constituted through retentional "traces," Husserl's (attempted) "reduction to the monadic sphere of ownness" is impossible, "stricken" with "traces" of passed time.

Derrida's stress on retention relates to his interest in "that writing which is

philosophy, or philosophy becomes a personal world-view....philosophy can exercise no other function at all for humanity than that of outlining a world-picture appropriate to one's individuality, as the summation of one's personal education." (Cr 196).

called literary."¹⁶ Literature "works" through the assignment of signs to a time which has passed, through the "design" (the presentation, the organization, the "work made") of a past which, through the "movement of difference," *was actually always already signed*. Designed, wrought through the "now" of the work, literature actually de-signs and de-fuses the "movement of difference" which was initially at work, before mundane writing, in experience per se.¹⁷ Literature thus involves *choice, voiced* retentions which, in the instant of the writing, were always already entwined with myriad other "traces." Derrida suggests, beyond mundane writing, an experiential literature. Found in experience through the "movement of difference," such literature becomes "lit et rature," sending consciousness to dream and erasure. Construing "difference" as psychical energy and the "movement of difference" as one's own spacetime displaced from consciousness and displayed in the indicative matrix, there is a scene. "Difference" circulates within the ambit of one's own "sphere" and forms, from that "sphere," a circuit with the world, a seamed scene, a merger.

Despite and to spite the nonpresence of that scene, there is also, within

¹⁶ In "The Time of a Thesis" Derrida notes that his "most constant interest, coming even before my philosophical interest...if this is possible, has been directed towards literature, towards that writing which is called literary." He then asks, "What is literature. And first of all what is it 'to write'? How is it that the fact of writing can disturb the very question 'what is?' and even 'what does it mean?'" (TT 37).

¹⁷ Apropos of the experience of mundane writing, Derrida in Of Grammatology notes that Rousseau in the Confessions explains "how he became writer." Rousseau "describes the passage to writing as a restoration, by a certain absence and by a sort of calculated effacement, of presence disappointed of itself in speech. To write is indeed the only way of keeping or recapturing speech...." (G 142).

presence, protention. Retention involves "traces" retained from experience. Protention, being futural, cannot be based in experience only; the protentional "trace" (involving anticipation, expectation) requires imagination, an imagination which constitutes ideality. Through a confluence of empirical (retentional) "traces" and ideal (protentional) "traces," *presence returns*, waking us up.

Finally, closing "Signs and the Blink of an Eye," Derrida refers to the difference between "the past present" and "the living present" as a "dialectic in every sense of the term." By "'dialectic' -- in every sense of the term" Derrida suggests 'dialectic' as logical argumentation and (through the etymology of the term [Gk. "dialegethai," 'to converse']) 'dialectic' as a conversation, a questioning and answering, *within* the "auto-affection" of one's own "sphere." More basically, 'dialectic' is related to the Greek verb "legein," 'to gather,' so that 'dialectic' may be understood as a dual, simultaneous *gathering*. Within "auto-affection,"¹⁸ the difference between the maintained, "living present" and the retentional past or

¹⁸ Derrida first introduces "auto-affection" through a long, rhetorical question: "Is not the concept of pure solitude ...*undermined* by its own origin, by the very condition of its self-presence, that is, by 'time,' to be conceived anew on the basis now of difference within auto-affection....?" (68). Used extensively in the next chapter, "auto-affection" is the capacity to affect oneself by/through oneself. Derrida describes speech as "auto-affection of a unique kind," for "the very structure of speech" implies "that the speaker *hears himself*...that he perceives the sensible form of the phonemes and that he understands his own expressive intention." (78). Within "auto-affection," the difference or "dialectic" between the "living present" and retentional/protentional traces 'strikes against' and complicates the hearing (of) one's self.

protentional future "open[s] up living to difference," so that there's "*divergence*" ["*ecart*"] "in the pure immanence of experience," an "inner" spacing which mimes an "outer" spacing evidenced by the indicative matrix everywhere.

Chapter Six

"The Voice That Keeps Silence" involves the source of speech, a source which "keeps silence," a silent "voice." The voice may inwardly "speak," hear and understand itself, effect itself. Later in the chapter Derrida asserts: "The voice *is* consciousness." (80). Translated, the French word "conscience" may signify both 'consciousness' and 'conscience.' Derrida's use of the French "conscience" ["La voix est la conscience"] implies both consciousness as general awareness *and* consciousness as moral sense, thus: "the voice is awareness/conscience." Breaking into the conservative voice (breaking that voice into two) through a "proto-writing" prior to it, Derrida concludes that the "auto-affection" of the voice "is not the inwardness of an inside that is closed in upon itself...it is the eye and the world within speech." As "eye" and "world" within speech, the voice *is* phenomena to be *read from speech, wrested from speech*.¹

The Projection

The title of the chapter evidences Derrida's "projection into" Husserl's text. "Projection" designates a psychic defense: unacknowledged feelings, wishes or thoughts are expelled by the subject and relocated in external persons or things.²

¹ Thus, the conjunction of the essay's original title ["et," La voix et le phenomene] is replaced by the copula ["est"].

² The psychoanalyst Andre Green notes that projection presupposes introjection: "the projected can only be that which has already been introjected. Only that which has been swallowed can be vomited." (Green, "On Projection," in On Private Madness, p. 85). Less psychoanalytically, as characterized by Hilary

In Section 8 of the "First Investigation" Husserl claims that "one speaks, in a certain sense, even in soliloquy" and that, in soliloquy, "it is certainly possible conceive of oneself as speaking." Husserl qualifies such "speaking" with the phrase "in a certain sense," noting a non-literal use of the verb "speak." Husserl thus refers to an *imagined*, "conceived of" "speech," yet Derrida refers to that "speech" with the substantive term "voice." In sum, Derrida projects his own inner voice into Husserl's text.

The silent voice, for Derrida, inheres within a "punctual now." Closing "Signs and the Blink of an Eye," he refers to "the absolute silence of the self-relationship," a relationship maintained in the "now." With the voice within that "now," there's an experienced "uselessness" of signs, an experience of "primordial intuition."³ Remarking that experience, Derrida attributes to Husserl's text a "double-exclusion": the voiced "now" entails foreclosure of "the other within me" *and* foreclosure of expression, for expression is subsequent to a more primordial "pre-

Putnam, projection involves "thinking of something as having properties it does not have (perhaps because something else we are acquainted with really does have them) without being conscious that this is what we are doing." (Putnam, The Many Faces of Realism, p. 11). Here, the "something else" which Putnam refers to may be the introjected voice, an internal voice which Derrida casts out, finding it in Husserl's text. Generally, "the sign in general" is funded and formed through projection, i.e. "reading" the indicative matrix is possible due to introjected properties (with which "we are acquainted") which, by projection, some other thing assumes. A main aim of the essay is an epistemic space wherein instances of "the sign in general" are (as Putnam suggests) unintentional; they *just happen*.

³ Intuition effaces signs: "whenever Husserl wants to stress the sense of primordial intuition, he will recall that it is the experience of the absence and uselessness of signs." (60).

expressive stratum of sense."⁴ Just as the (seemingly) "punctual now" derives from protentional and retentive "traces," so does the silent voice of "the self-relationship" require "traces" which are essentially *other than* the self, "pre-expressive" "traces" which are introjected, constituting an "other within."⁵ Through "traces" of an undecidable other other simultaneously without (outside) and within (inside) the self -- 'I' may signify myself to myself. Thus, 'I' (in)form myself through inner, voiced, imagined instances of the "sign in general" *and/or* through outer, perceived, actual instances of "the sign in general." In the former instance, the self takes place, within the silent voice. In the latter instance, the self is displaced, found in external phenomena. In the former instance, within the limited scope of imagined linguistic signs, seemingly "feigned communication" between 'I' and the "other within me" actually occurs.

⁴ The "second" exclusion [of expression] would *a fortiori* exclude indication. With the exclusion of expression by pre-expressive sense, Derrida again alludes to Section 124 of *Ideas* and a pre-expressive, pre-linguistic "sense." Against Husserl's text [which, on Derrida's misreading, locates the source of expression within one's "sphere of ownness"], Derrida now claims that "solitary mental life" within the "punctual now" excludes indication *and* expression. "The voice that keeps silence" voids all signs. Prior to indication and expression, the trace or the "sign in general," however, "breaks into" the voice. Insofar as the trace inheres within "experience in general," the trace inheres within the "pre-expressive stratum of perceptual sense" which sustains the voice.

⁵ "Phenomenological 'silence,' then, can only be reconstituted by a double exclusion...that of the relation to the other within me ...and that of expression as a stratum that is subsequent to... external to sense." (70).

Via Freud

Through two metapsychological texts of Freud, Derrida's projection may be analyzed. Freud's texts suggest a certain voice as source of conscience/consciousness. Derrida initially writes against such a source. Closely misread, Freud's texts also suggest the essay's project: an Other consciousness, a phenomenal speech.

1. In Section III of "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (1914) Freud posits the "ideal ego," a term which figures in psychoanalytic explanations of thought and behavior. Regarding impulses and desires, those which "one man indulges or at least works over consciously" may be "rejected with utmost indignation by another." (OM 87).⁶ Due to "the self-respect of the ego," certain "ideational representatives of instincts" within the psyche may be repressed, denied access to consciousness. The phrase "self-respect" suggests a regress of the ego respecting itself, abysmal speculation. Freud limits such potentially endless mirroring by positing the "ideal ego," a psychic entity which is "set up" within the general psychic system; the actual ego is measured against its ideal.⁷ "The ideal

⁶ Citations from Freud's key essays are from the collection On Metapsychology, (OM).

⁷ 'General psychic system' refers to the ego, the "ideal ego" and a third agency [the "ego ideal"] which solves an aporia. First, the aporia: does the "ideal ego" actively measure and judge the actual ego *or* does the actual ego actively measure and judge itself in relation to the "ideal ego"? Freud solves the aporia by postulating another psychic agency: the "ego ideal." Schematized: the ego measures itself in relation to the "ideal ego" and effects relations with that "ideal" through the activity of the "ego ideal." The ego and the "ideal ego" are entities, while the "ego ideal" is an agency which, through intentional thought and behavior,

ego" is a remnant of narcissistic omnipotence, a souvenir of infantile narcissism. The force for this omnipotent and often oppressive entity derives from libido (psychical energy in general). Unable to abandon the narcissism of childhood, the ego later seeks to recover that narcissism, that circuit of libido, through a satisfactory relation to its ideal.⁸ The ideal ego thus maintains standards, a "set-up" which orients one's thought and behavior.

In the third paragraph of Section III Freud introduces the "ego ideal." The ego ideal is the *agency* which effects relations between two entities: the ego and its "set-up," the ideal or *idle*⁹ ego. Interestingly, Freud first describes the ego ideal in specular terms: "If such an agency does exist, we cannot possibly come upon it as a *discovery* -- we can only *recognize* it, for we may reflect that what we call our 'conscience' has the required characteristics." (OM 89). The scopic connotation of 'recognize' suggests a conscience which sees itself in a scene, a consciousness or conscience unrelated to any voice. The delusion of being watched or supervised manifests such conscience in a basic, "regressive form;" Freud then notes delusional patients who "complain that all their thoughts are known and their actions watched or supervised." (OM 90). Freud suggests a

determines relations between the ego and the "ideal ego."

⁸ Lacan's Imaginary Order, wherein the subject is first given his or her "alienating identity," is related to Freud's notion of the "ideal ego." In "The Mirror Stage" Lacan explicitly refers to the "ideal ego," relating it to the mirroring "imago" which the infant sees and seizes on. For Lacan, the specular, "ideal ego" is the Imaginary basis of the ego per se, not a separate agency which guides the ego.

⁹ To stress its static, entific status (and to more easily distinguish ideal ego from "ego ideal"), *the ideal ego is henceforth termed 'idle ego.'*

conscience which *sees and supervises*, in the indicative matrix, itself.

Based on the seen, a voice develops. Freud soon explains the delusion of being "watched or supervised" in phonic terms: "what prompted the subject to form an ego ideal, on whose behalf his conscience acts as a watchman, arose from the critical influence of his parents (*conveyed to him by the medium of the voice*)...." (OM 90, my emphasis). Speech, specifically parental speech, forms the "critical influence" and voice of the ego ideal. The "critical influence" of that voice is strengthened within the subject through the speech of "those who trained and taught him and the innumerable and indefinable host of all the other people in his environment...." Introjected, the speech of others funds the voice of the ego ideal, the voice which relates (to) a specular, idle ego.

The ego ideal is voiced, inner speech. As actual speech is the basis of the ego ideal, Freud's text evidences a phonocentrism. Nevertheless, Section III of "On Narcissism" may be misread so that it conveys the essay's project: an Other consciousness which hears and speaks a phenomenal speech. Freud notes that the speech-informed ego ideal requires, for its maintenance, "large amounts of libido." In the course of normal development those "large amounts of libido" form cathexes which, through the agency of the ego ideal, relate the ego to its idle ideal.

Following Lacan's description in "The Mirror Stage," the "jubilant assumption of his specular image by the child" and the subsequent "set up" of the idle or ideal ego occurs "at the *infans* stage," *before* language and the formation of the ego

ideal.¹⁰ Continual recognition of the idle ego might result from appearances within the infant's environment. D.W. Winnicott argues that "*the precursor of the mirror is the mother's face*," stressing the import of the mother's face for the feeding infant. For Winnicott, "what the baby sees is himself or herself," but what the mother "*looks like is related to what she sees there*."¹¹ Focused on the infant, the mirroring gaze of the mother supports the narcissism of infancy and forms a closed circuit of libido. Winnicott's essay deals mostly with failures of empathy between mother and infant, situations wherein "babies...have a long experience of not getting back what they are giving."¹² A related, but different, situation may occur; if the infant's "scopic drive" is overly precocious, infant and mother may become engaged in a reciprocal, empathic acceleration of gazes. As the infant does not differentiate between inner and outer reality, objects or states of affairs within the environment might also assume that shared, accelerated gaze, causing the infant to continually recognize the specular, idle ego. Perhaps "recognition" of the idle ego is continual. If so, there may later be a constant effort of the ego to accord (through the voice of the ego ideal) with its idle ego; the general psychic system might then be strained, split between two domains, two demands: the aural and the visual, the heard and the seen, speech and phenomena. In certain circumstances the general psychic system might no longer be able to manage the

¹⁰ Lacan, Ecrits, p. 2.

¹¹ Winnicott, "The Mirror-role of Mother and Family," in Playing and Reality, pp. 111-112.

¹² Winnicott, *Ibid.*

stress of maintaining (through the voice) an accord between ego and ego ideal, thus prompting trauma and regression, so that "[t]he voices, as well as the undefined multitude, are brought into the foreground again by the disease [delusional psychosis]" and "the evolution of conscience is reproduced regressively." (OM 90). Misread, Freud's text suggests, as an effect of psychic strain, a fusion of modalities, a fusion of domains: *the voice of the ego ideal is seen, as the sight of the idle ego is heard*. The "voice of conscience" becomes fused with the site/sight of the idle ego. Through such fusion, the subject "reads" his or her own voice within phenomena.

The fusion is a confusion. Through such confusion, the ego must attain a voice by a regressive reproduction of "the evolution of conscience," i.e. by working backwards through the seen to a voice prior to any scene. Such a regressive "evolution" describes the general course of Derrida's essay: i) the issue of the voice is foregrounded; ii) like the punctual now, the self-presence of the voice is derived from "traces" which are initially other than consciousness; iii) a worldly, indicative matrix mirrors consciousness iv) thus, the voice must "break...the mirror....And start to speak."¹³ The worldly matrix, place of indicative signs, is see,

¹³ In "Cogito and the History of Madness" Derrida writes of and first assumes (in relation to Foucault) the "unhappy consciousness" of the "disciple." Like the infant -- "who, by definition, cannot speak" -- the disciple "knows that he alone finds himself already challenged by the master's voice within him....he is challenged by the master who speaks within him and before him...and having interiorized the master, he is also challenged by the disciple that he himself is...." Thus: "The disciple must break the glass...the mirror, the reflection, his infinite speculation on the master. And start to speak." (WD 31, 32).

read, heard and left, granting the *voices* of consciousness speech.¹⁴

2. In Section II of "The Ego and the Id" Freud describes the process through which unconscious contents become conscious. Freud first remarks the distinction between Unconscious and Preconscious domains within the general psychic system. "Auditory perceptions" constitute the "special sensory source" of the Preconscious. From that "special source," "memory-traces" form. Suggesting phonocentrism, Freud insists: "a word is after all the mnemic residue of a word that has been heard." Acquired through reading and enforced by writing, the visual aspects of any such "residues," are "secondary" and "may be...left on one side." (OM 359). Dynamically, contents within the Preconscious are like those within the Unconscious: repressed, they are not now available to Consciousness. Descriptively, Preconscious contents differ in that they are potentially accessible to Consciousness, i.e. latent. Preconscious contents also differ in that they are governed by the "secondary processes" of language, unlike contents within the Unconscious which remain governed by the "primary processes." Most importantly, Preconscious contents differ in that they are "thing-presentations" linked to "word-presentations" and are thus, *through the voice*, capable of becoming conscious (or, through consciousness, capable of becoming voiced). Undoing the resistances which maintain repression and making unconscious contents available to Consciousness is the aim of psychoanalysis; thus Freud asks, "'How does a thing

¹⁴ The closure of the essay invokes voices which may speak: "It remains, then, for *us* to *speak*, to make our voices *resonate* throughout the corridors in order to make up for the breakup of presence." (104, first emphasis mine).

become conscious?" (OM 358). Assuming Freud's topology, a thing or idea becomes conscious by first passing from the Unconscious into the Preconscious; there, the thing or idea becomes "connected to the word-presentations corresponding to it." (OM 358). Derived from "auditory perceptions," the "word-presentations" of the Preconscious inform the voice which effects the passage of content from the Unconscious to Consciousness.¹⁵

Formed from "word-presentations," the voice of the Preconscious is, however, complicated, for it confronts and conjoins "thing-representations." As "word-presentations" derive from heard words, "thing-presentations" derive from seen things; they are essentially images. The Unconscious is the source of such images. When asleep, the censoring voice of Consciousness fades, allowing, from the Unconscious, flows of images, i.e. dreams. Within the analytic session, the subject recalls, through the medium of speech, those images, the "manifest content" of a dream. Analytic work involves, through the medium of speech, understanding the thoughts which prompted those images. The work of analysis engages the Preconscious, as it is the place or space wherein exchange between

¹⁵ In Section II of "The Unconscious" the Preconscious is described as an aspect of the system Consciousness. The "first phase" of any psychical act "is unconscious and belongs to the system Ucs...." If the content of a psychical act passes into Consciousness, then that content has not been "rejected by the censorship" of the Preconscious. If, however, that content "is rejected by the censorship [of the Preconscious], then it is not allowed to pass into the second phase [Consciousness]...." (OM 175). The voice of the Preconscious may censor and repress psychic content. There are thus two modes of voice: one which actually speaks and one which "keeps silence" (which keeps the Unconscious silent).

unconscious phenomena and conscious speech occurs.

In Section I of "The Unconscious" Freud refers to the "consciousness" which "we attribute to everyone else" as the result of "an inference." Through analogy with our own experience of consciousness, the consciousness of others is inferred, only supposed. Freud then asserts that "[p]sychoanalysis demands...that we should apply this process of inference to ourselves." (OM 171). Following Freud, we should understand "the immediate certainty which we have of our own consciousness" as the result of an inference. Freud's demand is strange: if the consciousness of others was inferred from one's own consciousness, and if one's own consciousness is now *to be* inferred, then what *will be* the basis for one's own (inference of) consciousness? The basis is (use of) a language. Each consciousness is an *effect* of a language which, actually causing an Other consciousness, voids one's 'I.'¹⁶

Freud defines "thought" as "a substitute for a hallucinatory wish...."¹⁷ "Hallucinatory wish" (a wish which may be satisfied through hallucination) refers to the fundamental wish which results from an infant's "experience of satisfaction" at

¹⁶ Thus the terms 'ego,' 'idle ego,' 'ego ideal' all derive from (use of) a language; such terms are just "theoretical image and metaphor." Derrida writes: "Indeed this leads us to take the ego -- as absolute spectator of its own psychic self -- to be but theoretical image and metaphor" (12), an *effect* of metaphor within a language, i.e. a "narrow and derivative" language (actually wrought through "archi ecriture.")

¹⁷ Freud, Interpretation of Dreams, p. 567.

the mother's breast.¹⁸ Responding to the infant's cries, the (m)other appears; the percepts which accompany that appearance (breast, face, colors, milk, sounds, scents) form, for the infant, a satisfying configuration. Whenever internal need is again experienced but is not satisfied, the infant may *imagine* that configuration, so that an hallucinatory satisfaction of the wish (for nourishment, for the (m)other) occurs. In the 1895 "Project," Freud has "no doubt that the wishful activation will in the first instance produce something similar to a perception -- namely, a hallucination."¹⁹

During sleep the Unconscious produces hallucinations which, more directly than conscious thought, satisfy wishes. After sleep, dreamt images remain latent, and, "after" those images in the analytic session, the subject speaks. By the "rule" of free-association, the subject attempts to word the Unconscious, proffering a speech which is "somewhere between writing and speech...half-way between the two."²⁰ Fusing the Unconscious and Consciousness through the Preconscious, *between speech and phenomena*, the subject speaks a *phenomenal speech*, a script. Regarding that script, the "manifest content" of the dream is a ruse, a dream

¹⁸ When the infant cries in response to "endogenous stimulus," and the "extraneous helper [the caretaker, usually the mother] has carried out the specific action in the external world on behalf of the helpless subject," the infant, by means of "reflex contrivances," will "perform what is necessary in the interior of his body to remove the endogenous stimulus." In other words, the infant is fed by the caretaker and "this total event...constitutes an 'experience of satisfaction.'" (Freud, "Project for a Scientific Psychology, in The Origins of Psychoanalysis, p. 380).

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 381.

²⁰ Lacan, "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious," in Ecrits, p. 146.

"rhetoric" (involving "syntactical displacements" and "semantic condensations" "in which Freud teaches us to read the intentions...out of which the subject modulates his oneiric discourse"²¹) to be deciphered.

Like speech within the analytic session, "that writing which is called literary" tends towards -- tends to word -- the Unconscious.²² In the essay "The Unconscious" Freud refers to mental "acts and manifestations which I notice in myself and do not know how to link up with the rest of my mental life...." (OM 171). For Freud, such "acts and manifestations" attest to the existence of the Unconscious. In Section I of the essay ["Justification for the Concept of the Unconscious"] Freud claims that his "assumption of the unconscious is *necessary*....because the data of consciousness have a very large number of gaps in them....[O]ur most personal daily experience acquaints us with ideas that come into our head we do not know from where...conclusions arrived at we do not know how." (OM 168). Experiencing the world, one constantly confronts new "acts and manifestations" which do not initially "link up with the rest of [one's] mental life," "ideas that come [from] we do not know...where," "conclusions arrived at we do not know how." Appropriated by "the general psychical system," such events, ideas and conclusions become instances of "the sign in general." Through written words, a species of "the sign in general," literature proceeds. Like experience in general, the process of writing

²¹ Lacan, "The Rome Discourse," in Ecrits, p. 58.

²² "I have to remind you...that my most constant interest, coming even before my philosophical interest...has been directed towards literature, towards that writing which is called literary." (TT 37).

words prompts new "acts and manifestations," new "ideas" and "conclusions" (new words) without immediate relation to "the rest of [one's] mental life." Due to its wish, literary writing is the ceaseless process of integrating such instances "with the rest of [one's] mental life."

Despite its seemingly punctual source, perhaps philosophy (as it is written) also involves the Unconscious; perhaps its impetus is a "hallucinatory wish." If a wish is the origin of (the representation of) thought, then the satisfaction of that wish is the end of (the representation of) thought. Philosophy -- especially (at) its end -- derives from a hallucinatory wish which, if satisfied, would impose one's "tongue on the universe"²³ and, by virtue of being everywhere, vanish and be nowhere. A vain, totalizing wish of/for philosophy is (reflexively) remarked throughout Derrida's later writings: "*Plato* wants to emit. Seed, artificially, technically....To sow the entire earth, to send the same fertile card to *everyone*.....a great thinker is always somewhat a great post...." (PC 28, 32); "Every text, every element of a corpus reproduces or bequeaths...one of several injunctions: come together according to this or that rule... and form this or that type of institution so as to read me and write about me, organize this or that type of exchange or hierarchy to interpret me, evaluate me, preserve me, translate me, inherit me, make me live on...;"²⁴ In "Ulysses Gramophone" Derrida refers to Joyce's "declared

²³ "God declares war on the tribe of the Shems, who want to make a name for themselves by raising the tower and imposing their tongue on the universe." (Derrida, Ear of the Other, p. 99) The philosopher, thus, is a Shemite.

²⁴ Derrida, "Mochlos," in The Contest of Faculties, p. 23.

project of keeping generations of university scholars at work for centuries...[t]he vast scheme of bending vast communities of readers and writers to this law," a law which "can equally well be attributed to Plato and Shakespeare, to Dante and Vico, without mentioning Hegel and other finite divinities."²⁵ In "This Strange Institution" Derrida identifies with Joyce and his "dream": "Joyce dreamt of a special institution for his oeuvre, inaugurated by it like a new order....I did indeed have to understand and share his dream too...." (SI 74). Finally, in "Circumfession" Derrida writes of a wish to see "the inside of my life exhibiting itself outside, *expressing* itself before my eyes...."²⁶

Derrida asks, "Why does the inscription so fascinate me, preoccupy me, precede me? Why am I so fascinated by the literary ruse of the inscription...?" (TT 38). The "scopic drive," the *interest* involved in mundane reading and writing both involves and usually solves the schism between what is seen and is heard, material signifiers and comprehended signifieds: correlates of the idle ego and the ego ideal. In an attempt to survive beyond that involvement and solvent, perhaps one proffers "a writing that refers back only to itself" and "carries us *the same time*, indefinitely and systematically, to some [O]ther writing." (D 202).

Husserl's "Example"

"We return to the text." (21). Derrida claims that Husserl's account of "the

²⁵ Derrida, "Ulysses Gramophone," in Acts of Literature, p. 280.

²⁶ Derrida, "Circumfession," in Jacques Derrida, p. 10.

structure of inner life is "'simplified.'" (71).²⁷ Husserl's single example of soliloquy ("You have gone wrong, you can't go on like that"²⁸) is of a "practical order." Unlike an indicative sign in communicative speech, the order communicates nothing, for it does not appeal to an other: "there is no communication because there is no alter ego." Unlike an expressive sign, the example does not achieve reference to an ideal object. In the idiom of Section 30 of the "First Investigation," such practical exhortation remains a "presentational experience" without reference to an "irreal, self-identical intentional unity." (LI 327). Concerned only with terms which have fixed cognitive content, Husserl "determined the model of language *in general* -- indicative as well as expressive -- on the basis of '*theorein*.'" (71). Thus, Husserl's example of soliloquy is "nontheoretical, nonlogical and noncognitive." Such "imagined speech" remains "phenomena of completely fictitious signification."²⁹

²⁷ Derrida places 'simplified' ["'simplifiée'"] within scare-quotes, suggesting that the "structure of inner life" is actually complex. Like the phenomenal world, the "structure" of "inner life" is differentiated, irreducibly complex.

²⁸ Husserl's example may be compared with that oracle or inner voice which Socrates claimed to have heard: "It began in my early childhood -- a sort of voice which comes to me; and when it comes it always dissuades me from what I am proposing to do, and never urges me on." (Plato, *Apology*, 31 D). Unlike the voice which Socrates heard, Husserl's example apparently arrives too late.

²⁹ Derrida also notes that Husserl's foreclosure of communication within soliloquy follows from an adherence to the present tense. Husserl's "practical example" is of a temporal modality which does not occur in "the present indicative of the verb 'to be,'" as such, it is not a proposition of the logical form 'S is p' and so is "nonlogical and noncognitive." It is an instance of merely "'expressing oneself,'" not of "'expressing oneself about something.'" (73). Only expressions of the latter form, whereby some attribute is predicated of an object, are properly logical and cognitive. Such a "practical example," however, can be reconstrued so

Neither indicative, for it does not communicate with an other, nor expressive, for it does not achieve reference to an ideal object, Husserl's example evidences the voice which Derrida writes *against*. In terms of Freud's "On Narcissism," that voice, insofar as it "speaks" of remorse and amendment, is the voice of conscience. Strangely, the example also evidences the "archi ecriture" which Derrida writes *for*.

A "proto-writing" wrought by "the eye and the world within speech" follows from Husserl's example. In Chapter Four, "Meaning and Representation," Derrida argues that all representation, even "imaginative representation" within one's "sphere of ownness," requires an "originally repetitive structure." In "Signs and the Blink of an Eye" Derrida asserts that inner time consciousness requires the same "originally repetitive structure." Here, the "imagined speech" of soliloquy occurs through a "proto-writing" wrought *before* the "phenomenological voice." Derrida insinuates "archi ecriture" through a purely textual demonstration. He first notes the "weisen" ('showing') intrinsic to "Hinweis" ('indicative showing') and the "zeigen" ('pointing') intrinsic to "Anzeigen" ('indication'). Each silent word within one's

that it has proper propositional form. In Section 69 of the "Sixth Investigation" Husserl argues that performatives (questions and commands) can be understood as constatives of the form 'S is p.' "You have gone wrong...." can be converted into "That who is 'I,' now addressing myself as 'you,' is such that 'you have gone wrong.'" Derrida's concern, however, is with *how* such a practical performative is transformed into a cognitive constative; Derrida claims that "it is here that *speech* is necessary," here that speech occurs and transforms mere 'talking to oneself' into 'telling oneself that' S is p. The "silent" speech of the inner voice realizes and makes present "the sense of the verb 'to be,' a sense which "sustains an entirely singular connection with the *word*...the unity of *phone* and *sense*." (74).

"sphere" is a representation and repetition of those "formal identities" (of the signifier and the signified) which compose that word.³⁰ Repeating certain "formal identities," each word is "caught up" within "an originally repetitive structure," "an indicative web." The "completely fictitious signification" of imagined speech requires signs, and the fictitious signs of soliloquy, insofar as each involves a signifier which "points to" its signified, implies indication within consciousness, within the voice. Seemingly found in soliloquy, the essence of expressive meaning is actually derived from an indicative structure beyond one's own "sphere." Though Husserl's example is imagined and "completely fictitious," it evidences the "sign in general," the "unity of *Zeigen* before its diffraction into indication and expression." (72).

Husserl's example evidences the voice of "the other within me," an "other" who argues against the supposed silence of transcendental experience. In the "Introduction," glossing Husserl's view, Derrida asserts: "The (transcendental) ego is not an other." (12).³¹ For Husserl, the transcendental ego -- disclosed by the transcendental reduction -- is an autonomous, constituting consciousness. Against

³⁰ In "Meaning and Representation" Derrida notes that "A sign is never an event....A sign which would take place but 'once' would not be a sign...." Every effective use of words ("whether or not I do it for communicative ends") requires "a structure of repetition whose basic element can only be representative." Each effective word "function[s] as a sign...only if a *formal identity* enables it to be issued again and be recognized." (50).

³¹ Against Husserl, Derrida's construal of an altered transcendental consciousness accords with the poet's claim: "Je est un autre;" the other is me; I am the other. Against a subjectivity secure within itself, Derrida implies a subjectivity which identifies with the other, a consciousness which finds itself in the other, through the other, one which -- finally -- *is* the other.

the presence of that ego, Husserl's example "speaks": "You have gone wrong, you can't go on like that." The "other within" speaks against the present tense of the ego, as words of remorse ["you have gone wrong"] and amendment ["you can't go on like that"] refer to retentions and protentions, to the past and future, to times and tenses which are not present. Voiced by "the other within me," Husserl's example complicates "the structure of inner life." (72).

"Idealization and Voice"

Derrida notes that Husserl's example (a performative by which one merely "expresses oneself") may be transformed into a constative, so that one is "expressing oneself about something." Such transformation requires "the present indicative of the verb 'to be'," a verb form which Derrida identifies as "the pure and irreducible core of expression." (73). Transforming Husserl's example ["You have gone wrong, you can't go on like that"] into its "pure, teleological form" ["That who is 'I,' now addressing myself as 'you,' is such that 'you have gone wrong'"] requires the "present indicative of the verb 'to be.'" Regarding the transformative force of that verb, Derrida writes: "here *speech* is necessary." (74).

The "force"³² which transforms soliloquy into objective expression derives

³² This 'force' seems the force of things, a force which speech absorbs and repeats. With writing, Derrida attacks the force of that which *is*: "how is it that the fact of writing can disturb the very question 'what is?'" (PFT 37). The "privilege of being" is sustained through speech, through the "lure" of speech. In Of Grammatology Derrida refers to "the ethic of speech" as "the *delusion* of presence mastered." The "delusion or lure" of such mastery may be thought *through*, be (comprehended), by an appreciation of the "absence, dissimulation, detour,

from intentional, conscious speech. When one intends an assertion of the form 'S is p,' the spoken expression of that intention involves the verb 'to be,' as its present indicative form ['is'] joins subject and predicate. Essential to any sentence, "to be" has a special "privilege." Derrida claims that that privilege "is encountered nowhere outside the word." "To be" ["etre"], therefore, "is not a 'mere word,'" is not a sign with sense or reference, for "its sense designates nothing," "no state or ontic determination." Found in a language, translatable into all languages, "to be" ["etre"] "sustains an entirely singular connection with the *word*." Derrida identifies that "connection" as "the unity of the *phone* and sense."³³ (74). Found in all languages, "the word" of presence, "the present indicative of the verb 'to be,'" is dissolved or "deconstructed" through a "[n]onphonetic writing which breaks the noun ['being'] apart." (G 26).

Derrida claims that "[t]he prerogative ['le privilege'] of being cannot withstand the deconstruction of the word." (74). Such "deconstruction" evokes the "war" mentioned in the "Introduction": a "war of language against itself," a "disquietude" which will disclose "the origin and residence of language." (14). A "deconstruction of the word" will destroy the "privilege attached to the present indicative" and disclose "the insecurity of discourse," placing all security and

differance" of a "proto-writing" within speech: "To recognize writing in speech...is to begin to think the lure." (G 139).

³³ Derrida again alludes to Section 124 of *Ideas* and "the pre-expressive stratum of sense." The "unity of the *phone* and sense" is "the telos of perfect expression," the "total restitution...of a sense actually given to intuition." (75).

privilege "sous rature."³⁴ Against that "war" and erasure, the phenomenological voice *seems* to maintain ideality, for the inner voice which intentionally "speaks" seemingly effects "the total restitution" of "a sense actually given to intuition." (75). Transforming pre-expressive sense into objective expression through "linguistic form," the voice maintains and ideal objectivity.

The "ideal object" is "an object whose showing may be repeated indefinitely."³⁵ As the ideal object "has no dependence on any worldly or empirical synthesis," the presentation of such an object requires an element which is also unworldly: "*The name of that element is the voice.*" (76). Insofar as the voice constitutes the ideal object, the voice becomes fused with that object and seems, with its object, "freed from all mundane spatiality." As "the power of the voice" follows from confluence with, and communication of, ideal objects, Derrida notes

³⁴ Influenced by Heidegger's late essay "The Question of Being," Derrida briefly recommends and adopts, in *Of Grammatology*, the strategy of writing "is" or "being" "sous rature" ['under erasure']: "the sign is that ill-named thing, the only one, that escapes the instituting question of philosophy, 'what is...?'" (G 19). Simultaneously written and 'crossed-out,' the verb, and the noun which the verb grants presence to, are legible yet also reflexively marred by a negation mark which demonstrates the indicative element essential to all signs. The device of writing "sous rature," of simultaneously affirming and negating signs, marks indication. The device formalizes an intrapsychic negativity: "There is someone in me who kills with a burst of laughter whoever appears to find it necessary, opportune, important to say what he thinks, feels, or anything...." (PC 80).

³⁵ "The ideal object is the most objective of objects; independent of the here-and-now acts and events of the empirical subjectivity which intends it, it can be repeated indefinitely while remaining the same." (75). The omni-temporal objects of geometry, mathematics and logic are exemplary ideal objects. "The mathematical object seems to be the privileged example and most permanent thread guiding Husserl's reflection. This is because the mathematical object is *ideal*. Its being is thoroughly transparent and exhausted by its phenomenality." (OG 27).

"an unfailing complicity...between idealization and voice": "the history of the *phone*...is inseparable from the history of idealization...." (75).

The "operation of 'hearing oneself speak,'" of idealizing (oneself), "is an auto-affection of a unique kind." (78). Unlike other forms of auto-affection (seeing oneself, touching oneself) which require "external detour" (a mirror, another part of the body), one's own voice seems immediate: "the subject can hear or speak to himself and be effected by the signifier he produces...without passing through the sphere of what is not 'his own.'" (78). Actual speech affirms and perpetuates the lure of the voice. In communicative speech there are at least two "origins of pure auto-affection." When one speaks, one hears/understands oneself and, simultaneously, wants to be heard/understood by the other, to make the other "*repeat immediately*" words which were one's own. Speaking, we seem to reach other and bring another "expressive core" into correspondence with our own "origin of pure auto-affection." The habit of speech, the apparent weal of repeatedly heard words affirms the equivalence of voice and consciousness.

Lured by speech and "the delusion of presence mastered," one does not attend to the fact that one's spoken words *end* in the other, in *another "origin" wherein those words are iterated, altered. Phonologocentric prose is produced with and within a foreclosure of that iteration, that alteration.*

Before the Voice

Voiced within one's own "sphere," "words are alive because they *seem* not

to leave...not to fall outside me...." (76). Derrida implies that one's own words do in fact "leave" and "fall outside...at a visible distance." There, "at a distance," words "cease to belong to me," cease "to be at my disposition." The exteriorization and "distancing" of words by writing and speech is obvious, but Derrida suggests a dispossession of one's own voice by the "other within," a dispossession based on the experience of mundane writing.

Voiced words seem to effect an "absolute proximity of the signifier to the signified," a proximity which makes the signifier seem "absolutely diaphanous...." (80). With and within the voice, "the phenomenological 'body' of the signifier seems to fade away at the very moment it is produced." The "transparent dignity" of the voice, however, is "only apparent;" it "is broken when...I see myself write or gesture." When one writes, one produces and survives a "phenomenological situation" involving "external detour": the detour, the turn, from speech toward the "utensils" of writing; the detour, the turn, of intentions into inscriptions. Such detours make life "risk death in the body of a signifier that is given over to the world and the visibility of space." (78). As I write and see *that I write*, the "two absences" of writing become evident: "absence of the signatory...absence of the referent....Writing is the name of these two absences." (G 41).

Against a voice void of writing, against a speech founded with and within the presence of that voice, there is "archi ecriture." Derrida does not thematize "archi ecriture." It is indicated, mentioned just once in the essay: "This protowriting ['archi ecriture'] is at work at the origin of sense." (85). As "archi ecriture" is based on the

experience of mundane writing, it is like the indicative, written sign. Suggesting the indicative sign (and the logical space or gap between indicator and indicated), Derrida mentions "[t]he system of *Zeigen*...finger and eye movements," motions one might make to indicate some object or state of affairs to another consciousness. Derrida then suggests that such motions are lodged within the body, are "forms of pure auto-affection in the inwardness of one's own body," indicative signs which "do not require the intervention of any surface displayed in the world," signs which "are not of the order of the voice." An indicative writing within "one's own body" is "that which gives rise to inscription in general": the "writing" of the genetic code, "*the program*...the most elementary processes of information within the living cell." (G 9). There are -- before all mundane writing, speech and voice -- our inner, physiological "scripts."

"Crisis"

Through "the operation of 'hearing oneself speak,'" mundane writing is produced and "displayed in the world." Such writing is "indispensable for the constitution of ideal objects." (80). Husserl's text evidences the necessity of "inscription" for the tradition of ideal, geometrical objects. In "The Origin of Geometry"³⁶ Husserl asks, "how does geometrical ideality proceed from its primary intrapersonal origin...to ideal objectivity?" In response, Husserl claims that

³⁶ Husserl's essay is collected, as Appendix VI, in The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology (Cr 353-378).

the passage from an "intrapersonal origin" to "ideal objectivity" "occurs by means of language, through which ideality receives...its linguistic, living body." (Cr 358). More specifically, Husserl notes that the communication and continuance of ideal objects requires "corporeal occurrences...oral utterances or written documentations." (Cr 357). In the "Introduction" to his translation of "The Origin" Derrida considers Husserl's response a "surprising turnabout," for recourse to writing breaks and betrays the "absolute proximity" of signifier and signified which occurs with and within "the phenomenological voice." Exteriorized, the once voiced sign becomes phonic/graphic, and the voice "risks death in the body of a signifier." In the "Introduction" to the "The Origin" Derrida makes much of Husserl's mention of "inscription," describing the recourse to mundane writing as a "fall": "The paradox is that, without the apparent fall back into language...sense would remain an empirical formation imprisoned in fact as psychological subjectivity -- *in the inventor's head.*" (OG 77).

Exteriorized, the "inscription" "which brings the constitution of ideal objects to completion" is "phonetic," is a "narrow and derivative writing" which "proceeds to fix and incarnate an already prepared utterance." (80-81). Here, Derrida explicitly charges Husserl with phonologocentrism. In "The Origin of Geometry" there *is* textual evidence for that charge. The introductory paragraphs of "The Origin" mention a "return inquiry" ["Rückfrage"] "into the original meaning of the handed-down geometry," an inquiry back into "the most original sense in which geometry once arose." (Cr 353). Husserl seeks the original source within which geometry

was -- *and ideally is* -- produced. Derrida construes that "original source" as phonic, formed through the phenomenological voice: "the 'protogeometer' must produce the pure ideality of the pure geometrical object in [a] thought" which assures "its [the object's] transmissibility by speech...." (81). Already prepared in a voiced utterance, the "protogeometer" can then "commit it ['the pure ideality of the pure geometrical object'] to writing."

In the "The Origin" Husserl notes the "important function" of a writing which "documents linguistic expression," making communication possible without "immediate or mediate personal address," without "communicative speech." Husserl appreciates writing as "communication become virtual;" through such communication, "the communalization of man is lifted to a new level." Husserl then describes the "sensibly experiencable" graphemes of writing as "linguistic signs" which "awaken, as do linguistic sounds, their familiar significations." (Cr 361). Though the graphemes of writing are first passively sensed, the "awakening" of "significations" is an active, transformative process. For Husserl, that transformative capacity "belongs originally to every human being as a *speaking being*." (Cr 361, my emphasis).

Potentially *untransformed* (so that meaning is inert), the inscribed sign "bears the threat of crisis itself." Derrida then asserts: "The moment of crisis is the moment of signs." Husserl's The Crisis of European Sciences (1935) investigates the loss of "genuine scientific character," a loss also affecting philosophy, which, "in our time," begins "to succumb to skepticism, irrationalism and mysticism." (Cr

3). Husserl locates the beginnings of "crisis" in the nineteenth century when "the total world-view of modern man...let itself be determined by the positive sciences and be 'blinded' by the prosperity they produced...." (Cr 6). With time, tradition and history, there is a continuous "corporeal incarnation" of meaning in "written documents," a "convulsive proliferation of libraries." (G 8). Due to the accumulation of such "incarnations," a kind of lethal sediment forms: an "unavoidable sedimentation of mental products in the form of persisting linguistic acquisitions." (Cr 362). "Persisting linguistic acquisitions" are as archival inscriptions "which may be taken up again...merely passively," words which remain "uncharged," without "vouloir-dire." With and within the lethal "sedimentation" of "linguistic acquisitions," "the originally intuitive life...falls victim to *the seduction of language*." (Cr 362). For Derrida, such "seduction of language" obscures presence: "the act of *pure thought* which created the ideality of sense." (81). Against Husserl, Derrida appreciates and accelerates a lethal "sediment," an absence of "pure thought."

(Again) in "The Time of a Thesis" Derrida asks, "why...does the inscription so fascinate me, preoccupy me, precede me? Why am I so fascinated by the literary ruse of the inscription...which manages to carry itself away...." (TT 38). Regarding a language, "fascination" with that which "precedes" one is fascination with the phonic/graphic substance of that language. Such fascination prompts what Husserl terms (in both the "First Investigation" and in "The Origin of Geometry") "association." In the "First Investigation" the origin of indication is described as "associative;" indication "operates creatively," producing "peculiar

descriptive characters and forms of unity." Regarding indications, the mind moves from indicator to indicated due to a mere "association" of the former with the latter: "If A summons B into consciousness, we usually *feel* their connection forcing itself upon us...." (LI 294). In "The Origin" Husserl relates association to passivity; a consciousness dominated by "crisis" is passively "open" to "a realm of things that...melt into one another associatively...." (Cr 361). For such a consciousness "all meaning that arises is put together passively," so that there is a lack of intentional "reactivation" and consciousness is limited to "the individual members" (the particular graphemes of, for example, an algebraic formula) and fails "to unify them as a whole." (Cr 361). In lieu of "reactivating" geometrical truth, such a consciousness "comes to nothing," and the "ontic validity" of truth is "destroyed." (Cr 361-2). From individual instances of passive association, a pervasive "seduction of language" results and each "originally intuitive life" may "lapse into a kind of talking and reading that is dominated purely by association....." (Cr 362). A consciousness dominated by "association" remains entranced, fascinated by phonic/graphic *phenomena* of language. Such a consciousness fails to "reactivate" "an expression in an indication, a word in the body of a letter...." (81).

In a terse, transitional paragraph (comprising one sentence in the English translation) Derrida suggests "archi-écriture" as an "underlying motif" which motivated the production of Husserl's text.³⁷ In "The Origin" Husserl "recognizes"

³⁷ The relevant paragraph/sentence: "But if Husserl had to recognize the necessity of these 'incarnations' as beneficial threats, it is because an underlying motif was disturbing and contesting the security of these distinctions from within

the necessity of "corporeal occurrences" for the communication and continuance of geometrical truth: "innumerable oral utterances...written or other documentations" are necessary to convey "the spiritual form" of the "ideal object." "Corporeal occurrences" of language are "beneficial," ensuring the tradition of geometry. Yet, as phonic/graphic substance, such "occurrences" "bear the threat of crisis itself," as each "occurrence" allows consciousness to be seduced by the *phenomena* of language. Stressing the ambiguous status of linguistic "incarnations," Derrida refers to the "beneficial threats of writing. Initially indicative, the written text is, essentially, a series of undecidable graphemes, indicators which *may* indicate *possible* objects or states of affairs. According to Derrida, Husserl "recognized" the "disturbing" undecidability of writing, a recognition which prompted more writing. Moreover, Derrida suggests that Husserl "recognized" a writing "within speech," so (like Rousseau) Husserl experienced the absence of speech or "writing within speech" and substituted mundane writing for speech, as writing "is indeed the only way of keeping or recapturing speech...." (G 142)." Insofar as the voice of soliloquy derives from introjected speech (however), Husserl also "recognized" an "archi-écriture" "at work" "in the inwardness of [voiced] thought." Manifest in "the body of a signifier," latent within "the inwardness of thought," "the crisis" threatens consciousness. The threat of "crisis" is momentarily averted by inscription, instances wherein time, by writing, becomes signed.

and because the possibility of writing dwelt within speech, which was itself at work in the inwardness of thought." (81-82).

Space in Time

With writing, speech or voice, the *signing* of time involves "incidences of primordial nonpresence." (82). Derrida finds "differance" -- the spatial and temporal play of phenomena -- within the voice. The voice effects itself and, through that effect, affects itself: "auto-affection is the exercise of the voice." The apparent autonomy of the voice actually derives from the indicative matrix: "space, the outside, the world, the body...." (82). As indicative "incidences" are "at work in the inwardness of thought," the voice is affected, infected by a "pure difference" which "comes to divide self-presence." Thus, there cannot not be a "pure transcendental reduction," and immediate self-presence is an illusion, an *effect of repetition*. The presentation of self to self ("self-presence") is actually a re-presentation, a repetition of signs which were/are, initially and essentially, *beyond one's own "sphere," found out in the world*.

There, then, "the movement of differance" occurs, a movement which "produces a subject." As "the movement of differance" requires the indicative matrix, that "movement" inheres within the experience of perceptual, pre-expressive sense. Through that "movement," moments of significance occur, and "the extension of sense exceeds that of *meaning*...." (115). "Produced" by outer, pre-expressive "movement," subjectivity is not found within, not founded on, "a level of pre-expressive experience" or "level of sense" which would be "prior to *Bedeutung* and expression." (83). Occurring before/beyond the voice, the productive "movement of differance" does not involve a perceptual sense "mirrored" by

"Bedeutung and expression."

Against space, the voice seems to make/take its own time. The voice is apparently "original," for "its substance seems to be purely temporal." For Husserl, the omnitemporality of ideal objects is "but a mode of temporality;" omnitemporality derives from one's own time. Now, referring to The Phenomenology of Inner Time Consciousness, Derrida insinuates "auto-affection" within the "source-point" from which "the movement of temporalization is produced." Husserl claims that "'the primal source....is not generated....It does not grow up (it has no seed): it is primal creation.'" Husserl's description, however, is "already adrift in ontic metaphor," involving, *for now*, the generative force of a seed.³⁸ One's own inner consciousness of time, "the new now," is "*a being*," a "*produced object*," for "every language fails to describe this pure movement other than by metaphor." Against an inner "temporalization," the "movement of differance" shows that "the process" of "the living now" is an "auto-affection in which the same is the same only in being affected by the other...the other of the same." Here, with "the other within," there's an agonistic, "indicative communication" between self and self, so that: "There is someone in me who kills with a burst of laughter....I do not escape the slaughter."

³⁸ Husserl uses the metaphor of "generation," but asserts that the "primal source" is *not* "a seed," a negation which presupposes the possibility of a now as that which does "grow up" from seed. More obviously, the very formulation/inscription of the "the absolute beginning...from which all others are continuously generated" requires "the seminal adventure of the trace." (WD 292).

(PC 80).³⁹ Thus, the "pure difference" of "differance" "introduces into self-presence...all the impurity putatively excluded from it." (85). Wrought through "movement," the 'I' is an event.

The eventual 'I' derives from the "trace," an internal "ecart" ('divergence'), so that: "the living present springs forth out its nonidentity with itself...." (85). Doubled or split, consciousness "can only present itself as such by relating back to itself; it can aver itself by severing itself, only reach itself if it breaches itself, (com)plying with itself...along a break...Presence is never present." (D 302). In Of

³⁹ Derrida suggests an ego which, by "the other within," is "spilt." In "The Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defense" Freud notes "a conflict between the demand [of instinct] and the prohibition [of reality]" and refers to "a little boy" who "between three and four...had become acquainted with the female genitals through being seduced by an older girl." After the seduction, the boy "carried on the sexual stimulation...by zealously practicing manual masturbation...." The boy's enjoyment was soon countered by a nurse who "threatened [him] with castration." The boy's earlier sight of the female genitals thus made that threat real. Now understanding that the girl lacked a penis, the boy "cannot help believing in the reality of the danger of castration." (OM 461-463). As a solution to that danger, he "created a substitute for the penis...a fetish." (Freud does not specify the nature of the fetish.) Through the fetish, the boy now "disavowed reality," but he "saved his own penis," now having possession of a "talisman" against castration, allowing him "to proceed with his masturbation undisturbed." Though the boy's "turning away from reality" was "artful," the art of displacement ["he transferred the importance of the penis to another part of the body"] soon provoked "an intense fear of his father punishing him...." The fetish thus became a new source of fear, and "the whole force of the boy's masculinity" was required "to master" that fear. Through the fetish, a simultaneous "disavowal of reality" and satisfaction of the instinct occurs and there is "a splitting of the ego," not a "splitting" between the agencies of ego and id, but, in effect, the creation of two egos.

The supplement of writing may be understood as the result of displacement, a "fetish," a substitute for speech. The neologism "differance" -- with its written, "pyramidal" a -- marks scenes of mundane writing. "Archi ecriture," as a result of "differance," spreads the fetish out into an indicative matrix which reflects "the inwardness of thought," an Other consciousness.

Grammatology "the trace" is defined as "*the absolute origin of sense in general*." Inhering within pre-expressive, perceptual experience, the "trace" (wr)i(te)s experience. As "the self...is primordially a trace," as "[b]eing-primordial must be thought on the basis of the trace," the "*trace*" *prepares (for) significance* and develops (into) a "proto-writing...at work at the origin of sense."⁴⁰ Once in "movement" as "archi ecriture," the "trace" is within "the order of 'signification.'"

Closing "The Voice That Keeps Silence," Derrida makes the phonic graphic, and so insinuates "a spacing" within "*the temporalization of sense*." Derrida's "argument" presupposes "archi ecriture." In Of Grammatology "archi ecriture" is described as "a spacing" which "marks the *dead time* within the presence of the living present." (G 68). Such "dead time is at work," working against the self-presence of subjectivity: "[s]pacing as writing is the becoming-absent and the becoming-unconscious of the subject." (G 69). Derrida's "argument" also presupposes a distinction between "inside" and "outside," a distinction between time and space, oppositions to be solved. A generalized writing solves or dissolves the oppositions: "As soon as we admit spacing...as openness upon the outside, there can no longer be any absolute inside," so "[s]pace is 'in' time." (86). Thus, a spaced time violates and voids a writing which adheres to the temporality of

⁴⁰ 'Significance,' in contrast to 'meaning,' need not have objective and/or denotative value, as when one says 'that scent has significance for me.' Roland Barthes perhaps describes significance when he writes of "the thrill of meaning," a "thrill" which may "explode...burst out without ever assuming the definite form of a sign grimly weighted by its signified...." (Barthes by Barthes, p. 80).

one's own voice. Against phonologocentric prose, against one's own time and "sphere," "the externality of space...opens as pure 'outside' 'within' the movement of temporalization." (86). The experience of "hearing oneself speak," the lure of a writing which (miming voice) makes one's lines "mine," "is not the inwardness of an inside that is closed in upon itself...." (86). Assuming "archi ecriture," accumulating "an indicative web," "hearing oneself speak" becomes an "openness in the inside...the eye and the world within speech." Such "openness," "eye" and "world" alter the consciousness. The attempt to exclude the world "by the most rigorous transcendental reduction" is vain, an attempt which would, by the exclusion of writing, void its resources. Irreducibly tied to "exteriority in general," made through writing, "[p]henomenological reduction is a scene, a theater stage." (86).

Chapter Seven

Read *through*, the essay suggests a dissolve: the 'I' who wrote, the 'I' who spoke a speech which writing once conveyed, "fades,"¹ and "the zero-point of the subjective origin....the here...now" is altered, made Other. (94). Derrida first notes a "supplementary difference," suggesting, by a written 'a,' scenes of mundane writing. A certain "death by writing...inaugurates life," an "ultratrascendental" life, one simultaneously lost in the Imaginary and found in the Symbolic. From that life, a phenomenal speech issues.

Via Lacan

In Lacan's topology, the Imaginary is the domain of specular identification, a domain founded on the infant's experience of "the mirror stage," a stage in which "the subject...assumes an image....the mental permanence of the I." (E 2).² Aware,

¹ Lacan refers to a "fading of the subject." (Lacan, Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, p. 208.) Such "fading" involves a certain 'transition,' a shift from the other [i.e. the other person or thing which transcends one's consciousness] to the Other [i.e. the Unconscious]. As "[t]he Other is the locus in which is situated the chain of signifiers that governs whatever may be made present," as the Other is "that living being in which the subject has to appear," the subject -- which "depends on the signifier...in the field of the Other" -- is, during its insistence "reduced to being no more than a signifier...." (4F 203, 205, 207). In the instant of the signifier/indicator, the signified/indicated "fades." In the instant of speech/writing, certain *phenomena* take place for the subject, take the place of the subject, displace the subject, so that "the subject manifests himself in this movement of disappearance....the *fading* of the subject." (4 F 208.)

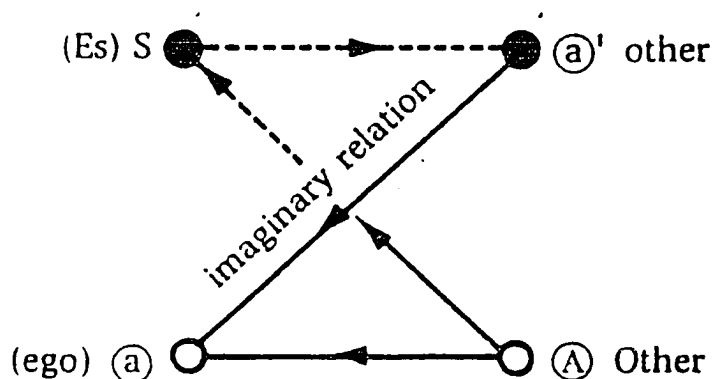
² Throughout this chapter, all citations from Lacan's texts are abbreviated: E: Ecrits; S I: Seminar - Book I; S II: Seminar - Book II; 4F: Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis. Most citations from Freud are (as in the previous chapter) from the collection OM: On Metapsychology.

with Freud, that "the ego is first and foremost a body-ego" (OM 364), Lacan claims that the ego develops from the "assumption" of the image of the (m)other's body; the seen gestalt of the (m)other becomes "the statue in which man projects himself." (E 2). Through "the sight...of the whole form of the human body," the subject receives "an imaginary mastery over his body...premature in relation to real mastery." (S I 79). Thus, through the "mirror stage," "Je est un autre."³ Lacan describes such "imaginary mastery" as "the original adventure through which man, for the first time, has the experience of seeing himself, of reflecting on himself and conceiving of himself as other than he is...." (S I 79).

According to Lacan's "L-Schema,"⁴ an imaginary relation is sustained

³ In The Seminar - Book II Lacan cites Rimbaud's formulation: "the Freudian discovery....is quite well expressed by Rimbaud's fleeting formula -- poets, as is well known, don't know what they're saying, yet they still manage to say things before anyone else -- 'I is an other.'" (S II 7).

⁴



between 'a' and 'a*,' between the ego [a] and its objects [a*]. Mundane writing (wherein the ego sees, hears and understands its own "painting of sounds") makes and attempts to sustain that relation. In The Seminar - Book III Lacan notes that "[t]he registers of the Symbolic and the Imaginary recur in the two other terms in which [Saussure] expresses the structure of language, namely, the signified and the signifier." (S III 53). Lacan then aligns the "imaginary relation...to ethology, to animal psychology": the "imaginary relation" is "a sexual relation [which] implies capture by the other's image." (S III 177). While the symbolic relation [between 'A' and 'S'] is "open to the neutrality of the order of knowledge," the imaginary relation "seems...the very domain of the erotization of the object." (S III 177). Scenes of mundane of writing -- the indicative phenomena of writing -- are *initially* other, and, through that mirroring, eroticized "image of the other," "the imaginary structuration of the ego" may form. (S II 95). Such "imaginary structuration" is the way, the ethos, of mundane, phonologocentric prose.

In Of Grammatology Derrida claims that "narrow and derivative writing" "supplements" speech; "writing is speech as it should be or...as it *should have been*." (G 141). "[T]he operation that substitutes writing for speech...replaces presence" and "diverts the immediate presence of thought to speech into representation and imagination." (G 142, 144). In "The Ego and the Id" Freud notes that "repressions proceed" from the ego. In the essay "Repression" Freud defines "the motive and purpose of repression" as "the avoidance of unpleasure." (OM 153). Mundane writing, as activity with and within the Imaginary, suits,

traditionally, a foreclosure of speech, the *repression* of a speech which would disclose the Other. Serving a fascinated ego, mundane writing traditionally avoids the "unpleasure" -- "iteration," "breaking force" and "spacing" -- experienced in speech, avoids events which evidence the Other.

Introducing "the Big Other," Lacan claims: "[w]e must distinguish between two *others*...an other with a capital O, and an other with a small o, which is the ego. In the function of speech, we are concerned with the *Other*." (S II 236). Lacan assumes, with Freud, that "at any given moment consciousness includes only a small content, so that the greater part of...conscious knowledge must be...in a state of latency, [be] psychically unconscious" (OM 168). According to the "L- Schema," the Other is identified with the Unconscious; all language and all significance which ("now") eludes consciousness remains lodged within the Unconscious/Other. In the analytic context, the truth of the speaking subject is found through the "Other": "The condition of the subject is dependent on what is being unfolded in the place of the Other." (E 193). The analyst/auditor thus discerns, within the speaker's speech, two relations: an alienated relation between the ego [a] and its other [a*] and a relation between the speaking subject [S] and the Unconscious [A].

Without mundane writing and with "archi ecriture," consciousness, like the subject who speaks "in analysis," is simultaneously (and interminably) lost in the Imaginary and the found in the Symbolic. Lost in the sights and sounds of so many *other* words, Derrida's essay eventually marks a way which accommodates

and allows the Other, a way involving a hyper-dialectic (without synthesis, without sublation into a third term) between the Imaginary and Symbolic. There is thus rapid transit between two domains. Through such transit, consciousness incessantly "supplements" itself, differs/defers (from) itself and is altered. Taken in two directions, lost/found in two at once, consciousness is given to and through a "primordial supplementation," a "primordial substitution." The "for-itself" of the ego becomes "an '*in-the-place-of-itself*' put *for itself*, instead of itself." (89). The "strange structure of the supplement" is an "operation" which "fissures and retards presence, submitting it...to primordial division and delay." (88). To be present to itself, to achieve "self-presence," consciousness must sign (itself), repeat (itself) and read (itself), elsewhere.⁵

Consciousness thus requires signs, and, as "the need for signs" is "the need for indications," consciousness "is caught up in an indicative web." Lacan notes that man, "as he is committed to a play of symbols," is a "decentered subject." (S II 47). Derrida, through the insinuation of an aphonic "archi ecriture," opens subjectivity to a "play of symbols" which displaces and displays the ego -- beyond a "narrow connection" to the other of (its) writing --- within the Unconscious, within

⁵ A result of "self-knowledge," "self-presence" would be the realization of the inscription upon the temple of Apollo at Delphi. In the "Phaedrus" [230 a] Socrates admits that he "has not yet succeeded in obeying the Delphic injunction to 'know myself.'" In "Plato's Pharmacy" Derrida appreciates Socrates *reading*: "this imperative of self-knowledge is not first felt or dictated by any transparent immediacy of self-presence. It is not perceived. Only interpreted, read, deciphered." (D 69).

the Other.⁶: "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other." (E 193). In contrast to the imaginary relation between 'a' and 'a*' (which is the "hold" of intentional consciousness), the Other is the Unconscious, the "place" which funds the truth of the subject's discourse: "The condition of the subject is dependent on what is being unfolded in the place of the Other." (E 193). What "unfolds" in/from that place is *phenomena*, unintentional "moments...dreams [images]...slips of the tongue or pen...flashes of wit" which go and remain beyond the ego's discourse, beyond the "hold" of intentional consciousness. In terms of Derrida's essay, such phenomena are those "gestures" which escape "the pure spiritual intention, the pure animation by *Geist*."

The Other prompts, for the 'I,' a certain death, a "fading." In relation to 'a*' (the other in general: "fellow man...neighbor...ideal I, a washbowl....these are all others" (S II 8)), the subject "sees himself...and that is why he has a an ego;" "the ego is an imaginary function" of the relation between 'a*' and 'a.'" (S II 36). Such a relation is (in a world of others), to a degree, inevitable; Lacan describes the Imaginary as a stage of identification which "everybody is at...there's no way of getting out of it." (S II 243). The analytic subject, however, is generally fascinated with and alienated through its others, bound to an imaginary relation, one wherein mundane writing often thrives. In a bibliopedic culture, the scene of mundane

⁶ The distinction between 'other' and 'Other' figures in Lacan's "L-Schema." 'S' marks "the [speaking] subject, the analytic subject."

writing ("the book": "perhaps the most charged, cathected object...."⁷) remains the site of meaning; Lacan notes that "meaning is by nature imaginary....it is tightly bound to what interests you...to that in which you are ensnared." (S III 54). Ensnared by the "delusional speech" of phonologocentric prose, "the Other is truly excluded...there is so little truth that the subject places none there himself, and in the face of this phenomenon...his attitude is one of perplexity." (S III 53). Such perplexity funds mundane writing, that speculation which, as it "gives itself as the image of speech," "seriously denatures what it claims to imitate." (D 137). Repressing speech, writing is "a 'fabrication of dead wood'" which the writer "wants to see erected 'in speech.'"⁸ Simultaneously forgetting and "getting back at" speech, "writing's case is grave." (D 103). By an acceleration and exacerbation of that "case," by an *explosion* of the "anguish"⁹ of mundane writing, Derrida suggests an Other consciousness, one markedly unlike authors of phonologocentric prose.

Derrida's "Argument"

Assuming expression, assuming that it is "more full than indication" (as

⁷ Ulmer, Applied Grammatology, p. 13.

⁸ Derrida, Signsponge, p. 6.

⁹ In Of Grammatology, apropos of Rousseau, Derrida notes that "the experience of auto-eroticism is lived in anguish." Masturbation is one link in a "chain of supplements" of which "narrow and derivative" writing is exemplary. In both cases (wherein a "supplement" "'cheats nature'") the "danger is that of the image." (G 151). "Anguish" [derived from the Latin "angustia," 'distress' and "angustus," 'narrow'] involves a channelling or focusing of libido onto an image, an imaginary relation. The writer connects to, narrowly, an image.

expressive discourse seems to not involve any "appresentational detour"), Derrida claims that "expression itself implies...a nonplenitude." (89).¹⁰ Despite the "intuitionist theory of knowledge" from which the phenomenological "theory of the sign" derives [i.e. the intuition of an object informs a voice which may inform speech which, finally, may impose mundane writing], there is an always possible absence of intuition. Derrida selectively reads Husserl's text, finding letteral evidence for the claim that "intuition is not indispensable," that expression may "dispense with the presence of the object...." (90). If an absence of intuition is "*tolerated* by speech," then that same absence is, *a fortiori*, granted through mundane writing, the inscription of speech. Based on the experience of mundane writing, "archi ecriture" occurs within expressive discourse, so that "one can speak without knowing" and achieve "the freedom of language...the candor of speech." (89). Through that achievement, consciousness is altered.

Derrida first refers to a "last exclusion...to which Husserl invites us," an "exclusion" which "consists in putting out of play...the acts of intuitive cognition which 'fulfill' meaning." (90). "Intuitive acts" refers to a perceptual intuition of an entity, an intuition which would authenticate a meaning-intention. Throughout the "First Investigation" Husserl refers to such intuition as "illustrative intuition." In Section 20 he notes that such intuition does not occur in "purely symbolic

¹⁰ By assuming expression here, Derrida apparently reads *with* Husserl. The purpose of the assumption, however, is (granting expressive speech) to *alter* "full," expressive speech with an "empty," indicative speech -- to produce a speech fraught with the iteration, breaking force and spacing "that can be recognized in the classical, narrowly defined concept of writing." (Lt 9).

thinking," e.g. determining the product of two four-digit numerals. In Section 11 of the "First Investigation" Husserl distinguishes between "the expression itself, its sense ["Bedeutung"] and its objective correlate." (LI 284).¹¹ Within "purely symbolic thinking" an expression can function freely, without a relation to its "objective correlate." In Section 12 Husserl offers examples which evidence the autonomy of "Bedeutung" in relation to a perceived, "objective correlate": two distinct expressions may, despite differing "Bedeutungen," refer to the same object: "'the victor at Jena'" and "'the vanquished at Waterloo;'" two identical expressions may, despite a shared "Bedeutung," refer to distinct objects: "'Bucephalus is a horse,'" "'This steed is a horse.'" The "Bedeutung" of an expression is not necessarily bound to any perceptual or "illustrative intuition" or "objective correlate." Thus, in Section 13 Husserl claims that "the essence of an expression lies solely in its meaning," and, in Section 14, that a "relation to an actually given objective correlate, which fulfills the meaning-intention, is *not* essential to an expression." (LI I 289, 290). In Section 19 ["Understanding Without Intuition"] Husserl notes that "[t]hose who locate the meaning-aspect of symbols in intuition, must find purely symbolic thinking insolubly enigmatic." (LI I 303); the "purely symbolic thinking" of mathematics often occurs without "authenticating intuitions" of the numbers for which numerals stand. Glossing Husserl's text, Derrida then claims that, although "the act of meaning" always aims at or intends "a relation with an object," "[t]he

¹¹ "Bedeutung," here, is comparable with Fregean "Sinn" ['sense'] which orients and/or directs an expression to its object or referent.

fulfillment of that aim by an intuition is not indispensable." (90).

In Section 9 of the "First Investigation" Husserl distinguishes, within expression, between "the physical phenomenon," "act," "meaning" and "intuitive fullness": "expression breaks up...into the *physical phenomenon* forming the physical side of the expression...the *acts* which give it [the expression] *meaning* and possibly also *intuitive fullness*, in which its [an act's] relation to an expressed object is constituted." (LI I 280).¹² Citing that passage, Derrida then asserts: "Fullness is only contingent. The absence of the object does not compromise the meaning...." (90). Returning to Section 9, continuing the citation: "In virtue of such acts, the expression is more than a merely sounded word. It *means* something...it relates to what is objective."

Derrida's "argument" depends on semantic ambiguity within Husserl's text. Derrida asserts that "the absence of the object" does not jeopardize the meaning of an expression; a "'fulfilling' intuition [of an object] is not essential to expression...." (91). According to Husserl, expression follows from an intentional "act" through which an expression "*means* something" and "relates to what is objective." For Husserl, meanings *are* objective, are of irreal objects. The intentional act which produces a meaningful expression is necessarily already of an object. When Derrida claims that "the absence of the object" does not "compromise" or affect the

¹² The relation between "act" and "meaning" -- between an intentional "act" and the "meaning" which that "act" intends prompts a question: is "meaning" intuited or constituted, received or sent? The enigma -- the abyss -- of that question orients the whole essay. Generally, the activity/passivity of "differance" (which generates "archi ecriture") displaces (but does not solve) the enigma.

meaning of an expression, he refers to what Husserl terms an "illustrative intuition," i.e. perceptual intuition of an entity. In Section 10 of the "First Investigation" Husserl asserts that "all objects and relations among objects only are what they are for us, through acts...in which they [objects and relations among objects] become present to us [and] stand before us as unitary items of what we mean." (LI I 283). In Section 21 Husserl notes that a certain intuition and objectivity is necessary for meaningful expression: "[c]onceptual essences are...'given' when the word-meanings (i.e. the meaning-intentions of the words) terminate in corresponding, directly intuitive presentations...." Intuitively fulfilled, expressions "are not mere statements concerning elements or relations of meanings, but [are] evident necessities concerning the *objects* thought of in these meanings...." (LI I 307). Selectively misreading Husserl's text, Derrida suggests that objectivity is not essential to understanding an expression.

Fading of the 'I'

Having "concluded" that "meaning does not imply the intuition of the object but...essentially excludes it," that "[w]hat is structurally original about meaning [is] the absence of any object given to intuition," Derrida focuses on the status of a particular, peculiar "object": the 'I.' Considering the perceptual statement "'I see a particular person by the window,'" Derrida claims that, though 'I' may actually see and perceive a certain person, "[i]t is structurally implied in my performance that the content of this expression is ideal and...is not impaired by the absence of

perception here and now." (93). Whoever hears/reads and understands the intended expression also understands, despite an initially indicative phonic/graphic "shell," an "ideal content," an "eidos" which does not require intuition. It is obvious that "purely symbolic thinking" often occurs without "illustrative intuition." Derrida, however, writes to "fade" within the "here and now," claiming, finally: "There never was any perception." (103). Suggesting tele-communication in general, Derrida writes: "Whoever hears ['entend'] this proposition ['I see a particular person by the window'], whether he is next to me or infinitely removed in space and time, should, by right, understand what I mean to say." (93). *Understanding* a perceptual statement -- one's *instant* of (its) understanding -- implies "a structure [which] will never form an 'intimately blended unity' with intuition." (93). That "structure" is the "originally repetitive structure" or "indicative web" in which all signs are caught: a "structure" which makes "all empirical culture appear in the generalized equivocation of a writing that...circulates throughout all languages at once...and rediscovers the poetic value of passivity." (OG 102).¹³

¹³ In his "Introduction to the Origin of Geometry" Derrida notes a "choice of two endeavors." One endeavor involves creative force, in contrast to "form" or structure: "*Form* fascinates when one no longer has the force to understand force from within itself. That is, to create." (WD 4-5). The first endeavor "would resemble that of James Joyce: to repeat and take responsibility for all equivocation itself, utilizing a language that could equalize the greatest possible synchrony with the greatest potential for buried, accumulated and interwoven intentions within each linguistic atom, each vocable, each word...." (OG 102). Thus, the first endeavor would create and (en)force an equivocal language of "all wordly [sic!] cultures in their most ingenious forms," the language of *Finnegans Wake*, a language which multiplies (the voice of) the 'I' into disparate *voices*. "The other endeavor is Husserl's: to reduce or impoverish empirical language methodically to the point where its univocal and translatable elements are actually transparent...to reach

Of "Mere Meaning"

In Section 9 of the "First Investigation" Husserl considers, briefly, situations wherein "[t]he relation of expression to object is...unrealized": "if the object is not intuitively before one, and so not before one as a named or meant object, *mere meaning* is all there is...." (LI I 280, my emphasis). It is obvious that, in our era of tele-communications, much that we "know" involves "objects" which are not "intuitively before one."¹⁴ My "knowledge" of electrons, "Strange Attractors," Ancient Egypt and recent events in Asia remains "mere;" the tele-communicated, "mere meanings" which comprise such "knowledge" occur without "illustrative intuitions" of the relevant "objects." Derrida insinuates such "mereness" within that which is most near: one's own "*hic et nunc*." The very fact that a perceptual statement ["I see a particular person by the window"] is understandable -- by an actual other or by "the other within me" -- entails, in the instant of (its) understand-

back and grasp again at its pure source a historicity or traditionality that no de facto historical totality will yield of itself." (OG 103).

With phenomenology (with philosophy), the "choice" of "endeavors" may be understood in relation to the distinction between "genesis" and "structure." In the essay "'Genesis and Structure' and Phenomenology" Derrida notes Husserl's difficult "navigation" "between the Scylla and Charybdis of logicizing structuralism and psychologistic genetism." Derrida then claims that Husserl thus "had to open up a new direction of philosophical attention...the discovery of a concrete, but nonempirical, intentionality, a 'transcendental experience' which would be 'constitutive' ...simultaneously productive and revelatory, active and passive." (WD 158). The "non-concept," the "*operation*," of "differance" effects that "concrete, but nonempirical, intentionality." The "movement of differance" is a "movement of disappearance," "the *fading* of the subject."

¹⁴ Such knowledge would be that which "enables us to pass beyond the limits of our private experience." (Russell, Problems of Philosophy, p. 59).

ing, an "absence of intuition": "My nonperception, my nonintuition, my *hic et nunc* absence are expressed by that very thing that I say, by *that* which I say and *because* I say it." (93). The possibility of language entails a possible impossibility of "illustrative intuition." Though the indicator/signifier is an "object or state of affairs of whose reality someone has actual knowledge," the indicated/signified aspect of the indicative sign remains "unactualized," for the indicator merely "motivates" "*belief or surmise in the reality*" of the indicated. The essentially indicative sign -- voiced within consciousness, spoken to an other or spatialized through mundane writing -- entails, in its instance, an absence of intuition, the absence of the object. Thus, Derrida claims that an "absence of intuition...is *required* by the general structure of signification, when considered *in itself*." In relation to writing, "the death of the writer and/or the disappearance of the objects which he was able to describe -- does not prevent a text from 'meaning' something." 'Meaning,' here, does not refer to the "vouloir-dire" or intended meaning of an author/text; Derrida refers to a certain meaning, a "mere meaning." Along lines of "mere meaning," "the total absence of the subject and/or the disappearance of the objects he was able to describe....gives birth to meaning as such, gives it out to be heard and read." (93).¹⁵

¹⁵ A curious conversion: commonly, one would claim that a text is first seen and read, and then "heard" or understood. Derrida suggests that the "meaning" of writing (before it is read) is already heard/understood.

How 'I' Fades

That which is signed entails absence. Derrida then attends to that which signs, to the source of signs: "the personal pronoun *I*." As the object of a "mere meaning," the 'I' is not "intuitively before one" and "death is structurally necessary to the pronouncing of the *I*." (96). In Section 26 of the "First Investigation" Husserl considers "essentially occasional expressions." Indexicals ('now,' 'here,' 'this,' 'I') require, for reference and meaning, cognizance of "the actual circumstances of utterance."¹⁶ Only through recourse to the context within which an indexical is expressed can the reference/meaning of that indexical be determined. Occurring within a context, referring to a particular person, thing or entity in spacetime, all "occasional expressions" are necessarily *indicative*. In contrast, "objective expressions" ("expressions out of which the principles and theorems, the proofs and theories of the 'abstract' sciences are made up" (LI I 315)) remain invariant and "are absolutely pure expressions, free from all indicative contamination." (94).

With actual speech, indication occurs whenever the personal pronoun 'I' occurs, occluding each ('I' to the) other. Husserl notes that "the word 'I'....does not work like the word 'lion.'" Unlike 'lion' ("which can arouse the idea of a lion in and of itself"), "the meaning of 'I' is essentially realized in the immediate idea of one's

¹⁶ In Section 26 Husserl distinguishes "between *essentially subjective and occasional* expressions" and "*objective* expressions." (LI I 314). The meaning of an indexical is *not* objective. Due to the "ever altering meaning" of indexicals, "[e]very expression...that includes a *personal pronoun* lacks an objective sense [meaning]." (LI I 315). Contingent reference determines the "ever altering" and "mere meaning" of an indexical.

own personality...." (LI I 316). For Husserl, such realization *first* occurs with "solitary speech" within one's own "sphere;" once so "realized," "the meaning of 'I'" ("the immediate idea of one's own personality") then inheres within "communicated speech." Each speaking subject thus has his/her "own I-presentation," his/her own "individual notion of I," and "that is why the word's meaning differs...." The word 'I' merely *indicates that* each speaking subject has such an "immediate idea." Thus, in the "case" of 'I,' "an indicative function mediates, "crying as it were, to the hearer...." (LI 316). Essentially indicative, the personal pronoun 'I' is tainted by its cry.

Through its cry, the 'I' "fades." In the final section of Of Grammatology, "From/Of the Supplement to the Source," Derrida notes, apropos of Rousseau's "Essay on the Origin of Language," an "absolute fear" at the "metaphoric origin of language." In the "Essay" Rousseau notes that when "'meeting others'" "'savage men will *initially* be frightened'." (G 277). Before communicative speech, before "reconciliation and presence," there is, in the encounter with the other, fear: "the other is *first* encountered....he is immense, like a master and a threatening force...." (G 278). Coeval with the experienced other, such fear "is the experience of the small and silent [*infans*] man." The intimidated, "silent man" is arrested within a state which Derrida, following Rousseau, identifies as "need," a state from which "gestures" issue. Derrida cites Rousseau: "'It seems then that need dictated the first gestures, while the passions wrung forth the first words.'" (G 273). There is thus caesura, a break, between "need" and "passion." The transition from "need"

to "passion" -- the transition from "nature" ("pure nature is *dispersion*") to "culture" ("the effect of reconciliation") -- requires *comprehending* that caesura, thinking it through, thinking through it.

The transition from "nature"/"need" to "culture"/"passion" is, also, a transit from the Imaginary to the Other, *from the essentially Imaginary 'I' to the Symbolic domain wherein one's speech assumes linguistic form*. In terms borrowed from Benveniste and Saussure, Lacan identifies the act of uttering ["enonciation"] with "la parole" and the utterance per se ["enonce"] with "la langue." The ego or "moi" "speaks a *parole* which links the Imaginary realm of primary meaning to the Symbolic realm of *langue*...."¹⁷ A speaker's "act," a speaker's work, follows from a biological need for "*identification*," for "the transformation which takes place in the subject when he assumes an image." (E 2). As described by Lacan in "The Mirror Stage," the Imaginary ("the matrix for all future presence and identity"¹⁸) is the place of "spatial captation," the site through which the ego becomes "situated": the gestalt of the other "situates the agency of the ego, before its social determination...." (E 4,2). For the intimidated infant, that site is the (m)other, a certain configuration of percepts.

¹⁷ Ragland-Sullivan, Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis, p. 159. The act of uttering, "la parole," consequently "belongs to the agency of the 'self' -- the je -- which transmits the *moi* request for love....*parole* also refers to the substitutive dimension in which Desire is integrated on the Symbolic plane through [the] *objet a* [*]...." (Ibid.). Through certain "acts" of speech, subjective desire achieves the Symbolic. The basis of those acts is *need*.

¹⁸ Weber, Return to Freud: Lacan's Dislocation of Psychoanalysis, p. 103.

In the 1895 Project Freud refers to an "original helplessness of human beings;" suffering the absence of the (m)other, the infant cries. Once "the extraneous helper has carried out the specific action...on behalf of the helpless subject," the site of the (m)other (and its configuration of percepts) "constitutes an 'experience of satisfaction.'"¹⁹ Lacking that "experience," the infant encounters dissatisfaction, nature, "pure dispersion." Rousseau, exemplary of phonologocentric authority, writes to renew the "experience of satisfaction," a "pleasure" which "is always a receiving of presence." (G 280). For Derrida, the "experience of satisfaction" (and/or the lack of that experience) becomes an "originary metaphor," the metaphorical origin of language. Phonologocentric authority generally writes for that experience, against a lack of that experience. For phonologocentric authority within a bibliopedic culture, the purpose of writing, of that writing which is termed "good," is presence: the returned presence of the (m)other and, through that presence, access to the Symbolic.

Mundane writing (in its anguished relation between a and a*) *attempts* transit from the Imaginary to the Symbolic, as "the becoming-language of the cry" seemingly leaves the Imaginary and achieves the Other. The attempted transit, however, is foiled, for the Other thrives in a space beyond the frame (and mirroring tain) of the book.²⁰ Fascinated with a booked writing, avoiding speech, a

¹⁹ Freud, "The Project," in The Origins of Psychoanalysis, pp. 299, 380.

²⁰ In his notes for The Large Glass Marcel Duchamp summarizes the plight of artistic production *and* phonologocentric authority when he notes, regarding the "malic moulds" of the "Bachelor Apparatus," "*they will never be able to pass beyond*

bildopedic, bibliopedic culture actually forecloses the Other.

Unless there is another transit (and there is), so that: "[t]he becoming-language of the cry is the movement by which spoken plenitude begins to become what it is through losing itself, hollowing itself out, breaking itself...." (G 270). If speech "hollows" itself (out), then the caesura between "need"/"nature" and "passion"/"culture" may be recomprehended, taken in reverse, allowing *transit from the Symbolic to the Imaginary*. As one passes from the Imaginary (the force of "parole") to the Symbolic (the forms of "la langue") by "producing an uttered," so may one simultaneously pass from the Symbolic to the Imaginary by *re-cognizing* already produced utterances, already formed statements. Such recognition is also a reinscription of "any statement -- a newspaper article, a scientific theorem, a snatch of conversation" within one's "literary space," the space of a switch. (SI 45). The switch involves "seeing," materializing, each indicator/signifier as a *cry of need, a need which is essentially and irrevocably one's own*. The re-cognition of one's own "sphere" within already formed discourse counters, essentially, the ethos of ex-pressive consciousness, making the 'I' now "fade."

The essay suggests that we see "the movement by which spoken plenitude begins to become what it is," seize the "hollow" of speech, write the 'I.' The writing of an 'I' so hollowed, of an 'I' so full of (and fulfilled through) the indicative matrix, follows from "what Husserl describes as an abnormal situation...." (96). Derrida

the Mask = They would have been as if enveloped...by a mirror reflecting back to them their own complexity to the point of their being hallucinated rather onanistically." (Duchamp, Writings of Marcel Duchamp, p. 51).

notes Husserl's analysis of "the zero-point of subjective origin, the *I*..." (94). Though the 'I' within communicative speech necessarily functions indicatively (in relation to the other), Husserl asserts that "[i]n solitary speech the meaning of 'I' is essentially realized in the immediate idea of one's own possibility." (LI 316). Posed in the interrogative ["does not the appearance of the word *I* in solitary speech...already function as an ideality?"], Derrida claims that "the *appearance* of...*I*" is "already...an ideality," already an object "capable of remaining *the same* for an I-here-now in general," an ideality which may be maintained, "keeping its sense even if my empirical presence is eliminated or radically modified." (90).²¹ Such an 'I' -- as it accords with language and asserts "'I am'" -- is intelligible only "in the absence of intuitive presence...in the absence of myself."²² An inclusive, generalized 'I' (the "I-here-now in general") occurs, and the "border...between solitary

²¹ Without argument, Derrida simply "slides" from the absence of "illustrative intuition" (which occurs in "purely symbolic thinking") to the absence of perceptual intuition (which occurs in the instant of understanding a perceptual statement) to "the absence of intuitive presence" which occurs "[w]hen I tell myself 'I am.'" He, in effect, shifts from the object of an intuition to the subject within whom an intuition would inhere: "Just as I need not perceive in order to understand a statement about perception, so there is no need to intuit the object *I* in order to understand the word *I*." (96). The shift induces an unusual, porous "border" between world and self, an "ultratranscendental concept of life," a life which shifts, incessantly, from the Imaginary to the Symbolic *and* from the Symbolic to the Imaginary.

²² Derrida notes that "it is in this way" ("in the absence of intuitive presence") "that the *ergo sum* is introduced into the philosophical tradition," suggesting Descartes' claim in the "Second Meditation": "I must finally conclude that this proposition, *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true *whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind*." (Second emphasis mine; Descartes, in Philosophical Writings of Descartes, p. 17). The certainty of one's existence follows from a propositional act through which (during which) one's existence is, paradoxically, rendered absent.

speech and communication" becomes porous, "less certain," more prone to instants of "mere meaning" found within the indicative matrix. Found out in the world, a generalized 'I' is already written.

Derrida cites Husserl: "What its meaning [that of the word 'I'] is...can only be gleaned from the living utterance and from the intuitive circumstances which surround it. If we read this word ['I'] without knowing who wrote it, it is perhaps not meaningless but it is at least estranged from its normal meaning") and asserts: "*Husserl's premises should sanction our saying exactly the contrary.*" (96). Written and read, the word 'I,' though "perhaps not meaningless," is detached from "the living utterance and...the intuitive circumstances which surround[ed] it," and *that is its normal circumstance*. Written, spoken or voiced -- the 'I' is, in the instant of (its) understanding, necessarily detached from "intuitive circumstances." Whenever, wherever 'I' occurs, it is as if it were written by an author who is "unknown" or "fictitious" or "dead." (96).

"Switching"

An 'I' between the Symbolic and the Imaginary may, though alive, also be dead. Derrida asserts: "The statement 'I am alive' is accompanied by my being dead...." (96). Undecidable, the "grave case" of writing becomes a "completely angelic" scene of projections (sendings) and introjections (receivings), an Other scene wherein consciousness "scan[s] the totality of lands as if they were

cuneiform signs,"²³ a scene of "switching."

In "The Philosophy of Electrical Science"²⁴ Allan Bass notes that Freud "guarantees the truth of psychoanalysis in terms of its refusal to employ the paranoid mechanism of projection." (PS 184). Freud, in his letters to Fleiss, first finds support from, and identification with, the older physician; later (in response to Fleiss' charge that psychoanalysis is "thought-reading," that "'the reader of thoughts merely reads his own thoughts into other people'") Freud accuses Fleiss of paranoia. Beginning his argument for a certain "switching," Bass cites Freud's December 9, 1899 letter to Fleiss: "The lowest of the sexual strata is autoerotism, which dispenses with any psychosexual aim and seeks only locally gratifying sensations. It is then succeeded by alloerotism (homo- or heteroerotism).... Hysteria...is alloerotic, since its main path is identification with the loved one. Paranoia...dissolves the identification...and dissolves the ego itself into extraneous persons. So I have come to regard paranoia as a forward surge of the autoerotic state, as a return to a former state." (PS 180-81). Bass paraphrases that letter: "So, Wilhelm, I will love the analytic, interpretive aspects of paranoia, as part of my hysteria; as a paranoid, you will have to see my interpretive capacities as a threat."

²³ In "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy" Derrida, suggesting the (en)trance of the Other, asks: "And if the dispatches always refer to other dispatches without decidable destination, the destination remaining to come, then isn't this completely angelic structure...also the structure of every scene of writing in general?" (OLR 27). Such a scene results from "switching."

²⁴ Collected in The Conflict of the Faculties. All citations from Bass' essay are abbreviated: PS.

(PS 181).

Very basically, Bass suggests that Freud's metapsychology or "philosophy of electrical science" requires Freud's hysterical identification with Fleiss' paranoia, so that one asks, "How far does the identification go? Does it include...identification with the paranoid's tendency toward a breakdown of identifications, toward disidentification?" (PS 181). In a word, yes -- psychoanalysis is, in its theory and practice, a merger, a "'guided paranoia'" which requires both "alloerotic identification and autoerotic disidentification." The theory of psychoanalysis, Freud's metapsychology, makes similar "identifications/disidentifications" with other disciplines: medicine, philosophy, biology, literature; moreover, the very inscriptions which form that text termed "psychoanalysis" involve, like all writing, hysterical identifications (which make forward progress) and paranoid disidentifications (which unmake and regress). Psychoanalysis thus includes "a principle of disintergration [paranoia] at the heart of its principles of integration." (PS 183).

Alluding to Breuer's conception of the psyche as a "'widely ramified electrical system,'" Bass then introduces "the circuit breaker" as a mechanism which may "stop the 'transmission of motor power'" and break "the 'establishment of a contact' when it is necessary to eliminate some apparatus from an overloaded circuit. Projection serves just such a function...." (PS 183-84). Bass cites Freud: "'projection...makes its appearance not only in paranoia but under other psychological conditions as well...in fact it has a regular share...in our attitude towards the external world.'"

There is, then, "projection" -- the "circuit breaker" -- operative in the general field of experience. Importantly, the paranoid person's projection is guided by the "unconscious mind," the Other; Bass cites from Freud's 1922 text "Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality": "'they [paranoiacs] do not project into the blue....They let themselves be guided by their knowledge of the unconscious, and displace to the unconscious minds of others the attention which they have withdrawn from themselves.'" (PS 186).

Finally noting "the word to which I have been leading all along" ("Einschalten," 'to insert,' 'to interpolate,' 'to switch on'), Bass again cites Freud: "...*switching*. One need only assume that an increase in resistance in the course taken by the psychical current in one direction results in a hypercathexis of another path and thus causes the flow to be switched onto that path.'" (PS 187). Freud thus describes the "circuit breaker" operative in psychoanalytic practice, a "switching on" which "*resembles projection...a switching on of the path into someone else's unconscious mind,*" a process which "*deceptively resembles the simple insertion of one's own thoughts into someone else's mind.*" Like psychoanalysis, "the philosophy of electrical science" involves a "switching" (a selective listening and speech) which "joins the paranoid person and the 'other' *on the same circuit,*" on and into the Other. Practiced by analyst and analysand *simultaneously*, such "switching" dissolves "projection" and its "simple demarcation of outside and inside...." (PS 188).

In relation to Derrida's explosion of writing's "grave case," one author notes

"that if you never stop writing or if the writing never stops, you will not have to hear its message."²⁵ Derrida's "completely angelic structure," his generalized "scene of writing" and "scriptural strategy" puts into play an unconscious which is "collective, not personal," an unconscious wherein "switchings" thrive. M. Valdemar, the protagonist of "the ordinary story of language" experiences a "breaking down" of boundaries, the "switched" (en)trance of the shared Other, a mesmerized state wherein speech seems to, impressively, write.

Poe's Story

This energetic ontology wherein "I can be dead," "is not an extraordinary tale by Poe but the ordinary story of language." (97). The essay is prefaced by three epigraphs. The third epigraph, from Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," describes a spoken "sound" of "distinct... syllabification" which says: "'Yes; --- no; --- I have been sleeping -- and now -- now -- *I am dead.*'" Told in the first-person by a mesmerist named "P," Poe recounts the protracted death of "M. Valdemar," a translator and bibliophile "who has resided principally at Harlem, N.Y., since the year of 1839...."²⁶ P. notes that Valdemar's "temperament was markedly nervous, and rendered him a good subject for mesmeric experi-

²⁵ Schneiderman, "Fictions," in Lacan and the Subject of Language, p. 155.

²⁶ Citations are from "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," collected in The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe, pp. 96-103.

ment."²⁷ "Approaching dissolution" ("his physicians had declared him in confirmed phthisis [asthma]"), Valdemar sends P. a note, asking the narrator to "come *now*." Within fifteen minutes, P. arrives at "the dying man's chamber" and finds his friend "propped up in the bed by pillows," with "doctors D---- and F---- in attendance." Along with phthisis, "the patient was suspected of aneurism of the aorta," and the doctors were both of the opinion "that M. Valdemar would die about midnight on the morrow (Sunday)." After the doctors had "bidden him a final farewell," P. speaks with Valdemar, who is "willing and even anxious" to undergo a mesmeric experiment: "'Yes, I wish to be mesmerized....I fear you have deferred it too long.'" (VP 98). Passing his hand over Valdemar's forehead and directing his gaze "entirely into the right eye of the sufferer," P. mesmerizes Valdemar, so that "[t]he glassy roll of the eye was changed for that expression of uneasy *inward* examination which is never seen except in cases of sleep-walking...." Having successfully performed the experiment, P. attempts conversation with the mesmerized patient: 'M. Valdedmar,' I said, 'are you asleep?'" At first, there is no response, but "at its

²⁷ "Mesmerism" [from Franz Anton Mesmer, German physician (1733-1815)] was the practice of putting a person into a condition resembling sleep. To "mesmerize" was, basically, to hypnotize. Poe, in his brief story/essay "Mesmeric Revelation" claims that "[t]here can be no more absolute waste of time than the attempt to *prove*...that man...can so impress his fellow, as to cast him into an abnormal condition, in which the phenomena resemble very closely those of *death*...." Like the narrator of "The Case of M. Valdemar," the narrator need not argue for the veracity of "mesmeric" experience: "that, while in this state, the person so impressed employs only with effort...the external organs of sense...that, moreover, his intellectual faculties are wonderfully exalted and invigorated...that his susceptibility to the impression increases with its frequency, while, in the same proportion, the peculiar phenomena elicited are more extended and more *pronounced*."

third repetition" Valdemar whispers: "'Yes; -- asleep now. Do not wake me! -- let me die so!'" Later that day (early Sunday morning, beyond the expected moment of death), in the presence of Dr. F----, P. again asks the patient, "'Do you still sleep?'" and Valdemar responds "'Yes, still asleep -- dying.'" Suddenly, the patient undergoes a hideous paroxysm, "leaving the mouth widely extended, and disclosing in full view the swollen and blackened tongue." After his "death-bed horrors," Valdemar becomes cadaverous, drained of vitality, except for "a strong vibratory motion...observable in the tongue." The motion continues "for perhaps a minute," and then, "from the distended and motionless jaws," a voice issues, making a sound which is "harsh and broken and hollow." The sound of the voice "seemed to reach our ears...from a vast distance, or from some deep cavern within the earth." The narrator then recalls that the voice "impressed me...as gelatinous or glutinous matters impress the sense of touch" and that "M. Valdemar *spoke* -- obviously in reply to the question I had propounded to him a few minutes before. I had asked him, it will be remembered, if he still slept. He now said: 'Yes; --- no; - -- I *have been* sleeping -- and now, now --- I *am dead*.'"

Witnessing Valdemar's speech, the doctors and narrator recoil in "shuddering horror." Though the patient spoke, "the mirror no longer afforded evidence of respiration," and "an attempt to draw blood from the arm failed." Evidently dead, Valdemar, by "the vibratory movement of the tongue," still responds to questions posed. To the amazement of all, M. Valdemar remains entranced, suspended between life and death for nearly seven months. Finally, on a Friday, P. decides

to break the mesmeric spell; as he makes the "customary passes" over the patient's forehead, Valdemar shouts "'For God's sake! -- quick! --put me to sleep - or, quick! -- waken me! quick! -- *I say to you that I am dead!*"²⁸ The story concludes with a desperate struggle to awaken the patient. Amid "ejaculations of 'dead! dead!' absolutely *bursting* from the tongue," Valdemar's body suddenly decomposes: "his whole frame at once...*rotted* away beneath my hands." Finally, P. and the doctors see, "upon the bed," the remains of Valdemar's body: "a nearly liquid mass of loathsome -- of detestable putrescence."

Poe's story suggests certain identifications. Derrida, as author of the essay, may be identified with P., the mesmerist. The reader, then, is Valdemar. Reading the essay *through* effects a kind of mesmeric state, as the reader becomes, like Valdemar, entranced, suspended between life and death. Finally reduced to a "detestable putrescence," the reader realizes his or her impending finitude and death. More generally, Valdemar (as translator and bibliophile) personifies any reader of booked, phonologocentric, philosophical prose. Once mesmerized,

²⁸ Roland Barthes, in his "Textual Analysis of a Tale by Poe," notes Valdemar's suspended, undecidable state: "[T]here is a gaping contradiction between Death and Language; the contrary of Life here is not Death...it is Language: it is undecidable if M. Valdemar is living or dead; what is certain is that he is speaking, without our being able to relate his speech to Death or Life." (Barthes, "Textual Analysis of a Tale by Poe," in The Semiotic Challenge, p. 284). Deleuze and Guattari, apropos of schizophrenic access to "disjunctive synthesis," suggest that same state: "The schizophrenic is dead or alive, not both at once, but each of the two as the terminal point of a distance over which he glides." (AO 76). Within that state there is "free disjunction; the differential positions persist in their entirety, they even take on a free quality, but they are all inhabited by a faceless and transpositional subject" (Deleuze and Guattari, Anti-Oedipus, pp. 76-77).

Valdemar's eye assumes "that expression of uneasy *inward* examination which is never seen except in cases of sleepwalking," an "inward look" philosophy perhaps effects.

The Base

Exemplifying "the ordinary story of language," M. Valdemar, before his final dissolution, speaks a phenomenal speech, a speech which impresses. The essay suggests the base of such speech: the booked debris of a bibliopedic culture. On that base, through its excess, "we understand the 'I am' out of the 'I am dead.'" Overwhelmed by the presence of all that's been thought, written and sent, the 'I' "fades," and the "normal situation" is "the anonymity of the written *I*, the impropriety of the *I am writing....*" (97).

Derrida notes "the autonomy of meaning with regard to intuitive cognition" and identifies that "autonomy" with "the freedom or 'candor' of language...." (97). The experience of mundane writing grants linguistic "candor": "the freedom to say everything." Wrought through writing, any act of utterance ["*enonciation*"], and the statement which that act forms ["*enonce*"], need not be based in "illustrative intuition." In lieu of intuition, a base of autonomous linguistic forms fund acts of utterance. Within that "autonomy," "[o]ne can speak without knowing."

Derrida refers to literature as "the freedom to say everything": "The institution of literature in the West...is linked to an authorization to say everything.....To say everything is no doubt to gather...to totalize by formalizing, but to say everything

is also to break out of ['franchir'] prohibitions. To *affranchise oneself* ['s'affranchir'] -- in every field where law can lay down the law. The law of literature tends...to defy or lift the law. It therefore allows one to think the essence of the law in the experience of this 'everything to say.'" (SI 37, 36). The experienced freedom and candor ["franc-parler"] of literature becomes the base, the model, for a world and consciousness wrought through "archi ecriture." Finally, as the 1989 interview was conducted in French, the phrase "tout dire" can be translated as both 'say everything' and 'say anything,' i.e. to speak without constraint. Construed as "a kind of writing," speech, like literature ["there is no literature without a *suspended* relation to meaning and reference"], becomes "an instituted *fiction...a fictive institution*, which allows one to say everything, in every way." (SI 48, 36). Such speech achieves writing, finishes writing, leaves (the) writing (of philosophy), for philosophical, phonologocentric texts *already* effect (as each is read) "the other within oneself, right up close but stronger than oneself," so that "a letter, at the very instant when it takes place (and I am not only speaking of consciousness) divides itself, puts itself into pieces...." (PC 60, 81). Derrida thus celebrates what Husserl laments: "Philosophy as science, as serious...rigorous science -- *the dream is over.*" (Cr 389).

Closing one dream, another begins, develops (from) its base: *an altered, Other consciousness*. Derrida notes Husserl's distinction between "fulfillment by 'sense' and...fulfillment by the 'object.'" (97). One's "meaning-intention" ("Bedeutungintention") "can always function 'emptily,'" without intuition of the object. The

sense of that intention, the *intension* through which an intention is known and indicated, remains a "symbol," a symbol which "always points to... 'truth,'" a symbol which "is itself constituted as a lack of 'truth.'" (97).²⁹ As that which "points to" ["fait signe vers"] "truth," as mere indicator of one's mental state, the "symbol" demonstrates that "truth" is, simply, "*the will to say the truth.*" (98, my emphasis). The seemingly constative statements of philosophy thus become "performatives," i.e. statements which function, like indicators, in the absence of certain objects or states of affairs.³⁰ Evidencing (only) "the will to say the truth," a philosophical claim is, in the instant of its linguistic (per)form(ance), void of

²⁹ Derrida's use of "symbol" refers to the "purely symbolic thinking" of mathematical thought which lacks concrete, "illustrative intuition." Derrida cites from Section 11 of the "First Investigation": "'If... 'truth' is lacking, an assertion's intention can only be carried out symbolically; it cannot derive from any 'fullness' from intuition.... It then lacks... a 'true,' a 'genuine' meaning.'" (97). When, apropos of the cited passage, Derrida claims that "[t]he symbol always points to... 'truth;'" it is itself constituted as a lack of 'truth,'" he seems to confuse 'symbol' with (Husserl's use of) 'assertion.' For Husserl, intuition of the object is the necessary telos of language. Glossing Husserl's view, Derrida writes: "The norm is knowledge, the intuition that is adequate to its object.... It is the full presence of sense to a consciousness...." (98).

³⁰ John Austin isolates statements which satisfy two conditions: "A. they do not 'describe' or 'report' or constative anything at all, are not 'true or false;'" and B. the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action...." (Austin, How to do Things with Words, p. 5). Such statements are "performatives." Austin then gives examples (the marriage vow, the christening of the ship, the promise (to will "my watch to my brother"), the weather prediction). Whether the performative be "contractual" (as a marriage vow or promise) or "declaratory" (as a weather prediction or declaration of war) the performative statement, in the instant of its performance, does not refer to any object or state of affairs. The intended "object" or end of the performative is always essentially *beyond* its linguistic (per)form(ance). The object or state of affairs which the performative intends is always, like the indicated aspect of the indicative sign, a mere possibility.

objective content.

Husserl conceives of truth as a relation between knowledge and language: the incorporation, within language, of knowledge, an inclusion which occurs by virtue of "sense." With any statement, "sense does not wait upon truth;" the truth or falsity of a statement is determined by one's own intuition of sense. Even a statement which cannot refer to an object ["The circle is square"] evidences sense, for its grammatical form ('S is p') conveys an intention, an aim toward an object (though the object of that intention cannot be). For Husserl (for philosophy generally), the sense of a statement is always already present to consciousness *before* that sense is stated or proposed, *before* recourse to language. The presence of sense within a "consciousness that is itself self-present in the fullness of its life" composes the authority of philosophy.

Derrida considers truth to be a performed effect, the result of a language.³¹ Beyond any particular language, however, an Other truth thrives. Writing "through" Husserl, Derrida refers to a "purification of the formal" which is always "guided by a concept of *sense*," a sense which is "itself determined on the basis of a *relation with an object*." (98). "Form" derives from sense, a sense which is realized "only in the knowing intentionality relating to an object." (98). Derrida describes, very

³¹ Derrida frequently evokes Nietzsche's description of truth as "'a mobile army of metaphors...a sum of human relations which became poetically and rhetorically intensified, metamorphosed, adorned, and after long usage, seem to a nation fixed, canonic and binding....'" (Nietzsche, cited, M 217). Neither Nietzsche nor Derrida, however, claim that 'there is no truth.' Derrida attends to the intersubjective or intrasubjective and always *performative* status of those contingent statements which (and authors who) make truth.

tersely, an epistemic dependence of "form" on "sense" and of "sense" on "object." The experience of writing (the experience, especially, of "that writing which is called literary") confuses the relations of form, sense and object. A subtle departure from Husserl's text, Derrida's next sentence suggests a transformation of form, the release of form from *objective* sense: "Form is but the emptiness and pure intention of...intentionality." That "emptiness," that lack of a sense "relating to an object," *creates* the apparent nonsense ["Unsinn"] of expressions such as "'The green is either'" or "'Abracadabra.'" There may always be, however, an Other sense within such expressions, a "structural unconscious" to be deciphered.³²

Through instances of "the sign in general," through "archi ecriture," an Other sense insists; its sense develops through "poetic language" which "transgresses the laws of grammar," through "nondiscursive signification...music, non-literary arts generally...." (99). The possibility of such (non)sense, the condition of its possibility, is a "perfect incorporation" of transcendental experience by psychological experience: "the domain of pure psychological experience incorporates the total domain of...transcendental experience." (11). With that inclusion, "a radical difference remains...a difference which, without altering anything, changes all the signs." (11).

³² In "Signature Event Context" Derrida refers to a "structural unconscious" or "essential absence of intending" which "govern[s] the entire science and system of utterance." (Lt 18). In that essay he also iterates, in French, Husserl's "agrammatical" example, "the green is either," ["das grun ist oder"], finding that "either" ["oder"] evokes "ou" ["where"] so that the example (iterated) involves, via "vert," grass or glass: "'Where has the green gone (of the lawn)....'Where has the glass gone....?'" (Lt 12).

The (non)sense "archi ecriture" makes transit, oscillation. "Neither a word nor a concept," "differance" (source of "archi ecriture") is (by its undecidability) "a word for the transitional object," an "object" which "belong[s] to the realm of illusion."³³ As the infant starts to use organized sounds (mum, ta, da) there may appear a 'word' for the transitional object.³⁴ The name given by the infant to its earliest object is often significant, and it usually has a word used by the adults partly incorporated in it.³⁵ Ideally, that word's "fate is to be gradually...de-cathected....It is not forgotten and it is not mourned. It loses meaning and this is because the phenomena have become diffused, have become spread out...over the whole cultural field."³⁵ The effects of "differance" alter consciousness and transform the experienced world into a "cultural field." The essay thus sends us to sleep, to "lit et rature," to dream within an Other scene wherein consciousness of "crisis" thrives. Within booked, phonologocentric language -- within philosophy -- the realization of that Other scene requires, however, "war," a valorization of that which 'was.'³⁶ Exemplary of philosophy, phenomenology refuses such war by "an

³³ Winnicott, "Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena," in Essential Papers on Object Relations, p. 258.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 258.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 259.

³⁶ That which was is now *read*, otherwise. Though Derrida obviously remains within the bibliopedic tradition, he intimates a way of receiving and reading texts, so that: "the trace" may "erase itself." ("In order to exceed metaphysics it is necessary that a trace be inscribed within the text of metaphysics, a trace that continues to signal not in the direction of another presence, or another form of presence, but in the direction of an *entirely other* text." (G 65, my emphasis). "Entirely other," such a "text" would be the effect of "differance," "archi ecriture," a

initial limitation of sense to knowledge, of logos to objectivity, of language to reason." (99).

"The Transcendental": "Rethought"

The history of philosophy, "[t]he history of being as presence...as consciousness of self in the infinity of *parousia*," is booked, "closed." (102). Opened, books of philosophy serve (as source and resource) of a suspended consciousness, an Other consciousness whose "living present is...deferred *ad infinitum*." (99).

In relation to Husserl's analysis of the "essentially occasional" indexical 'I,' Derrida notes that the "ever altering meaning" of the first-person pronoun "may always be replaced by an objective and therefore ideal content." (100). In Section 26 of the "First Investigation" Husserl notes that "the universal *semantic function* of the word 'I'" is "to designate whoever is speaking;" the "conceptual meaning" of 'I,' then, is "'whatever speaker is designating himself.'" For Husserl, the substitution of such "conceptual meaning" for 'I' (as "essentially realized in the immediate idea of one's own personality") would result in "unusual expressions," expressions which diverge from "the immediate idea of one's own personality." (LI 315-16). In Section 28 Husserl claims that "'*ideally* speaking, each subjective expression is replaceable by an objective expression which will preserve the identity of each momentary

"writing" which simply *happens as one reads, whatever one reads*: "The mode of inscription of such a trace...is so unthinkable that it must be described as an erasure of the trace itself." (G 65)).

meaning intention." (cited, 100). Derrida thus asserts that such replacement is ideal ["this substitution is ideal"], and, as "an idea in the Kantian sense," "this substitution of ideality for nonidentity, of objectivity for non-objectivity, is infinitely *deferred*." (100). Cited, Husserl's text confirms Derrida's claim: "*We are infinitely removed from this ideal....try to describe any subjective experience in unambiguous, objectively fixed fashion: such an attempt is always plainly in vain.*" (100-01).

From Husserl's analysis of "essentially occasional expressions," Derrida extrapolates, with emphasis, to his conclusion: "*the whole system of 'essential distinctions' is a purely teleological structure.*" (101). "Essential Distinctions" is, of course, the title of "Chapter One" of the "First Investigation." Philosophy is (within the closure of a book) the attempt to make and maintain such "essential distinctions." Derrida offers a list of distinctions ("the sign and the non-sign, linguistic sign and nonlinguistic sign, expression and indication, ideality and nonideality, subject and object, grammaticalness and nongrammaticalness, pure grammaticalness and empirical grammaticalness...intention and intuition, etc.,"³⁷) and claims that the possibility of *realizing* such distinctions is "deferred *ad infinitum*." Though those "essential distinctions" are (by writing) made, "they vanish," where/when the written (per)form(ance) stops. Bound to a text, such

³⁷ It is curious that Derrida does not explicitly refer to the distinction between the purely psychic and the transcendental, as that's the distinction which Derrida finds most untenable. Husserl's "enigmatic concept of 'parallelism,'" and the related theory of constitution, "incorporate" the transcendental within the psychic, the psychic within the transcendental (12-14). Following Husserl, Derrida's essay radicalizes the fusion of the psychic and the transcendental, realizing that fusion through an "ultratranscendental concept of life." (15).

distinctions "live...from the difference between fact and right, reality and ideality." Bound to "being-written," the "essential distinctions" remain finite, *limited*: "their possibility is their impossibility."³⁸ *"The transcendental must then be rethought."* (OG 77, my emphasis).³⁹ The route of that rethinking is the "common root" (which "makes all these metaphors possible"): "ultratranscendental life," a life in touch with death.

In Chapter Four Derrida notes that the presence of objective meaning requires -- "beyond my empirical existence, before my birth and beyond my death" -- "my absence." "The relationship with *my death*...thus lurks in [the] determination of being as presence...." (54). Philosophy, as an attempted "elimination of the sign," is "the dissimulation of this relationship with death." (42, 54). "Silent, secret and discreet," "differance" is "a tomb," a "tacit monument" which marks one's own "relationship with death." (132). Rethought through "differance," the "appearing of

³⁸ Attempting to realize such distinctions, Husserl, of course, wrote. Writing -- as "the painting of sounds," as spaced speech, as distinct instances of "parole" chosen from the field of "la langue" -- is a process of articulation [from L. "artus," 'joint,' 'precise moment']. Derrida thus claims that Husserl ("although he had not made a theme of 'articulation'...in the constitution of sense and signs") "recognized" its "necessity." (104). Thus radicalized, Husserl (like Nietzsche) "has *written what he has written*. He has written that writing -- and first of all his own -- is not originally subordinate to the logos and to truth." (G 19).

³⁹ In his "Introduction" to Husserl's "Origin of Geometry" Derrida asks how "Ideality comes to its Objectivity" and, citing Husserl, responds: "'by means of language, through which it [objectivity] receives...its linguistic flesh.'" (OG 76). There is, then, a "paradox," for "without the apparent fall back into language and thereby into history...sense would remain an empirical formation imprisoned as fact in a psychological subjectivity Historical incarnation *sets free the transcendental, instead of binding it.*" (OG 77, my emphasis).

the Ideal" is "produced within a relationship with death...." (102). The "infinite tasks" of philosophy are thus always limited, booked: "*The infinite difference is finite.*" (102).

In "The Freudian Thing" Lacan describes Freud as "an Actaeon" whose "passion for the goddess leads him....until he reaches the grottoes in which the chthonian Diana...offers to his thirst...the smooth surface of death, the quasi-mystical limit of the most rational discourse in the world....." The mirroring, "smooth surface of death" is "the place in which the symbol is substituted for death...." (E 124). Like Lacan, Derrida frequently alludes to death, as cognizance of one's own death may prompt "the death of the king" and an Other consciousness. (132).⁴⁰ "Differance" ("the difference that brings out phonemes and lets them be heard") marks "the finitude of life as an essential relation with one's self and one's death." (133, 102). "Differance" marks, mars and figures within all "rational discourse" as a "quasi-mystical limit," a "smooth surface" which mirrors and tortures the ideality which phonologocentric, philosophical prose attempts.

⁴⁰ In "The Rome Discourse" Lacan notes that "[t]he first is symbol in which we recognize humanity in its vestigial traces is the sepulture...." (E 104). Derrida claims that the 'a' of "differance" is "a tomb that (provided that one knows how to decipher its legend) is not far from signaling the death of the king." (132). Stressing death, both Lacan and Derrida appreciate Heidegger's "existential-ontological conception of death." In Section 52 of Being and Time Heidegger writes: "*death, as the end of Dasein, is Dasein's ownmost possibility -- non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped.*" Both Lacan and Derrida summon consciousness beyond "a constant tranquilization about death" which the "idle talk" ["rede"] of the "they" ["das Man"] provides. Beyond the reign of traditional "idle talk," consciousness assumes "differance" and is altered, so that: "the intermediary of death can be recognized in every relation in which man comes to the life of his history." [See also Lacan's Four Fundamental Concepts, 87-89).

"Rethought" through "differance," "the transcendental" occurs within "a closure" which has already *"taken place,"* within written time, spaced time, a time which does not pass without violence, without light. In "Force and Signification" Derrida refers to "the metaphor of darkness and light" as "the founding metaphor of Western philosophy." As error is "darkness" and truth is "light," "the entire history of our philosophy is a photology...a history of, or treatise on, light...." (WD 27). "Force" ("the movement which displaces lines," as a force which "switches" "the paranoid person and the other *on (to) the same circuit*" (PS 188), breaks the fascination of "form."⁴¹ The tradition of "heliocentric metaphysics," however, thwarts force, avoids force, "ceding its place to *eidos* [form]...." Displaced by "the form which is visible," force is always "already...separated from itself in acoustics." (WD 27). Ideally, the spoken word incorporates light, and a "photophonologocentric" tradition conveys a logos which was first seen, which remains lit, which enlightens. The production of that lit logos, the written reproduction of that logos, occurs through "*an absolute will-to-hear-oneself-speak.*" (102). Such a "hearing" requires imaginary involvement within one's "sphere of ownness," a foreclosure of the Other. In "Violence and Metaphysics" Derrida cites Levinas: "'Solipsism...is the very structure of reason'" and then notes an "ancient complicity" "between light and power," "between theoretical objectivity and technico-political possession." (WD 91).

⁴¹ In "The Philosophy of Electrical Science" Alan Bass develops (from Freud) the notion of a "switching" ["Schaltung"] by which the "electrical [psychical] system expands," so that "more apparatuses can stay on the circuit with less threat to the system." (PS 184). "Differance," producing "the movement of differance" effects a similar expansion and breaks "the fascination of form," especially written forms.

"Hearing-oneself-speak" within one's own "sphere," "[e]verything given to me...appears given to myself by myself," given "within light."⁴² There is, then, "a violence of light," "a displacement of technico-political oppression into the false innocence of philosophical discourse." (WD 92, translation altered). The issue, then, is "to maintain a philosophical discourse against light." For Levinas, it is through the relation to "the Other,"⁴³ through "ethical excendence," that one conducts a discourse, and finds a community, "anterior to Platonic light." (WD 85, 91). Following Derrida, however, such "excendence" is not possible, as the experience of writing, *qua photophonologocentrism*, is, precisely, to "renounce the other...to enclose oneself within solitude...to repress ethical transcendence." (WD 91). In place of all that's been booked and "said,"⁴⁴ however, there's space: (for)

⁴² "In contrast to...seminal differance" (which the photophonologocentric tradition has "repressed"), "the truth that speaks (to) itself within the logocentric circle is the discourse of what *goes back to the father*." (D 48).

⁴³ Levinas most frequently capitalizes 'Other,' *not* in reference to the Unconscious, but through respect toward, and appreciation of, the other person or being.

⁴⁴ In Otherwise Than Being Levinas distinguishes between "the Saying" ["le Dire"] and "the Said" ["le dit"]. The distinction corresponds to that which Benveniste makes between "enonciation" (the subject's act of utterance) and "enonce" (the statement which that act forms). The "Saying" occurs in one's exposure to the Other (which, for Levinas, is the other person, the ethical experience of "the face to face." The "Said" is the formed statement or proposition ['S is p']. Philosophy, for Levinas, involves the performative transformation of "the Said" into the "the Saying," so that any distinction between the ontological and ethical is dissolved. Throughout "At This Very Moment in this Work Here I am" (Derrida's 1980 essay *for* Levinas), such transformation and dissolve is, ceaselessly, attempted. In that essay Derrida attends to the booked, framed nature of his discourse, noting that "[t]he present work makes a present of what can only be given *outside the book....outside the framework*." (Derrida, "At This Very Moment....," in Re-reading Levinas, p. 31).

an alternative, a writing that writes (that) it(')s writing without writing. With "differance," through "the movement of differance," "an *[O]ther* writing" happens.⁴⁵

"I try to write (in) the space in which is posed the question of speech and writing." He tries "to write the question: (what is) meaning to say?" (P 14). To write that question is to write the *a priori* conditions necessary for the imposition of any question, to write (against an entire tradition of teleological thought, of thought ("good thought") *having a telos before decision, of a "space" before direction and sense*. It is thus "necessary in such a space...that writing mean nothing." Prior to any telos, a gelded, goal-less writing thrives through its drive toward the Other. To risk "meaning nothing" is "to start to play...to enter into the play of *differance* which prevents any word, any concept, any major enunciation from coming to summarize and to govern...the movement and textual spacing of differences." (P 14).

In "Outwork" Derrida refers to a "movement which situates every signified as a differential trace," a "movement" which defers determinate meaning, allowing, without arrest, "the concatenation of writing." (D 5). That "movement" is "dissemination": "a kind of writing that philosophy has never been able to reckon with," a writing which racks/recks philosophy, which "endlessly opens up a *snag*...that can no longer be mended, a spot where neither meaning, however plural, nor *any form of presence* can pin/pen down ['agrapher'] the trace." (D 27, 26). The "disruption"

⁴⁵ In *Positions* Derrida mentions such a writing: "[t]he issue is to deconstruct practically the *philosophical* opposition between philosophy and myth, between *logos* and *mythos*. Practically...done textually, along the lines of an *other* writing, with all the implied risks. And I fear that these risks will grow greater still." (P 53).

of "dissemination" "*explode[s]* the semantic horizon;" polysemia, in contrast, "is organized within the implicit horizon of a unitary resumption of meaning," implying "a teleological and totalizing dialectics that...must permit the reassemblage of the totality of the text into the truth of its meaning, constituting the text as *expression*...." "Dissemination" (realization of a writing which "breaks the noun apart" (G 26)) does not lead "back...to a presence of simple origin...." "Dissemination" "marks an irreducible and *generative* multiplicity." (P 45). Based on experienced graphemes, the ceaseless grafting of "dissemination" produces "a detour through/of writing one cannot get over." (D 26). "Dissemination" -- as "the theory and practice of the *graft* without a proper body" (D 11) -- effects -- *within texts* -- that "switching" described in "The Philosophy of Electrical Science," a "switching" which places analyst/reader and analysand/text "on the same circuit," in a text beyond "the zero-point of the subjective, the *I*," so that: "[r]esponsibility and individuality are values that can no longer predominate," and "to lose one's head, no longer to know where one's head is...is perhaps the effect...." (D 6, 20).

Effect of "differance," "dissemination" totally "change[s] terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion, by brutally placing oneself outside...affirming an absolute break and difference." (M 135). Derrida claims, however, that "deconstruction" (another effect of "differance"), though involving "a certain exterior that is unqualifiable or unnameable by philosophy," also "thinks...in the most

faithful, interior way...the structured genealogy of philosophy's concepts...." (P 6).⁴⁶ There is thus, through "differance," a "double-gesture": one's reading/writing of philosophy proceeds, simultaneously, within and without the phonologocentric text which one reads.

The "double movement" of deconstruction involves rapid transit between two domains. Space of identification, the Imaginary marks the ego's desire for fusion with the (m)other. Prompting writing, the Imaginary relation between ego [a] and its graphemes [a*] is (of) force: passion of, passion from, the origin: "*To write is to have the passion of the origin.*" (WD 295). The seen 'a' of "differance" indicates that force. Space of exchange, the Symbolic marks the ego's accession to the "primal signifier," i.e. the paternal phallus which maintains linguistic law.⁴⁷ Allowing meaning, the Symbolic relation between I [S] and the Unconscious [O] is (of) form: passage of, passage into, difference, articulation: *to mean is to let one's passion of the origin pass*. Basis of meaning in general, the heard/understood 'a' of "differance" suits the passage of forms. Deconstruction, as an academic, booked

⁴⁶ "The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective...except by inhabiting those structures. Inhabiting them *in a certain way*." (G 24). Such habitation would be an intrinsic criticism, one bound to the text. Later, in Of Grammatology, Derrida suggests a synthesis of intrinsic and extrinsic modes: "This moment of doubling commentary should no doubt have its place in critical reading. To recognize and respect all its classical exigencies is not easy and requires all the instruments of traditional criticism." (G 158).

⁴⁷ The founding, paternal "law" may be understood as the "bar" between signifier and signified, the bar which keeps "acoustic image" and "concept" distinct. Against the Symbolic, the Imaginary drive fuses "acoustic image" and "concept," fuses word and thing, takes words as things (and vice versa).

effect of "difference," simultaneously sees and hears/understands the phonologocentric, philosophical text. The seen text excites the Imaginary relation, provoking force and writing. The heard text engages the Symbolic relation, invoking meaning and form.

Booked, phonologocentric prose usually involves transit from the Imaginary to the Symbolic, from the forced opacity of the "acoustic image" or signifier to the formed transparency of the "concept" or signified. In terms which Derrida appropriates from Husserl, there is, with mundane writing, transit from one parallel "line" to its other, from "pure psychological experience" to "transcendental experience." (11). *The experience of mundane writing mimes the constitution of ideal, objective meanings within empirical consciousness.* Complicating phonologocentrism, Derrida suggests another transit: from the Symbolic to the Imaginary, from the formed transparency of the signified to the forced opacity of the signifier. In Husserlian terms, there is, with transcendental meaning, transit from one parallel "line" to its other, from "transcendental experience" to "pure psychological experience." (11). *The experience of ideal, objective meanings within empirical consciousness mimes the experience of mundane writing.* Such an "experience," however, disrupts an accepted relation between volition and cognition, i.e. that consciousness *intentionally* constitutes meanings, that an intension presupposes an intention, a "want-to-speak" ["vouloir-dire"]. The second, unusual transit "provokes the overturning of the hierarchy speech/writing" and "releases the dissonance of a writing within speech...." (P 42). Taking both transits simulta-

neously, taken in two directions, lost/found in two domains, consciousness becomes undecidable, Other.

With airy allusion to Hegel,⁴⁸ we -- yes -- refer to an "achievement of absolute knowledge," a "unity of the concept, logos and consciousness" which is, as "the infinite *vocation* of full presence," "the end of the infinite...." (102). That end or achievement would occur "in a voice without *differance*," a consciousness which, in silent violence, exits "the text." The rising eagle, "the way of Icarus," never exits, for "[e]very transgressive gesture re-encloses us...within the interior of the closure." (P 12). Opened within one's own interior, the booked "history of metaphysics" becomes the "*structure or schema of an absolute will-to-hear-oneself-speak*," a vast field which one may mind and mine, producing, "across the memory of old signs," "*unheard-of* thoughts...." (102).

D(or)a in Dresden

"Across the memory of old signs," such "thoughts" may finally play. The essay suggests a consciousness which, like Freud's Dora, is altered, "hysterical,"⁴⁹ errant, taken -- simultaneously -- in two directions, by two domains. It is

⁴⁸ "His name is so strange....the eagle caught in glass and gel. Let the emblanched ['emblem'] philosopher be so congealed." (Derrida, Glas, p. 1)

⁴⁹ 'Hysteria' derives from the Greek word "hustera": 'womb.' Translated into Latin, "hustera" became "matrix," "mater": mother. Considered etymologically, 'hysteria' may simply term an indicative matrix which is currently, as always, "giving birth," an apocalyptic, abysmal birth, bringing forth "the as yet unnameable which is proclaiming itself...only under the species of the nonspecies, in the formless, mute, infant and terrifying form of monstrosity." (WD 293).

a consciousness of crisis, a consciousness which engenders and endures a continually displayed disorder: things and words which indicate "a totality of meanings, reflexes and recollections," words and things which form "a discourse full of gaps and full of lights, filled with absences and overnourishing signs, without foresight and stability of intention...."⁵⁰

In The Truth in Painting Derrida claims that "deconstruction" effects "solid structures."⁵¹ The final paragraphs of the essay suggest such effects. Being booked, those effects remain to be realized. Aware of an electric, tele-communicated field rife with "mere meanings," of a current "applied grammatology" which overwhelms "the age of the book," the narrow relation between the (phonologocen-

⁵⁰ (Barthes, Writing Degree Zero, 47-48.) Alluding to "archi ecriture" in the essay "From Work to Text" Barthes writes (of) a "process of demonstration," a "Text" which "cannot stop," a "process" which, unlike the "work," "cannot be contained in a hierarchy" or "a simple division of genres." Like "archi ecriture" (which writes (of) the space of a certain, abysmal gallery), the incessant and plural "Text" "practices the infinite deferment of the signified" and "the generation of the perpetual signifier...." (Barthes, Image Music Text, pp. 157, 158).

⁵¹ "It is because deconstruction interferes with solid structures, 'material' institutions, and not only with discourses or signifying representations, that it is different from an analysis or a 'critique'....[D]econstruction works as strictly as possible in that place where the supposedly 'internal' order of the philosophical is articulated by (internal *and* external) necessity with the institutional conditions and forms of teaching." (Derrida, The Truth in Painting, p. 19). The deconstructive act questions and defuses instituted authority. Source of deconstructive acts, the passivity/activity of "differance" ["the agglutinating glue of 'differance'" (Gl 167 b)] lets/makes such acts take place. Derrida suggests an always already philosophical, *reflective community*, perhaps that limned by Kant in The Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics: "There will, therefore, always be a metaphysics in the world...everyone, especially every *reflective* human, will have it, and for want of a recognized standard will shape it for himself or herself *after his or her own pattern*."

tric writer's) ego and its (written) objects is rift, lifted to an Other scene.⁵² Within that scene, there is simultaneous transit between the Imaginary and the Symbolic; transit between those domains funds an incessant, "hyper-dialectic" which is never "sublated or internalized into a third term." (D 25). Within that transit, booked texts (and more) become so many objects to be minded and mined. Within that web, there remains -- within the space of "the sign in general" -- delay, *deferral of death*, so we "turn away...escaping the fascination of the picture."⁵³

⁵² The current scene purveys Imaginary contents and Symbolic contents, "thing-presentations" and "word-presentations," forming an alloy, an alliance, of those processes considered intentional/conscious and those considered unintentional /unconscious. Apropos of this scene, one author notes: "We are living, today [1983] in a period when much of the complicated and remote symbolism of the past is being expressed in very comprehensible psychological terms." Wang then cites Jung: "'It is the world of water, where all life floats in suspension....where I am individually this *and* that; where I experience the other in myself and the other-than-myself experiences me....'" (Wang, *Qabalistic Tarot*, p. 187). Reading, regarding the same scene, Derrida writes: "Our entire library, our entire encyclopedia, our words, our pictures, our figures, our secrets, all an immense house of postcards. A game of postcards...." (PC 53).

⁵³ Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, p. 88. Lacan notes, in Hans Holbein's "The Ambassadors" (1533) ["The two figures are frozen, stiffened in their showy adornments"], a "strange, suspended, oblique object in the foreground...." (FFC 88). Lacan identifies the anamorphic skull in the painting as "the phallic ghost," an "embodiment of the *minus-phi* of castration." (Ibid., 89). He then remarks that "the secret of this picture," "the way this fascinating picture presents, between the two splendidly dressed and immobile figures," "is given at the moment when, moving slightly away...we see what the magical floating object signifies. It reflects our own nothingness, in the figure of a death's head." (Ibid., 92). The disorder of Derrida's writing ["a tragedy...of destination"] results from his attempt to write of/on "the quasi-mystical limit of the most rational discourse," to produce a "death's head," "the smooth surface of death" within the discourse of philosophy. (E 124). Derrida's interest in the closure and limit of philosophy derives, perhaps, from childhood memories; in an interview apropos of the Algerian War, he remarks: "As a child, I had the instinctive feeling that the end of the world was at hand....Even to a child incapable of analyzing things, it was clear that all this

As the essay begins, it ends: in a gallery in a museum in Dresden, in a mausoleum or tomb. Closing the essay, Derrida cites, with ellipses, Husserl [Ideas, Sec. 100]: "'A name on being mentioned reminds of us the Dresden gallery....We wander through the rooms....A painting by Teniers...represents a gallery of paintings....The paintings of this gallery would represent in their turn paintings, which on their part exhibited readable inscriptions and so forth....'" (104). Husserl's mention of "the Dresden gallery" suggests Freud's "Dora" and her visit to that same gallery. Read through Derrida's essay, the texts of Husserl and Freud both suggest "differance," a culturalizing course.

Wandering through a gallery, Dora stops, to gaze in silence for two hours at Raphael's "Sistine Madonna."⁵⁴ When Freud asks Dora why the painting appealed to her, she replies, simply, "the Madonna." Freud fails to discern Dora's identification with the Madonna and, via the "virgin," with the wife of Herr K., displacing her original identification with the notion that "she was identifying with the young man" who had recently, at Christmas, sent her an album of photographs, some depicting monuments in a city. Transposed into the imaginary space and time of Dora's "Second Dream," Dora's two hours in the gallery become "two and a half hours more," the answer which the man in the "thick wood" gives to her

would end in fire and blood. No one can escape that violence and fear." (Derrida, interview in Derrida and 'Differance' p. 74).

⁵⁴ Painted by Raphael in 1522 for the principle chapel in the Vatican Palace, "The Sistine Madonna" now hangs in the museum in Dresden.

repeated ["about a hundred times"] question, "Where is the station?"⁵⁵

Also wandering through a gallery, Husserl's authorial, anonymous "we" ("we wander through the rooms") considers a painting by Teniers,⁵⁶ a painting which "represents a gallery of paintings." Hanging within an actual gallery, a re-presentation of the gallery becomes, there on the wall, a "mis en abyme": among the painted paintings by Teniers, appears another painting (of paintings in a gallery) by Teniers, as among the painted paintings in a painting by Teniers, there appears another painting (of paintings in a gallery) by Teniers, *ad infinitum*, *en*

⁵⁵ Dora's "Second Dream": "'I was walking about in a town which I did not know. I saw streets and squares which were strange to me. [Freud then notes that Dora later added 'I saw a monument in one of the squares,' a photographed monument which Freud soon relates to the photo album/Christmas gift, as Dora had been looking through that album the evening before the dream.] Then I came into a house where I lived, went to my room, and found a letter from Mother lying there. She wrote saying that as I had left home without my parents' knowledge she had not wished to write to me to say that father was ill. 'Now he is dead, and if you like you can come.' I then went to the station ['Bahnhof'] and asked about a hundred times: 'Where is the station?' I always got the answer: 'Five minutes.' I then saw a thick wood which I went into, and there I asked a man whom I met ['Where is the station?']. He said to me: 'Two and a half hours more.' [Freud notes that Dora, telling the dream a second time, says 'two hours.'] He offered to accompany me, but I refused and went alone. I saw the station in front of me and could not reach it. At the same time I had the usual feeling of anxiety that one has in dreams when one cannot move forward. Then I was home. I must have been travelling in the meantime, but I know nothing about that. I walked into the porter's lodge, and inquired for our flat. The maidservant opened the door to me and replied that Mother and the others were already at the cemetery ['Friedhof']. [Freud notes that Dora, telling the dream a second time, adds: 'I saw myself particularly distinctly going up the stairs,' and 'After she [the maidservant] had answered ['that mother and the others were already at the cemetery'] I went to my room, but not the least sadly, and began reading a big book that lay on my writing table.'" (DAH 114).

⁵⁶ Husserl refers to David Teniers the Younger, 1610-1690.

abyme. Importantly, the paintings of this abyss exhibit "readable inscriptions," intertwinings of image and word, of the Imaginary and Symbolic, an admittance of that "danger" ["the danger is that of the image"] which the phonologocentric tradition attempts to repress: the initially, essentially seen/graphic substance (and all that supports it, frames it, sends it). Against that repression, the contemporary "gallery" is the place wherein sight and understanding merge, so that: consciousness reads what it sees and sees what it reads, reaps an Other scene.⁵⁷ Section 100 of *Ideas* suggests a "labyrinth which includes in itself its own exits," an aestheticized world: the abysmal effect of "archi ecriture."

After wandering through a strange town, Dora finds, in a house where she lived, "a letter from Mother." Through the letter she learns that her Father is dead,

⁵⁷ The production of much visual art in advanced capitalist societies has required a sophisticated, legitimizing, linguistic meta-discourse. Subsequently, much "art criticism" or "theory" may be read as an attempt "to do" (to re-present) "things" (images, masses) "with words." Throughout this century, certain artists have assumed, as essential to their aesthetic projects, the role of critic/theoretician, a tendency more realized in the writings of Daniel Buren, Hans Haacke, Joseph Kosuth, and the "Art Language" group. More generally, innumerable artists have manipulated linguistic forms within their work, producing 'word-sculptures': Duchamp, Beuys, Marcel Broodthaers, Hanne Darboven, Jenny Holzer, Bruce Nauman, Lawrence Weiner, et al. In our era, the use of words as aesthetic, visual material is correlative with the use of sheer materiality (or immateriality): white paintings (Robert Ryman), exhibited radio waves (Robert Barry), documentations of people followed in the street (vito Acconci), a wall stained with water (Lawrence Weiner), long walks indicated by deposits of stones and timber (Richard Long), steel plates precariously balanced (Richard Serra), bullets fired into one's arm (Chris Burden), a cleansing of the gallery-space (Michael Asher), etc., etc. Subsequently, much contemporary art may be considered the attempt *to words with things*. Taking such attempts seriously, one may then conclude that the field of experience is already aesthetic and assert -- with Beuys -- that "my speeches are my sculptures" and see -- with Nietzsche -- that "the world as a work of art that gives birth to itself." (Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, p. 419).

and Dora is free to seek "the station." Though the voice of the man encountered in "a thick wood" asks her to wait, Dora does not wait; she leaves, determined to find "the station" alone. She continually sees the station in front of her, yet cannot reach it, cannot "move forward" and is suddenly, out of the anxious situation, back at home. Asking for her parents, she is told that they are "already at the cemetery," a ground ["Hof"] of peace ["Friede"] which refers, by another ground, back to the tracks ["Bahne"]. Dora goes to her room and begins "reading a big book which lay on [her] writing table." Unable to attain her desire, unable to *reach* "the station," Dora returns to her room/book/table. Based on her appreciation of a certain painting, Dora's dreamt delay, transposed, will be read in an exitless book (a book which covers the writing table, entirely).⁵⁸

Husserl's text suggests a limited infinity, a book bound to a table. Gazing

⁵⁸ Entranced by an exit-less book, Dora's consciousness is curious. Such a consciousness is comparable to the philosophical consciousness described by Socrates in Book V of The Republic: one which "has a taste for every sort of knowledge and [which] is curious to learn and is never satisfied." (R 205). Socrates, of course, soon qualifies philosophical curiosity; the "true philosophers" are not "lovers of sounds and sights," not entranced by the image or *appearance* of "the vision of truth." Enthused by the "sensory contours" of booked words, "bewildered at the possibility of consigning things to paper" (SI 37), Dora's consciousness remains seduced by, and lost in an Imaginary relation to, the "sights and sounds" of words. Dora's consciousness thus prompts the imposition of "archi ecriture," whereby a maze of many mundane texts is displaced by, and finally founded on, "the great book of the world." (Descartes, in "Part One" of The Discourse on Method writes of such a book: "Finally, as for the false sciences, I thought that I already knew their worth well enough not to be liable to be deceived by the promises of an alchemist or the predictions of an astrologer, the tricks of a magician or the frauds and boasts of those who profess to know more than they do....That is why...I entirely abandoned the study of letters. Resolving to seek no knowledge other than that which could be found in myself or else in the great book of the world, I...." (Philosophical Writings of Descartes, p. 115).

into a painting within a painting within a painting, *ad infinitum*, an anonymous "we" views an abyss. As Dora's delay is endless in time, the "mis en abyme" of an anonymous "we" is endless in space. Joined, the time of the dream and the space of the painting imply the spacetime of "differance," to defer (in time) and differ (in space): 1. "to temporalize, to resort, consciously or unconsciously, to the temporal and temporalizing mediation of a detour that suspends the accomplishment or fulfillment of 'desire' or 'will;'" 2. "'to differ'...the sense of not being identical, of being other, of being discernable...." (136). As the *directions* of "differance" situate us, this "gallery" or "labyrinth" *is* without precedence, without suspension. As any "exit" from the gallery is necessarily *of* the gallery, already caught within "an originally repetitive structure," there cannot be a turn out of "differance," no return "to the things themselves." The phenomenological telos of "intuitions or presentations" remains dreamt, *written*: "no perception is given," of "the broad daylight of presence, outside the gallery." "Through" Husserl's text, Derrida develops and celebrates errancy within the gallery, the world, "the dizziness of a perpetually self-engendered disorder."⁵⁹

Once read through, Derrida's essay indicates a certain exit: a phenomenal speech which would comprehend and end the spacetime of mundane writing.

⁵⁹ Hegel in The Phenomenology of Spirit writes of a "skeptical self-consciousness" which experiences "flux" and "*absolute dialectical unrest*," a "medley of sensuous and intellectual representations;" such consciousness is a "confused medley, the dizziness of a perpetually self-engendered disorder" and "is itself aware of this...." (Hegel, Phenomenology, pp. 124-25). The altered consciousness which the essay suggests perpetuates, survives and "is itself aware of" such "unrest."

Derrida explicitly invokes such speech: "It remains, then, for us to *speak*, to make our voices *resonate* throughout the corridors in order to make up for [*suppleer*] the breakup of presence." Like "that writing which is termed literary" ("which allows one to say everything in every way"), such speech would excite/engage Consciousness and the Unconscious, the Symbolic and the Imaginary, "the transcendental" and the "purely psychic." Based on the experience of mundane writing, such speech would achieve the *certainty* of writing, the deliberation and density of written words without writing words.

Apparently booked, such speech remains a lure.⁶⁰ "Rising toward the sun of presence," it is "the way of Icarus," a doomed flight, a "false exit," for the units of such speech (the "*akoumenon*") remain an effect, a "*phenomenon of the labyrinth*."⁶¹ Dense, allusive, the steps of the essay suggest -- *endlessly at an end* --

⁶⁰ Lure of the writing philosopher, for, as J.N. Mohanty writes in the "Introduction" to Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning: "Speaking is a mode of consciousness. Husserl wants to return to this mode of consciousness...to the consciousness of speaking, to the living act of speaking...." (ETM xviii).

⁶¹ As "[t]he gallery is the labyrinth which includes in itself its own exits," the "exit" remains re-presented, booked. Phenomenal speech is based on, takes place within, the "spoken" [i.e. voiced] phenomena of writing; it is the ridiculous dream of an Icarus. In The Seminar - Book I Lacan refers, apropos the distinction between "full" and "empty" speech, to a "labyrinth of referential systems": "....the opposition between empty and full speech, full speech insofar as it realizes the truth of the subject, empty speech in relation to what he has to do *hic et nunc* with the analyst, in which the subject finds himself...the labyrinth of referential systems made available to him by the state of cultural affairs...." (S I 50).

a speech which remains postponed, for the exigencies into which one is thrown are powerful, demanding, so that one may always fall into writing, its tomb. Or speak from it.

Exit

Closing, commentary suggests a voice or consciousness which, due to certain exigencies, "falls into writing." Speech and Phenomena has been read through to suggest an Other consciousness or voice, one which, in lieu of that fall, involves a certain "scanning" and, "switched," ceases writing and proffers a phenomenal speech.¹ Speech and Phenomena has been construed as the theoretical, booked basis for such an exorbitant scanning and end; based on the experience of mundane writing (and the Imaginary Relation which that experience maintains), phenomenal speech would apparently disengage from bibliopedic, bildopedic culture, alter its archives, cease its simple continuance. Thus read, the essay makes and takes a position more common to practices termed "artistic": paintings which display the end of painting, literature which inscribes the end of literature: position of an "apocalyptic tone," position of persons who assume an "eschatological eloquence," feeling that they are "in intuitive and immediate relation

¹ In the "Exergue" to Of Grammatology Derrida cites from an apparently ancient Egyptian text which was, in turn, cited in the proceedings of a 1963 Colloquium ("Writing and the Psychology of Peoples"): "The one who will shine in the science of writing will shine like the sun...O Samas (sun-god), by your light you *scan* the totality of lands as if they were cuneiform signs." (G 3, my emphasis). The commentary often refers to an "indicative matrix" which consciousness may "scan," discerning therein instances of "the sign in general." That matrix or "totality of lands" is the site of potential indicators -- *phenomena* which, when "read" as signifiers of linguistic signs, *speak*.

with a mystery."² Having followed and wrought a way to such an end or position, it is now necessary to exit from it, to dispell the *afflatus*, *hybris* of a self-authorized speech which would assume "the law of literature."³

Like the way of deconstruction, the way of such speech is caught in two double-binds. Phenomenal speech remains, as spoken words differ from (and are defined in relation to) written words, dependent on the *topos* or place of writing. 'Phenomenal speech' remains (as the phrase is inscribed, bound, read) dependent on the *thesis* or pace of writing. The *topos* and *thesis* which make phenomenal speech possible thus determine its impossibility; its possibility is its impossibility. Moreover, to claim that the place and pace of writing are over is to accede to the violent silence, the insolence, of a "last voice,"⁴ one which asserts "the end" (or "the end of the end"). Against the impress of a voice which ends writing, three moves, *three*, may be made, gleaned from Derrida's essay. 1. To suggest that the cessation of mundane writing is the end of writing is to simply imply that writing is

² In "Of An Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy" Derrida notes those "mystagogues" who assume "'an exalted vision...that is the death of philosophy.'" (AT 67). "These people place themselves out of the common, but they have this in common: they are all in immediate relation with the mystery. And they wish to lure, seduce, lead toward the mystery and by the mystery. (AT 69).

³ "The law of literature tends, in principle, to defy or lift the law. It therefore allows one to think the essence of the law....[i]t is an institution which tends to overflow the institution." (SI 36).

⁴ The voice of an "eschatological eloquence" which, though it strains to assert the end or "the end of the end," actually only concedes that "the end is soon, it is imminent....We are all going to die, we are going to disappear." (AT 81, 84). This, apocalyptic, is "the transcendental condition of all discourse, of all experience...of every mark or every trace." (AT 87).

not now (and never was) the activity or place in which truth occurs. One who follows Speech and Phenomena *through* finally capitulates to a reality of extra-textual truths which remain, indeed, anterior to "the scene of writing." Reversing a view commonly attributed to Derrida, there *are* realities which mundane writing, if truthful, mirrors. 2. Obviously, however, more than mere mirroring occurs; texts are produced in relation to (only) other texts: "bibliopedic culture." When Derrida claims that written discourse is now (as ever) caught up in "destinerrance" -- that a letter can always not arrive at its destination, that "dispatches always refer to other dispatches without decidable destination" (AT 90, 87) -- he apparently affirms more writing, celebrates abandonment to and acceleration of the archive, "this completely angelic structure." (AT 87). 3. It is at this point (at the juncture of 1. and 2.) that *writing and speech* unfold anew, to negotiate, in the tense present, opposite demands ('no, don't speak/write' + 'yes, do speak/write') and pass through "the undecidable." As described in "The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,'" the experience of "the undecidable" "is not merely the oscillation or tension between two decisions," it is "the experience of that which...is still obliged...to give itself up to the impossible decision, while taking account of law and rules."⁵ Derrida writes here of a simultaneous transgression and deployment, a simultaneous absence and presence of "the instruments or stones available in the house...language." (M 135). Such practice

⁵ Derrida, "The 'Mystical Foundation of Authority,'" in Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice, p. 24.

(best accommodated by the a-thetic, fictive space of literature, *lit et rature*) engages "a barely visible stem...almost imperceptible cold lever...so as to enervate, then dilapidate, enormous discourses that always end, though more or less denying it, in attributing an author's rights: 'that comes back to me,' the *seing* [signature] belongs to me."⁶ The nature of signs, condition of writing, is other than that; the scene does not return to the name. The same tain is (to be) heard within speech, *one has read*.

In "Tympan" Derrida acknowledges that the "exit" of Speech and Phenomena is "false." (M mxiii). Strangely, Derrida's essay gestures toward an *equivalence* of speech and writing, toward a consideration of that which lends each forces and forms. Still, within "the phenomenon of the labyrinth," within that quantified text which 'Speech and Phenomena' entitles and names, "the question of writing" remains, lessening "the hold" of the authorial voice and allowing new questions to proliferate, *ethical* questions which pertain to the place of inscription and the very "solid structures" which support that place: Why write? For what does one write? For whom does one write? What is a thesis? Why make or take a thesis? What is philosophy, after all, after? Beyond "the way of Icarus," perhaps such questions affect, for the better, those "solid structures" we read and write ways through.

⁶ Derrida, Glas, p. 3(b).

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