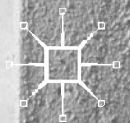# DERRIDA, THE SUBJECT AND THE OTHER

Surviving, Translating, and the Impossible

LISA FORAN

Derrida, the Subject and the Other

Lisa Foran

Derrida, the Subject and the Other

Surviving, Translating, and the Impossible

palgrave
macmillan

Lisa Foran
Philosophical Studies
Newcastle University, UK

Acknowledgements

Contents

List of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations reference the texts I cite most often. References to works by Heidegger in German cite the *Gesamtausgabe* (GA) editions, except for *Sein und Zeit* where, as standard, references are made to the original German edition or 'H' pagination (whose page numbers are also included in the *Gesamtausgabe* edition of the text, GA2). Throughout, the abbreviation will be followed by the original language page number and secondly by the page number of the English language translation (where available). Other works by these authors which I only cite occasionally appear in the full bibliography at the end of the book.

Works Authored by Martin Heidegger

BH   'Brief über den Humanismus'. In *Wegmarken* (GA 9). Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976. pp. 313–64. Trans. by Frank A. Capuzzi, 'Letter on Humanism'. In David Farrell Krell (ed.) *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings*. London: Routledge, 2011. pp. 147–81.

FT   'Die Frage nach der Technik'. In *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (GA 7). Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2000. pp. 5–36. Trans. by William Lovitt, 'The Question Concerning Technology'.

	In David Farrell Krell (ed.) *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings*. London: Routledge, 2011. pp. 217–38.
GA 11	*Identität und Differenz*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006. Trans. by Joan Stambaugh, *Identity and Difference*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.
GA 12	*Unterwegs Zur Sprache*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1985. Trans. by Peter D. Hertz, *On the Way to Language*. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
GA 54	*Parmenides.* Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1982. Trans. by André Schuwer & Richard Rojcewicz, *Parmenides*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.
SA	'Der Spruch des Anaximander'. In *Holzwege* (GA 5). Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977. pp. 321–73. Trans. by David Farrell Krell & Frank A. Capuzzi, 'The Anaximander Fragment' in *Early Greek Thinking*. New York: Harper & Row, 1975. pp. 13–58.
SZ	*Sein und Zeit*. Tübungen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1927. (7th edition) Trans. by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2009.

Works Authored by Emmanuel Levinas

AQE	*Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*. Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2010. Trans. By Alphonso Lingis, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981.
EPP	*Éthique comme philosophie première*. Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1998. Trans. By Seán Hand & Michael Temple, 'Ethics as First Philosophy'. In Seán Hand (ed.) *The Levinas Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1989. pp. 75–87.
TdA	'La trace de l'autre'. In *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger*. Paris: Vrin, 1994. pp. 187–202.
TI	*Totalité et infini.* Paris: Le Livre de de Poche, 2011. Trans. by Alphonso Lingis, *Totality and Infinity*. Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1969.

Works Authored by Jacques Derrida

Adieu   *Adieu à Emmanuel Levinas*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1997.

Apories   *Apories: Mourir – s'attendre aux « limites de la vérité »*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1996. Trans. by Thomas Dutoit, *Aporias: Dying – awaiting (one another at) the "limits of truth"*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.

Apprendre   *Apprendre à vivre enfin*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2005. Trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas, *Learning to Live Finally, The Last Interview*. Hampshire & New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.

Dénégations   'Comment ne pas parler, Dénégations'. In *Psyché: Inventions de l'autre* Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987. pp. 535–95. Trans. by Ken Frieden, 'How to Avoid Speaking: Denials'. In Budick, Sanford & Iser, Wolfgang (eds.) *Languages of the Unsayable, The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*. New York: Colombia University Press, 1989. pp. 3–70.

DG   *De la grammatologie*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1967. Trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Diss.   *La Dissémination*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1972. Trans. by Barbara Johnson, *Dissemination*. London & New York: Continuum, 2004.

DTB   'Des Tours de Babel'. In Graham, Joseph F. (ed.) *Difference in Translation*. London & New York: Cornell University Press, 1985. pp. 209–48. Trans. by Joseph F. Graham, 'Des Tours de Babel'. In Joseph F. Grahm (ed.) *Difference in Translation*. London & New York: Cornell University Press, 1985. pp. 165–207.

ED   *L'écriture et la différence*. Paris: Les Éditions du Seuil, 1967. Trans. by Alan Bass, *Writing and Difference*. London & New York: Routledge, 2001.

Intro.   *Introduction a 'L'Origine de la géométrie' de Husserl*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962. Trans. by John P. Leavey Jr. *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry An Introduction by Jacques Derrida*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.

L'événement   'Une Certaine possibilité impossible de dire l'événement'. In Derrida, Jacques; Nouss, Alexis and Soussana, Gad *Dire l'événement, est-ce possible?: Séminaire de Montréal pour Jacques Derrida*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001. pp. 79–112. Trans. by Gila Walker, 'A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event'. In *Critical Inquiry*, Vol.33, No.2, Winter 2007, pp. 441–61.

M   *Marges de la philosophie*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972. Trans. by Alan Bass, *Margins of Philosophy.* Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982.

Mono.   *Le monolinguisme de l'autre ou la prothèse d'origine*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1996. Trans. by Patrick Mensah, *Monolingualism of the Other or the Prothesis of Origin*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

OA   *L'oreille de l'autre otobiographies, transferts, traductions*. Montéal: VLB Éditeur, 1982. Trans. by Avital Ronell & Peggy Kamuf, *The Ear of the Other*. New York: Shocken Books, 1985.

Points   *Points de suspension, Entretiens*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1992. Trans. by Peggy Kamuf & others, *Points… Interviews, 1974–1994*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

Pos.   *Positions*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972. Trans. by Alan Bass, *Positions.* London: The Athlone Press, 1981.

Relevant   'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction 'relevante'?' In *Quinzièmes Assises de la Traduction Littéraire Arles 1998*. Arles: Actes Sud, 1999. pp. 21–48. Trans. by Lawrence Venuti, 'What is a 'Relevant' Translation?' In *Critical Enquiry*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2001, pp. 174–200.

SN   *Sauf le nom*. Paris: Galilée, 1993. Trans. by John P. Leavey Jr., 'Sauf le nom'. In *On the Name*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995. pp. 35–85.

Spectres   *Spectres de Marx*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1993. Trans. by Peggy Kamuf, *Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. New York & London: Routledge, 2006.

Survivre   'Survivre: journal de bord'. In *Parages*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1986. pp. 117–218. Trans. by James Hulbert, 'Living On / Borderlines'. In Bloom, Harold; de Man, Paul; Derrida, Jacques; Hartman, Geoffrey H. and Miller, J. Hillis *Deconstruction and Criticism*. London & New York: Continuum, 2004. pp. 62–142.

Transfert   'Transfert *ex cathedra:* le langage et les institutions philosophiques'. In *Du Droit à la philosophie.* Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1990. pp. 283–394. Trans. by Jan Plug & others 'Transfer Ex Cathedra: Language and Institutions of Philosophy'. In *Eyes of the University, Right to Philosophy 2.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. pp. 1–80.

VP   *La voix et le phénomène.* Paris: Quadrige/PUF, 1993. Trans. by David B. Allison, *Speech and Phenomena.* Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.

Introduction: From Translation to Translating

The initial idea for this book arose from the experience of living in different countries and languages. Living 'in translation' can produce a strange liberation by alienation. Speaking in a second language creates a sense of freedom and discovery whereby new ways of expressing the world are opened up which also opens up new worlds. Accompanying this is a sense of being able to discover oneself through these new experiences, as though the light of what is foreign or other can illuminate hidden recesses of oneself. Perhaps this is because there is an impression of escaping the shackles of what is expected of oneself in one's home culture or 'mother tongue'. '*Tromper la surveillance,*' Jacques Derrida terms it: 'eluding the watchful eye of some monitor, in order to tell the truth.'[1] Words in a second language which seem to reveal something 'new' in the world can thus seem more 'true'. We often don't notice our 'own' language, the strange idioms where history's ghost can live, whereas idioms of a second tongue can seem to resound with truth and wonder. In discussing translation, Maurice Blanchot describes this as the sensation that 'words need a certain ignorance to keep their power of revelation.'[2] Yet there is also, paradoxically, a sense of fiction that seems to permeate this experience, as though the words of a second language are both more 'true' while at the

same time not being 'real'. Words in another language seem to apply to the other or second country and not to one's home. There can be a feeling of living in a state of suspension when one lives in another country, as if 'real life' were paused and would begin again on the return home.

All of these curious and vague ideas revolve around the linguistic construction of identity and alterity. In Ireland, 'my' country, the relations between language and identity are particularly complex. Few Irish nationals speak the Irish language *Gaeilge*. Ireland is one of very few post-colonial countries that lost its mother tongue so completely. 'I only have one language, yet it is not mine'[3] says Derrida of his relation to the French language; the same could be said for the vast majority of Irish nationals who speak the English language as their mother tongue. Speaking a language that belongs to another country, but having no other language in which to speak, produces a sense of distantiation—the feeling of living in someone else's home and a homesickness for somewhere you've never been. A desire to put philosophical flesh on these skeletal (not to mention subjective) impressions motivated this book and its central questions: can we speak of subject and other as 'constructed'? If so, what role does language play in this construction? Do subject and other relate as languages in a play of mutually constructive translation? If so, what are the ethical implications of that exchange?

The practice of translation is of course as old as the history of languages. Insofar as it seeks to make an unintelligible meaning intelligible, it forms part of the history of hermeneutics. While hermeneutics as a discipline may only have arisen in the post-Kantian atmosphere of Romantic Germany, its roots reach back across antiquity. 'Words spoken are symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul; written words are the signs of words spoken.'[4] Aristotle's description of language as the clothing of inner mental experience in many senses offers a neat summation of the dominant approach to translation for many centuries. As Jean Grondin has pointed out, the Greek understanding of saying as *hermeneuein* or 'interpreting' arises from the notion of language as a translation of the soul's thoughts. Expression or *hermeneia* 'is simply the logos comprehended in words.'[5] *Hermeneuein* then, as the interpretation of those words, is the process of mediating external signs inwards towards the 'inside' of meaning. Translation, as the transformation of

a word in one language into a word in another language, would follow much the same path as a general *hermeneuein*. The meaning, the inner logos or thought (*dianoia*) could change its 'outer' clothing as simply as one changes a coat.

The occasional commentary on translation found in the works of Roman orators and unnamed grammarians, stages translation as a choice between two opposites. Faced with a text in Greek, a Latin scholar, in the later words of St. Jerome following Cicero, should proceed: '*non verbum e verbo sed sensum de sensu*'—'not word for word but sense for sense.'[6] Yet these Roman commentators and their early Christian counterparts in many senses follow the Greek approach to language in that the transposition of meaning is considered a simple dissociation of signifier from signified—whether that be at the level of the word or the broader level of the phrase. What is distinct in St. Jerome, and also in the commentary of Augustine, is the question of divine inspiration. Provided the translator proceed in faith, her words are guaranteed by the presence of the divine logos. While the Reformation placed interpretation and translation at the centre of the European stage, the resultant theories of translation remained largely confined to biblical exegesis. Although Wilhelm Dilthey claims that the Reformation led to the birth of hermeneutics in its Romantic form, Grondin argues that the influence of the Church fathers was far greater than often thought 'so that this pivotal period is much less revolutionary than the classic history of hermeneutics, itself indebted to Protestant theology, would suggest.'[7] Through the Reformation debates, the question of translation, or more broadly interpretation, centred on the relation to a transcendental divine spirit which made itself present in the transformation of words. Moreover, for many centuries translation was concerned with the transfer of meaning from one text to another, from one said to another said. My interest here is the movement of translation towards its own limit; towards the unsaid, unsayable and untranslatable.

The first step of this movement, propelled by a conflux of historical and philosophical forces, was taken by Eighteenth Century German speakers. German speaking translators at that time sought to define themselves against the prevailing French and English literary trends. Rather than aiming for a transparent translation where all traces of the 'original' text's foreignness had been erased, translators working in German

endeavoured to make the foreign as obvious as possible. Johann Gottfried Herder advocated 'bending' German itself to a foreign strain in order to accrue 'great advances' to the German language.[8] In this regard, Johann Heinrich Voss's translations of the *Odyssey* (1781) and the *Iliad* (1793), the first to retain the hexameter in German, had a profound impact on the German literary scene.[9] They ushered in an openness to translation as a possibility of transformation—not of the foreign text but of the German language itself. Such a view of translation as linguistic enrichment marks the move away from the separation of language and thought towards an understanding of thinking as inherently linguistic. As Lawrence Venuti phrases it 'language is conceived, not as expressing thought and meaning transparently, but as shaping them according to linguistic structures and cultural traditions which are in turn shaped by language use.'[10] Between Voss's *Odyssey* and *Iliad,* Immanuel Kant's three critiques appeared; the *Critique of Pure Reason* was published the same year as Voss's *Odyssey* (1781, second edition 1787), followed closely by the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788) and the *Critique of Judgement* (1790). The seismic shift in thinking that ensued evidently led to a radical re-evaluation of language and translation, although this was by no means immediate.

Kant's phenomena/noumena distinction introduced both an emancipation and a limitation of reason. On the one hand, the projection of a finite subject's categories upon the world of experience is what makes that world and the experience of it possible. On the other hand of course, the world as it is experienced is not the world as it is in itself. The disjunction introduced by Kant made way for the philosophical hermeneutics of the twentieth century via its romantic precursors of Friedrich Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Grondin describes post-Kantian philosophy as unfolding along two different paths: speculative idealism and hermeneutics. While these may well not have been in line with Kant's own ambitions, they nonetheless emerge from an interpretative, that is to say hermeneutic, engagement with the latter's thinking. It is in Schleiermacher and Dilthey's response to Kant that we can find the beginnings of a shift in the direction of the unsaid; the concern of post-Heideggerian philosophical hermeneutics as it is found in the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur.[11]

Traditionally understanding was considered 'normal' or 'natural' so that a method of hermeneutics was considered requisite only in the

exceptional situation of non-understanding; such as encountering a text in a foreign language. However, Schleiermacher reversed this perspective, claiming that non-understanding is the 'normal' state and that any fruitful understanding of anything that is said or written can emerge only from the application of a *Kunstlehre* or methodology of understanding. Traces of the radical uncertainty of post-Kantian subjectivity, whose possibilities for understanding have been limited by the phenomenal distinction, are evident in this focus on non-understanding. Hermeneutics under Schleiermacher becomes for the first time the science of understanding in its most general form and is no longer restricted to the occasional event of non-understanding. Language, claims Schleiermacher, can be interpreted both grammatically and technically. The grammatical side of an interpretation would centre on the language itself, syntactical rules, idioms in usage at the time of writing—its context would be the broader context of the language as a whole. On the other hand, technical or what Schleiermacher would later call 'psychological' interpretation, is concerned with the particular art or *technē* of an author, her intentions and characteristics—its context would be the 'inner' life of the individual author.

It is this psychological mode of interpretation that was taken up by Dilthey in an effort to find a methodological foundation for the human sciences. This foundation was sought on the basis of 'inner experience' or what Dilthey also later termed an 'interpretative psychology.'[12] Such a psychology 'tries to describe aspects of mental life by reference to their intrinsic structure, or (since that amounts to conceiving the parts in terms of the whole) it simply tries to "understand".'[13] The advantage claimed by Dilthey for this methodology is that the inner experiences of the subject—or author—are immediately intelligible, since they do not rely on the mediation of the senses required by experiences of the external world. It is precisely this notion of the immediacy of one's inner experiences that Derrida will much later interrogate in his reading of Edmund Husserl. Indeed Dilthey's descriptive psychology of *Erlebnis* or 'lived experience' is in a way a precursor of the former's phenomenology. In his later work[14] Dilthey sought to marry *Erlebnis*, understanding, and expression so that the human sciences would proceed by a hermeneutic. That is, by an understanding of the external expression of their subject

of inquiry towards what lies beneath—towards contents of meaning carried in the author's lived experiences. There is of course a certain tension here between the aspiration of a methodology specifically for the human sciences and the fact that understanding permeates all human historical experience, as Dilthey himself recognized.

Translation throughout these early beginnings of hermeneutics is deemed always possible; there is the text or the situation to be interpreted and it is possible to at least envisage a methodology for so doing. The shift, however, brought about through Schleiermacher and Dilthey points towards two things. First, that understanding is not immediately guaranteed but is rather something one works towards, pointing to the gradual effacement of the idea of a 'transparent' meaning. And second, almost paradoxically, that understanding is concerned with the understanding of 'inner mental life'; it proceeds from the outward signs of this life—expression—to its inner manifestations of meaning. It is with Martin Heidegger that the art of understanding expands dramatically so that existence itself becomes a hermeneutic. Grondin marks the radicalization of hermeneutics that took place with Heidegger in the following manner:

> 'Making sense of things', the beginning and end of hermeneutic endeavour, was no longer a marginalized epiphenomenon limited to text-based disciplines; it was instead a fundamental aspect of existence for a being that understands itself in time, and whose own being is concerned with being. Now indisputably philosophical, this has remained the nature of hermeneutics up to Gadamer and Habermas.[15]

While previously the interpreter or translator needed to overcome their present situation in order to free themselves (as much as possible) of potential prejudices, Heidegger invigorates hermeneutics so that what is made intelligible in its process is not simply a text or an author but the translator herself. As Miguel de Beistegui phrases it, with Heidegger the 'ultimate goal of hermeneutics is to render the interpreter transparent to himself *as* factical life. Hermeneutics is directed towards the living present, or the "fundamental mobility" of life.'[16] It is this radicalization of hermeneutics (and indeed its eventual abandonment) that marks Heidegger as the beginning point of this book.

Crucially, Heidegger arrives at this radicalization through his marriage of Husserlian phenomenology with Romantic hermeneutics, notably that of Dilthey.[17] Certainly the hermeneutic of factical life presented in *Being and Time* would not have been possible without its phenomenological method. Key, in terms of my concerns here, is the Husserlian notion of intentionality (itself adopted by the latter through Franz Brentano). The fact that consciousness is always directed towards something shows that it is open outwards towards the world, it is always about something outside of itself. As De Beistigui sums up the Heideggerian interpretation of Husserl: 'in the same way that Heidegger "translates" (that is, reinterprets) consciousness (*Bewusstsein*) as factical life and then as existence (*Dasein*), he also translates intentionality as openness-towards-something.'[18] This openness-towards of Dasein is where my account begins and crucially with the 'translation' of parts of the word 'phenomenology'. *Phainomenon*, translated as 'that which shows itself in itself'[19] and *logos*, translated as 'discourse' understood as 'letting something be seen',[20] leads Heidegger to the translation of 'phenomenology' as: 'to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.'[21]

My account of translation and alterity therefore begins at that point where hermeneutics becomes 'indisputably philosophical' through its confrontation with phenomenology. The first chapter examines the manner in which translation is deployed in Heidegger's thinking. I begin with *Being and Time* and trace the role of language therein focusing particularly on assertion, *logos,* and the question of repeatability. Over the course of the 1930s and 1940s Heidegger evinced a turn which led to the gradual abandonment of certain terms, notably 'hermeneutics' and 'phenomenology'. If the path of philosophy after Kant forked into hermeneutics and speculative idealism, then we might say that post-Heideggerian philosophy produced a similar fork between the hermeneutics of Gadamer and the deconstruction of Derrida. Here I follow this latter path towards the emergence of deconstruction in Heidegger's own thinking, notably in his later work. During the 1940s translation took on a crucial role in Heidegger's thinking, in this regard I move from *Being and Time* to a close analysis of 'The Anaximander Fragment' (1946). Here translation acts as an axis point from which and around which Heidegger's thinking

turns. It opens the possibility of original thinking that has, at the very least, de-centred metaphysical language. This analysis opens the way into Heidegger's *On the Way to Language.* Heidegger's thinking can be read as seeking to go beyond the phenomenology of Husserl, breaking out of the rigidity of the latter's terminology in an effort to allow the essence of language to be heard. Emmanuel Levinas also seeks a beyond phenomenology, but in a notably different way.

In Chapter Two I examine Levinas's writing on absolute alterity and his conception of the subject as 'hostage'. Such a subject is offered by Levinas as a 'counterpoint' to Husserl's transcendental intentional ego and to Heidegger's Dasein which, in its belonging to Being, belongs to the same.[22] Following the emergence of language as a desire to respond to the Other in Levinas, I argue for a subject who is constituted as a passive translating between being and otherwise than being through an unsaying of the ontological said. Having thus framed my account with Heidegger's ontological difference and Levinas's ethical difference, I proceed in Chapter Three to Derrida's différance. I begin by establishing the crucial role of death in the production of meaning for Derrida by taking a close look at the seminal *Voice and Phenomena*. From here I outline and develop the Derridean notion of *survie*[23] through his reading of Maurice Blanchot and Walter Benjamin opening up the problematic of the untranslatable and the impossible.

Chapter Four explores Derrida's explicit engagement with translation in various works. I begin with his own translation of Shakespeare and go on to examine his reading of Descartes' *Discourse on Method*. These readings reveal the power-play of language and enforced translation; themes which take centre stage in the second part of this chapter which deals with Derrida's own relation to France and the French language. Finally, I outline here the implications of 'origin myths' of translation, notably the Biblical narrative of Babel. Under the rubric of this myth I demonstrate the impossibility of the proper name and the inherent multiplicity at the heart of any so-called identity. Chapter Five deals with the 'impossible' through two names of absolute alterity: 'God' and 'Death'. I conclude with the relation between translating, sur-viving and mourning, and argue that the subject/other relation in Derrida can be conceived as 'sur-viving translating'.

Tackling the work of an author as prolific as Derrida—and one around whom a whole industry of secondary material appears to have been

founded—inevitably demands a highly selective attitude to bibliography. Surprisingly few works have focused on translation in Derrida. Two exceptions of note are Kathleen Davis's *Deconstruction and Translation*[24] and Michael Thomas's *The Reception of Derrida*: *Translation and Transformation*.[25] The first of these places Derrida's work within the discipline of Translation Studies and aims to highlight the impact Derrida's thinking can and should have on the practising translator. The latter text provides an overview of the manner in which 'deconstruction' has been transformed by its own translation into other languages and academic contexts. My own interest is slightly different; I want to follow the operation of translation throughout Derrida's writings as a way to approach his accounts of alterity. It is not until the last chapter that I begin to draw on works where Derrida reads Heidegger and Levinas; I have done this with the hope that the reader might follow the deployment of translation from Heidegger, to Levinas and finally to the absolute dynamism accorded to this term in Derrida's work. In other words, I want to (at least initially) read Derrida through Heidegger and Levinas, rather than reading Heidegger and Levinas through Derrida. My overall claim is that translation operates in the work of each of these three thinkers in a crucial way; that it is through an invigorated notion of translation that each author takes a step beyond what Derrida terms 'a certain concept' of philosophy. Significantly, this step 'beyond' is taken at the limits of the possibility of translation. Translating thus reveals an *other* way of thinking and most notably of all, another way of thinking the Other. In Derrida's words:

> What does philosophy say? Let's imagine that it's possible to ask such a question: What does philosophy say? What does the philosopher say when he is being a philosopher? He says: What matters is truth or meaning, and since meaning is before or beyond language, it follows that it is translatable. Meaning has the commanding role, and consequently one must be able to fix its univocality or, in any case, to master its plurivocality. If this plurivocality can be mastered, then translation, understood as the transport of a semantic content into another signifying form, is possible. There is no philosophy unless translation in this latter sense is possible. […]This, then, was what I thought of as the passage into philosophy, the program of translation. The origin of philosophy is translation or the thesis of translatability, so that wherever translation in this sense has failed, it is nothing less than philosophy that finds itself defeated.[26]

Notes

1. Survivre p. 191 /trans. p. 120.
2. Maurice Blanchot *La part du feu* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1949) p. 173 /trans. by Charlotte Mandell *The Work of Fire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995) p. 176.
3. Mono. p. 15 /trans. p. 2 & *passim.*
4. Aristotle *De Interpretatione* I.16a 3–8 (trans. by Harold P. Cook).
5. Jean Grondin (trans. by Joel Weinsheimer) *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1994) p. 21.
6. Jerome (trans. by Kathleen Davis) 'Letter to Pammachius' (395 CE) in Lawrence Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader* 2nd ed. (New York & London: Routledge, 2004) pp. 21–30, p. 23.
7. Grondin *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (*op.cit.*) p. 19.
8. Johann Gottfried Herder (trans. by Michael N. Forster) 'Fragments on Recent German Literature (1767–8)' in Michael N. Forster (ed.) *Herder*: *Philosophical Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) pp. 33–65. Herder's phrase in full is: 'What great advantages would not inevitably accrue to our language if it learned to mold [*sic.*] itself to the Greek and Latin languages as far as possible and showed its flexibility to the public's eyes!' p. 38.
9. The translations are praised by Wilhelm von Humboldt in the preface to his own translation of Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* and the 'foreignizing' strategy they employ is also praised by Goethe in the *West-Easterly Divan* (see Lawrence Venuti, 'Foundational Statements', *op.cit.* p. 19). Interestingly, they inspired Hölderlin's ill received translation of Sophocles which was vehemently attacked by Voss's son Heinrich (though it was later praised by Heidegger and Walter Benjamin). For more on Hölderlin's approach to translation in this work see Kathrin H. Rosenfield 'Getting inside Sophocles' Mind through Hölderlin's "Antigone" in *New Literary History* Vol. 30 No. 1 (Winter 1999) pp. 107–27.
10. Venuti 'Foundational Statements' (*op.cit.*) p. 19.
11. Grondin *Sources of Hermeneutics* (*op.cit*). p.ix-x.
12. Grondin *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (*op.cit.*) p. 85.

13. *Ibid.* p. 86.
14. Namely '*Der Aufbau der geschtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaftern*' [*The Construction of the Historical World in the Human Sciences*] in Bernhard Groethuysen (ed.) *Gesammelte Schriften* Vol.7 (Stuttgart: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958).
15. Grondin *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* p. 20.
16. Miguel de Beistegui *The New Heidegger* (London & New York: Continuum, 2005) p. 23.
17. Which is not to say that these two traditions are wholly separate; Husserl's phenomenology of *Erlebnis* owes at least something to Dilthey's account of descriptive psychology. Heidegger devotes an entire section of *Being and Time* (§77) to Dilthey (see SZ pp. 397–404 /trans. pp. 449–455).
18. De Beistigui (*op.cit.*) p. 24.
19. SZ p. 28 /trans. p. 51.
20. SZ p. 32–3 /trans. p. 56.
21. SZ p. 34 /trans. p. 58.
22. In discussions that deal with or cite Hiedegger directly I will maintain the orthographical distinction of 'Being' for *Sein* and 'being' for *seiend* introduced by Macquarrie & Robinson in their translation of *Being and Time*. Similarly, in discussions that deal with or cite Levinas directly I will maintain the orthographical distinction between 'other', for *autre* and Other for *autrui* introduced by Lingis in his translations of *Totality and Infinity* and *Otherwise than Being*.
23. This term can be variously translated. James Hulbert translates it as 'living on' whereas Joseph Graham uses 'sur-vival'; as he puts it: 'Survie: The word means "survival" as well as "afterlife"; its use in the text also brings out the subliminal sense of more life and more than life. The hyphenation of "sur-vival" is an admitted cheat.' (DTB TN p. 206). I will often use Graham's 'cheat' of sur-vival to emphasize this double meaning.
24. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2001.
25. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
26. OA pp. 159–60 /trans. p. 120.

The Saying of Heidegger

Introduction

Derrida notes on many occasions the impact Heidegger's work had on his own, even once claiming that he could not have written anything without Heidegger.[1] As such, my investigation into translation and the relation with the other, begins with an examination of Heidegger's thinking on language. In this chapter I do three things—first, I set out the role of language in Heidegger's work through an exegesis of some of Heidegger's most pertinent texts on the theme. Second, I demonstrate the manner in which translation in many senses operates as a *hodos* or 'way' into the task of thinking. Finally, I ask whether Heidegger's thinking of difference is radical enough or whether his thinking remains trapped in some way in a thinking of the same; a question that will return in subsequent chapters.

I begin with the account of language in Heidegger's seminal *Being and Time* (1927). Here I mark the relation between the truth of Being and language as *apophansis*. I note in particular the manner in which Heidegger sees writing and repeatability as a threat to the revelatory power of language and the implications of such a view for translation. Between the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927 and that of the

'Letter on Humanism' in 1947, Heidegger's thinking underwent a 'turn' or *Kehre*. This turn, as Heidegger is at pains to point out in that latter work; is not a radical departure from *Being and Time* but rather a development of his thinking. Key to this development is a deeper engagement with language and its relation to Being. It is no coincidence that many of Heidegger's texts from the 1940s deal with translation and so, in the second section of this chapter, I examine Heidegger's extended translation of the Anaximander fragment. In the last section I examine what Heidegger terms the essence of language—Saying—and its relation with man as a co-belonging. I claim that while Heidegger consistently emphasizes the as yet 'unsaid' of Saying, he falls short of positing an 'unsayable' and that this has radical implications for the translatable and untranslatable.

Language in *Being and Time*

In *Being and Time* Dasein, 'that entity that each of us is,' is described as Being-in-the-world, which is a unitary phenomenon. In order to analyze this unitary phenomenon Heidegger examines the 'constitutive items in its structure' which are not to be understood as contents subsequently pieced together, but rather as aspects occurring simultaneously within the whole. These 'constitutive items' are the worldhood of the world, the 'who' of Dasein and Being-in as such. Within the structure of *Being and Time*, the principal analysis of language takes place in the broader context of the 'Being-in as such' (Division One, Chapter Six).[2] Here Heidegger describes the 'there' of Dasein's Being-there (or 'there-Being', *Da-sein*) as state-of-mind (*Befindlichkeit*), understanding (*Verstehen*) and discourse (*Rede*). These three existentialia, or conditions of Dasein's existence, are co-constitutive and co-occurring. For the sake of space I will focus here on the accounts of understanding and discourse without dwelling on state-of-mind. I will then illustrate the relationship between discourse and the possibility of truth as unconcealment.

Ordinarily when we use the word 'understanding' we tend to mean 'being able' or 'competent' to do something or 'being a match for it.' However, for Heidegger this kind of understanding is derived from primordial or existential understanding where that 'which we have such

competence over is not a "what", but Being as existing.'[3] As an *existentiale* understanding is a mode of Dasein's very Being. Dasein, as being-there is always already in a world, this world is disclosed to Dasein as significant and as its (Dasein's) potentiality-for-Being. This disclosedness of the world is existential understanding which has the structure of projection. 'Projection' (*Entwurf*) here means that Dasein, in its Being, is always 'throwing' possibilities for its Being ahead of itself.[4] These possibilities are on the one hand described by Heidegger as definite and on the other hand as purely possible.[5] While this may at first seem contradictory it is essential to grasp these two characteristics of the possible together. Since Dasein is Being-in-the-world and the world is always already disclosed to Dasein in a particular way, then Dasein 'has already got itself into definite possibilities.'[6] Dasein either lets these possibilities pass by or 'seizes upon them,' this is the modality of Dasein's Being. Nonetheless, since Dasein is thrown into a world in which other entities already are, and which has already been disclosed in a certain way; these possibilities are pre-structured. There is a 'range' of possibilities in terms of what can be disclosed to Dasein at any given time. Dasein's possibilities are different today than they will be a century from now. What will remain the same, however, is Dasein's existential structure of Being-possible. The possibilities that Dasein throws ahead of itself can subsequently be 'seized upon' and appropriated but within understanding itself, they remain only possibilities. Understanding then, as an existentiale, is the mode of Dasein's Being in which 'it *is* its possibilities as possibilities.'[7]

'Sight', 'light' and 'showing' play important roles in *Being and Time* and many of the descriptions of Dasein emphasize the ability to 'see' that which is. Dasein's ability to engage with its environment and the things it finds there in a meaningful way is described as *Umsicht* generally translated as 'circumspection' or literally 'around sight.'[8] Understanding too is described as a type of 'sight,' although this is neither 'just perceiving with the bodily eyes' nor 'pure non-sensory awareness of something present-at-hand.'[9] Rather, understanding allows Dasein to 'see' entities *as* meaningful through their network of involvements in the world within which Dasein finds itself. Understanding, as which Dasein projects its Being upon possibilities, has its own possibility of developing itself in interpretation. Interpretation is the manner in which understanding appropriates

the possibilities it had previously projected: interpretation is the manner in which understanding 'becomes itself.'[10]

The relation between interpretation and understanding is perhaps best understood in terms of what Heidegger calls the 'fore-structure' and the 'as-structure'. Understanding acts as a tripartite fore-structure made up of fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception. Fore-having (*Vorhabe*) is an understanding of the background network of involvements of that which we wish to interpret. Fore-sight (*Vorsicht*) is an understanding of how to approach the entity in question. Fore-sight 'takes the first cut' at what was understood in fore-having in a definite way. An interpretation of an entity has always 'already decided for a definite way of conceiving' the entity in question and this way of preconceiving is what Heidegger terms fore-conception (*Vorgriff*).[11] It can either be drawn from the entity itself or it can force the entity into concepts that do not belong to its way of Being, in either case it reflects Dasein's anticipated understanding of how the interpretation will terminate.[12]

Interpretation, emerging out of existential understanding is not the process of 'throwing a signification' over something present-at-hand but rather the 'laying out' of the involvement of something initially grasped through understanding. It is through interpretation that the 'as' structure is made explicit. We 'understand' a room when we enter it, interpretation brings particular things within the room 'close' to us—seeing the vacant chair *as* a possibility to be grasped (and sat upon). Further, interpretation feeds into understanding modifying and developing our background understanding through experiences of improving things or putting them to rights.[13] This circular movement of background understanding to interpretative articulation and its subsequent return to a background understanding is not, argues Heidegger, to be understood as a vicious circle. Rather, this hermeneutic to-ing and fro-ing provides the positive possibility of knowing and the disclosure of meaning: '*only Dasein can be meaningful or meaningless.*'[14] But what exactly is meaning for Heidegger? As understanding, Dasein projects possibilities ahead of itself which are then articulated by interpretation. These possibilities are projected *upon* meaning which is to be understood as the intelligibility of an entity, its disclosure to Dasein. Since Dasein alone has the form of Being which is a disclosive Being-in-the-world, and since only Dasein has the mode of

Being as understanding; then only Dasein can reveal the meaning of an entity. Meaning is not at all the definition of words in a dictionary but rather the existential framework upon which Dasein as understanding projects and from which interpretation articulates.[15]

Interpretative articulation, where the fore-structures of understanding are made explicit through the as-structure of interpretation, is not yet assertion but only its possibility. Assertion, understood as the expression of interpretation in a predicative statement, serves three purposes for Heidegger. As derivative of interpretation and understanding, assertion will bring these two modalities 'more sharply into view' and reveal the manner in which they can be modified. Secondly, the analysis of assertion reveals a relationship with *logos*; a crucial concept in 'ancient ontology' for defining the Being of entities. Finally, though not unrelated to Heidegger's second purpose, assertion is related to the problem of truth which is fundamentally 'coupled with the problem of Being.'[16]

Heidegger argues that the history of the word *logos* has been a history of mistranslations: 'λόγος [*logos*] gets "translated" (and this means that it is always getting interpreted) as "reason", "judgment", "concept", "definition", "ground", or "relationship".'[17] These translations have covered up the fundamental signification of *logos* as 'discourse'. Aristotle had already seen this when he described *logos* as *apophainesthai.* That is, the *logos* 'points something out', namely what the discourse is about, and thereby allows it to be seen. Further, discourse 'has the character of speaking – vocal proclamation in words. The λόγος [*logos*] is φΩνή [*phonē*], and indeed, φΩνή μετά φαντασίας [*phonē meta phantasias*] – an utterance in which something is sighted in each case.'[18] The structural form of apophantic discourse is 'synthesis' for Heidegger, although he uses this word in a specific way. Synthesis here is not to be understood as a 'binding' of something 'inside' the subject to representations of that which is 'outside', but is rather the 'letting something be seen in its *togetherness* [*Beisammen*] with something – letting it be seen *as* something.'[19] While Heidegger's engagement with the term *logos* develops and in some ways changes in his later work as we will see in subsequent sections of this chapter; this role in revealing the *togetherness* of beings remains decisive throughout.

Heidegger argues that *logos*, as that which allows something to be seen, can be either true or false, provided we understand 'truth' and 'falsity' in

a particular way. The 'truth' of *logos* has been covered-up by an under-standing of truth as *adequatio intellectus rei* or as *correspondentia* or as *conventia*.[20] These traditional understandings of truth are rather *derived* from the primordial signification of truth which is Dasein's disclosedness of the world. Truth, for Heidegger, is a question of covering-up or letting-be-seen and this is rooted in Dasein as Being-uncover*ing* which allows an entity to be-uncover*ed* in itself:

> These entities become that which has been uncovered. They are 'true' in a second sense. What is primarily 'true' – that is, uncovering – is Dasein. 'Truth' in the second sense does not mean Being-uncovering (uncovering), but Being-uncovered (uncoveredness).[21]

It is crucial to highlight the emphasis here on the verbal as opposed to the nominal mode. Dasein as truth is *uncovering*, and as we will see this stress on the processual nature of truth continues throughout Heidegger's writings. 'Truth' for Heidegger is always conceived as a movement, rather than a static judgement. The entities talked about in discourse can either be revealed or hidden in such a way that 'truth' as *alētheia* is the coming out of concealment. In discourse entities must be taken out of their concealment in order to be seen as something unhidden (*alethēs*). In this way falsity, as *pseudesthai* would be discourse which covers up, allowing an entity to be seen—but not to be seen in itself or in its essence. Falsity is to allow an entity to be seen *as* that which it is *not*.[22] The primary function of *logos* then, is 'apophantical discourse'. From discourse emerges the possibility of assertion which does three things at the same time: points out, predicates and communicates.[23]

An assertion is not a 'representation' (*Vorstellung*) of an entity but rather, as *logos*, an assertion is apophantic—it points out an entity, disclosing it and allowing it to be seen from itself. Werner Marx states that for Heidegger, Aristotle's definition of man as a 'rational animal' (*zōion logon echon*) reveals an original understanding of Dasein that Aristotle only partly grasped. That is, Aristotle failed to notice that *logos apophanit-kos* as an *alētheuein* originates in *hermēneia*, which arises from 'circum-spective' understanding.[24] In other words, because part of our very Being as Dasein is to understand our world and interpret it (*hermēneia*), we can

unconceal (*alētheuein*) things therein and point them out (*apophantikos*) through language (*logos*). Aristotle failed to follow this role of language as a 'pointing out' back to its ontological foundation in Dasein's existential constitution.

Assertion is also a predication; it gives the entity that it has pointed out a definite character. As such it narrows our 'view' or understanding of the entity. If we say 'the hammer is too heavy' we focus on this singular character of the hammer and 'dim down' its other characteristics. However, this in no way diminishes the fact that an assertion is apophantic. Rather assertion operates in the double modality of letting an entity be seen while at the same time restricting the view we have of that entity. Finally, assertion is communication. When we make an assertion we share with another Dasein our Being-towards that which we have asserted. If I say to you 'the hammer is too heavy' we are *together* towards the hammer and the hammer is revealed in itself. Heidegger conceives of this *sharing of Being-towards* as existential communication. What is said then is not the focus here but rather the sharing of a way of Being which reveals our Being-in-the-world as a Being-with. Assertion then as apophantic, predicative and communicative, not only lets an entity be seen, not only gives that entity a definite character, but also reveals Dasein to itself as a Being-in-the-world-with-others.[25]

Assertion, like interpretation, makes that which is projected in understanding explicit and, again like interpretation, it has fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception as its existential foundations. However, assertion is 'an extreme case' and 'a derivative mode of interpretation'[26] for two reasons. Firstly, assertion modifies an entity by taking it out of its involvement or togetherness with other entities in the world. Ordinarily we come across entities ready-to-hand as equipment and interpretatively understand them within their totality of involvements. Once we make an assertion about an entity, for example the hammer, we take that entity out of its involvements and make it present-at-hand. The definite character we assert about the entity, its 'what', is only revealed in its being *present-at-hand*, so that the assertion simultaneously *covers-up* its readiness-to-hand. In this way the 'as' structure of interpretation becomes modified, no longer reaching out and articulating the totality of involvements

through which the entity is revealed in itself. This distinction between assertion and interpretation leads Heidegger to distinguish two types of 'as': the 'existential-hermeneutical as' of interpretation and the derivative 'apophantical as' of assertion.[27]

This double role of assertion as both disclosive and concealing at the same time is aptly described by Gert-Jan van der Heiden as serving a twofold goal for Heidegger. On the one hand, it allows Heidegger to describe *logos* as 'showing'—assertion as apophansis. And on the other hand, it allows him to describe *logos* as 'disguise'—assertion as concealing the 'whole out of which beings are interpreted.'[28] Yet assertion is derivative of interpretation for a second, one might say more serious, reason: repeatability. In order to fully explore this 'problem' of repetition let me turn now to a fuller definition of the existential foundation of language— *Rede*, 'discourse' or 'talk', and its everyday modality of *Gerede*, 'idle talk'.

While this will change quite considerably in the later work, for the Heidegger of *Being and Time* the ontological foundation of language— *Rede*, 'discourse'—has its roots in Dasein's disclosedness.[29] As one of Dasein's existentialia, discourse expresses the intelligibility of Being-in-the-world insofar as it Articulates (*artikulieren*)[30] meaning as a 'totality-of-significations'. We must think of discourse as expressing meaning in the broad sense of Dasein's understanding of Being-in-the-world, Heidegger's emphasis is on meaning which is disclosed within a network of relations rather than as a definition of a word. When Heidegger describes discourse as equiprimordial with understanding and state-of-mind he stresses their co-originality. Discourse does not occur apart from either of these other existentialia: all three are co-constitutive and occur together. The intelligibility of Being-in-the-world is expressed as discourse and discourse in turn is expressed as language. The worldly Being of discourse is language understood as a *totality* of words which we come across as ready-to-hand. This totality can be broken down into individual word-Things which are present-at-hand. There are various 'parts' which together make up discourse, and different theories of 'the essence of language' have focused on one or other of these different parts—communication or expression and so on. However, for Heidegger we cannot narrow our understanding of discourse in this way, nor is it a question of simply putting the parts together to create a whole. To understand language ontologically as the

worldly Being of discourse we must understand it in terms of the analytic of Dasein:

> The items constitutive for discourse are: what the discourse is about (what is talked about); what is said-in-the-talk, as such; the communication; and the making-known. These are not properties which can just be raked up empirically from language. They are existential characteristics rooted in the state of Dasein's Being, and it is they that first make anything like language ontologically possible. [...] what is decisive here – to work out in advance the ontologico-existential whole of the structure of discourse on the basis of the analytic of Dasein.[31]

Dasein's basic state is the disclosedness of Being-in-the-world and discourse, as an existentiale of Dasein, shares this basic state. 'What the discourse is about' discloses an aspect of this Being-in. 'What is said in the talk as such' is that through which discourse communicates, and communication shares a co-state-of-mind (*Mitbefindlichkeit*). Being-with is fundamental to Dasein's Being but in discourse it becomes 'explicitly *shared*' and appropriated. Finally, in discourse Dasein *ex*presses itself, not that we should understand this as Dasein putting something 'outside' which was originally 'inside' Dasein itself. Rather what is expressed, for Heidegger, is Dasein's Being-outside or Being-open-to-the-world.[32] Nonetheless, the connection between understanding, discourse and state-of-mind can only be made clear for Heidegger when we consider two existential possibilities of discourse which are often passed over in theories of language—hearing and keeping silent.[33]

Talking or discoursing for Heidegger demands a hearing which is already an understanding. As he notes, even in hearing words of a foreign language we do not hear 'a multiplicity of tone data,' rather we hear them *as* unintelligible words.[34] This demonstrates the manner in which the projecting of understanding and the appropriating of interpretation are at play in discourse. For Heidegger, keeping silent or 'reticence' makes something manifest. It is not to be confused with being 'dumb', rather Dasein in keeping silent has something to say 'that is, it must have at its disposal an authentic and rich disclosedness of itself.'[35] In keeping silent Dasein articulates its own intelligibility

and opens the possibility for authentic listening which allows Being-with-one-another to become 'transparent.'[36] This 'listening' will continue to play a significant, albeit a slightly different role throughout Heidegger's writings on language. Here in *Being and Time* however, there is another reason that Heidegger accords Dasein's reticence such weight, and this is related to what he sees as the 'threat' of discourse—idle talk or *Gerede*.

As noted above, assertion is communicative—it communicates a shared Being-towards—but in so doing it can 'narrow' the manner in which we understand an entity by giving it a definite character. Nonetheless, assertion can also 'widen' the manner in which we understand when what is asserted is 'passed along in "further retellling".'[37] An assertion can be repeated to others and in this repetition what was initially pointed out can become 'veiled again' buried under the sedimentation of hearsay.[38] For this reason Heidegger warns against 'talking extensively' since this can distance Dasein from its primordial understanding of the entity in itself as revealed in its network of involvements. Further, excessive talk reduces Dasein's understanding to the understanding of word-Things, leading to "sham clarity – the unintelligibility of the trivial.'[39] When we encounter language merely as so many word-Things we encounter it as present-at-hand and as such cut off from its disclosive and hermeneutic power.

Dasein is 'delivered over' to the way in which the totality of significations has already been expressed in language. This 'already expressed' must preserve in part an understanding of Being-in-the-world and Being-with, since these are fundamental to Dasein. Nonetheless, this 'deposited' understanding does not reveal the entity in itself. Rather, it simply becomes repeated in '*gossiping* and *passing the word along*.'[40] In everydayness Dasein takes this 'deposited' understanding, repeated by the 'they' in gossip, as fact and does not attempt to make what is talked about its own. In this way, *Gerede* or idle talk 'serves not so much to keep Being-in-the-world open for us in an articulated understanding, as rather to close it off and cover up entities within-the-world.'[41] Dasein forgets the possibility of uncovering an entity in understanding and appropriating it as its *own* (*Eigen*) possibility. Heidegger argues that it is *essential* for Dasein to explicitly appropriate what has already been uncovered 'and assure itself

of its uncoveredness again and again.'[42] Dasein loses itself in the idle talk of the 'they' where everything is 'understood' but where nothing is understood in its primordial manner—that is, in its network of involvements.[43] 'Dasein is in the truth' insofar as it is a Being-uncovering which reveals the being-uncovered of an entity. However, Dasein is also 'in untruth'[44] since idle talk covers up and is a phenomenon of Dasein's everydayness. Nor is idle talk limited to speech, it manifests itself in writing 'where it takes the form of "scribbling".'[45] If the danger of idle talk for Heidegger is that it blindly repeats the 'given' understanding of an entity rather than actively uncovering it 'again and again' for itself; then the danger of 'scribbling' is that the 'the reader will *never be able* to decide what has been drawn from primordial sources' and what 'is just gossip.'[46]

The accounts of idle talk, scribbling, and discourse generally illustrate two important points in Heidegger's work. Firstly, Heidegger posits the possibility of a 'right' way—the ontological-existential way—of using, understanding and communicating in language. This will always be the way in which Dasein reveals itself to itself as a Being-in-the-world and as a Being-with. Secondly, they reveal Heidegger to be at least suspicious of repeatability and writing—an attitude found even in the later work, as we will see. As van der Heiden expresses it 'Heidegger seems to forget the positive dimension of repeatability'.[47]

As Chapters Three, Four and Five will demonstrate, writing and repeatability are the very structure of language for Derrida and the claim that there is a 'primordial understanding' or an origin to which we can return is the very idea he seeks to subvert. Furthermore, Heidegger's privileging of the spoken word reflects what Derrida terms the traditional 'phonocentrism' of philosophy—an account of which we examine in Chapter Three. In terms of translation it is worth noting that in *Being and Time*, language, truth, and meaning are all rooted in the existential structure of Dasein. Translation thus could here be a positive phenomenon insofar as it could 'uncover' a primordial understanding. Dasein as translator might unconceal an entity in itself. However, given the emphasis that Heidegger places on 'talk', the *logos* as *phonē*, and the impossibility of telling 'primordial understanding' from 'just gossip' in the written text; it is unlikely that he would find much sympathy with such a view. More importantly, it is at least questionable that such a 'primordial understanding' can be

assured and whether indeed the uncovering of such an understanding would in fact be the goal of translation. For now however, we will move on to our examination of some of Heidegger's later works to investigate the manner in which language shifts its position therein and the implications of such a shift for an understanding of translation.

Translation, *die Kehre* and Anaximander

During the 1940s the question of translation came to occupy Heidegger a great deal. In the winter semester of 1941 he devoted approximately half a lecture course to the translation of the Anaximander fragment.[48] During the summer of 1942 Heidegger delivered an extensive commentary on Hölderlin's hymn *The Ister*, discussing translation in Hölderlin and Sophocles.[49] During the winter semester of 1942–43 again at Freiburg, Heidegger delivered a lecture course entitled 'Parmenides and Heraclitus' which dealt extensively with the issue of translation.[50] Here the focus will be on these texts on translation, in particular on 'Der Spruch des Anaximander' (1946), a text written for publication, unlike the lecture courses just mentioned. As the latest from this series on translation it will offer a culmination of Heidegger's thinking on the subject. The writings from this period reflect the gradual transition from an ontology grounded in the fundamental disclosedness of Dasein, to an ontology that seeks to think *how* Being makes being possible. By the late 1950s language takes centre stage in the revelation of Being and the possibility of *Ereignis*; to which I will turn in the subsequent section.

The fragment attributed to Anaximander is considered to be the oldest fragment of 'western' thinking. Its value, however, for Heidegger is to be found in what remains unsaid in this fragment which, through a thoughtful translation, might be allowed to 'speak out.'[51] As Werner Marx points out, the Anaximander Fragment testifies for Heidegger to the early Greek experience of the twofold of Being and being. However, while this twofold nature was 'given' in a certain sense to the Greeks, the ontological difference was not yet available to thought but 'withdrawn' from thought, forgotten.[52] '*The oblivion of Being is the oblivion of the distinction between Being and beings.*'[53] Heidegger's purpose then, in

translating the Anaximander fragment can be understood as wishing to show the difference between Being and being (or presencing and present) as it is revealed in this early fragment. If we think, argues Heidegger, what occurs in this 'first beginning' or 'former dawn' we might open up the 'other beginning' or 'the dawn to come' of thinking.[54] Translating thus acts for Heidegger as a means for uncovering the as yet unsaid of Anaximander's saying.

The fragment itself survives in a passage from Simplicius who transcribed it from a now lost work by Aristotle's student Theophrastus. Heidegger initially translates it as: '[b]ut that from which things arise also gives rise to their passing away, according to what is necessary; for things render justice and pay penalty to one another for their injustice, according to the ordinance of time.'[55] In order to translate the fragment in such a manner that its 'unsaid' or 'unthought' might be brought to light, Heidegger notes it is necessary to first of all translate one's *thinking*, and not just one's language, to what is said in Greek.[56]

In his lectures on Parmenides, Heidegger discusses the difference between translation understood simply as the substitution of one word by another, and a more primordial translating that transports what has been said 'into another truth and clarity.'[57] To mark this difference Heidegger distinguishes between *Über*setzung (*trans*lation) and Über*setzung* (translation). *Über*setzung (*trans*lation) is 'paraphrase' or substitution of words and does not transform thinking in any way. On the other hand, Über*setzung* (trans*lation*) carries us over into another *realm* of thinking; it literally 'transports' our thinking.[58] For this reason Heidegger claims that translation, in this transportative sense, does not wait for different languages but takes place in and within a single tongue:

> What we fail to recognize, however, is that we are also already constantly translating our own language, our native tongue, into its genuine word. To speak and to say is in itself a translation, the essence of which can by no means be divided without remainder into those situations where the translating and translated words belong to different languages. In every dialogue and in every soliloquy an original translating holds sway. We do not here have in mind primarily the operation of substituting one turn of phrase for another in the same language the use of 'paraphrase'. Such a change in the

choice of words is a consequence *deriving from* the fact that what is to be said has already been transported for us into another truth and clarity – or perhaps obscurity.[59]

Translating for Heidegger then, is the possibility of revealing 'another truth' and this revelation can take place even in just one language. In fact, the danger for Heidegger is that we do *not* translate when we are listening. He notes that if we are German speakers and we hear the German words of a thinker or a poet, we make the mistake of thinking that we understand the word simply because it is familiar.[60] The task of thinking *as* translating (Über*setzung*) is rather to hear the word again and again as if we were hearing it for the first time, and to thereby try to constantly uncover its meaning or truth.[61] As we saw above, this task is one which Heidegger already described in *Being and Time*, where he emphasized the necessity of uncovering the meaning of entities again and again.

These two modalities of translation, one derived from the other, leads van der Heiden to criticize what he terms a 'hierarchy of translation' in Heidegger. As he notes, Heidegger offers the translation of *Unverborgenheit* ['unhiddenness'] for the Greek word *alētheia* (as opposed to the usual translation of *Warheit* or 'truth'). With this translation Heidegger aims to return thinking to the possibilities of the *Greek* language and as such to the possibility of disclosing the relation between Being and being. Translations into Latin do not open up thinking for Heidegger. In particular, the translation of *alētheia* into the Latin *veritas* rather closes off the possibility of disclosure. Yet, as van der Heiden points out, the translations of Greek words into Latin words 'are not just substitutions of words, but are grounded in a transition from the Greek experience of truth to the Roman-Christian experience of truth.'[62] That is, they reflect translation as 'transportation' or Über*setzung*. Heidegger, however, describes this shift in the experience of truth only as a covering-up of Being, a fact which, for van der Heiden, illustrates Heidegger's privileging of the Greek experience of truth over all others.[63]

While there can be no doubt that Heidegger certainly privileges the Greek experience, van der Heiden seems to pass over the fact that the 'covering-up' that takes place in the translation of Greek to Latin is also viewed by Heidegger as necessary. The oblivion of the distinction between

Being and being is described as the unfolding of Being's destiny. I will come back to the privileging of the 'Greek' experience below.

To begin to find a way into the words of Anaximander, Heidegger first of all seeks to establish what the fragment speaks of, what it is about. Traditionally, through the translation of *onta*, it is understood to be about 'things' or 'beings'; how they come into being and subsequently pass away. The fact that the fragment is usually approached in terms of the thinking that comes after it—namely through Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy—is revealed by the more or less accepted understanding of these 'things' as 'natural things'. This presupposition was born, argues Heidegger, of a misreading by Aristotle and Theophrastus.[64] 'Things' or 'beings' in this fragment must rather be understood as 'man, things produced by man, and the situation or environment effected and realised by the deeds and omissions of men', as well as 'daimonic and divine things', in short: 'manifold being in totality.'[65] If the presupposition that the fragment is about 'natural things' fails, then so too does the idea that the fragment speaks about the natural sciences in 'moral' or 'juridical' terms. At the time Anaximander was writing the traditional boundaries between disciplines such as science, law, and ethics were not firmly asserted or maintained. Heidegger insists on casting aside 'all inadequate presuppositions' about the text in order to even begin its translation.[66] I highlighted above the importance of listening and keeping silent for authentic discourse as described in *Being and Time*, and here Heidegger returns to this listening. Heidegger's methodology of translation is to 'listen' to what is said in the words of Anaximander, which is to say, to listen to what is unconcealed of Being in this fragment without forcing it into a preconceived idea of what it says.

In order to bring this as yet unsaid unconcealment of Being to light, Heidegger focuses on the terms *on* and *einai* in their 'Greek essence'. The usual understanding of these terms as 'being' (*on*) and 'to be' (*einai*) does not think them as *Greek* terms, claims Heidegger. The Greek experience of Being is primordial so that these terms in their 'Greek essence' are not just revelatory of one way of thinking but in fact the 'key words for all Western thinking.'[67] Heidegger's point is that we actually aren't even clear what these terms mean in our own language (German, English etc.) Nor can we be assured that a translation of these Greek terms would bring us

any closer to what these terms thought *in* Greek would say. However for Heidegger, this state of confusion surrounding these fundamental words of thinking is not an accident of misguided philology or history. Rather the confusion reveals the oblivion of the distinction between Being and beings; an oblivion that was itself a part of the history and destiny of Being. Being gives the Being of beings and in so doing withdraws or conceals itself from those beings; it hides itself behind the gift that it gives. This play of concealment and unconcealment leads to the confusion of Being with a being and the onto-theo-logical constitution of metaphysics. That is, an understanding of Being (ontology) in terms of a highest being, God (theology), and an ensuing hierarchical 'logic'.[68] This forgetful understanding of Being is thus here mirrored in the confusion surrounding the terms *ta onta*, *on* and *einai*. As Heidegger phrases it, the confusion 'arises from the abyss [*Abgrund*] of that relation by which Being has appropriated the essence of Western man.'[69] It is the nature of this groundless relation between man and Being that I want to turn to now and in particular the role language plays in it.

Heidegger understands Being as withdrawing from beings in the process of giving them their Being. This is also the manner in which language is received by man; in granting language, understood as a totality of words, the essence of language itself withdraws. The task of 'thinking language' is to bring its concealed essence to itself, that is, to language as words. I outlined above the operation of the term *logos* in *Being and Time*, and this term continues to play a central role in Heidegger's thinking. Now, however, in these works from the 1940s, *logos* is understood as Being. As that which gives order, measure and ground to beings but is itself *groundless*: *logos* is 'play' and 'setting to motion'. Heidegger claims that by the time of Plato and Aristotle *logos* had been misinterpreted as 'grounding' rather than groundless, and the forgetting of *logos* as play was part of the general withdrawal of Being from man's thought.[70] In order to bring about a 'new' destiny of Being, one where the ontological difference might be thought; Heidegger insists on attempting to think *within* the groundlessness or confusion of *logos* and doing this requires a 'conversation' with early thinking.[71]

As noted, Heidegger insists on translating 'our thought' to what is Greek in order to think what the Anaximander fragment says. 'Greek'

here carries a particularly Heideggerian significance. 'Greek' is to be understood neither as a people nor as a nation; neither as a cultural nor a historical group. Rather for Heidegger 'Greek' is to be understood as the 'dawn of that destiny in which Being illuminates itself in beings and so propounds a certain essence of man.'[72] Without wishing to oversimplify Heidegger's thinking on this point, 'Greek' might here be understood as that moment in history when man first enquired into the nature of Being, when man first asked questions such as 'what does it mean to be'? or 'how are things what they are'? As soon as man began asking these questions, whose very possibility depends upon the possibility of language, then a special relationship between man and Being emerged. The 'certain essence of man' brought forth here by Being is man's *relation* with Being. However, while this may come close to describing what Heidegger seems to be claiming, there are of course issues which cannot be ignored. First of all, 'Greek' is certainly the dawn of 'Western thinking,' the emergence of thinking into 'the land of evening' (*Land des Abends/Abendland*). At no point does Heidegger discuss the *place* where Anaximander was writing. Anaximander as an Ionian was not on the Greek mainland but the coast of Asia Minor and this border place was traversed by thinking from Egypt and Babylonia as much as it was by 'Greek' thought. While of course Heidegger can claim not to be interested in an anachronistic 'post-colonial' reading of the so-called beginning of philosophy; it does seem that if this was the *time* and the *place* where Being first illuminated a certain essence of man then its status as a border should not be passed over. It seems that Being first revealed itself in this way to man at a time of great strife (the Sixth Century BCE being a particularly violent time in Miletus) and in a place where many different ways of thinking were coming together. While the Egyptian/Babylonian influence on Greek (and therefore 'western') thought has traditionally been overlooked, if not flatly denied; Martin Bernal argues that this 'dawn of western civilisation' was far less a 'momentous *Greek* miracle' than a fusion of multiple ancient civilisations.[73]

Secondly, as noted above with van der Heiden, Heidegger is proposing a 'hierarchy' of translation wherein the 'Greek' experience reveals something more than (for example) the 'Latin' experience of Being. Even if the forgetting which followed the move from Greek to Latin was neces-

sary or part of what Heidegger terms the 'destiny' of Being, the privileging of Greek cannot be simply passed over. And this privileging of the Greek experience of Being corresponds to a privileging of the German language as that which is most adept at appropriating Greek modes of thought. As noted in the Introduction, German translators, at least from the Eighteenth Century if not from Luther, had advocated what would be termed today a 'foreignizing strategy'. That is, had advocated 'bending' the German language, creating new words (often through a combination of existing words) to accommodate 'foreign' ideas. Paradoxically this welcoming of the foreign was in a certain sense a re-assertion of the same, insofar as it was part of an understanding of the German language as exceptional in its ability to appropriate and accommodate all manner of thinking.

Heidegger then, in proposing the language of Being as Greek or German (only) appears to follow a German tradition of linguistic exceptionalism. The echo of this with various strands of National Socialism is deeply problematic. I will not dwell here on Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism and his own anti-Semitism. Not because these issues are unimportant but on the contrary because they are so important they deserve more space than is possible here.[74] What I simply want to point out is that Heidegger's adhesion to a tradition of German exceptionalism in translation is flawed on his own terms: For if Being and man truly are engaged in a 'special' relationship surely the facticity of any given language would be irrelevant. So that the undeniable privileging of Greek and German ways of thinking reveal the manner in which Heidegger's political views, however one wishes to frame them, came to infect his thinking.

Returning to the reading of Anaximander; Heidegger describes the relation between man and Being as unfolding 'historically as something fateful, preserved in Being and dispensed by Being, without ever being separated from Being.'[75] Being 'dispenses' the space in which history unfolds by revealing itself in beings and simultaneously concealing itself. In revealing beings Being 'sets beings adrift in errancy' and leads to the establishment of the 'realm of error.'[76] This 'error' is man's inability to grasp his own essence, the essence of Being and the distinction between them. In other words, Being reveals beings and illuminates them but because part of the essence of Being is to 'keep to itself' or conceal itself behind

what it gives, beings—including man—are in error, that is, they do not think or see Being itself. 'Man's inability to see himself corresponds to the self-concealing of the lighting of Being.'[77] This 'error' is both the destiny of Being and the fate of man. Without this 'realm of error' there would be no history, since this is the manner in which Being 'sets beings in motion'. The 'keeping to itself' of its truth is part of the essence of Being as the *epochē* of Being.[78] Heidegger translates this phenomenologically rich word—*epochē*—formerly meaning 'reduction' or 'bracketing', to mean the 'stepping back' of Being itself. A translation of a phenomenological method to an ontological condition, as though Husserl had but clumsily sighted the truth of Being. As Being steps back from what it gives (beings) world history unfolds in an 'epochal' nature and each 'epoch of world history is an epoch of errancy.'[79] What interests Heidegger, and what his translation of Anaximander seeks to achieve, is the manner in which the Greek epoch was the beginning of the *epochē* of Being, the beginning of both the historical period in which Being has been forgotten and Being's withdrawal from thinking which led to this very forgetting. This Greek epoch then will reveal both the unconcealment *and* the concealment of Being. The concealment of Being, which is part of its very essence, was forgotten from this first beginning but might now be rethought through listening to the traces it has left in the Anaximander fragment. In order to do this 'it is essential that we translate ourselves to the source of what comes to language in it, which is to say, to τά όντα.'[80]

Given that the first part of the fragment seems to consist of Simplicius' words rather than Anaximander's, and given that the last part of it displays what Heidegger terms an 'anachronistic' Aristotelian style, Heidegger limits the fragment to the following: '...according to necessity; for they pay one another recompense and penalty for their injustice.'[81] Nonetheless, despite seeing the words *phthora* and *genesis* in the previous part of the fragment as additions of Simplicius, Heidegger is inclined to retain them 'as secondary testimony' to Anaximander's thinking.[82] Certainly they are words used by Homer long before they carried the conceptual weight accorded them by Plato or Aristotle. Both of these terms are translated by Heidegger to reflect the *movement* of coming into unconcealment. Central to this is a rethinking of the opposition between becoming and Being. Heidegger argues that the understanding of becoming as transient

and Being as enduring must be thought together. We must attempt to think the manner in which Being 'sustains' becoming and the manner in which becoming 'is' an essential part of Being. Following Heidegger, we should understand 'becoming' then as the 'coming into unconcealment' of Being. In this way *genesis* is understood as a movement through which a being abandons concealment and enters unconcealment. Equally, *phthora* is the movement through which a being abandons unconcealment and withdraws into concealment. As we will see, these are the movements of *presencing*, through which all that *is* has its *present*:

> '[C]oming-to-be *is*' and 'passing-away comes to be' still may speak in favour of an ancient language. Γένεσίς [*Genesis*] is coming forward and arriving in unconcealment. Φθορά [*phthora*] means the departure and descent into concealment of what has arrived there out of unconcealment. The coming forward into... and the departure to... *become present* within unconcealment between what is concealed and what is unconcealed. They initiate the arrival and departure of whatever has arrived.[83]

To return to the key term of *ta ónta*; Heidegger notes that *ónta* is the truncated form of the earlier *eónta*, and *ón* the truncated form of *eón*. The epsilon here is at the root of the words '*est*', '*esse*' and 'is'. '*Éón*' is both nominal as 'a being' and verbal as 'to be' so that the ontological difference is hidden within this single word. In order to translate this term in which both the oblivion of Being and the possibility of a new destiny of Being lies, Heidegger turns to the words of Homer hoping to find there how this word was 'heard' by the early Greeks.

In Book I of the *Iliad* the Greeks ask the seer Kalchas to explain why Apollo has sent a plague. Here Homer describes Kalchas as one 'who knew all that is, is to be, or once was.'[84] In *Being and Time* Heidegger linked understanding, sight, and the relation between things in a number of ways. *Umsicht*, generally translated as 'circumspection' is the manner in which Dasein 'sees' things or understand things as mattering to it in a particular way. While *Rücksicht* and *Nachsicht* ('considerateness' and 'forbearance') are the ways in which Dasein understands or 'sees' other Daseins as mattering to it.[85] It is precisely because of this linking of understanding with vision that Levinas will describe the Other as

'invisible' as in beyond our comprehension—as I will discuss in the next chapter. Here in 'The Anaximander Fragment' Heidegger translates the Homeric line above so that Kalchas is one who 'has *already* seen.'[86] What Kalchas sees, Heidegger continues, is that which has been present, that which is presently present, and that which is yet to be present. Taking his cue from the Greek *pareónta*, where the prefix *para-* means 'alongside', Heidegger designates what is 'presently present', *eónta*, as 'coming alongside in unconcealment.'[87] He justifies this translation through a return to German where he notes that the *gegen* in *gegenwärtig* (presently) should not be understood in the usual way of 'against', but should rather be heard in terms of *Gegend* an 'expanse' or 'area' or even 'neighbourhood'. In *Being and Time*, *Gegend* is the 'region' in which something belongs by virtue of its use—the pot belongs in the region of the kitchen along with pans and knives and so on.[88] Dasein orients itself in terms of regions— knowing where things are to be discovered by virtue of their involvement with other things to create an equipmental totality. As Heidegger's thinking develops, this notion of *Gegend* remains crucial. Here *Gegend* becomes 'the open expanse of unconcealment' in which what is presently present lingers together or alongside everything else that is presently present before returning to concealment once again. 'Presently' then is finally translated by Heidegger as: '"having arrived to linger awhile in the expanse of unconcealment".'[89]

The issue, however, becomes more complicated as Heidegger progresses. For if what is 'presently present' is that which is 'lingering awhile' in unconcealment, it necessarily has a relation to what is in concealment—from which it emerges and to which it returns. In this way what is not presently present 'presents' itself *as absent*. Kalchas the seer can step away from what is presently present and see what is present *as* absent. The seer sees everything that in some way becomes present:

All things present and absent are gathered and preserved in *one* presencing for the seer. [...] presencing preserves [*wahrt*] in unconcealment what is present both at the present time and not at the present time. The seer speaks from the preserve [*Wahr*] of what is present. He is the sooth-sayer [*Wahr-Sager*]. Here we think of the preserve in the sense of the gathering which clears and shelters; it suggests itself as a long-hidden fundamental

trait of presencing, i.e. of Being. One day we shall learn to think our exhausted word for truth [*Wahrheit*] in terms of the preserve; to experience truth as the preservation [*Wahrnis*] of Being and to understand that, as presencing, Being belongs to this preservation.[90]

Through translation Heidegger links the notions of 'preserving', 'presencing' and 'truth' together. Parvis Emad points out that translation, in the sense of 'transporting' or Über*setzung*, allows Heidegger to think more deeply the question of the meaning of Being. It is through this 'originary translation' that Heidegger moves from seeking the meaning of Being in *Being and Time* to thinking the *truth* of Being. The 'translation' of 'meaning of Being' to 'truth of Being' in Heidegger's thought is not simply a change in terminology but rather reflects, argues Emad, an ongoing experience with language. 'Originary translation that occurs within language already translates thinking of the question of the "meaning of being" *into* a thinking of the "truth of being" and thus reformulates it.'[91] In other words, it is translation as the experience of language which gives thinking its direction. Heidegger translates *einai* as the presencing of what is present, *einai* is Being which 'is already in itself truth, provided we think the essence of truth as the gathering that clears and shelters.'[92] We might understand this in terms of the gift; Being as truth gives beings their being while withdrawing itself. In this withdrawal it provides the expanse in which beings gather and it preserves beings there in their present. The withdrawal of Being is the truth of Being insofar as this withdrawal is part of its essence. The withdrawal or concealment is as important as the unconcealment for truth as *alētheia* is processual. Being names the presencing of what is present, in the sense of a gathering which 'clears and shelters', and this in turn is designated for Heidegger by the word *logos*. 'The *Λόγος* [*logos*] (*λέγειν* [*legein*], to gather or assemble) is experienced through *Ἀλήθεια* [*alētheia*], the sheltering which reveals things.'[93]

The fragment then, following Heidegger's extended translation, is not simply about 'natural things', but about all that is present in unconcealment, the *tá ónta*. What is interesting here however, for Heidegger, is the second clause of the saying which reads 'they pay one another recompense and penalty for their injustice [*adikia*].'[94] 'Justice' in Greek is *dike*, so that *a-dike* or *adikia* is generally translated by 'injustice'. However, it is

unlikely that *dike* carried the sense of the contemporary word 'justice' in Homeric times. W.K.C. Guthrie has illustrated that the use of the word *dike* in Homer is much closer to the sense of 'path' in the sense of 'way' and therefore to 'natural order' or 'the way things are'. The swineherd who welcomes Odysseus home from his travels by feeding him and providing him shelter, does so 'as is *dike*'—'as is the way', as is 'proper' or 'right'.[95] Heidegger too takes issue with the translation of *adikia* by 'injustice'. In the Anaximander fragment, following Heidegger, *adikia* is the basic trait of that which is present which is not 'unjust' but rather 'out of joint'. It protrudes, in some sense, between the two arms of concealment to be 'out' in unconcealment for the time which it is presently present. In other words, what is presently present is so only between its emergence from and return to the jointure of concealment.[96]

If *adikia* is 'out of joint' then *dike* is 'jointure' according to Heidegger so that '*didónai... diken*' would read 'gives jointure' and this jointure is the 'order' of Being.[97] Indeed 'order' here would seem closer to Guthrie's account of *dike* in Homeric language, in the sense of 'way' or 'way things are'. For Heidegger, the 'order' is that of arriving from concealment into unconcealment, lingering awhile, and departing back into concealment. It is 'given' (*didónai*) in the sense of letting something belong to another. So that the line from Anaximander: '*didónai gár auta diken kai tisin allélois*' now becomes for Heidegger: 'present beings which linger awhile let order belong ἀλλήλοις [*allélois*], to one another.'[98] Before moving on to the end of Heidegger' extended translation and commentary it is worth noting both Levinas' and Derrida's commentary on the translation of this line and on *adikia* in particular. For Levinas, the 'persistence' of a being in its presence, is 'unjust' (*adike*) and is disrupted by the Other who 'puts into question the ego's natural position as subject, its perseverance [...] the stubbornness of its being [*étant*].'[99] Once put into question in this manner, the subject is marked by a 'non-in-difference' to the Other. For Levinas, Heidegger's account, against his own intention, manifests the 'original significance of ethics'. In *Spectres of Marx* Derrida links the 'out of joint' of Heidegger to Hamlet's 'time is out of joint'. Within a discussion of justice and the necessity of disadjustment for justice, Derrida asks of Heidegger: 'Does it [*Dike*] come simply to repair injustice (*adikia*) or more precisely to rearticulate *as must be* the disjointure of the present

time ("to set it right" as Hamlet said)?'[100] I will return to these accounts of justice (or 'order') in subsequent chapters.

For now I will move on to two final words which are key to following how Heidegger describes giving or letting belong between present beings. These words are *tisis* which Heidegger will translate as *Ruch* ('reck') and *chreón* which Heidegger will translate as *Brauch* ('usage'). *Tisis* is usually translated as 'penalty' leading to the translation of *didonai* as 'to pay'. However, for Heidegger who translates *didonai* as 'giving' or 'letting belong', the original meaning of *tisis* would be better understood as 'esteem' [*Schätzen*].[101] Those beings that linger awhile in presence, *ta eónta*, stand in disorder because when they are lingering they try to 'hang on' to, or persist in their presence. However, this does not result in an anarchic mass of individual beings but rather beings allow order to belong to each other in what Heidegger initially terms 'consideration' as a translation of *tisis*.[102] However, this is too anthropomorphic for Heidegger and he chooses instead the archaic word *Ruch*. Though only used today in the form of *ruchlos* ('reckless'), Heidegger traces it back to the Middle High German word *rouche* meaning *die Sorgfalt* ['solicitude'], or *die Sorge* ['care']. Another term of particular signifigance in *Being and Time* where '*Sorge*' or 'care' was the transcendental and ontologically unifying structure of Dasein's existentialia revealed in anxiety.[103] *Sorge* had the aspects of *Besorgen* or 'concern' wherein Dasein was 'concerned' with other things in the world and *Fürsorge* or 'solicitude' wherein Dasein cared for other Daseins. *Sorge* itself was Dasein's care for itself to be itself. However, in Heidegger's later work *Sorge* comes to mark the care for Being itself, the care described here is more focused on allowing present beings their Being than on Dasein caring for its own Being.

The translation then of *tisis* to 'reck' would express for Heidegger the manner in which beings, lingering awhile in unconcealment, tend towards other beings in such a way as to allow them to remain in their essence.[104] In other words, in the expanse of unconcealment [*Gegend*] each being becomes present to each other present being. The only manner by which a being can linger in presence is to allow other beings their 'while' in presence, as Heidegger phrases it: 'insofar as they no longer share the compulsion to expel one another from what is presently present, they let order belong.'[105] Each being lets the other be and this 'letting

be' is 'reck'. As a result of this 'reck' the disorder which always threatens presence (in the persistence of what is present) is surmounted.

The *tó chreón* of the first clause is for Heidegger the oldest name in which the Being of beings comes to language.[106] As such, Heidegger's translation of this term is central to my concerns surrounding translation for it reveals not only that Heidegger finds the trace of Being's 'first dawn' *in* language, but also that Heidegger believes this can be awoken into a 'new dawn' *through translation.* As we have seen, for Heidegger the 'oblivion' of Being is the forgetting of the distinction between Being and beings. This oblivion was not only unavoidable but was, in fact, rich and prodigious: it was 'the event of metaphysics.'[107] However, this oblivion cannot have been absolute if it is something that now comes to thought. Heidegger argues that this distinction has been unveiled or unconcealed, but that we have failed to notice it. The distinction has been hidden, but not hidden in a fundamental sense. A distinction between primordial concealment and a second order concealment is found in *Being and Time* and continues to operate in Heidegger's thinking here. Primordial concealment is the withdrawal of Being as it gives being and is essential to Being itself. It is only from this primary concealment that any unconcealment or truth of Being can emerge. Secondary concealment on the other hand is that which has been unconcealed by Being but now remains in disguise. This second order concealment is much like the 'semblance' of *Being and Time*. The ontological difference is concealed in this second order sense, it has been unveiled by Being and its trace left in language but it has not yet been designated as such.[108]

Chreón is usually translated as 'necessity' or 'that which must be', however, Heidegger notes the word is etymologically related to *Chraó. Chraó* generally means 'to furnish' or 'to lend' although Heidegger links it more with 'hand' as in 'to extend one's hand to someone' or 'to place in someone's hands'. In this way he comes to an understanding of *chreón* as 'handing over'. Derrida describes Heidegger's thinking of the hand as part of the essence of the gift, as a way that Heidegger tries to think of a giving that doesn't take hold, and certainly that sense of giving without return plays its role here.[109] Since the second clause of the fragment, which is about presencing, refers to the first, this 'handing over' must be the simultaneous handing over and preservation (or 'keeping in hand')

of presence.[110] In light of this claim Heidegger offers *der Brauch* ['usage'] as a translation of *Chreón*. The root meaning of 'to use', Heidegger suggests, is to have something to hand to enjoy. This meaning he arrives at through the Latin word *frui* and the German words *fruchten* and *Frucht*. In English the word would be 'to brook', a word used today only in its negative sense: 'I'll brook no rival!', for example. However, as the English translators of Heidegger's text Krell and Capuzzi note, the archaic sense of this word includes the idea of 'to make use of' or 'to enjoy' something. 'To brook' is linked especially with the right of *usufruct*, the right to cultivate and enjoy the fruits of land one does not own.[111] 'Usage' then in this context is understood by Heidegger as handing something over to its own essence, preserving it, keeping it in hand, as something present. In these translations of 'reck' and 'usage' we can see the manner in which Heidegger understands the essence of Being as both giving the Being of beings and setting in motion the expanse of unconcealment. Of particular note is the sense of 'preservation' entailed in both of these translations, the idea that Being preserves, protects or shelters beings in their Being.

I highlighted above that *logos* is that which gives grounds while being itself groundless, and similarly 'usage' is that which gives boundaries. It is that which gives the portions of the jointure of presencing between twofold absencing while being itself without boundary—*apeiron*. Indeed this is Heidegger's principal claim, that all of the 'ancient' words once 'translated' reveal the play of Being—the *chreón* and *apeiron* of Anaximander, the *logos* of Heraclitus and the *Moira* of Parmenides.[112] In each of these words lies hidden the truth of Being, namely that 'Unconcealment itself is presencing.'[113] Even by the time of Aristotle a trace of this rich understanding of Being could still be sensed in the word *energia*. It is in the translation of *energia* to the Latin *actualitas* that produces the 'decisive turn [*Kehre*]' in the destiny of Being.[114] Once this translation had taken place, access to the truth of Being remained closed off to man, *actualitas* came to mean static 'reality' and 'objectivity'. In this way man lost sight of the openness of Being and the distinction between Being and being. Nonetheless, through 'thoughtful dialogue' with early thinkers Heidegger believes we can release a new beginning where the essence of Being might be thought. Heidegger ends his extended translation of Anaximander

with a question: 'But what if Being in its essence *needs to use* [*braucht*] the essence of man? If the essence of man consists in thinking the truth of Being? Then thinking must poetize on the riddle of Being.'[115] This poetizing on the 'riddle of Being' and the manner in which the essence of Being 'uses' the essence of man are the central concern in all of Heidegger's subsequent works, to which I will now turn.

Thinking the Relation: Man, Saying and the Unsaid

The focus here is on the relation between language, Being and man. In particular I want to draw out the implications of Heidegger's conception of the essence of language—Saying—and the manner in which this essence corresponds to the essence of man and to Being itself. In order to do this it is necessary to make Heidegger's understanding of identity and difference clear and that is where we will begin. I will then go on to illustrate how these 'same' essences relate to each other in the *Ereignis* or 'appropriation'. Ultimately the goal here is to ask whether or not the 'unspoken' as Heidegger thinks it is 'unsayable' or simply unsaid as of *yet.*

Joan Stambaugh has noted that Heidegger considered his 1957 work, *Identity and Difference*, his most important work since *Being and Time*. The difference between these two works, Stambaugh explains, lies in a different approach to the question of relation. Rather than proceeding from an analysis of one of the components of the relation, as he did with Dasein in 1927; Heidegger now enquires into the relation *as* relation.[116] And it is this notion of 'relation' which plays a pivotal role in Heidegger's understanding of identity. The traditional principle of identity, 'A = A', is interrogated through translation by Heidegger. 'Identical' in Latin is *idem*, a translation of the Greek *auto*, an expression which means, Heidegger notes, 'the same'.[117] Yet the principle of identity does not simply say 'every A is the same' but crucially that 'every A is the same *with* itself'. The 'with' is fundamental, it evidences identity as born of mediation; that which is 'the same' is always 'the same' as or *with* something else. Identity as 'sameness' thus implies relation 'mediation, a connection, a synthesis: the

unification into a unity.'[118] This role of mediation lay unthought, claims Heidegger, until the work of the speculative idealists such as Fichte, Schelling and Hegel.[119] In the previous section I rehearsed Heidegger's encounter with Anaximander and here Heidegger turns to another of his favoured 'pre-Socratics', Parmenides. Heidegger reads Parmenides' line, 'for the same perceiving (thinking) [*noein*] as being [*einai*]', as meaning that perceiving or thinking belongs together with Being 'in the Same and by virtue of this Same.'[120] Furthermore, since thinking is the distinctive characteristic of man, the belonging together of thinking and Being is the belonging together of man and Being.

But what exactly is this 'belonging together' of man and Being? The totality of Being encompasses all that is, all beings, including the being that is man. All beings are 'in the order of Being' and as such 'belong' to Being. Man however, as the being who thinks, is open to Being; to thinking Being and so is distinct from all other beings. If thinking belongs together with Being, and man belongs together with Being through thinking; then the three belong together in the Same. This is not to say that Being is only or initially posited by man but rather that man and Being are 'appropriate' to each other. While this is certainly ambiguous it is important to recognise that Heidegger is trying to both think (ontological) difference and to think differently. In trying to think the between or the 'belonging' of man and Being, Heidegger encourages a step, a 'leap' or what he also terms 'a spring' away from representational thinking.[121] It would seem that what Heidegger is driving at here is an attempt to think 'outside' the tradition of metaphysics. He notes that if we 'leave' representational thinking, which for Heidegger would be thinking that had forgotten the difference between Being and being; we might think we have fallen into an abyss (*Abgrund*). Yet, as noted above, it is thinking Being as ground rather than groundless play, that has given rise to the confusion surrounding Being and the covering up of the ontological difference. As such the *Abgrund* which arises from stepping away from or letting go of [*loslassen*] representational thinking is in fact closer to a primordial thinking of Being. This 'letting go' is crucial in Heidegger's later work characterized by the abandonment of terms such as 'hermeneutic' and 'phenomenology' in order to let thinking go towards 'namelessness'.[122] This attempt to think without 'names' or without a rigid terminology is a

way of thinking language as more than simply 'a grasp that fastens upon the things.'[123] For Levinas, however, it is precisely here that Heidegger fails. For Levinas Heidegger's project from the 1920s onwards is characterized by this grasping of what is other and making it one's own; by a thinking or understanding which leaves no room for that which exceeds the grasp of comprehension—this will be the subject of the next chapter.[124] This spring then, claims Heidegger, provides access to the 'realm from which man and Being have already reached each other in their active nature, since both are mutually appropriated, extended as a gift, one to the other.'[125] The 'spring' then leads us in a way to where we 'already are' that is to the 'belonging together' of man and Being.

Heidegger's argument thus far is that identity, following Parmenides, doesn't belong to a being but rather Being belongs to identity. Identity, rethought as a relation wherein two things are the same, is essentially a belonging together of Being and being. Man, as the exceptional being who thinks, is open to Being and to experiencing the relation between Being and being as a relation. This experiencing of the relation, or more precisely the 'coming into its own' of this relation, is the *Ereignis*: 'The essence of identity is a property of the event of appropriation [*Das Wesen der Identität ist ein Eigentum des Er-eignisses*].'[126] Heidegger's next question then is how is *Ereignis* revealed or reached in our current age? To answer this question we have to first understand what Heidegger terms the *Gestell.*

In the examination of Heidegger's reading of Anaximander I pointed out the understanding of Being as *epochē* and the manner in which Being, as it withdraws from the gift it gives, unfolds in the epochs of history. Our current epoch or age is that of technology which must be understood not merely as something created by man but rather as that which reveals or unconceals Being to man in a particular way. The unconcealing or revealing of technology is a challenging (*Herausfordern*).[127] Through this mode of unconcealing man is challenged to 'secure' all beings for calculation and Being is equally challenged to let beings appear in the horizon of what is calculable.[128] Through the unconcealing of technology everything—the reserves and power of nature, the labour of man, all that is in Being—is reduced to an order within which it can be used for the purposes of technology itself. All beings become 'stock' and are reduced

to a 'standing-reserve' (*Bestand*). That is to say, beings are revealed insofar as they can become calculable for the purposes of technology; they are reduced to a 'standing-reserve'—so much stock to be used-up by technology. In this way, beings are not unconcealed in their *own* essence. *Gestell*, 'frame' or 'enframing' is the name of how the unconcealing of technology seeks to reduce everything to a single mode of unconcealment. We might think of it in the same way as assertion in *Being and Time*; as I highlighted in the first part of this chapter, the danger of an assertion is that it 'dims down' an entity's network of involvements; allowing it to be seen but only to be seen in a certain way. Unlike assertion, however, *Gestell* is not a particular action of *man* but is the manner by which technology itself reveals itself and other beings:

> Enframing [*Gestell*] means the gathering together of the setting-upon that sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the actual, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve. Enframing means the way of revealing that holds sway in the essence of modern technology and that is itself nothing technological. [...] In enframing, the unconcealment propriates in conformity with which the work of modern technology reveals the actual as standing-reserve. This work is therefore neither only a human activity nor a mere means within such activity.[129]

In terms of language and translation, the *Gestell* has an important role to play for two reasons. Firstly, within the *Gestell* all speaking is reduced to information. If the *Gestell* reduces nature to so much energy to be used by industry, then it reduces language to formalization. Here language 'in-forms' man, that is, 'forms' man to fit a calculative way of engaging with Being. Through the *Gestell* man becomes 'cut off' from the essence of language as Saying. However, and here we reach the second role *Gestell* plays in Heidegger's thinking on language, being cut-off from the essence of language is what allows man to escape the *Gestell*.

For Heidegger, the *Gestell* is a prelude to what is called *Ereignis*; a more original appropriating whereby man and Being come into their full essence. By coming into their full essence Being and beings cease to be revealed only as standing-reserve and as such can overcome the dominance of the *Gestell*. What then is the *Ereignis* and what is its relationship with language? Heidegger offers the following description:

The event of appropriation [*Er-eignis*] is that realm, vibrating within itself, through which man and Being reach each other in their nature, achieve their active nature [*Wessen*] by losing those qualities with which metaphysics has endowed them. [...] Thinking receives the tools for this self-suspended structure from language. For language is the most delicate and thus the most susceptible vibration holding everything within the suspended structure of the appropriation inasmuch as our active nature is given over to language.[130]

Ereignis is the opening of man to Being whereby man becomes his own essence appropriating Being through his own being. Equally, Being opens to man appropriating his being into its own. This entails both an *appropriation* [*Ereignis*] and an *ex-propriation* [*Enteignis*], whereby both Being and man give themselves over to each other in themselves. If Being withdraws in giving the gift of being, then *Ereignis* too withdraws in giving both Being and man to their belonging together. *Ereignis*, however, is more than just Being.[131] It is an event, a movement through which the relation between man and Being is freed to come into its own. Under the *Gestell* man unconceals entities or beings as so much stock to be used by technology. This is not only an unconcealment of beings in a way that is not true to their essence, it is also a mode of man's Being that is not true to man. The *Ereignis* on the other hand, unconceals beings in their true Being, letting them be what they are without reducing them to so much stock to be used. In this, Being comes into its own essence as it is revealed as that which entities are. Equally, man comes into his own essence of unconcealing beings in themselves. Through the *Ereignis* Being becomes voiced in language: 'Language is the house of Being. In its home man dwells.'[132] Language, Being and man *belong* and dwell together.

Discussing language explicitly is difficult, in part because of the perennial difficulty of having to use language to talk about language. But also, in a more ontological vein, discussing language is difficult because the essence of language is to conceal itself in the unconcealing of words. To overcome this problem, Heidegger proposes a 'formula' but one which uses the same (German) word three times (speak/speech), each time saying something different, 'yet the Same.'[133] What Heidegger wishes to uncover is this 'Same'; the 'oneness that is the distinctive property of

language.'[134] While in uncovering this 'oneness' we cannot escape the web of language we use and find ourselves in, Heidegger does believe that we can 'loosen it' to see what unifies the strands of language in their relation. Furthermore, in the same way that the essence of technology is nothing technological, we might say that the essence of language is 'nothing linguistic'. 'Co-ordinating' the components of a language or collecting information about it, as is the method in linguistics or philology, does not reveal what makes language *language*. Rather Heidegger is interested in 'the manner in which language has Being'[135] and this is not unrelated to the question of truth. From *Being and Time* onwards, Heidegger interrogated the idea of truth as *alētheia*. In his later work he returns to Aristotle's *On Interpretation* and the Greek understanding of a sign as *apophantic*, that is, as a showing or unconcealing. Language speaks, argues Heidegger, by showing, by letting appear all that is present.[136] The fact that names for language focus on the tongue—*lingua*, *glossa*, *langue*, *Sprache*—reveal for Heidegger that the manifestation of language is through speaking, the making of articulated sounds. This can be made manifest if we make these sounds, or remain silent.[137] Speech gives voice and language to what is spoken about, '*insofar as something is said*' it appears, is shown or pointed out. However, Heidegger marks a distinction between speaking and saying: saying is the Being of language which is given voice in speech.[138]

Heidegger proposes the phrase 'the being of language: the language of being [*Das Wesen des Sprache*: *Die Sprache des Wesens*]'[139] as a 'guide word' for his investigation into language. This phrase, Heidegger claims, is not an assertion which can be proven as 'true' or 'false' in terms of 'correctness'. We can, however, inquire into what each part of this phrase means. The 'being of language' is, argues Heidegger, '*Saying as Showing*.'[140] This Saying is the origin of all language understood as a totality of words or signs; signs 'arise from' Saying, the essence of language. Saying as Showing is not merely a human activity. Human saying or human speaking, allows a being to appear only insofar as it follows Saying. Thus, it would seem that Saying is that which allows a being to appear, or at the very least is that which allows human speech to allow a being to appear. It is not the case that Saying adds linguistic expression to phenomena which have *already* appeared; rather Heidegger insists that they appear only inas-

much as they are in Saying. Heidegger describes Saying—the 'Being of language'—as following:

> Saying sets all present beings free into their given presence, and brings what is absent into its absence. Saying pervades and structures the openness of that clearing [*Lichtung*] which every appearance must seek out and every disappearance must leave behind, and in which every present or absent being must show, say, announce itself. Saying is the gathering that joins all appearance of the in itself manifold showing which everywhere lets all that is shown abide within itself.[141]

In these sentence 'Saying' could well be replaced by 'Being'. As with Being, Saying is not a being and, as with Being, Saying is without ground.[142] Saying therefore '*is*' Being; provided Heidegger's account of identity as a 'belonging together' or a mediated unity is kept in mind. If this account of Saying responds to the first part of Heidegger's guide word, that is, 'the Being of language', it would also seem to respond, in a slightly different way to the second part of that guide word: 'the language of Being'.

Heidegger notes that while in the first part of the phrase in question was the *essence*, the 'whatness' of language, in the second part 'Being' is to be understood verbally as 'being present' or 'being absent'. 'To be' here is understood by Heidegger as that which persists in its presence in that it 'makes way for all things' or 'moves all things'.[143] This description obviously chimes with that of *logos* as play or setting in motion that I described above. If Saying manifests itself as 'speaking', it is necessary to elaborate the manner in which Heidegger understands this term. As I highlighted in the reading of *Being and Time*, keeping silent and listening are a key part of the Heideggerian conception of language. In that earlier work listening was the means through which an authentic Being-with could become 'transparent' to Dasein. This value of listening both does and does not change in the later Heidegger. On the one hand speaking, that verbal manifestation of Saying, 'is at the same time also a listening'[144] and, as with *Being and Time*, it reveals a belonging-together. On the other hand, listening is now more than listening to the words of a conversation, and the belonging-together it reveals is not the Being-with of Dasein. Rather listening now reveals the manner in which the belonging-together

of man and Being is 'given' by *Ereignis*. Heidegger argues that in the listening which accompanies speaking we listen to Saying, the Being of language in which man dwells. This dwelling of man in the Being of language (Saying) is revealed in the *Ereignis.*

For Heidegger man can come to his essence only by 'listening' that is, by being open to Saying which is at the same time to be open to Being. This coming into his essence takes place only through the *Ereignis* which, because it 'gathers mortals into the appropriateness of their nature and there holds them,' is that which 'allows Saying to reach speech.'[145] As such, Heidegger contends, our very belonging to Saying (Being) lies in *Ereignis*. I noted above the relation between *Gestell* and *Ereignis*, and that within *Gestell* language is reduced to formalization. The power of language as Saying which shows is narrowed under *Gestell* so that its showing is only a revealing as standing-reserve. This is precisely because the *Gestell* is only a 'prelude' to *Ereignis* and not yet *Ereignis* as such. It is only in *Ereignis* that the full essence of Saying as Showing can reach language: 'language always speaks according to the mode in which the Appropriation [*Ereignis*] as such reveals itself or withdraws.'[146] If to come into his essence man must speak by way of listening to Saying, then equally Saying must be voiced by man. Their mutual co-belonging revealed only through *Ereignis* is summarised by Heidegger: 'Saying is in need of being voiced in the word. But man is capable of speaking only insofar as he, belonging to Saying, listens to Saying, so that in resaying it he may be able to say a word.'[147]

It would be tempting to think of this 'resaying' simply as a translation of Saying into man's said. However, this would perhaps be too rash. Heidegger describes Saying as a 'silent voice' by *way* of which we speak and to think of it as something *said* to man would be to misunderstand Heidegger's account. It is more, for Heidegger, that Saying as Being is what allows something its presence and that in speaking we unconceal that which has already been unconcealed by Being itself. Nonetheless, Heidegger certainly privileges the voice or the tongue over the written word, a point I'll come back to below. Before that however, I want to outline the account of the 'word' and in particular its relation to the gift.

Heidegger's last period of thinking is marked by a deep engagement with poetry and it is through a reading of the poem 'The Word' by Stefan George that he offers an account of what a word or name is.[148] It is

interesting that Heidegger chooses this poet in particular. George was a prolific translator, translating Shakespeare and Mallarmé into German, yet Heidegger does not mention his work as a translator and the impact that this may have had on his own poetry. Theodor Adorno, on the other hand, notes that George expresses in his translations the 'exogamy of language', the desire for the foreign or 'other' that is inherent in language itself.[149] In 'The Word' George describes a poet's relation with language. Initially the poet sought the word for something from the goddess of language who would bestow a word on each thing the poet brought to her shore. However, on one occasion the poet brings a prize 'so rich and frail' for which the goddess has no word and immediately the 'prize' escapes. The last lines of George's poem read '[w]here word breaks off no thing may be.'[150] For Heidegger this precisely describes the manner in which Being as Saying is that which allows a thing to come to presence—the word allows something to be unconcealed. That is, Saying or Being itself must 'grant' or give the word in order for a thing to presence. Of course it might be argued that words themselves are things—things collected and defined in dictionaries. But this is not what Heidegger aims at with the 'word'. In the last chapter of this book I discuss Derrida's claim that Heidegger remains trapped in the onto-theo-logical constitution of metaphysics that he seeks to escape. The account of the word as that which gives Being and the biblical echo with God's word which gives being—'in the beginning there was the word [*logos*]'—would certainly seem to support Derrida here:

> What the poetic experience with language says of the word implies that the relation between the 'is' which itself is not, and the word which is in the same case of not being a being. [...] If our thinking does justice to the matter, then we may never say of the word that it is, but rather that it gives – not in the sense that words are given by an 'it', but that the word itself gives. The word itself is the giver. What does it give? To go by poetic experience and by the most ancient tradition of thinking, the word gives Being.[151]

The word then gives what it does not have to give—an understanding of the 'gift' close to Derrida's.[152] To return to Heidegger, if the word gives yet in the poem the word is denied to the poet, this should not lead us to think that the 'prize' simply vanishes. Rather, it escapes him insofar as it is 'held back.'[153] This does not mean that the prize is 'gone' but rather that it

has sunk into concealment and this concealment itself reveals something to the poet. It reveals, in a way that cannot *yet* be said. The denial of the word here is at one with the withdrawal of Being. In the withdrawal of Being man is given over to thinking Being inasmuch as he is given his own Being. Equally with the denial of the word, man (here the poet) is given to think the relation between Saying and Being as presencing. The denial itself is already a gift. What is interesting here, and particularly in terms of the possibility of translation, is how Heidegger understands this withdrawal or concealment as 'the mysterious nearness of the far-tarrying power of the word'.[154]

This 'mysteriousness' is the manner by which Heidegger refers to the unsaid, unthought or unspoken. I will keep coming back in this book to the nature of possibility and impossibility in terms of translatability and untranslatability. It is necessary therefore to establish whether or not Heidegger posits an untranslatable (unspeakable, unthinkable) or simply an untranslated. *Logos*, for Heidegger, as Saying is Being as the presencing of beings.[155] While *logos* sets all things in motion and manifests as language, language itself can be a dangerous possession. As noted Heidegger 'abandoned' words like 'phenomenology' and 'hermeneutic' in order to give his thinking over to namelessness. Language, particularly in the form of rigid terminology, can entrap thinking. Language in the *Gestell* for example, reveals beings only in a certain way and not in their own essence. For this reason Heidegger is wary of using language to speak of Saying; noting that Saying remains in a certain way 'beyond' language, it cannot be captured in a statement.[156] Indeed he notes that in order to appropriate Saying it is necessary to be silent, to listen and to not even talk about being silent.[157] The mysteriousness that Heidegger accords the 'word' above is precisely this unnameable and ambiguous Saying. The 'treasure' in the poem, claims Heidegger is the word for the Being of language.[158]

Conclusion

While Heidegger does posit an 'unspoken' this is not an 'unspeakable'. He notes that everything spoken arises in some way from the unspoken 'whether this be something not yet spoken, or whether it be what must

remain unspoken in the sense that it is beyond the reach of speaking.'[159] This is the same movement that we saw with *alētheia*; what is unconcealed emerges and draws from what is simultaneously concealed. What is spoken emerges and draws from what is simultaneously unspoken. Since Saying—which grants every speaking its speaking—is Being and since Being conceals itself in its unconcealing, Saying conceals itself in its speaking. Saying is 'beyond the reach of speaking' in the same way that Being is beyond the reach of thinking. Yet, Heidegger does seem to suggest that that which we cannot yet think or say can in some way, at some point, be yet brought forth in a saying. Of course, Heidegger would argue that this would be a saying that would have to be a re-saying again and again. Nonetheless, it does not seem to be *unsayable*. For Heidegger, what is concealed in the fundamental concealing of Being is also in motion with unconcealing. The task of thinking is not so much to unconceal everything, but rather to think the concealing/unconcealing *in motion*; to think 'the presence of the twofold, Being and beings'.[160] As Werner Marx points out 'Heidegger is convinced that the "turn" from the oblivion of Being, from the withdrawal of creative Being, to the world essence has already "e-vented" itself' and that 'Heidegger has declared more than once that he already sees "the signs" of a turning point.'[161]

In terms of translation then, it would seem that Heidegger posits a fundamental or 'originary' translating that can reveal to thinking the distinction between Being and being. While something may as yet be untranslated, such as the thinking that speaks in the Anaximander fragment, it can be brought forth and indeed is brought forth by Heidegger himself. While Heidegger, particularly in the later works, notes that the essence of language is ethereal and somewhat ungraspable, it is so only in terms of traditional representational thinking. Escaping this thinking, thinking differently, would appear to reveal that essence insofar as Heidegger does go so far as naming it. Translating then for Heidegger, even if it is a translating that must be performed again and again, always remains *possible*.

Difference for Heidegger can be named—the ontological difference—it therefore remains a difference in the Same. For Derrida, in naming, identifying and thereby limiting difference, Heidegger's thinking results in 'a presumption of unity' gathered beneath and within the sole 'sending

of Being'.[162] In this 'gathering' of philosophy, Derrida claims, something remains excluded. For Levinas, what is excluded is a thinking of radical alterity that could not be subsumed into the Same. In short, we might say that if for Heidegger philosophy forgot the ontological difference, then for Levinas philosophy—including Heidegger—forgot the ethical difference of the Other person (*Autrui*). Philosophy, claims Levinas, reduces everything to 'the constitution of being' so that the approach of the Other becomes their manifestation in Being and their immediate loss of alterity.[163] Levinas's question then to Heidegger, and the question of the next chapter, is thus: 'Does a significance of signification exist which would not be equivalent to the transmutation of the Other into the Same?'[164]

Notes

1. Derrida, Pos. p. 18/trans. p. 9: 'What I have attempted to do would not have been possible without the opening of Heidegger's questions. And first, since we must proceed rapidly here, would not have been possible without the attention to what Heidegger calls the difference between Being and beings, the ontico-ontological difference such as, in a way, it remains unthought by philosophy.'
2. Heidegger, SZ pp. 130–179/trans. pp. 169–224. The 'worldhood of the world' is examined in Division One Chapter Three, (pp. 63–112/trans. pp. 91–148) and the 'who' of Dasein in Chapter Four (pp. 113–129/trans. pp. 149–68).
3. SZ p. 143/trans. p. 183.
4. SZ p. 145/trans. p. 185.
5. SZ pp. 144–5/trans. pp. 183–5.
6. SZ p. 144/trans. p. 183.
7. SZ p. 145/trans. p. 185.
8. See SZ §15 note in particular: 'Dealings with equipment subordinate themselves to the manifold assignments of the "in-order-to". And the sight with which they thus accommodate themselves is *circumspection* [*Umsicht*].' (p. 69/trans. p. 98).
9. SZ p. 147/trans. p. 187.
10. SZ p. 148/trans. p. 188.

11. SZ p. 150/trans. p. 191.

12. SZ p. 150/trans. p. 191.

13. SZ pp. 149–150/trans. pp. 189–191.

14. SZ p. 151/trans. p. 193.

15. SZ pp. 151–2/trans. pp. 192–3.

16. SZ p. 154/trans. p. 196.

17. SZ p. 32/trans. p. 55.

18. SZ pp. 32–3/trans. p. 56 Christopher P. Long argues that Aristotle's use of the word φαντασία in this context must be heard in the middle/passive voice and as such would point to combination between signification and intention. (Christopher P. Long, *Aristotle on the Nature of Truth* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. See in particular 'Following the Sound of the Voice in Aristotle' pp. 79–96) 'In Aristotle, the term itself [φαντασία] comes to designate a power of the soul that occupies a kind of middle space – between expression and articulation, meaning and intention, and at a yet deeper level, between perceiving and thinking, object and subject, body and mind.' (*op. cit.* p. 83) This would mean that the 'something sighted' that Heidegger here refers to should also and at the same time be understood as 'something thought', that these two actions would occur *together* for Aristotle—a fact which reflects Heidegger's own account of understanding as a type of 'sight'.

19. SZ p. 33/trans. p. 56.

20. SZ p. 214/trans. p. 257.

21. SZ p. 220/trans. p. 263.

22. SZ p. 33/trans. p. 57.

23. SZ p. 154/trans. p. 196.

24. Werner Marx, *Heidegger and the Tradition*, trans. by Theodore Kisiel & Murray Greene (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971) [hereafter W. Marx] p. 153.

25. SZ pp. 155–6/trans. pp. 197–9.

26. SZ p. 160/trans. p. 203; SZ p. 157/trans. p. 200.

27. SZ p. 158/trans. p. 201.

28. Gert-Jan van der Heiden, *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement*

(Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2010) [hereafter van der Heiden]. pp. 26–8.

29. SZ pp. 160–1/trans. p. 203.
30. I am here following Macquarie and Robinsons' convention of using 'Articulating' with a capital for *artikulieren*. In German the verbs *artikulieren* and *gliedern* both mean 'articulate'. With *artikulieren* the emphasis is on the 'joints' of that which gets divided whereas with *gliedern* (which can also mean 'limb') the emphasis appears to be more on the individual 'parts' or 'members' that make up a whole (see SZ trans. n.1 p. 195). Discourse then—like interpretation—Articulates or 'joins' the totality of significations. In the next section of this chapter I will return to this 'joining', 'disjoining' and 'disarticulation'.
31. SZ pp. 162–3/trans. p. 206.
32. SZ pp. 162–3/trans. pp. 205–6.
33. SZ p. 161/trans. p. 204 & SZ pp. 163–5/trans. p. 206–8.
34. SZ p. 164/trans. p. 207.
35. SZ p. 165/trans. p. 208.
36. SZ p. 165/trans. p. 208.
37. SZ p. 155/trans. p. 197.
38. SZ p. 155/trans. pp. 197–8.
39. SZ p. 164/trans. p. 208.
40. SZ p. 168/trans. p. 212.
41. SZ p. 169/trans. p. 213.
42. SZ p. 222/trans. p. 265.
43. SZ p. 169/trans. p. 212.
44. SZ p. 222/trans. p. 265.
45. SZ pp. 168–9/trans. p. 212.
46. SZ p. 169/trans. p. 212.
47. Van der Heiden p. 28.
48. The course was subsequently published as *Grundbegriffe* (GA51) and translated into English as *Basic Concepts* [trans. by Gary Aylesworth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993)].
49. *Hölderlins Hymne 'Der Ister'* (GA53). Trans. by William McNeill and Julia Davis, *Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister'* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

50. This was published as *Parmenides* (GA 54).
51. Heidegger, SA p. 325/trans. p. 16.
52. W. Marx p. 127.
53. SA p. 364/trans. p. 50.
54. SA p. 327/trans. p. 18.
55. SA p. 329/trans. p. 20.
56. SA p. 329/trans. p. 19.
57. Heidegger, GA 54 p. 18/trans. p. 12.
58. GA 54 p. 17/trans. p. 12. See also the translator's introduction to this text where they explain their decision to translate Über*setzung* as 'transporting' (GA 54 trans. p.XV). As they note, the emphasis in German on *setzung* is not captured by the suffix '–*lation*' in English. The German *setzen* means 'to put' or 'to place' so that *an Land setzen* means 'to put ashore'. In this way the emphasis on -*setzung* in Über*setzung* is very much to highlight a 'placing-' or 'putting-over'. In an observation on *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, Eugenio Donato comments on this in terms of an abyss both constituted by and overcome through translation: 'It is interesting to note here that the word *Übersetzung* has a double etymology in German and thus a somewhat stronger semantic field, since one of the senses of '*Übersetzung* (translation, metaphor, transfer) is to leap over an abyss. Thus it poses both the abyss dividing things in two and at the same time the possibility of leaping over the abyss' (Donato in Derrida OA pp. 168–9/trans. p. 127).
59. GA 54 pp. 17–18/trans. p. 12.
60. GA 54 p. 18/trans. p. 13.
61. GA 54 p. 18/trans. p. 12.
62. Van der Heiden p. 191.
63. Van der Heiden p. 192.
64. SA p. 331/trans. p. 21.
65. SA pp. 330–331/trans p. 21.
66. SA p. 332/trans. p. 22.
67. SA pp. 334–5/trans. p. 24.
68. See 'The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics' in GA 11 pp. 51–79/trans. pp. 42–74. Derrida, however, argues that Heidegger himself repeats this tradition by simply replacing 'God'

with 'Being' (See for example Dénégations pp. 585–95/trans. pp. 53–62).

69. SA p. 335/trans. p. 25.
70. W. Marx p. 156.
71. SA pp. 335–6/trans. p. 25.
72. SA p. 336/trans. p. 25.
73. See Martin Bernal, *Black Athena*: *The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization* (*The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785–1985*, *Volume 1*) (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991); of particular note in terms of ancient etymology see too Martin Bernal *Black Athena*: *The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilisation The Linguistic Evidence* (*Volume III*) (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006) which traces the relation between Semitic, Egyptian and Greek words.
74. Heidegger's involvement with National Socialism has been the subject of numerous books, articles, special editions and conferences. To list all such publications from Richard Wolin to Emmanuel Faye would far exceed the space here. For an overview see for example Miguel de Beistigui, *Heidegger and the Political*, *Dystopias* (London: Routledge, 1998) or, the more critical, *Heidegger's Roots*: *Nietzsche National Socialism and the Greeks* by Charles Bambach (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003). In 2014 with the publication of the *Schwarze Hefte* or 'Black Notebooks' the fervour of production surrounding Heidegger's Nazism almost returned to the peaks of the original *affaire Heideggerian* of the 1980s demonstrating that this is a question that will continue to occupy scholars for some time to come. An excellent account of the philosophical nature of Heidegger's political stance and one which engages with much of the literature to date is to be found in Mahon O'Brien's *Heidegger*, *History and the Holocaust* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).
75. SA p. 336/trans. p. 25.
76. SA p. 337/trans. p. 26.
77. SA p. 337/trans. p. 26.
78. SA pp. 337–8/trans. pp. 26–7.
79. SA p. 338/trans. p. 27.
80. SA p. 339/trans. p. 28.

81. SA p. 341/trans. p. 29. The 'ordinance of time' seems far from anachronistic and quite why Heidegger feels the need to remove it from the fragment is unclear. As a historical moment during which a shift from 'myth' to 'natural science' was occurring, and given the Greek understanding of Chronos as the God who gave 'the order of time' to the world and man, it seems far from 'anachronistic' or 'Aristotelian' to think that Anaximander would indeed see the *apeiron* as providing an order even if it itself was without order, limits or determination.

82. SA p. 341/trans. p. 30.

83. SA p. 342/trans. p. 30 (italics and ellipsis in original).

84. Homer, the *Iliad* B.I, lines 81–2 cited by Heidegger SA p. 345/trans. p. 32. The line in Greek reads: '*ός ήδη τά τ έόντα τά τ έσσόμενα πρό τ' έόντα*' ('*os éde tá t éónta tá t éssómena pró t' éónta*').

85. See SZ §15 & §26 in particular (pp. 66–72/trans. pp. 95–102; pp. 117–125/trans. pp. 153–163).

86. SA p. 345/trans. pp. 33–4.

87. SA p. 346/trans. p. 34.

88. SZ p. 103/trans. p. 136.

89. SA p. 346/trans. p. 34.

90. SA p. 348/trans. p. 36.

91. Parvis Emad 'Thinking More Deeply into the Question of Translation: Essential Translation and the Unfolding of Language' in John Sallis (ed.) *Reading Heidegger Commemorations* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993) pp. 323–40 [hereafter Emad] p. 328.

92. SA p. 349/trans. p. 37.

93. SA p. 352/trans. p. 39.

94. SA p. 353/trans. p. 40.

95. W.K.C. Guthrie *The Greek Philosophers from Thales to Aristotle* (London: Routledge, rpt. 1997) pp. 5–8.

96. SA p. 355/trans. p. 41.

97. SA p. 357/trans. p. 43.

98. SA p. 358/trans. p. 44.

99. Emmanuel Levinas 'Diachronie et representation', 1st published in *University of Ottawa Quarterly* Vol. 55 No. 4, 1985 reprinted in *Entre nous*: *Essais sur la pensers-à-l'autre* (Paris: Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1991) pp. 177–97/trans. by Michael B. Smith & Barbara Harshav, 'Diachrony and Representation' in *Entre Nous*: *Essays on Thinking-of-the-Other* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998) pp. 159–177. For Levinas's commentary on *Der Spruch des Anaximander* see in particular pp. 186–7/trans. p. 168.

100. Derrida, Spectres p. 52/trans. p. 29; for Derrida's full discussion see Spectres pp. 41–56/trans. pp. 20–33.

101. SA pp. 358–9/trans. p. 45.

102. SA pp. 359–60/trans. p. 46.

103. see SZ (section VI) pp. 180–230/trans. pp. 225–273.

104. SA p. 360/trans. p. 46.

105. SA p. 360/trans. p. 47.

106. SA p. 363/trans. p. 49.

107. SA p. 365/trans. p. 51.

108. SA p. 365/trans. p. 51.

109. Derrida '*La main de Heidegger*' in *Psyché*: *Inventions de l'autre vol.II* (Paris: Éditions Galillée, 2003) pp. 415–451, trans. by John P. Leavey Jr., '*Geshlecht II*: Heidegger's Hand' in John Sallis (ed.) *Deconstruction and Philosophy the Texts of Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) pp. 161–96.

110. SA p. 366/trans. p. 52.

111. SA trans. n. p. 53.

112. SA p. 369/trans. p. 55 See also Heidegger's essays on these very topics: 'Logos (Heraklit, Fragment 50)' (GA 7 pp. 211–34), 'Moira (Parmenides, Fragment VIII. 34–41)' (GA 7 pp. 235–262) [trans. by David Farrell Krell & Frank A. Capuzzi in *Early Greek Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975): 'Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B50)' pp. 59–78 and 'Moira (Parmenides VIII, 34–41)' pp. 79–101].

113. SA p. 370/trans. p. 55.

114. SA p. 371/trans. p. 57.

115. SA p. 373/trans. p. 58.

116. Joan Stambaugh in GA 11 trans. p. 8.

117. GA 11 p. 33/trans. p. 23.
118. GA 11 p. 34/trans. p. 25.
119. GA 11 p. 34/trans. p. 25.
120. GA 11 p. 36/trans. p. 27 Heidegger elsewhere describes Parmenides as one of only three 'primordial thinkers' along with Anaximander and Heraclitus (GA 54 p. 11/trans. p. 7).
121. GA 11 p. 41/trans. p. 32.
122. GA 12 p. 114/trans. p. 29.
123. GA 12 p. 161/trans. p. 68.
124. The point is made in various of Levinas' works but see in particular EPP p. 68/trans. p. 76 where Levinas notes: '*Auffassen* (*understanding*) is also, and always has been, a *Fassen* (*gripping*)'.
125. GA 11 pp. 41–2/trans. p. 33.
126. GA 11 p. 48/trans. p. 39.
127. FT p. 15/trans. p. 223.
128. GA 11 pp. 43–4/trans. p. 35.
129. FT pp. 21–2/trans. pp. 227–8.
130. GA11 p.45 /trans. p.37-8.
131. GA 12 n.2 pp. 248–9/trans. n. p. 129.
132. BH p. 313/trans. p. 147.
133. GA 12 p. 230/trans. p. 112.
134. GA 12 p. 230/trans. p. 112.
135. GA 12 p. 238/trans. p. 119.
136. GA 12 p. 243/trans. p. 124.
137. GA 12 p. 232/trans. pp. 113–114.
138. GA 12 p. 241/trans. p. 122.
139. GA 12 p. 170/trans. p. 76.
140. GA 12 p. 242/trans. p. 123.
141. GA 12 p. 246/trans. p. 126.
142. GA 12 p. 244/trans. p. 125.
143. GA 12 p. 190/trans. p. 95.
144. GA 12 p. 243/trans. p. 123.
145. GA 12 p. 248–9/trans. pp. 128–9.
146. GA 12 p. 251/trans. p. 131.
147. GA 12 p. 254/trans. p. 134.

148. First published in 1919 and later published as part of the collection *Das Neue Reich*, in 1928 (see GA 12 p. 152/trans. p. 60).

149. For more on this see Shierry Weber Nicholsen, *Exact Imagination*, *Late Work*: *On Adorno's Aesthetics*, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997), in particular: 'Language: Its Murmuring, Its Darkness and Its Silver Rib' pp. 59–102.

150. GA 12 p. 152/trans. p. 60*ff.*

151. GA 12 p. 182/trans. pp. 87–8.

152. Derrida, SN p. 112/trans. p. 85.

153. GA 12 p. 183/trans. p. 88.

154. GA 12 p. 184/trans. p. 89.

155. GA 12 p. 224/trans. p. 155.

156. GA 12 p. 255/trans. p. 134.

157. GA 12 p. 255/trans. p. 135.

158. GA 12 p. 223/trans. p. 154.

159. GA 12 p. 240/trans. p. 120.

160. GA 12 p. 112/trans. pp. 26–7.

161. W. Marx p. 240.

162. Derrida, Points pp. 139–40/trans. p. 131.

163. Levinas, TdA p. 188.

164. TdA p. 190 (my translation).

The Unsaying of Levinas

Introduction

On his own account, the 'opening of Heidegger's questions' may have made Derrida's work possible, but it is with Levinas that he claims to be in absolute agreement. Even once stating that he was 'ready to subscribe to everything that [Levinas] says.'[1] In subsequent chapters we will discover that this claim is both true and false, in the sense that while Derrida accepts much of Levinas's thinking, he does so on the basis of *supplementing* it. Before examining the manner in which Derrida does this, I want to outline Levinas's account of alterity and the role language plays therein.

Translation, taken as the transfer of meaning from one linguistic-cultural sphere to another, raises questions of ethics and justice. To whom is a translator to be faithful? The culture, society, norms and language she translates into (*langue d'arrivée*) or the language she translates from (*langue de départ*)? If the translator operates in a 'between space' inhabiting neither one language nor the other absolutely, while at the same time inhabiting them both; how does she measure the distance between one and the other? How does a translator 'do justice' to the text she is translating, how does she achieve a balance between bringing the foreign 'home'

while respecting its alterity? This question is inseparable from that of how the subject relates to the other without destroying their alterity.

To investigate these questions and their possible responses I am going to focus here on Levinas's 1974 work *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. This work marks a radicalization of the question of justice, a radicalization which takes place through a subtle shift in the Levinasian concept of the subject. Bettina Bergo notes that whereas the 1961 work *Totality and Infinity* centred on 'the face, as expression and voice – teaching;' *Otherwise than Being* 'presents a less phenomalist less illuminated encounter, called substitution.'[2] Derrida too highlights this development in terms of a subject defined as 'host' in *Totality and Infinity*, to the subject as 'hostage' in *Otherwise than Being*,[3] where the subject is described *as* substitution. This move towards an understanding of the subject as 'hostage', as 'substitution', results in a redefinition of the figure of the third: the other of the other. Crucially it is the arrival of the third party that opens the possibility of justice. Further, in defining the subject as 'subjected', as 'substituted', as 'hostage' Levinas calls the notion of violence into question.

I begin with an overview of *Otherwise than Being* highlighting both the distinction between the saying and the said; and the Levinasian reimagining of the subject as substitution. From here the chapter moves on to an account of sensibility, the subject's response to the world, as a response that gives birth to language. I will then be in a position to examine two important and related aporetic situations: betrayal and justice. For Levinas the manifestation of being is a betrayal of the subject's responsibility to the Other but it is a betrayal that at the same time enables a material response to that responsibility. Similarly justice, while seeking to limit the violence of existence, necessitates violence in its own coming to be. The question of translation will accompany each aspect of this analysis, from its ordinary understanding as the translation of one language to another; to a more existential understanding of translation as the very site of human subjectivity.

Levinas's work involves a constant repetition of themes whereby one theme or concern implies another. For this reason, while this chapter is divided into sections with a particular focus, each section entails all the other sections and a certain level of repetition will be unavoidable. As

Levinas notes; these are themes that 'do not lend themselves to a linear unfolding,' themes which 'cannot be truly isolated from each other without projecting on one another their shadows and reflections.'[4]

Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence

Otherwise than Being seeks to describe the subject in terms other than ontological, intentional, conscious, rational, and so on. Instead of focussing on the life of Husserl's intentional ego, Levinas is concerned with the pre-intentional corporeal self. This concern for the subject as sensibility was already employed by Levinas in earlier works. The 1935 *On Escape*,[5] for example, describes the sentient aspect of life (in contradistinction to an intentional life) with accounts of nausea and shame. These physical experiences hurl us into an absolute present and reveal the desire to escape oppressive anonymous being (the *il y a*). Similarly, the 1947 *Existence and Existents*[6] employs accounts of bodily states such as fatigue and insomnia, to reveal the gap between the bodily 'self' and the intentional 'I'. Levinas's 'corporeal self' is described as a *hypostasis*. However, this is not the traditional notion of substantiality whereby the subject as 'beneath-standing' is a substratum to which predicates can be attached. Rather the hypostasis for Levinas, the substantiality of the subject, *is* the subject *as* a body. When we experience pain, we *are* that pain and not a consciousness positing itself and then representing pain to itself. At first sight this substantiality would seem to create a subject with an interior to which it retreats in pain or shame. However, as Bergo notes, it is also the subject's radical openness to exteriority through its sensuous vulnerability.[7] The term *hypostasis* marks here Levinas's blurring of the interior/exterior divide.

By the time of the more systematic *Totality and Infinity* (1961) Levinas goes as far as to state: 'Sensibility constitutes the very egoism of the I, *which is sentient and not something sensed* [...] sensation breaks up every system.'[8] Before any intentional act, we are a body responding to our exposure to the world and specifically to our exposure to the Other. Prior to intentionality, argues Levinas, is sensibility. This notion of the subject as beyond systematization (including that of a system of 'morality') is

central for Levinasian ethics, or what Derrida describes as an 'ethics of ethics'.[9] Ethics cannot consist in reducing the singularity of a subject by simply inserting particular beings into an abstract ethical system. Ethics is rather *the* particularity of my existence in the face of the Other: ethics is 'first philosophy'.

Ethics Is First Philosophy

> Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does evil, and I put a stumbling block before him, he will die. Since *you* did not warn him, he will die for his sin. The righteous things he did will not be remembered and I will hold *you* accountable for his blood.[10]

This citation is one of five that precede *Otherwise than Being*.[11] Levinas is clearly invoking the biblical figure of the watchman who is held responsible for warning the people of oncoming danger. The subject for Levinas is in many respects this 'watchman'; accountable for the Other, as much as for himself, and this is in part the way in which the Other is first for Levinas. We are accountable (to God or the Good) for the Other and for what harm may come to the Other. Like the watchman this responsibility is thrust upon us from beyond (from God or the Good) without the right, or before the right, to choose it. Like the watchman, we are *elected* in our responsibility for the Other before we engage in the freedom of our own action. According to Catherine Chalier, Levinas wishes to give a philosophical account of the significance of this notion of 'election' found in the Abrahamic tradition, and especially in the Talmud. Levinas seeks to read the Torah with the Logos.[12] Chalier notes the centrality of the 'Covenant of Responsibility', the *Brit LaHariout* to the Jewish religion whereby one is responsible for the Other over and before one is free.[13] 'Responsibility does not result from a free choice but from the consciousness of this Covenant, which has elected man before he could utter a word.'[14] Raphael Zagury-Orly notes that election in Levinas' work 'opens the question of the subject' but crucially, the *unique* and *individualized* subject who 'can no longer be related to or thought from intentionality.'[15]

Levinas finds the philosophical armoury to account for this religious idea of election in a rethinking of consciousness and thought. Traditionally what has been considered 'first philosophy' has been the correlation between thought as knowing and being: 'In the realm of truth, being as the *other* of thought becomes the characteristic *property* of thought as knowledge.'[16] For Levinas the history of philosophy testifies to an understanding of truth as 'rediscovery, recall, reminiscence, reuniting under the unity of apperception.'[17] Knowledge too has been seen as that which may be recuperated as re-presentation or a return to presence and for both nothing may remain *other*.[18] From Hegel's Spirit, to Descartes' self-affirming cogito, up to Husserl's transcendental ego; knowledge has been modelled as the appropriation of that which is exterior (other) into the interior (the same). In affirming itself the subject, on this model, becomes the being that affirms being. The following lines seem to take aim at Heidegger in particular:

> In order to have surprised the Ego, being in truth does not alter the identity of the Ego. [...] All experience, however passive it may be, however welcoming it might be, is immediately converted into "constitution of being" which it [experience] receives, as if the *given* was drawn from itself, as if the sense which it [the given] carries was granted through me.[19]

Thought as knowledge is understood as an endless *return* to the same and all knowledge is knowledge of being; there is no space here for a radical alterity.[20] Viewed as this self-sufficient and solitary act, knowledge has been associated with the freedom of the subject as the freedom of knowledge. Levinas, on the other hand, claims that while 'the present is a beginning in my freedom,' the Good is *other to* that present and 'does not give itself to freedom.'[21] As such, he must account for a different type of thought; a type of thought which is not self-knowledge returning to itself, a type of thought which is not knowledge of being but rather, what he terms thought as 'wisdom'.[22]

Levinas chooses Husserlian phenomenology, 'one of the culminating points in Western philosophy,'[23] as his point of departure. Levinas reads Husserl as understanding knowledge on the model of perception, representation and the objectifying act. I will continue to outline Levinas's

reading of Husserl here but before doing so it should be noted that this is very much Levinas's reading. Husserl explicitly argues against this understanding of perception as a 'representation' explaining that this arises from a misunderstanding of the difference between perception and depictive symbolic objectivation. For Husserl, a perception perceives 'the physical thing itself' and not a 'sign or a picture' of it.[24] Nonetheless, for Levinas, Husserl perpetuates a model of knowledge where what is other can be reduced to the same. Under the Husserlian schema of intentionality the object is appropriated by knowledge to become the object of knowledge; the noema to consciousness's noesis. As Levinas notes, the intentional consciousness of Husserl's *epochē* can even take the ego itself as its object, so that 'implicit states' are just so much data to be 'brought to light'. Of course this operates as a somewhat unreachable telos, even for Husserl, but it is a telos nonetheless. For Levinas this reduced consciousness 'remains a non-intentional consciousness of itself, as though it were a surplus somehow devoid of any wilful aim. A non-intentional consciousness operating, if one may put it like this, unknowingly as knowledge, as a non-objectivizing knowledge.'[25] The primary phenomenon for Levinas is not a subject and an object but rather the relation between them—something Heidegger too attempted to think, albeit in a different way. As Jacques Rolland has pointed out, for Levinas what 'counts therefore in the first instance, is the "*to*" in "relation to the object".'[26] Levinas is here arguing for another type of consciousness that does not return to the self, a consciousness operating almost parallel to the intentional consciousness. For Levinas European philosophy understands consciousness as an Odysseus—travelling out into the world but always returning to the home of the self. Against this, or perhaps better, supplementing this, Levinas posits the tradition of Jerusalem which understands consciousness as an Abraham exiled forever to an unknown land.[27] What interests me in terms of the double position of the translator, is how Levinas describes the relation between these two consciousnesses, between Odysseus and Abraham.

This Abraham or 'other consciousness' has left its mark in philosophy in two ways. Firstly, in the trope of a 'pre-reflexive' consciousness, usually discredited in philosophy as nothing but a 'distortion' or even a 'violation'. For Levinas this so-called pre-reflexive consciousness is in fact a

'counterpoint to the intentional.'[28] Similarly, philosophy is haunted by the spectre of scepticism which testifies to this *other* consciousness, to the 'shattering of the unity of transcendental apperception.'[29] Scepticism may be refutable, notes Levinas, but it always returns.[30] That philosophy can never quite rid itself of these two ghosts—the non-intentional consciousness and scepticism—bears witness to a disquietude in the intentional consciousness which culminates with Husserl's transcendental ego. This ego, despite 'declaring and affirming itself – or making itself firm – in being, still remains ambiguous or enigmatic.'[31] We must, for Levinas, go beyond thinking of this non-intentional consciousness merely as 'pre-reflexive', as some sort of empty potentiality; we should rather embrace it as distinct from intentionality with its own separate but equally central modality.

The non-intentional consciousness, the corporeal self, is described by Levinas as 'passive' and this passivity will be a central theme in *Otherwise than Being.* It is to be understood as the passivity of the body, the skin, responding to the world—to touch, to pleasure, to pain, to heat, to cold— responding before the emergence of a rational, synthesizing consciousness which endlessly affirms its own self. Levinas argues that this passive, corporeal, sensible, ego is in fact testified to in the phenomenological account of time in Husserl. The play of protentions and retentions that constitute for Husserl the 'living present'—that is, a non-temporal temporalizing from which the intentional ego emerges—indicates to Levinas the *duration* of time which cannot be grasped or represented. These plays of protention/retention in Husserl 'at least remain non-explicit and suppose, in that they represent a flow, another sort of time.'[32] Levinas's question thus is whether this implicit 'other sort of time' might signify in another way, in a way that is not just knowledge or representation but rather as 'pure duration'. This 'other time' which signifies as duration, (which, like ageing, is impossible to represent), is that of a being which does not insist on its own being, a being which does not return to its own self-identification. We witness it in ageing, a passive process which we cannot *possess* in the way we can possess a memory as an object of knowledge.[33] Here, in this 'other time', there is no 'consciousness of...'; this is not the time of intentionality. We are not conscious of the process of age-

ing—it passes *through* us; it *happens* to us passively. This non-intentional consciousness:

> [H]as no name, no situation, no status. It has a presence afraid of presence, afraid of the insistence of the identical ego, stripped of all qualities. In its non-intentionality, not yet at the stage of willing, and prior to any fault, in its non-intentional identification, identity recoils before its affirmation. It dreads the insistence in the return to self that is a necessary part of identification [...] One comes not into the world but into question.[34]

This corporeal, non-intentional self is the counterpoint to the ego of being that affirms its identity in representation and objectivizing knowledge. If we think of being like a tapestry, then this corporeal self would be the underside of the tapestry—where all the threads are exposed and visible and not yet rationalized into a pattern we can recognize.[35] So what exactly happens here in this 'other time' or 'underside' of consciousness? For Levinas the simple answer is responsibility for the Other. What awakens this other consciousness, or what disturbs and disrupts the self-affirmation of the identical ego, is the call of the Other person. It is the face of the Other who commands the other consciousness and 'expels' the intentional ego from its rest in self-identity.[36] The call of the Other demands a response and that response *is* responsibility from which language emerges. As Levinas phrases it: 'one has to speak, to say *I*, to be in the first person, precisely to be me (*moi*). But, from that point, in affirming this *me* being, one has to respond to one's right to be.'[37]

That the subject 'has to respond to one's right to be' is not because of some abstract law to which it must conform, but because the Other puts the subject in question. The subject in the face of the Other questions its own right to be; a questioning that leads to fear for the Other: 'the fear of occupying someone else's place with the *Da* of my *Dasein*.'[38] If first philosophy is a response to the most fundamental of questions, then it must always be an ethics; it must always demand a justification. For Levinas the question of the meaning of being is not to be understood as 'What is the meaning of being?' but 'What does (my) being mean (for the Other)'? That is, what results from being, and by what right does it do so:

> Does being human consist in forcing oneself to be and does the under-standing of the meaning of being – the semantics of the verb to be – represent the first philosophy required by a consciousness which from the first would be knowledge and representation [?...] This is the question of the meaning of being: not the ontology of the understanding of that extraordinary verb, but the ethics of its justice. The question *par excellence* or the question of philosophy. Not 'Why being rather than nothing?', but how being justifies itself.[39]

Levinas's work develops a critique of traditional philosophy based upon what he sees as its failure to account for transcendence[40] and it is with this question of transcendence that *Otherwise than Being* begins. If transcendence is possible at all for Levinas, it must consist in the *event* of being passing over to what is other than being. This must not be understood as *being otherwise* but as *otherwise than being* itself. The other of being is also not to be confused with nothing; being and nothing are involved in a dialectic. Levinas tries to think the *beyond* being rather than nothing or the negation of being, which will in some way always reinstate being itself.[41] Any attempt to imagine not-being fails; the *il y a*, anonymous non-particular being (Heidegger's 'Being') 'fills the void that the negation of being leaves.'[42] Essence (being) continuously persists in essence, filling up any 'interval of nothingness' which would interrupt it.

The essence of essence is this persistence or what Levinas also calls 'interest' and which is to be contrasted with the 'disinterest' of transcendence. Essence as interest is not just a refutation of negativity, it is not simply essence's inability to cease; but is also positively the *conatus*, or 'togetherness' of beings. In this Levinas seems close to Heidegger. As noted in Chapter One, Heidegger describes beings as wishing to 'persist' in their being leading to a 'disjointure'. This perseverance or persistence in essence was limited in Heidegger by the 'letting-be' of present beings to each other. This 'letting-be' might be understood as a certain 'ethical' relation within the Heideggerian schema, but for Levinas this 'letting-be' fails to accord the Other its unique place (or non-place). Further, the Heideggerian co-belonging does not allow for any interruption or 'rupture' of the same (Being), a rupture which is the heart of Levinas' account. Rather, under Heidegger, beings belong together in the Same.

While this Same is not 'identical' and certainly entails a thinking of difference; it is a difference that is not yet the insurmountable difference between same and other—the ethical difference—described by Levinas.

'The interest of being is dramatised in egos struggling the ones with the others, and thus, together.'[43] The interest of being, thus produces a totality of war perpetuating the immanence of being. We may well then think that according to this logic, the 'dramatisation' or enactment of being's *other* would be found in peace. However, Levinas warns that peace is but mediation and politics, a kind of 'waiting', under which the drama of being's interest as struggle is converted into an economy of exchange which reduces beings to nothing but their calculability.[44] It is important to note that this account of being and otherwise than being reflects Levinas's concern to escape totalizing systems. On the one hand we have sensibility, affectivity, diachrony, the non-systematizable, the adverbial, saying, and transcendence, all of which are associated with being's *other*. While on the other hand, we have rationality, intentionality, synchrony, system, the verb, the said, and immanence; all associated with being. The one ruptures the other producing an ambiguous play between them. One way to understand this relation is as the ethics of being's other rupturing the politics of being.

A Note on Politics

Politics entails a certain 'weighing up' of possibilities, a comparison and most of all a 'system'. I would here like to open a parenthesis to very briefly discuss the political in Levinas' work since it has an obvious role to play in his conception of justice and ethics. The political is not the principal focus of the current work but it remains on its margins insofar as any interrogation into the subject/other relation implies a broader political engagement. Translation too is necessarily caught up in the political— what is translated, by whom, when, why and how it is translated are questions not immune to politics—as will become evident in subsequent chapters. As Kathleen Davis phrases it 'translations are ethical-political acts'.[45]

In the preface to the 1961 work *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas argues that politics is the 'art of foreseeing war and winning it by every means' and that it is 'opposed to morality, as philosophy to naïveté.'[46] As much as politics may be the 'art of foreseeing war', again Levinas warns against viewing peace as some sort of teleological ideal towards which politics must move. Politics is understood in *Totality and Infinity* as the threat of totalitarianism not only in the political sense of a totalitarian state; but also in an ontological sense of the oppression of the subject by anonymous being—the *il y a*.[47] The later work on the other hand, seems to embrace more fully the necessity and inescapability of the political while questioning the scope of its violence. *Otherwise than Being* continually emphasizes the necessity of the move from otherwise than being to being, from responsibility to justice and from ethics to politics. This move has always already taken place; if we are sensible and infinitely responsible for the Other, we are also rational and concerned with how to enact our responsibility for all the other others.

Derrida argues that Levinas is silent on how the passage from the ethical to the political is to take place,[48] a point that Simon Critchley agrees with.[49] Following Derrida, Critchley argues that the space between the ethical and political in Levinas might be rethought of as a 'hiatus' that opens 'onto a new experience of the political decision.'[50] It seems to me however, that Levinas's silence is not so much a refusal to comment on how the ethical relation of the face-to-face encounter is to be enacted in the political sphere; but rather that this relation informs or in fact permits a political reckoning in the first place. The question thus is not to be thought of as a 'move' from the ethical to the political but rather an awakening of the ethical in the political.

Fabio Ciaramelli makes the point that the political in Levinas is to be understood as the institution of equality amongst the multiplicity (or plurality) of individuals, and that this is to be distinguished from the institution of tyranny or totality which would reduce the inherent plurality of humanity to an anonymous generality.[51] If the ethical in Levinas is the relation between the subject and the Other; the political is the troubling of this relation by the entry of the third party (a point I will come back to a little further on). The entry of the third party is the institution of the political in that with the arrival of the third the subject must 'compare the incompa-

rables'; subject, Other and third must be recognized as 'equals'. It is tempting, therefore, to read the initial ethical relation between subject and Other as the 'origin' of the political but this is not the case. The relation between the subject and Other is 'pre-originary'; it is both outside and before the political. Ciaramelli argues that this pre-originary acts as the 'condition and limit of the political'[52] as an opening of the opening of origin. As such, following Claude Lefort, Ciaramelli claims that the strange relation between the self-originating political (in the figure of the third) and the pre-original ethical results in the claim that human society can only open itself by being held in an opening that is other to itself—the pre-original.[53]

For Levinas philosophical accounts of the subject and Other have remained trapped in accounts of the same. Politics insists on responding to man's 'political' nature, rather than embracing what goes beyond that, what is *other* to that. Meaningful political events for Levinas are those which transcend the solely political, events which break apart an already existing political system of thought. He offers the example of President Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977. This event is *meaningful* because Sadat did not respond solely to his political, rational consciousness, but rather transcended it by going beyond the prudence and precaution of political decision making. Or, to put it differently; Sadat acted *otherwise* to the standard political rationale. Sadat's visit was 'the very way upon which reconciliation has had a chance to be produced' because it awakened and came from the infinite sensible response to the Other.[54] It brought the possibility of real peace, as opposed to a calculated 'economy' of peace, because it indicated 'that peace overflows purely political thought.'[55]

Here lies the Levinasian concept of politics; it is not that we must deduce politics from the ethical relation but rather that we must awaken the already existing ethical in the already existing political. Meaningful political events arise when we awaken the ethical saying in the political said. The ethical, as the otherwise than being, leaves its trace in the material plane of ontology and calculation; the task is to hear that trace. For now I close this brief parenthesis on the political in Levinas—but it is a question that will be in the background of the rest of this chapter.

The Saying and The Said

Before examining this trace and how it operates in Levinas's work, I want to outline the Levinasian conception of language. What Levinas terms *saying* (*le dire*), the 'foreword of languages', indicates the otherwise than being and it leaves its trace in the *said*, language understood as a system of signs. Unlike Heidegger's 'Saying' which is the 'same' as Being insofar as it is the 'essence' of language, the Levinasian 'saying' is the signification of one's responsibility to the Other. For Levinas saying is prior to being, or perhaps not even 'prior', which would suggest a linear temporalization, saying is rather *outside* of being. Whereas being is 'play without responsibility', saying, this pre-original language refers to the inversion of being's interest. Saying is the responsibility for, and the substitution of, one for the other beyond the immanence of being.

Further, there is here marked, albeit thus far ambiguously, the relation between language (even as a 'pre-original language'), meaning, responsibility and being. As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, for Levinas signification is the subject's responsibility for the Other and it is this signification that is found in saying. The question we must now ask is how does this pre-original language, this expression of responsibility, manifest itself *in* the immanence of being? According to Levinas:

> [T]his pre-original saying is metamorphosisized into [*se mue en*] a language where saying and said are correlative one to the other; where the saying is subordinated to its theme. [...] The correlation of the saying and of the said, that is to say, the subordination of the saying to the said, to the linguistic system and to ontology, is the price that manifestation demands. In language as said, everything translates itself before us [*tout se traduit devant nous*] – be that at the price of a betrayal. Language is ancillary and therefore indispensible.[56]

Saying therefore, as responsibility prior to being, manifests itself in *a* language, whereby it is subordinated to the said. The infinite responsibility of the one for the Other as saying is translated in its manifestation into the said. This 'said', language as systems of signs, overtakes and betrays the inherent ambiguity of saying. The oft repeated '*traduttore, traditore*' [translator, traitor] is found echoed in Levinas's account. The price of the

manifestation of the otherwise than being, the price of this translation, is a betrayal. Nevertheless, without the said, taken here as *a language*, the saying would not be able to manifest itself at all. Language, the said, betrays the ambiguity of saying and yet this betrayal is the chance or the possibility through which any faithful investigation into the otherwise than being can be undertaken.[57] The question of this betrayal and the manner in which it can be limited and reduced will in fact be the condition of the possibility of *an* ethics as such and the very task of philosophy:

> It consists in asking if the pre-original of Saying (that is the anarchic, the non-original as we designate it) could be led to betray itself in manifesting itself in a theme (if an an-archeaology is possible) – and if this betrayal can be reduced; if it is at the same time possible to know and to free the known from the marks that thematization has imprinted upon it in subordinating it to ontology. Betrayal at the price of which everything manifests itself, even the unsayable and through which is possible the indiscretion towards the unsayable which is probably the very task of philosophy.[58]

Since the *otherwise than being* is said in language and therefore betrayed, it is the task of philosophy, and certainly Levinas's task in this work, to extract the saying from the said through an *unsaying*.[59] This of course may lead to the question of whether the *saying* and the *being unsaid* can be at the same time—in other words can we in unsaying something free it to the point that it returns to saying itself? The short answer is no. Saying cannot be grasped, it is ethereal and ambiguous and any attempt to grasp it or to put it into ordinary language—any attempt to put the infinite into the finite—will fail. Nonetheless, there are degrees of failure and in embracing the essential ambiguity of language, especially that of poetry or prophecy, a *sense* of the saying can be awoken in the said.[60] Primordial signification as saying will always be other to being, other to synchronic thought and so Levinas warns that we 'must stay with the extreme situation of a diachronic thought.'[61] Synchrony is synonymous with systematization, accord or order. On the other hand, diachrony signifies discord or difference. The relation with the Other will always entail an insoluble difference. Language thus for Levinas, as the manifestation of the pre-original saying, is the expression of being's other. The surplus of meaning

in any communicatory act indicates what is *not* encompassed in being. While we cannot encounter this otherwise, this saying, in a direct presence of experience, we can reduce the betrayal of manifestation through:

> [A]n incessant unsaying of the said, a reduction to the saying always betrayed by the said, whose words are defined by non-defined words; it is a movement going from said to unsaid in which the meaning shows itself, eclipses and shows itself.[62]

The Levinasian subject can escape the totalizing immanence of being only through transcendence realized in the *unsaying* of the said of language in order to come closer to saying. The subject, thus, for Levinas, is the '*oneself* who repulses the annexations of essence.'[63] Whereas essence as interest or the *il y a* does not allow for interruption or exception, it fills in all the gaps so to speak; the other of being is a non- place, is the exception to the immanence of being and it signifies subjectivity.[64] Subjectivity is not pure interest in its own perseverance but is marked and indeed constituted by the encounter with the Other which transforms the being, the interest, of the subject into being-for-another—responsibility.

Central to the analysis of responsibility is the question of temporality and the manner in which it indicates the pre-original saying as the absolute responsibility for the Other. The problem, as Levinas states it, is how can subjectivity be thus extracted from essence, from being, without this extraction *lasting* or *taking place* and thus occurring in being? 'The *otherwise than being* cannot be situated in any eternal order extracted from time that would somehow command the temporal series.'[65] Temporalization, for Levinas, signifies in a double manner; it 'signifies also the *beyond being* and *not-being*; it must be that it signifies a difference with regard to the couple being and nothing.'[66] The temporalization of time indicates the *difference* between being and nothing and thus the beyond being.

The temporalization of time for Levinas is on the one hand a recuperation of everything through retention, memory and history whereby nothing is lost and everything is presented and represented in the 'scelerosization' of everything into substance. And yet, on the other hand, the temporalization of time must necessarily also include 'a lapse of time', the instant 'out of phase with itself', without which no time could

pass at all. As Levinas describes it: 'a lapse of time that does not return, a diachrony refractory to all synchronaization, a transcending diachrony.'[67] Like the double characterization of the subject as both an Odysseus returning to Ithaca and an Abraham eternally exiled from the Fatherland, time is paradoxically both representable and impossible to represent. The recuperating temporalizing of time also signals the irrecuperable lapse of time, a past which cannot be represented, a pre-original past. As with saying, that 'pre-original language' which was yet signalled in language and in the said, though subordinated by it; so the pre-original past is signalled in the recuperating temporalization of time. Thus, although in both cases the 'beyond' (either of language as saying or of time as a non-recuperable past) is signalled in being itself, this does not, for Levinas amount to an ontological claim. The beyond of language or of time will always be *outside* of being, beyond the materiality of ontology. The modality by which this *beyond* is signalled will be that of the trace.

The temporalization of time indicates the difference between being and otherwise than being and must be conceived as saying itself. Saying is the temporalization of time.[68] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger argues that Dasein itself temporalizes and that this is 'original time' which is proximally and for the most part lost in the everydayness of the they. The later Heidegger sees time as a gift, a gift from the *Ereignis—es gibt Sein*, *es gibt Zeit*. Levinas too sees the temporalization of time in being but also and crucially in the otherwise than being. Furthermore, for Levinas the temporalization of time is inextricably linked with saying (and thus language), which is responsibility for the Other *outside* of Heidegger's 'Same' or Being. My responsibility for the Other therefore, takes place in the non-recuperable temporalization of time which is saying revealed in language:

> Essence fills the said – or the epos of the Saying; but the Saying through its power of equivocation – that is to say through the enigma by which it keeps the secret – escapes the epos of essence that encompasses it and signifies beyond in a signification that hesitates between this beyond and the return to the epos of essence. Equivocation or enigma – inalienable power of the Saying and modality of transcendence. Subjectivity is precisely the knot and the closure [*le nœud et le dénouement*] – the knot or the closure – of essence and essence's other.[69]

The power of Saying is described here as equivocation, as that which cannot be clarified, crystallized and in some sense possessed by a 'knower'. For this reason the style Levinas employs throughout *Otherwise than Being* is somewhat hyperbolic and enigmatic. This style (what he terms a type of 'prophetic speech') is deliberately employed in order to reveal something beyond what is merely being said. Saying is precisely that which cannot be grasped since by its very nature it is beyond the ontological plane. Saying here is rooted in subjectivity, that non-lieu between being and otherwise than being, the knot that both links without encompassing and closes without closing-off the relation between the two. Subjectivity passively enacts and inhabits the denegation of this relation.

How are we to understand this pre-original past? Levinas notes that it is not a past that we can 'go back' to, for this would imply a representation of what was in fact never a 'presentation' in the first place. This is a past that cannot be recuperated—we cannot here follow a linear succession of time. And yet we discover this irrecuperable past in the present in our responsibility for the Other. 'The time of the *said* and of *essence* there lets the pre-original be heard.'[70] As Ciaramelli has noted, the pre-originary is designated by Levinas as a counterpoint to the 'originary character of ontology. Even if ontology is not fundamental, it is originary and primordial.'[71] In other words, ontology has an origin, while otherwise than being does not. Signification, for Levinas, is found in the *an-archē* of the beyond being in the immediacy of the face-to-face relation of subject and Other. This pre-originary anarchical relation, however, is always already interrupted. The face-to-face relation of the otherwise than being is disrupted by the third party, understood as the principle of human society and origin itself.[72] The pre-originary then, argues Ciaramelli, is not some 'older' or more originary origin, but rather that which interrupts the origin of the ontological order.

We can see here, following Ciaramelli, that there is a play of double interruption taking place. On the one hand, there is the interruption of the origin of the ontological by the pre-originary, conceived as signification. And on the other hand, there is the interruption of the pre-originary, the signification of the face-to-face relation, by the origin of the

ontological. These parallel strands of thought can be reformulated as the interruption of the phenomenal by the non-phenomenal, the present by the never present, the said by the saying, the political by the ethical, and so on. As Ciaramelli phrases it:

> [T]he pre-originary produces itself as the deconstruction of origin, as its destruction and interruption. Therefore it precedes the origin only after the event, *après coup*, according to the scheme of what *Totality and Infinity* called the 'posteriority of the anterior'. If the anterior only occurs a posteriori, it presupposes – and at the same time escapes or gets out of – origin.[73]

It may at first seem that this relation between subjectivity and the pre-original (language or past) in fact constitutes a recuperation of sorts. However, since the response of the subject to the Other arises in the non-recuperable past it simply cannot ever be thematized or recuperated into the present. This response is thrust upon the subject—it is not chosen. This is certainly not to deny freedom; it is rather that freedom begins in being. 'The Good cannot make itself present nor enter into representation. The present is a beginning in my freedom, while the Good does not give itself to freedom – it has chosen me before I could have ever chosen it. No-one is good voluntarily.'[74] Freedom is thus conceived by Levinas as inextricably linked to notions of origin and ontology, whereas responsibility has neither beginning nor end. Freedom as 'after' responsibility is tied to the Hebraic tradition and its notion of 'election'. It is also informed by the attempt to escape notions of freedom as a *limit* to responsibility—that is, the idea that one is responsible *only* for what one has freely chosen to do. Chalier reads this thinking of responsibility *prior* to freedom as not only informed by the Judaic tradition of election, but also as a response to the suffering of the Jewish people during the Second World War: 'Levinas uses a philosophical language that in spite of all its greatness was compromised by the terrible calamities of [the Twentieth] Century. The language of philosophy has been distorted by those philosophers who were faithful to the idea that responsibility must be limited by freedom.'[75]

The pre-original is a past which is 'incommensurable' with the present. Whereas the present has a beginning (*archē*) and an end and is therefore

finite and thematizable, diachrony is non-totalizable, non-thematizable and infinite. This refusal of the present in the diachronical is that which commands the subject to the Other, forcing responsibility for the Other on her. This responsibility for the Other is meaning itself: 'Despite me, for-an-other – there is signification par excellence and the meaning of one-self, its *self* – accusative not derived from any nominative – the very fact of finding oneself in losing oneself.'[76] The encounter with the Other through the modality of sensibility and exposure (which cannot in any way be chosen) draws the subject out of itself towards the Other; an outward movement which does not return. At the same time, in parallel so to speak, there is the rational ego which does return to the same but it too is now *othered*; in this way there is an 'other in the same'. The inside/outside divide becomes blurred despite the individualizing force of the encounter that realizes responsibility as uniquely *mine*. Meaning thus for Levinas, is the 'despite-myself', is responsibility for the Other. I will come back further on to the question of translation. For now I want to point out that that if meaning is the ethical relation and if translation is understood as the carrying across of meaning from one language to another; then we might view translation as an ethical act on two levels within the Levinasian framework. First, the pre-original language saying, indicated in a language, is the ethical relation. My responsibility for the Other is indicated in words where the echo of saying can be heard. Therefore, to find the saying in the said through an 'unsaying' and a 'resaying', that is in translating, is to engage in an ethical act. Second, if meaning itself is the responsibility for the Other, then in carrying meaning from a language through the non-lieu of translation to another language, the translator in fact carries the responsibility for the Other and is responsible *for* that responsibility.

The Trace

Levinas describes the relation between being and otherwise than being, and the relation between subject and Other as 'trace'. While certainly the otherwise than being can almost only be described negatively as what it is not, Levinas claims that this is more than just a negative theology.

Rather, all of these 'negative attributes which state what is beyond essence become positive in responsibility.'[77] Responsibility is here understood as *response*, my response to the command issued in non-presence. And yet it is not even a response in the usual way, for it is a response that comes before any freedom or any choice. This response is to what cannot be thematized and so it responds 'as though the invisible that bypasses the present left a trace by the very fact of bypassing the present. That trace lights up as the face of a neighbour.'[78] Levinas is quite clear that the trace left by the invisible is not the 'residue of presence'—for in fact how could the non-present, or never-present, leave a present trace? The trace here described is an ambiguous 'glow'.

This idea of a 'glow' echoes of course Plato's sun and especially the later Plotinian interpretation of this metaphor. Plotinus frequently describes the relation between the multiplicity of being and the unity of the One in terms of the sun and its light.[79] Man, things, the world—all things that *are*—are bathed in the light of the One, though this emanation of light in no way diminishes the One. So too with the Infinite (and indeed with the saying and the non-recuperable past), which traces itself in the plane of the finite while remaining beyond it. Indeed, as Levinas notes, it is Plato who offers the very idea of the *ἐπέχεινα τῆς οὐσίας* (*epekeina tes ousias*), of the 'Good beyond being' or the Good which transcends being. However, this transcendence is irreducible to 'the Heideggerian interpretation of Being transcending entities.'[80] It is the Plotinian development of this Platonic notion which Levinas employs in his description of the trace:

> Plotinus conceived the procession from the One, as compromising neither the immutability nor the absolute separation of the One. It is in this situation, primarily purely dialectical and quasi-verbal [...] that the exceptional significance of the trace takes shape in world. '[...] here the trace of the One gives birth to essence, and being is nothing but the trace of the One'.[81]

Yet what exactly is this trace? If it is not, as Levinas has warned, a 'residue of presence' how can we understand it? There is on the one hand an ordinary understanding of trace as sign; a stone scratched by another stone can be read as a sign of the presence of the man who held the

stones. The scratch can be read as the trace of that man, the *signification* of that scratch can be read as an indication of that man's presence. At a crime scene the detective can follow the traces of the criminal's presence; a hunter can follow the traces of her prey as she tracks it through the forest; or a historian can discover ancient worlds in the traces they have left behind.[82] Such traces are 'inscribed in the very order of the world.'[83] Even in this ordinary understanding of trace *as* sign the trace remains 'exceptional' in relation to other signs since it signifies without the intention to signify. The criminal does not intend to indicate her presence, nor the prey its passage. Yet even these traces, exceptional as they are, are not what Levinas terms 'authentic traces' since they are still within the order of the world. Authentic traces, or the trace as trace, disturb that order rather than conforming to it.

If the trace plays the role of sign then equally every sign also operates as trace. A sign is always more than its signification; it also indicates the 'passage' from that which issued the sign. That is, a sign such as a word is not only the signification of this word but also indicates or presupposes a speaker or writer, a sign holds the traces of those who have emitted them. Levinas offers the example of a letter, the style of which would offer to a graphologist or a psycho-analyst the signification of 'the sealed and unconscious, yet real, intentions of the one who issued the message.'[84] That is, the traces left in the style of writing could signify something of the author's intention (even an intention that was not intended to be communicated). The sign holds traces and these traces can be read as signs. Again, however, Levinas warns against taking this understanding of the trace as the authentic trace:

> But that which then in the written form [*graphie*] and the style of the letter specifically remains trace, does not signify any of these intentions any of these qualities, reveals or hides precisely nothing. In the trace is passed a past absolutely gone-by. In the trace is sealed its irreversible revolution. The unveiling which restores the world and reduces to the world and which is proper to a sign or a signification, abolishes itself in this trace.[85]

That is to say, the trace as trace is not what we ordinarily understand as trace. It is not the surplus of meaning communicated by the tone of

the speaker or the sloped letters of the writer. These 'traces' reveal or unveil something of the speaker or writer; they unveil something in and within the order of the world, that is, within being. The trace as trace, for Levinas, is the trace of the otherwise than being and must be understood as the ineffable. It is the *passing* of time, its duration. It is the disruption of finitude by the infinite, of order by disorder, of sense by non-sense: 'In this overflowing of sense by nonsense, the sensibility, the self is first brought out, in its bottomless passivity, as pure sensible point, a disinterestedness, or subversion of essence.'[86]

I have described the irrecuperable past and the saying and noted their divergence from the order and systematicity of being. The subject as the knot between being and otherwise than being, as well as the null-site at which otherwise than being pierces through the order of being, is the plane upon which the trace works. 'The trace is the insertion of space in time, the point where the world bows to a past and a time' (a description which resonates with Derrida's conception of différance).[87] The trace is the 'site' or the 'moment' at which the other to the otherwise than being, that is being itself, *becomes.* It is the process according to which the world gets bent into an order and structure, where time becomes countable and recuperable. The trace is the grazing, the touching, of being and otherwise than being. The subject cannot recuperate the trace of the otherwise than being since this would be to put it into a synchronized time. However, the trace that passes the subject can awaken the ineffable *sensation* of the otherwise than being, the signification of which, as we have noted, is to be understood positively as responsibility for the Other.

Analogies and metaphors can be dangerous if they are taken too far, yet they can be helpful to understanding provided we bear in mind their limits. As such we might liken the trace to the sensation of waking from a bad dream which we cannot remember. In those first hours of awakening we can feel the disquietude of the dream yet know nothing of the dream's contents. This disquietude can haunt the day as an uncomfortable feeling we cannot account for. It is the presence of the *affect* of the dream, the uncomfortable feeling, which we carry rather than the dream itself. The signification of the dream is in fact this affect and it is this word, affect, which Levinas uses to describe the presence of the trace—something that has never quite been present as such and yet troubles the present: 'dis-

turbing the present without allowing itself to be invested by the *ἀρχή* [*archē*] of consciousness [...] the subject is *affected* without the source of the affection becoming a theme of representation.'[88]

For Levinas the trace is what he terms a 'third way' between veiling and unveiling; it does not reveal the order of the world but in some sense troubles that order.[89] Central to the trace is the issue of transcendence; a movement of transcendence that assures the other side of being like a 'bridgehead', a movement of the same that does not return.[90] This is not the transcendence of Heidegger which ultimately remains trapped in being whereby 'a transcendence revealed, inverts itself into immanence, the extraordinary is inserted into an order, the Other is absorbed into the Same.'[91] Rather, the trace maintains transcendence as transcendence without allowing it to pass into the order of immanence and in fact 'only a being transcending the world can leave a trace. The trace is the presence of that which, strictly speaking, has never been there, of that which is always past.'[92] Paradoxically then, the trace is presence but the presence not of an absence (as we might be tempted to think in Heideggerian terms) but rather the presence of that which has never been, nor never will be, present. It is the presence of the Other in the process of absolving herself from my life.[93] The trace as trace then, in fact disrupts what we might ordinarily understand as trace or material trace:

> The trace as trace does not only lead towards the past, but is the *pass* itself towards a past more distant than all past and all future, which are still lined-up in my time, towards the past of the Other, where eternity takes shape – absolute past which brings all times together. [...] Somebody has already passed. Their trace does not *signify* their passing – as it does not signify their work or their enjoyment [*jouissance*] in the world, it [the trace] is the very disruption of imprinting (one would be tempted to say *engraving*) of unimpeachable gravity.[94]

The trace, the 'glow' of the infinite is the face of the Other which commands me to respond, and that response is not one that I chose but one that I make before I can even welcome the order to make it.[95] The response of the subject is born beyond being in sensibility. In the same way that we do not command our skin to feel heat or cold, so we respond

to the Other, without an intentional act and before freedom can even be named. Before moving onto an account of sensibility and its relation to language I will finish this exegesis of *Otherwise than Being* by describing in more detail the Levinasian notion of substitution.

The Subject as Substitution

For Levinas the infinite does not signal to a unified subjectivity. Subjectivity is itself 'the breaking point of essence exceeded by the infinite,' the 'breaking point but also the binding point.'[96] As noted earlier, subjectivity finds itself between being and otherwise than being, between the finite and the infinite, the present and the non-present. Chapter Four of *Otherwise than Being*, 'Substitution', focuses on the subject and is the kernel around which the entire treatise is built.[97] The Levinasian critique of traditional philosophy centres on the issue of transcendence. However, while the focus in earlier works had been on the Other—notably on the *visage* of the Other—*Otherwise than Being* reframes the critique from the point of view of the subject.[98] On this account:

> Subjectivity in its *being* undoes essence by substituting itself for an Other. As one-for-the-other – it is reabsorbed in signification, in saying or the verb of the infinite. Signification precedes essence [...] It is the glory of transcendence. Substitution – signification. Not the replacement of one term by another – as it appears thematized in the Said – but substitution as the very subjectivity of the subject.[99]

These sentences could almost be read as a concise summary of *Otherwise than Being*, they make a number of claims. The subject in being ruptures the ontological plane and transcends it. This is achieved by the operation of substitution. But what is this substitution if it is not 'the replacement of one by another'? The answer lies in undoing the modality of the subject in the plane of ontology where the subject is 'for-itself'. The subject in being is interested, that is, its modality is the perseverance of its own existence. It is for this reason Heidegger can claim Dasein's transcendence as the *augenblick* of owning the possibility of its impossibility, that is, res-

oluteness in being-towards-death.[100] On the other hand, for Levinas my irreplaceability is not located in my own death but rather in my responsibility for the Other; here before I can even identify myself over time, I am uniquely summoned to answer for the Other. The otherwise than being, as the pre-original, reveals the temporality not of the subject's own existence, but rather the time of the Other. This time marks the subject as concerned for the time *after* its own death. If the temporality of existence (interest or being) is constructed around Husserl's play of primal impressions, retentions and protentions which constitute the 'living present' of the intentional ego; then, the temporality of the otherwise than being is to be understood as a disinterest in the subject. That is, a temporality which does not originate in the subject's intentionality. Key here will be the notion of origin, creation and death. The subject for Levinas will be exposed as passive in its own creation, as originless and as a being that moves towards the beyond death. Hence, the subject is a 'substitution', prior to its being-for-itself, it 'is' for-another.

According to Levinas, traditional accounts of the subject reduce every existence to an 'adventure of being'. They presuppose an origin, the *ἀρχή* [*archē*] of consciousness from which the subject goes out to its other and to which the subject returns with the other named and identified. The subject as consciousness of..., as a being in Being, reduces everything to the Same.[101] In contradistinction to this, the Levinasian subject has no origin but is rather pre-original, marked by a time before the time of consciousness. Against the origin of consciousness Levinas argues for the ambiguity of creation. This concept of creation should not be misconstrued as theological, or rather I think the idea of the theological must be reformulated.

If we think of the Greek word *theos* we should remember that in its earlier use it was employed to name that which was in a certain sense un-nameable or non-representable, the *beyond* of human existence. As G.M.A. Grube puts it, *theos* in its Greek context 'meant first and foremost that it is more than human, not subject to death, everlasting.'[102] *Theos* denotes the surplus of meaning between people, a response prior to an address in language. Hence if we are to hear the echo of the 'theological' in Levinas's use of the word 'creation' we should allow this sense of the word—this sense of the beyond or unaccountable—to resound.

Creation must be understood as *preceding* essence. If creation *ex nihilo* is to have any meaning at all then it must entail, argues Levinas, an extreme passivity:

> The self as a creature is conceived in a passivity more passive still than the passivity of matter, that is, prior to the virtual coinciding of a term with itself. The oneself has to be conceived outside of all substantial coinciding of self with self. Contrary to Western thought which unites subjectivity and substantiality, here coinciding is not the norm that already commands non-coinciding, in the quest it provokes. Then the recurrence to oneself cannot stop at oneself, but goes to the hither side of oneself. A does not, as in identity, return to A, but retreats to the hither side of its point of departure. Is not the signification of responsibility for another, which cannot be assumed by any freedom, stated in this trope?[103]

Substitution must be understood as this inverted identity where the subject goes beyond or behind its intentional ego to recur with (not return to) itself. Levinas grants to Husserl that not all intentionality in consciousness is voluntary. He maintains, however, that even in involuntary intentionality Husserl's pattern of voluntary intention remains: 'the given enters into a thought which recognizes in it or invests it with its own project and thus exercises mastery over it.'[104] Levinas's 'other side' of intentionality reveals a subject who does not recognize, does not identify over time—not only does not identify the Other over time but does not even identify itself over time. Against the traditional notion of a subject's 'identity' Levinas opposes the subject's 'subjectivity'. The subject here is 'going to the hither side of identity, gnawing away at this very identity.'[105] Yet this is not to be understood as an 'alienated subject', the subject is not losing itself (only to later find itself) but rather goes out to the Other and is 'inspired'. In being-for-the-Other the subject 'breathes' the Other and is opened to the possibility of surpassing being.[106] This is not the Fichtean 'I' where the Other limits the subject and therefore constitutes it, but is rather the subject supporting the Other while its responsibility for the Other summons it as unique.[107] How we are to understand this subject at all? The Levinasian subject is not a 'general subject' but 'me' individualized in *my* inescapable responsibility for the Other. How then

is this subject with its own individual and not to be shunned responsibility not to have an identity? How can this responsibility be *mine* if I am as such a non-identity? Identity in this context must be understood not as individual personhood, but rather as being *part of being*—being subsumed into the identical immanence of essence. My 'non-identity' arises from the fact that I transcend being in my response to the Other. In this way Levinas describes the 'rupture' of identity as the shift from being to signification; from being to otherwise than being. It is this 'rupture' of being that is the subject's subjectivity.[108]

The subject here is *for-the-Other* and it is this *for* that is signification. Subjectivity is meaningful, not that it *has* a certain meaning but that it *is* meaning—a meaning 'despite death.'[109] In direct contradistinction to Heidegger's Dasein and its Being-towards-death, Levinas's subject in being-for-the-Other is 'being-towards-death in order to be for-that-which-is-after me.'[110] This meaning, this *for*-the Other; this infinite responsibility is imposed on the subject before it can be-for-itself. Before we *are* as such, we are responsible for the Other and as such meaningful and as such understood as 'subject'. Meaning is substitution and substitution is to transcend being (being-for-oneself) in order to be-*for*-the-other. It is the point at which the infinite breaks apart the immanence of essence (being). This breaking apart of essence is ethics: '*la rupture de l'essence est éthique.*'[111] Subjectivity, understood as the subject's exposure or *subjection* to the Other, *is* ethics.

Without the Other, or more precisely without responsibility for the Other; there is no subject at all. We simply cannot escape this responsibility thrust upon us before we even *are*, subjectivity, argues Levinas is *not* a mode of being. 'Signification, saying – my expressivity, my signifyingness as sign, my verbality as verb, cannot be understood as a modality of being: disinterstedness suspends essence.'[112] Language as *a* language is trapped in the said, and as such will in a certain sense be both the possibility of the ethical relation but also that which *at the same time* fails or transgresses that ethics. The subject invariably approaches the Other in the said, that is, in the immanence of being. For this reason the subject is never responsible *enough* or in certain sense fails in its responsibility. The betrayal or the transgression of the saying by the said can only be reduced, never annulled.

Subjectivity, as noted, is both the site and non-site of the breaking- up of essence. The responsibility which constitutes the subject is the primary signification which is prior to being and prior to identity. Subjectivity as place and non-place 'comes to pass' as a passivity. Responsibility is thrust upon the subject, it is not chosen. Thus there is an absolute passivity in the constitution of the subject, a disinterestedness which is the subject's sensibility.[113] Sensibility understood as vulnerability, as exposure to wounding in the subject's substitution of herself for the Other. The subject is the defeat of the ego's identity since the subject is always *for* the Other. The responsibility for the Other comes before the subject's freedom as exposure to the pre-original of language, saying: 'exposure of the exposure, expression, Saying. Frankness, sincerity, veracity of Saying. [...] Substitution at the end of being ends up in Saying—in the giving of sign, giving sign of this giving of sign, expressing oneself.'[114] This exposure is linked to the sensibility of the subject, like the passivity of the subject's skin which responds to the world before a decision about that response can be made; the response to the Other is passive and sensible. It 'turns the subject inside-out' claims Levinas, producing 'the fact of the otherwise than being.'[115] The next section of this chapter explores this notion of sensibility and exposure in more detail.

The subject as hostage for the Other, hostage taken without choice, is substituted for the Other in the space between being and otherwise than being and this substitution is in saying. In the very offering of the subject *as* sign which takes place in every expression of the subject, is the act of substitution. Saying as 'pre-original' or 'non-original' of language nevertheless leaves its trace as a 'glow' in a language or the said. Saying, further, is the sacrifice of the hostage who has not chosen to be a hostage but is perhaps chosen by the Good which is for Levinas, always beyond being. Joseph Cohen argues, following Derrida, that the subject as hostage is the very condition of the possibility of the subject as host which welcomes the Other.[116] That is, in being substituted in its passivity for the Other, the subject is sacrificed for the Other. The subject's being-for-itself is interrupted, or sacrificed, in order that it be-for-the-other. Without this sacrifice of itself leading to its being-for-the-other, the subject could not welcome the other *as* host, could not open fully to the Other. Nonetheless, this interruption or breaking apart of essence's inter-

est is never complete. The relation between the beyond being and being is conceived as a denegation, one term interminably interrupts the other preventing any resolution of the relation. As such, the subject's sacrifice for the Other, the subject's being-for-the-other, is also interrupted; here by the figure of the third. As a result, argues Cohen, sacrifice in Levinas is to be understood as an 'infinition' of sacrifice—it is never finished or complete but remains eternally open to its infinite repetition.[117]

Central to the Levinasian concept of the subject is the *proximity* of the Other. This nearness of the Other is not a physical nearness that could be calculated or measured but a nearness that might be better understood as 'closeness'. When we describe someone as being 'close' to us we do not simply understand the word to mean someone who is physically beside us (we can be 'close' to someone who is far away or even to someone who is dead), but rather one with whom something has been shared. There is the implication in this term of a 'caring for' and thus in fact an implicit understanding of responsibility. Those we are 'close' to are generally those for whom we sacrifice; sacrifice our time, sacrifice our own pleasures for theirs, sacrifice our own needs for theirs, and so on. It is worth keeping this everyday understanding of 'close' in mind. Levinas insists that previous accounts of proximity have remained trapped within the ontological plane whereby '[p]roximity abides as diminished distance, conjured exteriority.'[118] In *Being and Time* Heidegger describes Dasein's spatiality as 'de-severance'. This is the way in which Dasein encounters distance in terms of what that distance means to Dasein itself. We do not, claims Heidegger, merely understand distance in terms of measurements but in terms of how it is lived. We speak of things being 'a stone's throw away' or 'as long as it takes to smoke a pipe'. However, Heidegger's account of lived spatiality refers exclusively to the manner in which things as ready-to-hand are encountered in terms of Dasein's Being-in.[119] Levinas, on the other hand, insists on thinking proximity not in function of Being or Dasein's mastery of its environment, but in terms of the Other. 'Proximity as saying, contact, sincerity of exposition; saying before language, but without which no language, as transmission of messages, would be possible.'[120] Proximity, 'closeness', is thus understood *as* saying—this 'non-original' language.

Saying for Heidegger was intimately linked with Being it was the *essence* of language. However for Levinas saying (*le dire*) is *beyond* essence or being. The beyond being cannot be described simply as the foundation of being, this would in a manner demand that it *supported* being. Levinas is not here trying to think, in Heideggerian terms, the relation *as* relation (whether that is the relation between the saying and the said; or the irrecuperable past and the representable past; or being and otherwise than being or the same and the Other). To think the relation as a relation would lead to one of two things. Either it would be to think only the terms of that relation; for example, being on one side with otherwise than being on the other. Or, it would be to think only of the space between the relevant terms, which invariably reinstates those terms as ultimate limits.[121] Levinas is trying to think the denegation of the relation; a forcing apart of the terms of the relation by the inevitable *surplus* that occurs. The surplus of the relation is the trace, understood as the 'glow' of the saying in the said. A surplus that is more than either of them alone, and in fact, more than either of them together in a relation—a constant overflowing that cannot be contained by the singular terms of the relation itself. All of this is not to say that Levinas seeks to undermine being or to in some way inscribe it on a 'lower level' than otherwise than being, quite the opposite: 'But it is from proximity that it [being] takes, on the contrary, its just sense.'[122] It is in the responsibility that is thrust upon the subject prior to being that the possibility of awareness emerges and with it the possibility of justice as a reckoning:

> [A]wareness [*la prise de conscience*] is motivated by the presence of the third alongside the neighbour [*à côté du prochain*] approached; the third is also approached; the relation between the neighbour and the third cannot be indifferent to me who approaches. A justice between the incomparable ones is necessary. A comparison between the incomparable ones and a synopsis is necessary; togetherness and contemporaneousness; thematization, thought, history and writing are necessary. But it is necessary to understand being starting from the *other of being*.[123]

The arrival of the third demands that the responsibility in the encounter with the Other be translated into justice. The otherwise than being

must, if we are to have justice at all, lose its diachrony and give way to synchrony or systematization. We can also think of this in terms of the finite and the infinite. The subject cannot act in the infinite; only God could do so. Hence the subject, passively marked or troubled by the trace of the infinite, translates its infinite responsibility for the Other into justice and its finite enactment. However, our understanding of being—of systematization, synchrony and justice—must begin in an understanding of the otherwise than being—of diachrony and infinite responsibility. Levinas struggles against the idea of a subjectivity that is nothing more than a modality of essence. In this vein he criticizes the Heideggerian account of Dasein as the mode through which essence manifests itself. Heidegger's Dasein fails to account for the hypostasis of the subject, it 'reties the rupture' of the subject's subjection to the difference between being and otherwise than being. Levinas does not dispute the Heideggerian claim that in the 'word' addressed to the Other being is understood. Rather, Levinas claims that the subject as saying, as being a sign for the other, signifies *more than* this understanding of being.[124] Heidegger consistently distanced himself from the terms 'subject' and 'subjectivity' precisely because such terms 'remain uninterrogated as to their Being and its structure, in accordance with the thoroughgoing way in which the question of Being has been neglected.'[125] Heidegger defends himself against charges of 'humanism' by describing 'humanism' as a product of metaphysics arising from the tragic translation of the Greek experience of Being into Latin. 'Humanism' as a metaphysical pursuit fails to think the Being of man as the relation between man and Being. 'Humanism' is not Heidegger's concern he claims because it offers too poor a notion of man.[126] Yet for Levinas, Heidegger's Dasein or even the later 'man' falls prey to this very criticism. 'Dasein, which belongs to essence as the mode in which essence manifests itself' reduces man to nothing but the manifestation of Being, simply a 'modality of essence'.[127] Against this, Levinas argues that the subject is what it is through its very break from essence rather than its participation in it or understanding of it.

The possibility of breaking out of ontological oppression is found for Levinas in saying. While being may well be understood in every word, Levinas's point is that every saying also says *more than being*. As that which is beyond being and as that which is the possibility of an address to

the Other; saying is already an ethical act. That which is said and the act of saying must be thought differently. In my address to the Other, I, in a certain sense, erase myself as self and stand for the Other. Every address to the Other says 'here I am', 'here I stand for you'. It is this 'here I am', this '*for* you' that is the very subjectivity of the subject where the 'I' is 'possessed by the other.'[128] Every act of saying by the subject overflows its 'content' in the signification that the address itself (as opposed to what is said *in* the address) signifies. In other words, the very act of responding at all overflows what is said in the response.

Sensibility and the Birth of Language

Sensibility in Levinas is a somewhat enigmatic concept, not least because it is a concept which by necessity cannot be thematized. It is the manner by which we are affected by the Other; the face of the Other affects us in a way that nothing else outside of us affects us. The subject/Other relation does not follow the structure of the subject/object relation. The affect is similar in nature, though not at all in scope, to the way in which an art work might affect us. We hear Górecki's *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* and without conceptualizing it, without putting anything into words we are moved. Or perhaps we stand in front of one of Rothko's *Seagram Murals* and their oppressive force makes the hair on the back of our neck stand up. These moments cannot be adequately dressed in language, our attempts to do so make the moment slip away. Before language can explain, we are affected. Before we have an intentional thought about the art work, we are moved. These moments are *uniquely* ours—'mine'—and yet they are such precisely by their ability to pull us *out* of ourselves.

In such a way, and yet infinitely more than this, the face of the Other affects us, stirs us, moves us—before we think of who the Other is, before we name them, before we ever 'see' their face as such. It is the ache we feel on encountering someone we do not know in need, it is the urge to help them while we cannot help them enough. This sensibility moves the subject beyond itself while at the same time individualizing it. The subject is stirred to respond without the Other ever uttering a command. Sensibility is that which releases the 'I' from anonymous being

into *its own* existence. It is the raw response before and without words. Sensibility is as passive as our skin. We feel what touches our skin—the heat of the sun or the cold of the rain—without any intentional act; we cannot *decide* to feel these things. Nor can we 'relive' these things, pain or pleasure—sensibility—belongs to a past that cannot be represented. Sensibility is also, however, that which gives birth to words and language, it is the desire that animates our search for language as a desire to respond.

As the sensible becomes cognized or thought about, it becomes temporalized in an ontological sense. For Levinas, this 'temporal modification is not an event, nor an action, nor the affect of a cause. It is the verb to be.'[129] The question Levinas now poses is what is a verb? What is the essence of a verb or how does a verb 'verb'? Levinas seeks to disambiguate the relation between identification—naming, noun—and sensation which, as precognitive, cannot be named. However, he must first clarify the relation between verb and noun. This relation reflects Heidegger's ontological difference (between Being and *a* being) a difference that remains forever ambiguous: 'Logos is the equivocity of being and entity – primordial amphibology.'[130] Logos, the word or the said, is the very ambiguity between verb and noun. Verbs and nouns are the domain of the *said*, and in the said 'the diachrony of time is synchronized and becomes a theme.'[131] The manner by which a verb 'verbs' so to speak,—the essence of a verb—is the revelation of essence and temporalization: 'The said, as verb, is the essence of essence. [...] Essence not only translates itself, it temporalizes itself in the predicative statement.'[132] Equally through the identification of things, through their naming in nouns, the time of essence resounds. In naming Socrates 'Socrates', we announce the essence of Socrates, we allow his *way* of being to be heard and in hearing this *way* we hear the time of essence.[133]

This time of essence is recuperable time, time we can recall, represent, and project upon. However, Levinas's investigation concerns the irrecuperable past, the past that cannot be present. Sensibility, whether revealed in nausea or *jouissance*, belongs to a temporality that cannot be made present again; it is *beyond* an intentional representation in consciousness. If it is through nouns and verbs, that the time of essence can be heard, then it is through the adverbial that the time of the otherwise than being can be heard. 'Do not the sensations in which the sensible qualities are

lived resound *adverbially*, and more precisely, as adverbs of the verb to be? *But then if they could be surprised on the hither side of the said, would they not reveal another meaning*?'[134]

How are we to reveal, in the said, the saying or the otherwise than being? How can we 'hear' the adverbial in the said? Levinas proposes a reduction to the primary signification of the responsibility for the Other. Inevitably this reduction will itself become thematized and synchronized in the said, but this is the risk of philosophy: to unsay the said in order to light up, albeit fleetingly, the saying. The responsibility of philosophy is to disallow the congealment of saying into said.[135] The reduction that Levinas suggests aims to go beyond the Logos, beyond being and non-being, beyond true and not-true; to the one-for-the-other of responsibility 'to the locus or non-lieu, locus and non-lieu, the utopia, of the human.'[136]

'Saying signifies otherwise than as an apparitor [*appariteur*] presenting essence and entities.'[137] This of course is in contradistinction to the Heideggerian 'Saying' which I examined in Chapter One. Heidegger's Saying is almost inseparable from Being which is made manifest or made to appear through language. Levinas's choice of words here should not be passed over—saying is not just an 'apparitor'. An apparitor, coming from the Latin *apparere* ['to appear'] was a Roman public servant attending an officer or authoritative figure of Roman law. Saying then is not a facilitator of a political (or ontological) order but the ethical non-origin of such a structure. Language may well be 'the house of Being', but for Levinas before language there is saying, which is *not*, in Heideggerian terms, the 'essence' of language. As such, the Levinasian saying will not just be 'that which makes appear' the authority of essence and the law of recuperable time. Saying, while it does trace itself in the said, signifies primarily as the approach of, and to, the Other in sensibility.

Saying is not the giving of signs but rather the transformation of the subject into a sign itself.[138] In this 'becoming-sign' of the subject, argues Levinas, is an exposure to trauma, a sensible vulnerability. Signification for Levinas is the responsibility of the subject for the Other. 'Exposure to the other, this is signification, this is signification itself, the one-for-the-other [...] that is to say, responsibility.'[139] There is a clear break here from the Husserlian account of language. For Husserl a sign is a sign only if it

is 'understood' or at the very least understandable. There are, in Husserl's account, two functions of the sign; indicative and expressive. Indications point to a state of affairs that is, they are apophantic. Smoke, for example, operates as an indication of fire. However, for Husserl, indications do not contain a meaning rather they 'motivate' a 'descriptive unity' of judgement whereby the existence of one state of affairs (smoke) leads to a belief in the existence of another state of affairs (fire).[140]

Expressions, on the other hand, are inherently meaningful. When one uses an expression one is 'giving voice' to a particular meaning-intention of consciousness.[141] All expressive intentional acts have a content and this content is for Husserl the same as the meaning of the expression, although it is not the same as the object the expression refers to. 'Every expression intimates something, means something, and names or otherwise designates something.'[142] For Husserl, meaning (the content of the intentional act of expression) is essential to an expression whereas communication, perception, and intimation to another subject are incidental. For Levinas this account remains trapped within the immanence of being; it is an account of the said rather than the saying. Husserl's intentionality, for Levinas, remains 'the centripetal movement of a consciousness that coincides with itself, recovers, and rediscovers itself.'[143] In the sensibility of saying the subject precisely does *not* coincide with itself but is pulled out of itself, exposed and exiled as it stands for another. Saying cannot be reduced to the intentional structure in the same way that the said can be.

The subject is its sensibility as exposure: 'an exposure to expressing and thus to Saying, and thus to Giving.'[144] In the same way that we do not actively choose what our skin can or cannot feel so are we exposed in this pure passivity to the Other. Levinas states that we are exposed '*to* saying, *to* giving'. What is given here is not the signification of the expression (in Husserl's terms) but rather what is given is the self, given in passivity and sacrificed without intention. The subject is both the giving and the gift that is given. A gift that cannot even be acknowledged as such, a gift that demands the *ingratitude* of the Other (gratitude would be a *return*).[145] In the passivity of the subject's exposure to the Other, whereby it signifies and is passively exposed to the primordial signification of its responsibility to the Other, the subject is stripped of its identity. The subject is 'disclosed', 'denuded', 'non-coinciding with itself', 'torn-up from

itself'—the subject is stripped of its identity and thus made unique.[146] This absolution of identity that takes place in the saying, as a sign given to the Other, is not simply a negation of essence but is rather a 'disinterest' whose modality is the de-situating of the (intentional) ego.[147]

All of this takes place without intentional activity; our responsibility for the Other is not chosen but thrust upon us. This takes places as a passivity that is not even receptivity argues Levinas, but rather the living corporality of the human body as the possibility of pain. Humans are vulnerable creatures, easy to injure. It is this passive vulnerability that for Levinas reveals the inherent responsibility of being. If responsibility for the Other did not trouble our being-for-ourselves, we simply would not survive. The temporality of this passivity is the temporality of ageing: 'Life is life despite life – in its patience and its ageing.'[148] Whereas intentionality partakes of a recuperable, representable temporality; ageing cannot be made present. Ageing rather indicates only the *passing*, the already passed of time. We cannot represent it, it happens 'despite ourselves'. We become aware of it as *already passed* in those moments when, confronted with our reflection, we see that we have aged and have become other to ourselves. Ageing is diachronic, it cannot be synthesized. This diachrony of time:

> Is a disjunction of identity where the same does not rejoin the same: there is non-synthesis, lassitude. The for-oneself of identity is now no longer for itself. [...] Subjectivity in ageing is unique, irreplaceable, me and not another; it is despite itself in an obedience where there is no desertion, but where revolt is brewing. These traits exclude one another but they are resolved in responsibility for another, older than any commitment.[149]

The sensible for Levinas cannot be described in the terms of 'consciousness of...' it can become this, of course, but when this happens we are entering already the realm of the said. What Levinas wishes to describe is the indescribable *prior*, the ambiguous unity of sensing and sensed before it becomes a consciousness of... Sensibility is what all protection and absence of protection presupposes; it is found in the ambiguity of a kiss where the sensed and the sensing cannot be separated—a

reversion from grasping to being grasped and the equivocality between the two.[150]

In summation, the subject for Levinas is the null-site between being and otherwise than being, the knot and the unravelling of that knot between the two. While on the one hand the immanence of being makes of the subject an intentional ego who can think, conceptualize and abstract through language; the otherwise than being is revealed in the subject's sensibility as the primary signification of responsibility. The subject's exposure to wounding and pain, the subject's sensibility, is the manner by which the subject is affected by the Other.[151] Pain can never be represented, we can remember *that* we felt pain but we cannot feel it again, and it is this non-representable quality of sensibility that reveals the diachronic time of the Other. This very sensibility is signification and its trace is found in the way in which a subject gives to the Other, gives both itself and its materiality: 'It is because subjectivity is sensibility – an exposure to others, a vulnerability [...] that a subject is of flesh and blood, a man that is hungry and eats, entrails in a skin, and thus capable of giving the bread out of his mouth, or giving his skin.'[152]

Manifestation and Betrayal

As alluded to above, for Levinas, 'the price that manifestation demands' is the subordination of the saying to the said, the irrecuperable past to the present, sensibility to intentionality.[153] So what exactly is being manifested here? What is the source of that which is manifest? And to whom is it manifested? Levinas agrees with Heidegger that 'what is essential in essence' is its own manifestation.[154] The amphibology between noun and verb at play in the said is accomplished in the very way that being 'is'. In contradistinction to Heidegger, however, Levinas offers both a *subject* who is more than the manifestation of being's essence and a *signification* that is more than the manifestation of being.

For Levinas, the European philosophical tradition privileges ontology, presence, truth as the exhibition of being's essence, and subjectivity as a strict correlation with its object of thought.[155] As a result of these prejudices, when asked to whom being manifests itself philosophy cites

the subject while at the same time viewing the subject as a modality of being. The point Levinas is making is that being requires something other than itself to manifest itself *to*. Being requires an 'underside', an *Other* to which it can show itself. It entails 'a getting out of phase which is precisely time, that astonishing divergence of the identical from itself.'[156] That is, the very manifestation of being requires an irrecuperable lapse of time, a diachronic movement. This getting out of phase indicates the irrecuperable anarchic past. Manifestation indicates being's Other to whom being shows itself. Manifestation, as requiring a time in which to take place also requires the *lapse* of time; an irrecuperable and immemorial time:

> The fact that one could not philosophize before the manifestation of something also does not imply that the signification of 'being', correlative of every manifestation, would be the source of this manifestation and of all signification, as one could think when one starts with Heidegger – or that monstration would be the foundation of everything that manifests itself, as Husserl thinks.[157]

Levinas is here making three points. First, manifestation and thematization in the said is necessary for philosophy—indeed he notes that his own work is itself trapped to certain extent in the said.[158] Second, the meaning of being is its own manifestation; it is 'correlative to every manifestation'. Third, and most importantly, being is not all that is signified in manifestation. Indeed signification by its (Levinasian) definition is *more than* the signification of being. As I have restated throughout this chapter, the primary signification for Levinas *is* the subject's responsibility for the Other and this is revealed as sensibility, or sensed as the saying of every said. Philosophy as phenomenology collapses manifestation and signification together; for Levinas, signification is more than this.

When I outlined the concept of creation in the passivity of the subject's substitution, I highlighted that origin is not the origin of itself. The *archē* for Levinas arises or is born out of the surplus of the *an-archē*. If the pre-original signification 'also signifies the dawning of a manifestation in which it can indeed shine forth and show itself, its signifying is not exhausted in the effusion or dissimulation of this light.'[159] In other words, the pre-original signification does indeed manifest being and

shine through this manifestation. Nonetheless, this does not amount to reducing the pre-original signification to nothing more than being. In examining the notion of the trace in Levinas I noted that the pre-original signification shines through in that which is manifest but without being 'exhausted' by that shining through. The 'shining through', the 'glow' of the primary signification, can be sensed in the present without itself being present, much as light from the sun allows us to see without all that we see being light. The primary signification, which is beyond being, overflows to the point of surplus thus permitting the manifestation of being through the subject as the dénouement between being and otherwise than being.

In Chapter One, I highlighted the importance of co-belonging in Heidegger and here Levinas takes up this being-together. Beings that show themselves in being do so through their co-presence the one to the other. We discover being in the being of other beings which requires being together with those other beings in some way. This togetherness, the 'conatus' of beings as Levinas describes it, is disclosed as intelligibility understood as a structured system. The presence of this system is the disclosure of being itself.[160] The terms of any system acquire their meanings in relation to the overall structure. The words of a language, for example, have meaning in relation to the other words in that language. The system of intelligibility whereby being is disclosed follows this rule and as a result the meaning of the subject, its signification, becomes dependent on the system itself. In other words, the disclosure of being produced by a system of intelligibility leads to a notion of the subject as that which performs this disclosure and nothing more. Philosophy, argues Levinas, makes the mistake of viewing the subject solely in terms of the system; it views the subject as a cog in the machine of the disclosure of being, dissolving the subject into its structures. Viewing the subject as primarily a rational, intentional being, viewing the subject only as consciousness of..., leads philosophy to view the subject *only* in terms of its intelligibility, an intelligibility it borrows from the very system of being's disclosure.[161] As such the subject becomes a servant of being.

On the contrary the subject in its responsibility for the Other 'is then not reducible to the way a term is implicated in a relationship, an element in a structure, a structure in a system.'[162] This is not a relation with

terms as ultimate limits, but rather the denegation of relation. Prior to, outside of, beyond being the subject gives itself as sign to the Other. The signification of the subject is to stand for the Other in substitution and responsibility. The primary signification is always the one-for-the-other:

> In a said everything translates itself [*se traduit*] before us, even the ineffable, at the price of a betrayal which philosophy is called upon to reduce. Philosophy is called upon to think ambivalence, to think it in several times. Even if it is called to thought by justice, it still synchronizes in the said the diachrony of the difference between the one and the other, and remains the servant of the saying that signifies the difference between the one and the other as the one for the other, as non-indifference to the other.[163]

The responsibility of philosophy is to reduce the betrayal of the translation of the saying into the said. At each moment that a saying is captured in a said, thematized and thought, there is an inescapable loss, a betrayal of the infinite by the finite. This betrayal is necessary and unavoidable but it must be reduced. The only manner by which such a reduction can take place is through an 'incessant unsaying of the said.'[164] This 'unsaying' will invariably also take place in the said, will also be synchronized and thus betrayed. Philosophy's task is hence endless; in synchronizing the diachrony of the difference between the subject and the Other it betrays that diachrony while also at the same time permitting that diachrony to become manifest. Without the translation of the saying to the said, nothing could become manifest. While otherwise than being is not the opposite of being, but beyond being, it is nonetheless in being (intentionality, systematization, consciousness of...) that the otherwise than being leaves its trace. Philosophy is charged with reducing the betrayal of manifestation, the violence of ontology, in two ways. Firstly, it must synchronize the diachrony, or as Levinas also puts it, 'thematize the difference' between the same and the other.[165] That is, philosophy must somehow place the saying into a said. Yet secondly, and at the same time, must also disrupt the synchronic order with diachrony or 'reduce the thematized to difference'.[166] That is, it must awaken the saying in every said.

While the manifestation of being may well be a betrayal of the otherwise than being, this betrayal is a necessary treason. The trope of treason

arises in numerous creation myths, a fact which indicates the manner in which betrayal is constitutive both of change and the emergence of a new law or order. In the Genesis tale of the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve are expelled from paradise as a result of Eve eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; her betrayal of God. Yet the consequences of this betrayal are not only negative, positively it results in self-knowledge and recognition. Eve recognizes her own body and Adam his, they recognize too the wonder of God and feel shame. Here lies the beginning of consciousness of..., the transcendental ego and the quest for knowledge which has been the 'adventure' of philosophy. Yet it is a consciousness that is not at home with itself, expelled as it is from the infinite grace of God in a state of shame. Judas too betrays the Infinite, God in his earthly incarnation, with a kiss. Into the tragedy of that kiss however, is woven the possibility of transcendence—the resulting death of Christ guarantees the resurrection of man. Nor is this trope of betrayal limited to the Abrahamic tradition. Zeus's violent deposition of Kronos, the betrayal of his father, leads to the emergence and survival of the other Olympians.[167] Indeed Kronos's betrayal of his own father Ouranos by castrating him produced the 'cut' which separated the heavens and the earth creating an opening which lead to the emergence of time and the order of men.[168] In this vein I claim that Levinas's conception of the betrayal of the infinite or anarchical is in fact the *archē* of consciousness. Betrayal as the manifestation of being, as the emergence of finite order, is therefore the possibility a subject who can act, for only the divine could act in the infinite.

The betrayal that is the manifestation of being is consistently located by Levinas in the said; language understood as a system of signs.[169] Yet language, this betrayal of the saying by the said, is also what permits the saying to shine through. The signification of the infinite, of saying 'has let itself be betrayed in the logos only to translate itself before us. It is a word already stated as kerygma in prayer or blasphemy. It thus retains in its statement the trace of the excession of transcendence, of the beyond.'[170] Language, logos, as the translation of the infinite to the finite, or of the saying to said, is a betrayal but it is a betrayal that paradoxically allows us an awareness of the infinite itself. Without betrayal as this translation into language, the trace of saying would nowhere inscribe itself and

the subject, as the knot between saying and said, could hardly be born. Further, the translation into the order of being, into the system of language, gives rise to justice.

Justice

It may seem thus far that Levinas is making the mistake of privileging the otherwise than being; of categorizing the sensible as 'better than' the intentional; of valuing the saying more than the said. But it is in his account of justice that his effort to think differently, his effort to escape a hierarchical structure can be seen. Hitherto I have been following Levinas's account of the subject in terms of the otherwise than being. The subject understood as the 'breaking point' of essence constituted in the beyond being by its responsibility for the Other and signifying this responsibility through its sensibility in saying. What, however, of the subject in its being, in the said? Levinas notes:

> It will turn out to be possible to understand the manifestation of being on the basis of justice to which is led a saying which is not only addressed to the other, but is addressed to the other in the presence of a third party. Justice is this very presence of the third party and this manifestation, for which every secret, every intimacy is a dissimulation. Justice is at the origin of the claims of ontology to be absolute, of the definition of man as an understanding of Being.[171]

 Saying, responsibility for the Other, *requires* justice and because of this requirement, this need, 'there is the question of the said and being.'[172] As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, Levinas reformulates the question of philosophy from 'why is there being rather than nothing?' to 'how does the manifestation of being justify itself?' The subject's responsibility to the Other is infinite; not only because it is never responsible enough, but because it is responsible for *all* the Others not just one particular Other.[173] Yet this infinite responsibility 'can and has to manifest itself in also limiting itself.'[174] Each Other is a third party with respect to another.

If we return for a moment to the account of the encounter with the Other and then think of a third party arriving on the scene, so to speak, we find we have to ask ourselves to whom to be responsible first, who to respond to first, and in this movement is born the *representation* of the primary signification.[175] That is, my response to the Other in the modality of sensibility must, with the arrival of the third party, in some way be translated into an intentional thought.

This is a translation that is in a certain sense inspired by the otherwise than being without fully encasing it into the ontological plane. The subject as the denegation of the relation between being and otherwise than being, as the null site where the infinite breaks up the finite, holds both the finite and the infinite in a knot of translation. It is the ambiguous yet necessary movement from sensibility to intentionality, from saying to said, that gives birth to justice and indeed to philosophy.[176] Ontology demands justice since justice is the arrival of the third—that is, the arrival of being and systematizable thought. Within the plane of ontology a decision must be made; to whom am I most responsible? This decision is of course a kind of violence, it makes an economy of the subject's infinite responsibility. Yet justice is also a type of reprieve. If justice is understood as the echo of responsibility in the plane of being then it is also the possibility of remembering the saying in the said. Being holds the echo of justice in its very manifestation.

The entry of the third party however, should not be misconstrued as an empirical or chronological fact.[177] The move from sensibility to intentionality takes place through both sensibility *and* intentionality. The experience in sensibility of the responsibility thrust upon the subject is also already the intentional experience of *thinking* the third. While we are sensibly and passively responding to the Other we are already thinking of the other to the Other:

> In the proximity of the other, all the other than the other obsess me, and already this obsession cries out for justice, *demands measure and knowing*, is consciousness. [...] The other is from the first the brother of all the other men. The neighbour that obsesses me is *already* a face, *both* comparable and incomparable, a unique face *and* in relationship with faces, which are visible in the concern for justice.[178]

The subject's relation to the Other is completely diachronic—the subject substitutes itself for the Other, is responsible for the Other without even choosing this responsibility. In saying, all of this moves in one direction, so to speak, the direction of the one-for-the-other. With the arrival of the third party a 'contradiction' is introduced to this movement.[179] In saying the relation between the subject and the Other is asymmetrical, the manner in which the subject is affected by the Other is *not* reciprocal.[180] The relationship with the third is a continuous correction of this asymmetry through which the subject is 'approached as an other by the others,' and through which the subject reverts 'into a member of society.'[181] Indeed for there to be justice at all, the subject must become an Other like the others and this is only possible through the third party.[182]

The responsibility of the subject for the Other in saying as sensibility is not a 'deforming abstraction' but is the birth of the manifestation of being, consciousness and justice.[183] In the manifestation of being the subject represents being to itself and in this representation it compares 'the incomparables'—the Other and the third. This comparison is justice which in turn measures the subject's own responsibility, makes of *it* a calculus.[184] This is necessary not only for the Other, the neighbour, to become present and visible but also for there to be justice for the subject as well as for the Other. For Levinas we have two simultaneous but disjunctive ways of 'being': there 'is' the otherwise than being, the irrecuperable past, the saying and so on; but there *is* also being, the present, the said. We live our lives in both of these modalities together, the subject is 'in two times, and thus is a transcendence.'[185] Justice is not legality or a function of the state; it is not even simply a judgement in the sense of subsuming a particular case under a general rule. 'Justice is impossible without the one that renders it finding himself in proximity.'[186] That is, justice is impossible without the subject who is responsible for the Other. As such 'nothing is outside of the control of the responsibility of the one for the other.'[187]

Further, justice is not to be understood as some kind of degradation of the initial face-to-face relation by the empirical arrival of the third party; 'the contemporaneousness of the multiple is tied [*se noue*] about the diachrony of the two.'[188] Knotted into the relation between

subject and Other, that diachronic relation, is the relation with all the other others, the multiplicity. While the work of justice is mediation and thematization (its modality is consciousness rather than sensibility; said rather than saying), this is the very 'entry of the diachrony of proximity, of the signifyingness of saying into the synchrony of the said.'[189] In other words, justice in being born of the primary responsibility to the Other is also the *trace* of this primary signification on the ontological plane. Justice is the glow in the finite of the subject's infinite responsibility. 'It is the necessary interruption of the Infinite being fixed in structures, community and totality.'[190] This interruption of the infinite by the finite, of the beyond essence by essence, is born of the subject as the null-site between the two.

The final point I wish to make here concerns the relationship between truth and justice. Truth for Heidegger was the disclosure of Being as the play of concealment and unconcealment. For Levinas this 'play' is *for* something other than itself: 'everything shows itself and is said in being for justice.'[191] As such, truth presupposes justice. Heidegger's understanding of Dasein as the being which is open to Being, and indeed his later descriptions of the *Ereignis* as the mutual and appropriating openness of Being to Dasein and Dasein to Being, is here rethought by Levinas. This opening to being is a requirement of justice born of the responsibility of the subject for the Other. The anarchic saying whose signification is responsibility requires the signification of the said which is justice and 'here with problem begins the concern for truth' and philosophy's search for a principle.[192] This search does not however, have truth as its destiny or goal. The disclosure of being opens the field of phenomenality which justice requires, but justice 'conditions the birth of truth itself.'[193]

Conclusion

In this chapter I have emphasized the shift in the understanding of signification from Heidegger to Levinas notably through the account of sensibility and the translation of responsibility into justice. In positing sensibility as an existential modality that is both different yet parallel to an intentional modality of existence, Levinas offers a different account

of language. While language has often been viewed as something which codifies thought, Levinas sees language as accomplishing a double structure. Firstly it is born in sensibility, that is, our primary *corporeal exposure* to the world and specifically to the other person. Language is viewed as the result of the manner in which we are *affected* by the other person; this affect affects us as a desire to respond to the Other before a command has been uttered. In this response is responsibility, before anything is stated or 'thematized in a said', the one is responsible for the Other. This responsibility is the primary signification for Levinas and it is indicated beyond language in the face. This primary signification must however be made manifest in being, for the subject subjectivizes between the modalities of being and otherwise than being. The trace of this signification is found in the said, in a language, as the inevitable surplus of meaning in any communicatory act.

However, this response cannot only be from one person to one other person. If the subject was ordered only to one other 'a question would not have been born,'[194] the response of the responsible one would, in a certain sense be straightforward. What complicates the relation between same and Other is the third party, which is to be understood as *all others.* The diachronic relation between subject and Other is interrupted by another Other whereby the subject is faced with the task of 'comparing the incomparables'. This comparison requires a thematizable thought and systematization in language. This move from sensibility to intentionality, from the-one-for-the-other to the one-for-the-other*s*, gives rise to justice. It is through this translation of ethics to justice that being itself becomes manifest.

Translation within this framework is ethical; in transforming the sensible to the intentional it is what permits action. Certainly that action can be just or unjust, but without translation there would be no action at all. When we encounter the Other our primary response in sensibility is to be moved by them, moved to help them, to be responsible for them. In order to enact this affect the Other has upon us we are confronted with choice (which requires language and intentional thought) and in this choice is born justice. Translation is what enables sensibility to move beyond itself, it is always taking place. The subject for Levinas, is in fact

this non-lieu of translation—a tie between the modalities of sensibility and intentionality.

Yet there is another manner in which translation is ethical, which is in its process of *unsaying*. Saying, which is responsibility, 'must spread out and assemble itself into essence, posit itself, be hypostasized, become an eon in consciousness and knowledge, let itself be seen, undergo the ascendency of being.'[195] However, it is the responsibility of philosophy to limit what is lost in this 'spreading out' so that the 'light that occurs not congeal into essence what is beyond essence.'[196] Although the trace or 'glow' of the otherwise than being can be sensed in being, it is often 'scelerosized' in being so that it is lost or forgotten. The predicative statement disallows for ambiguity since the 'this as that' structure of language sets too rigid a framework for the trace of the saying in the said to be heard. At first this sounds close to Heidegger who sees the danger of assertion as 'dimming down' the revelatory power of language and whose later work is marked by a deliberate ambiguity in an attempt to think through namelessness. However, for Levinas what is glimpsed in the possible ambiguity of language is not the ontological but rather the ethical difference. Philosophy is called upon by saying to reduce the violence of encasing it into a said; this reduction takes place as an 'incessant unsaying'. Philosophical and prophetic language through their use of hyperbole and superlatives hold the possibility of ambiguity and in this ambiguity lies the possibility for the saying to shine more strongly in the said.[197] Translation, as the non-lieu between two languages is an inherently ambiguous site. The move from one language to another passes through a plane where meaning is sensed rather than thought. There is a light between languages when approached in translation, a light that may well be that of the primary signification of saying.

Further, the Levinasian subject as inhabiting that breaking point between being and otherwise than being, is constituted *as* a translator. The translator holds two languages together and glimpses between them the emergence of meaning. In the same way the subject holds and is held by, both being and otherwise than being and as such allows for the emergence of the primary signification, that is, responsibility for the Other. Like a translator, the subject betrays its infinite responsibility in making it finite but without such a move the subject would remain powerless to act.

Like a translator, the only hope the subject has to amend for its betrayal is to retranslate; to unsay and say again knowing that every re-saying will fail but that this failure is in itself a manner of success. Philosophy bears the responsibility of reducing the betrayal of the most formidable translation of responsibility to justice. It must watch over justice constantly so that the trace of responsibility that glows in it is not lost or extinguished by the violence of the said. It is in this way that first philosophy is ethics.

Notes

1. Derrida *Altérités* (Paris: Éditions Osiris, 1986) p. 74.
2. Bettina Bergo 'The Face in Levinas: Toward a Phenomenology of Substitution' in *Angelaki*, *Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* Vol. 16 no. 1 (2011) pp. 17–39.
3. Adieu, p. 49, pp. 105–6.
4. AQE p. 37/trans. p. 19 [translation modified].
5. Emmanuel Levinas, *De l'évasion* (Paris, Biblio Essais: 1998) Trans. by Bettina Bergo, *On Escape* (Stanford, Stanford University Press: 2003).
6. Emmanuel Levinas, *De l'existence a l'existant* (Paris, Vrin: 2000) Trans. by Alphonso Lingis *Existence and Existents* (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Press: 1995).
7. Bettina Bergo, 'Inscribing the "Sites" of Desire in Levinas' in Hugh J. Silverman (Ed.) *Philosophy and Desire* (New York, Routledge: 2000) pp. 63–82 Hereafter Bergo.
8. TI p. 53 /trans. p. 59 (Italics at source).
9. Jacques Derrida, ED p. 164 /trans. p. 138. Derrida, *Adieu* p. 15: 'Yes, an ethics before and beyond ontology, the State or the political, but ethics also beyond ethics' (my translation).
10. Ezekiel 3:20 (New International Version), my emphasis. Lingis uses a different translation of the Bible but I believe the NIV translation is closer to the French version that Levinas employs, particularly in the last line 'I will hold you accountable for his blood' which in the French is '*mais de son sang, je te demanderai compte.*' See also for example Ezekiel 33:6 (NIV): 'that man will be taken

away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood.'

11. AQE p. 8 /trans. p. vii.

12. Catherine Chalier 'The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and the Hebraic Tradition', in Adriaan T. Peperzak (Ed.) *Ethics as First Philosophy*: *The Significance of Emmanuel Levinas for Philosophy, Literature and Religion* (New York: Routledge, 1995) pp. 3–12 [hereafter Chalier].

13. Chalier also notes the etymological link in Hebrew between 'responsibility' (*ahariout*), 'other' (*aher*) and the temporal sense of 'after' (*aharei*) (*op.cit.*p. 8).

14. Chalier p. 10.

15. Raphael Zagury-Orly 'On Election: Levinas and the Question of First Philosophy' in *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* Vol.20 no.3 (2012) pp. 349–61 [hereafter Zagury-Orly] p. 353. Zagury-Orly also notes that 'election' in the Judaic tradition indicates a radical alterity that precedes and interrupts any and every unified identity. This notion of election as interruption, disjunction and heteronomy is further contrasted with the Christian notion of love, which Zagury-Orly describes as 'economical' in its movement of reciprocity. 'Election' through the figure of Ezekiel operates, argues Zagury-Orly, as that which constantly interrupts the 'involvement in the ontological sphere or order of cause and effect, of calling and response, of autonomy and necessity in order to open towards a dia-chronical movement by which response for the other is always both too late on the calling of the other and already preceding the call of the other' (*op.cit.* p. 361).

16. EPP p. 68 /trans. p. 76.

17. AQE p. 51 /trans. p. 29.

18. EPP p. 71 /trans. p. 77.

19. TdA, pp. 187–188 (my translation).

20. EPP 72–3 /trans. p. 78.

21. AQE p. 25 /trans. (modified) p. 11.

22. EPP p. 67 /trans. p. 78.

23. EPP p. 77 /trans. p. 78.

24. Husserl §43 *Ideas I* pp. 79–80 /trans. p. 93.

25. EPP p. 80 /trans. p. 79.

26. Jacques Rolland, Preface to EPP, p. 26 (my translation).

27. TdA, p. 191.

28. EPP p. 82 /trans. p. 80.

29. AQE p. 266 /trans. (modified) p. 171.

30. AQE p. 261 /trans. (modified) p. 168.

31. EPP p. 88 /trans. p. 81.

32. EPP p. 86 /trans. p. 80.

33. AQE p. 88 /trans. p. 52*ff.*

34. EPP p. 88 /trans. p. 81.

35. AQE p. 163 /trans. p. 103.

36. TdA, p. 195.

37. EPP pp. 90–91 /trans. p. 82.

38. EPP p. 94 /trans. p. 82.

39. EPP pp. 107–109 /trans. p. 86.

40. Emmanuel Levinas *De Dieu qui vient à l'idée* (Paris: Vrin, 1998) trans. by Bettina Bergo, *Of a God Who Comes to Mind* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998) p. 95 /trans. p. 56: 'the history of Western philosophy has been the destruction of transcendence'. See also Adrian Peperzak 'Beyond Being' in *Research in Phenomenology* 8 (1978), pp. 239–261 Hereafter, Peperzak.

41. AQE pp. 13–14. /trans. p. 3.

42. AQE pp. 14–15/trans. (modified) p. 4.

43. AQE p. 15 /trans. (modified) p. 4.

44. AQE pp. 15–16 /trans. pp. 4–5.

45. Kathleen Davis *Deconstruction and Translation* (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2001) p. 51 [hereafter Davis].

46. TI p. 5 /trans. p. 21.

47. TI pp. 8–9 /trans. p. 24.

48. Adieu, p. 196ff.

49. Simon Critchley, 'Five Problems in Levinas's View of Politics and the Sketch of a Solution to them', *Political Theory*, 2004, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 172–185 [hereafter Critchley]. In this article Critchley raises five problems—fraternity, monotheism, androcentrism, filiality & the family, and Israel—that he feels provokes a certain 'disquietude' in the Levinasian notion of the political. The centrality of

'fraternity' and the family conceived on the model of 'filiation' or the son (*fils*), notably in *Totality and Infinity*, raises feminist concerns. The call of God which forces responsibility onto man in Levinas leads to a tie, argues Critchley, between fraternity and monotheism where the universal secular state would be a 'translation' of that tie—leading to obvious problems for those who do not subscribe to monotheistic laws. These concerns combined with Levinas' troubling relation to the political state of Israel lead Critchley to propose a way of holding on to Levinas' *form* of ethics while discarding the political *content*. This move, found, as Critchley notes, in Derrida's *Adieu*, leads to the possibility of salvaging a non-foundational politics that respects alterity while remaining open to thinking beyond a totalitarian universalism. A full discussion of the political in Levinas is unfortunately beyond the scope of the current work. Here I wish to simply show the manner in which politics can be viewed as a translation of the infinite ethical responsibility for the other, and the manner in which this translation must be constantly interrogated—unsaid or re-translated—in order to open beyond itself to the possibility of justice.

50. Critchley p. 177.
51. Fabio Ciaramelli 'The Riddle of the Pre-original' in Adrian T. Peperzak (ed.) *Ethics as First Philosophy the Significance of Emmanual Levinas for Philosophy*, *Literature and Religion* (Routledge, New York & London: 1995) pp. 87–94. [Hereafter Ciaramelli] pp. 90–91.
52. Ciaramelli p. 91.
53. Ciaramelli, p. 91 See also Joseph Cohen 'La mort de l'autre et la démesure ethique du sacrifice', in Joseph Cohen, *Alternance de la métaphysique Essais sur Emmanuel Levinas* (Paris, Galilée: 2009) pp. 73–87.
54. Emmanuel Levinas, *L'au-delà du verset* (Editions de Minuit, Paris: 1982) p. 222 (my translation).
55. *Ibid.* p. 228.
56. AQE pp. 17–18 /trans. (modified) p. 6 The French verb *traduire* (*se*) is translated by Alphonso Lingis quite consistently as *conveyed/covey oneself* which is certainly part of its meaning. But it

also means *translate* or *interpret*; I will therefore use this word in my own translations of Levinas in order to establish a richer understanding of the English word 'translate'. Coming from a Latin root the verb literally translated from Latin would mean a 'carrying-over'. This would seem most relevant here in terms of Levinas's discussion of the *Otherwise than being*, which is *carried over* from the beyond to manifest itself in some way before us, in the immanence of being. 'Translate' also implies a process of change; the otherwise than being which is in some way 'conveyed' or 'translated' before us. However, we must also understand that this is not the change of otherwise than being *into* being but rather change as manifestation; the relation between being and otherwise than being is, for Levinas, in a constant flux. If we think of them as two languages that are both, and at the same time, totally translatable and yet totally untranslatable; they are in a relation that is absolutely de-negated and torn apart; a non-relationary relation.

57. AQE p. 18 /trans. p. 6.
58. AQE p. 19 /trans. (modified) p. 7.
59. This notion of an 'unsaying' was already introduced in the preface to TI p. 16 /tans. p. 30.
60. See for example AQE pp. 228–253 /trans. pp. 145–162.
61. AQE p. 20 /trans. p. 7.
62. AQE p. 278 /trans. p. 181.
63. AQE p. 21 /trans. (modified) p. 8.
64. AQE p. 21 /trans. p. 8.
65. AQE p. 22 /trans. p. 9.
66. AQE p. 22 /trans. (modified) p. 9.
67. AQE p. 23 /trans. p. 9.
68. AQE p. 23 /trans. p. 9.
69. AQE p. 23 /trans. (modified) p. 10.
70. AQE pp. 24–5 /trans. pp. 10–11.
71. Ciaramelli, p. 87.
72. Ciaramelli p. 88 Critchley also describes the third as 'the realm of legality, justice, the institution of the state' (Critchley p. 173).
73. Ciaramelli p. 88.
74. AQE p. 25 /trans. (modified) p. 11.

75. Chalier p. 11.
76. AQE p. 26/trans. (modified). P. 11.
77. AQE p. 26 /trans. pp. 11–12.
78. AQE p. 26 /trans. p. 12.
79. Plotinus, trans. by MacKenna & Page, *The Enneads* (London: Penguin Books, 1991). See also Jean Grondin (trans. by Lukas Soderstrom) *Introduction to Metaphysics From Parmenides to Levinas* (New York, Columbia University Press: 2012) p. 71.
80. TdA p. 189 (my translation) Grondin, however, notes that while Plotinus would take the *epekeina* in Plato literally as 'beyond', as 'transcendent'; the word in Plato may, in fact, not refer to an ontological transcendence: 'The Good's *epekeina* thus connotes [in Plato] less an ontologically transcendent being than some qualitative excellence or superiority. The idea of the Good surpasses the level of *ousia* by its dignity and power.' (Grondin, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, *op.cit.* p. 47).
81. TdA, p. 201 (my translation) The quotation here is from the French translation of Plotinus's *Enneads* (V,5) by Bréhier and differs slightly from the standard English translation by MacKenna & Page which reads: 'the trace of The One establishes reality: existence is a trace of The One.' (*op.cit.* p. 391).
82. TdA, p. 199.
83. TdA, p. 200.
84. TdA, p. 200 (my translation).
85. TdA, p. 200.
86. AQE p. 255 /trans. p. 164.
87. TdA, p. 201 see also Derrida 'Différance' in *Margins of Philosophy* in particular: M pp. 13–14 /trans. p. 13.
88. AQE pp. 158–9 /trans. pp. 100–101 (my emphasis).
89. TdA, p. 198.
90. TdA, p. 190.
91. TdA, p. 198 (my translation).
92. TdA, p. 201.
93. TdA, p. 202.
94. TdA, pp. 201–202 (my translation).
95. AQE p. 28 /trans. p. 13.

96. AQE p. 27 /trans. (modified) p. 12.
97. The main part of Chapter Four was first published in *La Revue philosophique de Louvain* (October, 1968) under the same title ('La Substitution') and Levinas notes that it is the work's 'centrepiece' (AQE p. 9/trans. p. xli).
98. Peperzak p. 242.
99. AQE p. 29 /trans. (modified) p. 13.
100. Heidegger, SZ §46-§54 pp. 235–270 /trans. pp. 279–315.
101. AQE pp. 156–157 /trans. p. 99.
102. G.M.A. Grube *Plato's Thought* (Norwich, Methuen: 1935) p. 150.
103. AQE p. 180 /trans. p. 113–114.
104. AQE p. 161 /trans. p. 101.
105. AQE p. 180 /trans. p. 114.
106. AQE pp.186–188 /trans. pp. 117–118.
107. AQE p. 182 /trans. p. 115.
108. AQE p. 30 /trans. p. 14.
109. TI p. 263/trans. p. 236.
110. TdA, p. 192 (my translation).
111. AQE p. 30 /trans. p. 14.
112. AQE pp. 29–30 /trans. (modified) p. 14.
113. AQE p. 31 /trans. p. 15.
114. AQE p. 31 /trans. (modified) p. 15.
115. AQE p. 185 /trans. p. 117.
116. Cohen, p. 79.
117. Cohen, pp. 84–87. For more on the question of sacrifice in Levinas and in particular this notion of 'infinition' see also Joseph Cohen 'L'infiniton éthique du sacrifice' (in *Alternances de la métaphysique*, *op.cit*. pp. 159–175).
118. AQE p. 32 /trans. p. 16.
119. See in particular Heidegger, SZ §23 pp. 104–110 /trans. pp. 138–144.
120. AQE p. 32 /trans. (modified) p. 16.
121. AQE p. 181 /trans. p. 115.
122. AQE p. 33 /trans. (modified) p. 16.
123. AQE p. 33 /trans. (modified) p. 16.
124. AQE p. 35 /trans. (modified) p. 18.

125. SZ p. 22 /trans. p. 43.

126. See Heidegger, BH which deals explicitly with these questions.

127. AQE p. 34 /trans. p. 17.

128. AQE p. 222 /trans. p. 142. See also AQE pp. 180–181 /trans. p. 114: 'The word *I* means *here I am*, answering for everything and everyone.'

129. AQE p. 60 /trans. p. 34.

130. AQE p. 73 /trans. (modified) p. 42.

131. AQE p. 65 /trans. p. 37.

132. AQE p. 69 /trans. (modified) p. 39.

133. AQE p. 72 /trans. p. 41.

134. AQE p. 61 /trans. p. 35 (italics at source).

135. AQE p. 75 /trans. p. 44.

136. AQE p. 77 /trans. p. 45 This idea of the subject as being without a place (*u-topos*) or homeless was already explored in TI (see in particular TI pp. 162–90 /trans. pp. 152–174). There the question of home was offered as both an opening and a closing-off. The question of placelessness of course ties with the Levinasian project of offering an exiled Abraham as a counterpoint to the European tradition of the homeward bound Odysseus.

137. AQE p. 78/tans p. 46.

138. AQE p. 83 /trans. p. 49.

139. AQE p. 92 /trans. p. 54.

140. Edmund Husserl (trans. by J.N. Findlay) 'Expression and Meaning' (First Investigation), *Logical Investigations*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970) pp. 269–333 [Here after Husserl LI 1] §2 p. 270.

141. In Husserl's later work, from *Ideas* on, the intentional act is renamed *noesis* and the content of an intention *noema*—Levinas occasionally uses these terms although they were not yet operative in Husserl's work at the time of the *Logical Investigations*.

142. Husserl LI 1§14 p. 290.

143. AQE pp. 82–3 /trans.p. 48.

144. AQE p. 85 /trans. p. 50.

145. TdA, p. 191.

146. AQE pp. 83–4 /trans.pp. 48–9.

147. AQE p. 86 /trans. p. 50.
148. AQE p. 87 /trans. p. 51.
149. AQE p. 88 /trans. p. 52.
150. AQE p. 120 /trans. p. 75.
151. See AQE pp. 111–155 /trans. pp. 69–78.
152. AQE p. 124 /trans. p. 77.
153. AQE p. 17 /trans. p. 6.
154. AQE p. 34 /trans. p. 17.
155. AQE p. 207 /trans. p. 132, AQE p. 50 /trans. p. 27.
156. AQE p. 51 /trans. p. 28.
157. AQE p. 110 /trans. p. 68.
158. AQE p. 18 /trans. p. 6.
159. AQE p. 106 /trans.p. 65.
160. AQE p. 208 /trans.p. 132.
161. AQE p. 208 /trans.p. 132.
162. AQE p. 214 /trans. p. 136.
163. AQE pp. 252–3 /trans. (modified) p. 162.
164. AQE p. 278 /trans. p. 181 See also TI p. 16 /trans. p. 30.
165. AQE p. 256 /trans. p. 165.
166. AQE p. 256 /trans. p. 165.
167. It is interesting to note here, given the earlier references to Plotinus, the manner in which he incorporates the genealogy of the Greek Gods into his philosophy. Drawing on Hesiod's *Theogony*, Plotinus argues the first *hypostasis* is the *nous* or intellect—a realm governed by Kronos, son of Ouranus or the One, where Kronos (or Chronos) opens the order of time. The next *hypostasis* or realm is that of sensibility and anarchy and is ruled by Zeus. Hence in the Plotinean framework the overthrow of Kronos by Zeus is the betrayal of the intellect or order, by the sensible or disorder. Levinas is obviously undoing this hierarchy of understanding and sensibility. [For more on the Plotinean adaptation of Hesiod's genealogy of the Gods see Elizabeth Palma Digeser 'Religion, Law and the Roman Polity' in Clifford Ando & Jörg Rüpke (eds.) *Religion and Law in Classical and Christian Rome* (Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag: 2006) pp. 68–84 in particular pp. 76–80].

168. See Fritz Graf (trans. by Thomas Marier) *Greek Mythology* (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press: 1996) in particular pp. 81–88 and pp. 196–7.

169. AQE p. 17, p. 19, p. 158n., pp. 211–212, p. 237, p. 243, p. 246, p. 253 /trans. p. 6, p. 7, p. 194 n., p. 135, p. 151, p. 156, p. 158, p. 162, p. 165. See also Peperzak p. 17.

170. AQE p. 237 /trans. (modified) p. 151.

171. AQE p. 108 n /trans. p. 191.

172. AQE p. 77 /trans. p. 45.

173. AQE p. 204 /trans. p. 128.

174. AQE p. 204 /trans. p. 128.

175. AQE p. 132 /trans. p. 83, AQE p. 246 /trans. p. 158: 'The entry of the third party is the very fact of consciousness.'

176. AQE p. 204 /trans. p. 128.

177. AQE p. 246 /trans. p. 158.

178. AQE p. 246 /trans. p. 158, my emphasis.

179. AQE p. 245 /trans. p. 157.

180. AQE p. 134 /trans. p. 84.

181. AQE p. 247 /trans. p. 158.

182. AQE p. 250 /trans. pp. 160–1.

183. AQE p. 248 /trans. p. 159.

184. AQE p. 248 /trans. p. 159.

185. AQE p. 135 /trans. p. 85.

186. AQE p. 248 /trans. p. 159.

187. AQE p. 248 /trans. p. 159.

188. AQE p. 248 /trans. p. 159.

189. AQE p. 250 /trans. p. 160.

190. AQE p. 250 /trans. p. 160.

191. AQE p. 253 /trans. p. 163.

192. AQE p. 253 /trans. p. 163.

193. TI p. 13 /trans. p. 28.

194. AQE p. 245 /trans. p. 157.

195. AQE p. 75 /trans. p. 44.

196. AQE p. 75 /trans. p. 44.

197. AQE p. 281 /trans. p. 183.

Derrida: Life and Death at the Same Time

Introduction

In Derrida the thinking of difference found in both Heidegger and Levinas becomes even more dynamic and volatile. Every possibility of founding or defining an approach to the other (text/person)—even as a groundless ground (Heidegger) or as a rupture (Levinas)—is discovered to be impossible or rather (im)possible. Translation becomes in Derrida an absolutely limitless operation which reveals not simply the difference between Being and being, or that between same and Other. Rather, it reveals both of these, *and another* difference: the difference of différance. For Derrida, what remains as yet unthought in the work of both Heidegger and Levinas is the manner in which any determination, limitation or definition remains haunted by what it excludes:

> In relation to whom, to what other, is the subject first thrown (*geworfen*) or exposed as hostage? Who is the 'neighbour' dwelling in the very proximity of transcendence, in Heidegger's transcendence, or in Levinas's? These two ways of thinking transcendence are as different as you wish. They are as different or as similar as being and the other, but seem to me to follow the

117

same schema. What is still to come or what remains buried in an almost inaccessible memory is the thinking of responsibility that does not stop [*ne s'arrête*] at *this* determination of the neighbour, at the dominant schema of this determination.[1]

I believe that Derrida's attempt to escape the 'schema' of Heidegger and Levinas begins with a radical re-evaluation of the role of death both in the production of meaning and in the understanding of existence itself. He does this through the idea of *survivance*—'survival' or 'living-on'. In this chapter I examine this term and the manner in which it is, for Derrida, the condition of all texts insofar as it describes their relation to their own translations. I begin with Derrida's 1967 work *Voice and Phenomena*; a reading of Husserl's account of language and meaning. In a 1967 interview Derrida himself described this work as that which 'in a classical philosophical architecture, would come first' and even states that much of his work after this book could be seen as a commentary on its last pages.[2] As Patrick O'Connor has noted, Derrida's commentary on Husserl offers 'a snapshot of some of Derrida's career-long concerns.'[3] I will focus on the last sections of this work where questions of death and meaning are most prevalent. Having demonstrated the role of death in the production of meaning, I will follow two paths that lead to Derrida's thinking of *survivance*: one is through his reading of Maurice Blanchot and the other through his reading of Walter Benjamin.

Derrida's Reading of Husserl

Derrida claims that Husserl remains trapped in a metaphysics of presence through his privileging of the living voice.[4] Husserl attempts to isolate the signified from its physical form in the signifier by limiting the remit of pure meaning to the sphere of solitary mental life. As I noted in the last chapter on Levinas, Husserl posits a sharp distinction between the indicative and expressive function of the sign. Indicative signs point to something—smoke indicates fire, for example—but do not have meaning or *Bedeutung*. Expressive signs on the other hand, that is linguistic signs, do have meaning or *Bedeutung*. In communication, expressive signs become

interwoven with indication. When I speak, for example, my mental states are also indicated to my listener. However, in the realm of solitary mental life expressive signs are freed from this indicative and empirical detour. Husserl's account is taken by Derrida to depend upon this isolation of an ideal signified which is experienced by the speaker (the subject speaking to herself) immediately *im selben Augenblick*; in the blink or glance of an eye. Derrida utilizes Husserl's own account of temporality to show that the 'blink of an eye' is already a divided now.[5] However, what I'm interested in here are the questions of death, writing, and the survival of meaning. For this reason I'm going to concentrate on the last chapters of *Voice and Phenomena* where these questions are most prominent.

In the *Logical Investigations* Husserl describes pure expression as an unproductive medium; it does not *produce* anything but rather facilitates the movement of pre-expressive sense into expression, that is, into its conceptual and universal form of language as words. In this early work Husserl then argues for a 'pre-expressive sense' which is subsequently dressed in language when expressed. In the later Husserl this stratification of expressive functioning is far less absolute; he even explicitly states that expression is 'not something like a coat of varnish, or like a piece of clothing' that coats meaning.[6] In *Voice and Phenomena* Derrida, somewhat strategically, focuses on the earlier, more stratified account. Derrida's claim is that for Husserl sense is understood always as a relation to an object and that therefore expression would simply restore the presence of the object both as the object being before us and also as proximity of self to self. As Derrida puts it:

> An ideal object is an object whose showing may be repeated indefinitely, whose presence to *Zeigen* is indefinitely reiterable precisely because, freed from all mundane spatiality, it is a pure noema that I can express without having, at least apparently, to pass through the world […] The passage to infinity characteristic of the idealization of objects is one with the historical advent of the *phōnē*.[7]

Here the word 'apparently' is central. What Derrida will go on to show is that the freedom of the voice from spatiality is only 'apparent'; that the voice, like writing, presupposes both spatiality and temporality and that

these are inseparable. When Derrida discusses the 'voice' in this context we must bear in mind that it is consciousness itself, the self present to itself, hearing itself 'in the absence of the world.' It is not 'the body of speech in the world' but rather the voice 'phenomenologically taken.'[8] For Derrida this is the intentional animation, the breath or the soul that animates the body of speech giving it life.[9]

In his earlier text, *Introduction to Husserl's 'Origin of Geometry'* (1962), Derrida describes three types of ideal object with varying degrees of ideality in Husserl. There is the ideal objectivity of the word, for example *Löwe* ['lion'], which can be repeated infinitely while remaining the same. Secondly there is the ideal objectivity of the sense of the word which would remain the same across different languages so that *lion*, *Löwe*, *león* share their ideal sense. Both of these idealities are 'bound' in that they adhere to an empirical subjectivity and an empirical community. However, there is also and finally absolute ideal objectivity: the unbound or 'free' objectivity of the object itself. The Pythagorean Theorem as an ideal object is exemplary. For Husserl, geometry assures its own absolute ideal objectivity since it 'exists only once' regardless of how often it is repeated or even in what language it is expressed.[10] *Voice and Phenomena* continues Derrida's interrogation of ideality in Husserl. The ideal object is the most objective of objects in the history of philosophy, for it 'is' independent of any empirical subjectivity which intends it and as such can be infinitely repeated while staying the same. Nonetheless, it is not a thing in the world and as such it must be constituted in a medium which also does not have worldly form; a medium which preserves both the presence of the object to intuition and at the same time self-presence. Derrida claims that this medium is understood, not only in phenomenology but in the whole history of western metaphysics as the voice which is heard. Every visual or spatial signifier is made up of two parts so to speak; the ideal form and the form encountered empirically as a word on a page for example. This distinction between the empirical and the ideal separates an inside—phenomenological consciousness—from an outside—the world. 'Apparently there is nothing like this in the phenomenon of speech.'[11] As Derrida notes, for phenomenology seeing oneself write and hearing oneself speak are two 'radically different orders of self-relation.'[12]

A certain understanding of truth and its opposition to appearance operates within traditional understandings of the voice. For phenomenology the silent voice of consciousness according to Derrida, is 'apparently transcendent;' this has been the history of the voice. This apparent transcendence rests on the fact that the ideal meaning—the *Bedeutung*—is understood to be immediately present to the speaker. This immediate presence of the signified to consciousness is brought about through the effacement of the sensible body and exteriority of the signifier. As Derrida notes, implied in the structure of speech is that the speaker both perceives the phonemes and understands her own expressive intention together and at the same time; without any movement of differentiation.[13] The idea is that when I speak to myself 'in my own head' so to speak, I have immediate access to the meaning without the mediation of indicative signs. There is then an 'apparent transcendence' of the world and its empirical bodies. The life giving act which animates these phonemes 'does not risk death in the body of a signifier that is given over to the world and the visibility of space.'[14] Of course the paradox here is that idealities must be constituted through repetition which is made possible through this very detour through space and the possible death of the subject. As Derrida notes in the *Introduction*, without going through the detour of a particular language ideal objectivity would remain bound to the subject who had 'uncovered' it, trapped forever 'in the inventor's head'. As such Husserl's attempt to de-sediment origins and to shake off their historical linguistic accumulations cannot be absolutely successful. As Derrida phrases it 'historical incarnation sets free the transcendental, instead of binding it.'[15]

Hearing oneself speak is taken to be a unique kind of auto-affection for two reasons, argues Derrida. The first is that it is a medium of universality. That is, what is signified in this medium are idealities infinitely repeatable as the same for all people at all times. Second, in hearing herself speak the subject is affected by the signifier without having to 'detour' though what is not her own. All other types of auto-affection require a pass through the external world,[16] or they are not universal, but subjective.[17] Hearing oneself speak is pure auto-affection. The unity of sound and voice in the phenomena of hearing oneself speak, in this pure auto-affection, is the absolute proximity of signifier and signified, a proximity which is broken

when I see myself write or gesture. This proximity of signified to signifier in hearing oneself speak leads Husserl to assert a pre-expressive sense of which expression is merely 'reflective'; expression is an 'unproductive medium'. For Derrida such an account reduces language entirely to the recovery of this primordial sense; it makes language, the sign in general, merely the clothing of a non-linguistic meaning. However, as noted there are certain issues here with Derrida's reading of Husserl, and I will come back to these a little further on.

While Husserl contends that ideal objects, such as scientific truths, are discovered in inscriptions of statements as well as verbal statements, ultimately for Derrida he relegates language to a secondary level experience. In the *Origin of Geometry* for example, Husserl's 'proto-geometer' constitutes an ideal object in thought, then in effective speech and finally inscribes it in writing. This writing can be reawakened to free the original meaning from its indicative form—signs on a page—but there is always a risk of forgetting the original sense for Husserl, a suspicion of writing shared by Heidegger.[18] As Derrida notes, Husserl's fear is that the presence of the act beneath the historical sedimentations will not be reconstituted so that the 'moment of crisis is always the moment of signs.'[19] The difference between body (writing) and soul (expressive intention of the author) governs this risk. 'Crisis' here would be for Husserl the loss of the original sense which must be rediscovered or reactivated. Of course this 'reactivation', born of a return inquiry or *Rückfrage*, is itself only possible through signs themselves and their sedimentation over time, leading to a circular or 'zig-zagging' mode of inquiry.

While Husserl recognizes the necessity of the possibility of writing in the constitution of ideal objects, he nonetheless remains ambiguous about its value. For as much as writing provides life as survival of objective truths, writing for Husserl 'simultaneously makes passivity, forgetfulness, and all the phenomena of *crisis* possible.'[20] As such he seems to guard against this crisis by arguing that writing is expressive only 'when its space is temporalized,' that is, when 'an actual intention animates it.'[21] It is this animating intention or soul of the writing, the becoming flesh (*Leib*) of the body (*Körper*), the *Geistigkeit* that is independent and primordial.[22] Nonetheless, if Husserl recognized the importance of writing it is because, argues Derrida: 'an underlying motif was disturbing and

contesting the security of these traditional distinctions from within and because the possibility of writing dwelt within speech, which was itself at work in the inwardness of thought.'[23] In other words, Derrida believes that Husserl's own work reveals the possibility of overcoming a metaphysics of presence, but that Husserl himself remained blind to this possibility.

For Derrida, against Husserl and indeed against much of the philosophical tradition, there is always a difference which divides the subject in auto-affection, even in the apparently pure auto-affection of hearing oneself speak. We cannot grasp this difference 'in its identity, its purity or its origin, for it has none. We come closest to it in the movement of différance.'[24] Différance, as we will see, is the becoming space of time and the becoming time of space. It is a movement of deferral and differing at the same time so that neither of these things can be definitively decided upon. Différance does not happen to a subject but rather is needed to produce it, and it reveals auto-affection as something that cannot simply be the experience of a subject already itself, an *autos*. Différance 'produces sameness as self-relation within self-difference; it produces sameness as the non-identical.'[25]

While the underlying primordial sense that Husserl seeks to retrieve through pure expression of solitary mental life appears to be only temporal, Derrida will show that this temporality is always already divided. Husserl describes the experience of temporality through a tripartite unity: the *ür-impression*, retention and protention. The now is never an isolated moment but is rather constituted by holding on to the just past *as* just past in retention. Similarly the now expects the future of what is just about to happen in protention. Using the example of a melody, Husserl notes that we hear a melody precisely *as* a melody because we do not hear just one note on its own but rather hear one note *as following* a previous one and we expect another note *to follow* that which is being currently heard. In this way the 'now' is really a shading of previous and yet to come perceptions like a comet tracing a tail in the immediate past and forging one into the immediate future. 'The apprehensions continuously blend into one another here; they terminate in an apprehension that constitutes *the now, but which is only an ideal limit*. There is a continuum that ascends towards an ideal limit.'[26] The 'source-point' (the *ür-impression*) which in one sense produces temporality is already for Husserl an auto-

affection. This source-point, this primal now engenders itself, it 'has no seed' according to Husserl.[27]

And yet, this primal now must in some way affect itself so that it can become a non-now. For Derrida 'this process is indeed pure auto-affection in which the same is the same only in being affected by the other, only by becoming the other of the same.'[28] It is this strange movement of self-differentiating auto-affection that Derrida claims metaphysical concepts—activity/passivity, will/non-will, pure/impure, and so on—attempt to cover up through their absolute opposition. This difference is already at work in self-presence emerging from its non-identity with itself and the possibility of the retentional trace. This trace, for Derrida, is the relation of the living present to the outside, to what is not purely one's own; it is an openness to exteriorization and therefore to space:

> The trace is not an attribute; we cannot say that the self of the living present 'primordially is' it. Being-primordial must be thought on the basis of the trace and not the reverse. This archē-writing is at work at the origin of sense. Sense being temporal in nature, as Husserl recognised, is never simply present; it is always already engaged in the 'movement' of trace, that is, in the order of 'signification'.[29]

In other words, signification, whether indicative or expressive, internal or external, ideal or 'real'; is constituted on the basis of an openness to its other. If it is apparently purely temporal (as the phenomenological voice seems to be for Husserl) then it is already producing itself as a movement of difference that is as a becoming spatial. 'Space is "in" time; it is time's pure leaving-itself; it is the "outside-itself" as the self-relation of time.'[30] From this Derrida concludes that expression cannot be understood simply as something 'added onto' a pre-expressive sense. Yet as I have already pointed out Husserl recognizes this, at least in *The Origin of Geometry*. As Derrida himself explains in his introduction to that text, Husserl insists that truth can only be fully objective once it is 'said *and* written' and that sense only becomes ideal on the basis of its ability to be linguistically embodied rather than being constituted independently of that ability.[31] However, in *Voice and Phenomena* Derrida passes over this. Husserl plainly states in *Ideas I* that expression is not

added onto another stratification of sense.[32] While it is true that *Voice and Phenomena* is guided by the *Logical Investigations*, the fact that Derrida often refers to later texts (such as *The Crisis*, *Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness* and *Ideas I* itself) makes the insistence on the 'pre-expressive sense' seem at the very least an oversight. However, in terms of my concerns regarding translation the point is useful to the extent that many theories of translation begin with an understanding of language as a 'translation' of thought or of a kind of pre-linguistic meaning. This then leads to an understanding of translation as an exercise of re-clothing an already existing meaning, which remains pure and accessible. For Derrida this separation of meaning and language is one of the many 'essential distinctions' which philosophy must interrogate. Returning to Husserl's 'essential distinction' between indication and expression; for Derrida these two must now be thought as primordially intertwined.[33]

Each experience of a sign already implies an experience of what is *lacking* in the sign; that is, full presence; of self to self and/or of object to self. The sign always falls short of full presence, in fact it *must* fall short of full presence for otherwise it would not have the time or space in which to signify:

> If indication is not added to expression, which is not added to sense, we can nonetheless speak in regard to them, of a primordial 'supplement': their *addition* comes to *make up for* a deficiency, it comes to compensate for a primordial non self-presence. And if indication—for example writing in the everyday sense—must necessarily be 'added' to speech to complete the constitution of the ideal object, if speech must be 'added' to the thought identity of the object, it is because the 'presence' of sense and speech had already from the start fallen short of itself.[34]

This is to say, language is always representative; it always stands for and points towards something else. In this way words supplement the absence of what they point towards; they make what is absent present while at the same time maintaining it *as* absent.[35] Here what is supplementary is différance which demonstrates presence as always already subjected to division and delay. We cannot think différance if we begin by thinking of consciousness or of presence, nor if we think of the opposites of unconscious or

non-presence. 'The supplement is maddening because it is neither presence nor absence, presence or absence.'[36] In terms of translation the operation of différance, or as Derrida also terms it 'supplementary difference', problematizes its traditional understanding. Translation can no longer be conceived of as a simple 'carrying-over' of an ideal signified or *Bedeutung* that would initially be fully present. Rather translation, as that which 'practises the difference between signified and signifier' enacts différance.[37] 'The supplementary difference vicariously stands in for presence due to its primordial self-deficiency.'[38] In other words, since there is no presence that can be understood as 'full'—it is always already and necessarily divided by the becoming spatial of temporality and the becoming temporal of spatiality—presence demands something be added to it: the supplement.[39]

Every sign stands for, is in the place of something else, the present sign signifies something that is absent but the signification of that sign depends on that very absence. The sign is a supplement for what is absent. For Derrida a signifier doesn't simply represent an absent signified, rather it also points to and substitutes another signifier; leading to a chain of supplements where each word points to another and where the *first* word or *archē* word cannot be uncovered.[40] In communication the experience of the speaker and the sense she aims at are not fully present to me, therefore 'expression gives way to indication.'[41] However, indication is not simply what makes up for the absence of the indicated term, but it also replaces the expressive sign, that is the signifier whose signified is ideal. Though expression is for Husserl fuller than indication, as Derrida will show, there is still a non-plenitude at work in its structure.

Husserl's theory of language is for Derrida both highly original and highly traditional. On the one hand, for Husserl speech is speech provided it follows grammatical-logical rules, whether or not it makes knowledge possible. Husserl's 'most audacious' exclusion is to make the intuitive fulfilment of the object inessential to speech. Meaning, for Husserl, is possible whether or not the object aimed at or intended is present. On the other hand however, in his account of 'essentially occasional expressions', Husserl re-instates intuitive fulfilment as the essence of language. Thus Derrida claims that Husserl both recognizes 'the freedom of language, the candour of speech' while nonetheless remaining governed by 'an intuitionistic theory of knowledge.'[42]

The essential distinction in Husserl's pure grammar is between absurdity (the 'counter-sensical' or *Widersinnigkeit*) and senselessness (nonsense or *Sinnlosigkeit*). For example, one can speak of absurdities such as 'square circles' intelligibly, there is a certain comprehension of sense.[43] It is this minimum understanding that allows us to know that these are phrases which have no object to intuitively fulfil them. 'The absence of an object (*Gegenstandlosigkeit*) is hence not the absence of meaning (*Bedeutunglosigkeit*).'[44] This is Husserl's 'audacious' move. However, when we move into nonsense where rules of grammar are no longer used, for example when we use phrases such as 'green is or' or 'abracadabra'; this 'modicum of comprehension' is precisely what is missing.[45] Meaning is absent here because the phrase has no object (present or absent or impossible to be present).

While for Husserl meaning can function in the *absence* of the object (*Gegenstandlosigkeit*), in the *presence* of the object, he argues that it is merged into an object-meaning unity.[46] This, for Derrida, is to efface the very structure that is unique and original to language, namely that it can function '*by itself.*' Derrida illustrates with an example of a statement about perception. The statement 'I see a person by the window', contains a meaning which functions regardless of its perceptual fulfilment and regardless of the presence or absence of the speaking or writing subject. However, while Husserl grants that the absence of the subject and the absence of the intuition are *allowed* by functioning speech, for Derrida the possibility of these absences are *essential* to the structure of signification *in itself*. For meaning to be meaning it must entail the possibility of persisting beyond the life or death of subjects who can reactivate it, and beyond the presence or absence of the objects they describe. It is this very possibility of the *survival of meaning* that 'gives birth to meaning as such.'[47] Derrida frames his enquiry with these questions:

> How is writing—the common name for signs which function despite the total absence of the subject because of (beyond) his death—involved in the very act of signification in general and, in particular, in what is called 'living speech'? How does writing inaugurate and complete idealization when it itself is neither real nor ideal? And why, finally, are death, idealization,

repetition, and signification intelligible, as pure possibilities, only on the basis of one and the same openness?[48]

To answer these questions Derrida takes the example of the word 'I.' This word belongs to a group of words Husserl describes as 'essentially occasional expressions' or what are now commonly known as 'indexicals'. These are words whose meanings are said to be context-dependent; they must be 'indexed' to a situation for either their meaning or their object to be revealed. For Husserl these expressions have 'an essentially indicating character.'[49] As Derrida notes they are expressions which cannot be replaced by another word without changing their meaning; which function indicatively; and which are found 'whenever a reference to the subject's situation is not reducible.'[50] For Husserl the meaning (*Bedeutung*) of these expressions are 'realized' or 'fulfilled' by the speaker; 'I,' for example he argues, is the 'immediate idea of one's own personality.'[51]

The problem with this argument, for Derrida, is the reduction of meaning—previously described as ideal—to a subjective experience, and the necessary fluctuation introduced to meaning by this operation. As Derrida notes, 'I' already functions as an ideality, we can understand it without necessarily knowing to whom it refers. As we saw above, Husserl himself had argued that intuitive fulfilment is not essential to expression; that *Gegenstandlosigkeit* does not result in *Bedeutungslosigkeit.* This leads Derrida to argue that when I say 'I,' even in solitary expression, its meaning implies the *possible* absence of its object, that is, me. 'I am' means something whether I am alive or dead. Husserl, on the other hand, describes 'I' as naming a different person each time 'by way of an ever altering meaning' and that, although not meaningless when encountered without intuitive fulfilment, it is at least 'estranged from its normal meaning.'[52] Derrida argues that this understanding of 'I' is incompatible with the necessary ideality of meaning in general. It also, he notes, contradicts Husserl's previous distinction between *Gegenstandlosigkeit* (the absence of the object) and *Bedeutungslosigkeit* (meaninglessness).[53] The signifying function of the 'I' cannot, argues Derrida, depend solely upon the life of a subject, rather it can only possess an ideal identity if it also functions when the speaker is dead; death is 'structurally necessary to the pronouncing of the *I.*'[54]

However, Derrida's argument here appears somewhat if not seriously problematic. As Joseph Claude Evans has pointed out, it would seem that Derrida misses the Husserlian distinction between *indicating* and *indicated* meanings.[55] For Husserl, the word 'I' has both an indicating and an indicated meaning (both of which are ideal) at play in its 'normal' meaning. The indicating meaning is the general function of the word. In the case of 'I' it is what designates the person who is speaking and allows a listener to be directed toward them accordingly. Nonetheless, in situations where the speaker is not present (an absent, unknown or dead author, for example) there is still this indicating or general function of meaning. The indicated meaning, on the other hand, is what above was described as 'an immediate idea of one's own personality' which for the other, listener or reader, may not be fully present as such but is understood as the speaker's intuition of themselves. Husserl, argues Claude Evans, not only *could* allow for Derrida's claims here but in fact explicitly does so. So that when Derrida claims that the 'I' functions in the absence of the living speaker Husserl could easily respond in agreement, noting only that this functioning would simply be limited to an indicating or 'general' function and would lack the relation to a particular or token 'I,' that is, the indicated meaning.[56]

Evans is highly critical of Derrida's selective reading of Husserl and in particular his decision not to include Husserl's own later modifications of the arguments made in the *Logical Investigations*.[57] It is of course deeply important to be aware of these somewhat violent readings performed by Derrida, and Evans successfully undermines Derrida's argumentation here. However, there is one point where I think Evans moves a little too fast. Derrida insists on death as 'structurally necessary to the pronouncing of the "I"' and that life as self-presence is 'indifferent' to the function of meaning. On these points Evans argues that Derrida 'neglects the fact that a marginal awareness of my own conscious life […] is a condition for the full sense of the "I".'[58] A 'full' sense is what Derrida argues is impossible, though this is not necessarily what Evans is here positing and presumably he means that this marginal awareness is part of what makes up the sense (even if not 'full') of the 'I.' More serious, however, is the claim that Derrida neglects that an awareness of my conscious life is at play in the 'I.' On the contrary, Derrida does not seem to *neglect* this but

is rather questioning its privileged position and the marked absence of 'a marginal awareness of my own death' in Husserl's work. For Derrida, 'what opens the repetition to the infinite […] is a certain relation of an "existent" to his death.'[59] This is not to say that there is no relation to life but rather that it is the relation *between* life and death (*survie*) that opens the possibility of ideality and signification.

Returning to *Voice and Phenomena*; Derrida's argument is that the independence of meaning from an empirical subject is both confirmed by Husserl, and yet also denied in the situation of essentially occasional expressions. This 'autonomy of meaning' has for Derrida 'its norm in writing and in the relationship with death.'[60] Writing is not to be understood purely as the inscription of words on a page but as a representative and repetitive structure which dictates language whether spoken or written in the conventional sense. Language is always a detour away from presence; it is a detour operating always already before presence could supposedly be fully present. As such it is representative in the sense of substitutive; a supplement added to and representative of that which is lacking. It operates on the basis of possible and necessary absences or deaths. Husserl fails to draw similar conclusions, Derrida claims, because he remains under the governance of the ideal of full presence and an understanding of truth as knowledge understood as a relation to an object.

'Husserl describes, and in one and the same movement effaces, the emancipation of speech as non-knowing. The originality of meaning as an aim is limited by the telos of vision.'[61] What Derrida contends is that the symbol or the sign for Husserl always points towards what it is lacking, that is to say, truth. Husserl himself says that when truth is lacking in an assertion it is only symbolic; that its *value* for knowledge rests in its intuitive fulfilment and that when this is unachievable it lacks a 'true' or 'genuine' meaning.[62] As Derrida notes; 'speech could well be in conformity with its essence as speech when it was false; it nonetheless attains its entelechy when it is true.'[63] This intuitive fulfilment is for Derrida always understood in phenomenology as perception; as such the telos of speech is a visual relation with an object which would imply full presence to a fully self-present subject. Since Husserl offers an account of perception that entails non-perception as constitutive of the present perception, Derrida's reading may again seem harsh here.[64] However, there certainly

is a privileging of some sort of intuitive fulfilment in Husserl. It is for this reason that his pure grammar can allow sense to any expression that retains the *possibility* of a relation with an object—a golden mountain for example—but reduces to nonsense any statement that does not promise knowledge, that is, does not promise a possible relation to an object— 'green is or' for example. Husserl, like so many of his predecessors argues Derrida, 'defined sense in general on the basis of truth as objectivity. […] All of which amounts to recognizing an initial limitation of sense to knowledge, of logos to objectivity, of language to reason.'[65]

Derrida notes that for Husserl the content of an essentially subjective expression, such as the word 'I,' can be replaced by or substituted with an objective and ideal content. However, this substitution is an *ideal*, a telos towards which language moves but never arrives at; it is a substitution infinitely *deferred*.[66] Husserl himself notes that while subjective expressions can *ideally* be replaced by objective expressions, this replacement is in reality impossible.[67] As Derrida notes the entire network of 'essential distinctions' in Husserl—between sign and non-sign, expression and indication, ideality and reality, and so on—operates as a teleological structure. The very possibility of distinguishing between them must be infinitely deferred; their absolute distinction is never *in fact* arrived at. 'Their possibility is their impossibility.'[68] This is not however to say that Derrida claims no distinctions are possible at all. Rather, Derrida argues that the possibility of making distinctions arises from the impossibility of those distinctions being *absolute*.

For Derrida presence is always infinitely differing and deferring as the movement of différance. What allows (an impure) presence as this infinite differing to appear at all is the relation with death. If I am to understand presence as *infinitely* deferred and differed then I must understand it as being so beyond my own disappearance; beyond my death. It could not appear to me as the ideality that it is without this relation to my possible disappearance. As such my *finitude* is constitutive of the *infinitude* of différance. Différance, as Derrida phrases it: 'becomes the finitude of life as an essential relation with oneself and one's death. *The infinite* différance *is finite*.'[69] In fact, différance cannot even be conceived under these terms—these distinctions—of finitude and infinitude or absence and presence; it is a movement which makes these terms distinguishable

and yet interdependent.[70] Différance might in fact be understood as the 'supplement of origin'. If origin remains a myth, an ideal telos as much as a beginning; then it is always lacking, has never 'arrived' as such. It was never a beginning we could excavate and return to presence, therefore différance might be said to replace it as its substitute and to be added to it disrupting the space which is lacking in it.

Derrida ends *Voice and Phenomena* with a reference to Husserl's *Ideas I*; here the latter discusses entering the Dresden Gallery and seeing paintings of a gallery of paintings—a *mise en abyme*. This situation, argues Derrida, is our situation; we live within an endless stream of representations of representations which we cannot escape or precede or suspend. There is no stepping outside this 'gallery' into the 'the broad daylight of presence.' Rather, we can only 'supplement [*suppléer*] the breakup of presence' and in the end, despite Husserl's hopes to the contrary, 'the thing itself always escapes.'[71]

The traditional telos and presumed *archē* of philosophy, being as presence represented here by the living voice; is called into question by Derrida. '*A voice without différance, a voice without writing, is at once absolutely alive and absolutely dead.*'[72] While the emphasis in Derrida's reading of Husserl is on the necessity of death, this is not at the price of the exclusion of life. Rather, Derrida challenges an absolute demarcation between these terms arguing instead for the necessity of death to life and of life to death. The continued unfolding of philosophy may not be able to escape the tradition deconstruction seeks to destabilize, but it can embrace an 'unheard-of-question' and accept that in 'the openness of this question we no longer know.'[73] Embracing this 'no longer knowing' might open thinking upon a new route; freeing philosophy from its will to presence. However, to think in this different manner, to think différance, we need new names warns Derrida; we need names that are no longer caught up in the pursuit of absolute knowledge as full presence.[74]

One of these 'new names' which express Derrida's urge to overcome binary distinctions and his claim that everything begins by the intermediary, is the term *survie*.[75] Death is 'structurally necessary' to pronouncing the 'I' claimed Derrida in his reading of Husserl. That is, language continues; it continues to have meaning independently of the one who utters or writes it. Language *survives* its author, the subject, and this survival is part of its structural essence. Nonetheless, if one of the essential

features of language is that it can function *by itself*, it paradoxically also demands its existence from subjects in general; without any subject to use it language *as* language would disappear. As Derrida points out in the *Introduction*, the silence of the remains of pre-historic civilizations, their untranslatability and unreadability, testify to the necessity of death in that they remain in the absence of the life of the subject who inscribed them. Yet they also testify to the necessity of a subject in general, for even in the failure to understand these inscriptions they remain encountered as inscriptions that could possibly be understood. The inscriptions live-on as language even in their untranslatability, since this untranslatability already carries the possibility of translatability.[76] One of Derrida's criticisms of Husserl's discussion of language was that it proceeded without regard for 'whether or not there exist any languages; whether beings such as men use them effectively or not.'[77] The being of language entails its own autonomy while at the same time relying on subjects to use it, modify it, change it; that is, to give it life. Language precedes the life of any particular subject— a situation already attested to in the Heideggerian account of 'thrownness' in *Being and Time*[78]—yet it also *exceeds* that life, persisting after the death of a subject. Language thus depends on both the life of a subject (any subject, subjects in general) and on the death of the subject (the particular subject using it at any one time). This paradoxical situation is, for Derrida, tied to the question of translation, or more specifically, of translatability:

> A text lives only if it lives *on* [*survit*], and it lives *on* only if it is *at once* translatable *and* untranslatable (always 'at once … and': *hama*, at the 'same' time). Totally translatable, it disappears as a text as writing, as a body of language [*langue*]. Totally untranslatable, even within what is believed to be one language, it dies immediately. Thus triumphant translation is neither the life nor the death of a text, only or already its living *on*, its life after life, its life after death. The same thing will be said of what I call writing, mark, trace, and so on. It neither lives nor dies; it lives *on*. And it 'starts' only with living on […] [79]

I will constantly return to this '*hama*, at once'; it is crucial to understanding not just Derrida's account of translation but his thinking in general. Language has thus neither a life nor a death *as such*; but rather persists in the world and in its communion with subjects only on the

condition of a certain paradoxical state of life-death or death-life or sur-vival. The operation here is very similar to what was described in the reading of Husserl where the difference between signifier and signified (between body and soul) was infinitely deferred and differed. We saw that while we can differentiate between them—Derrida does not claim distinction is impossible—that differentiation is never complete or pure. The condition of this situation was named différance: an undecidable spatio-temporal lag from which the subject, meaning, language, experience itself emerged. In the passage just cited, with this question of life and death and of one *as* the other; Derrida introduces the term sur-vival [*survivance*]. A term he borrows, transforms, and translates from Benjamin by way of Blanchot. From Blanchot Derrida develops a notion of *survie* as a 'suspension of death' and from Benjamin he takes *survie* as a 'more than living'.

Survie and Blanchot

Derrida's 1979 text 'Survivre journal du bord' (in English 'Living On/ Borderlines') was a text written specifically for translation as part of the collection *Deconstruction and Criticism* which brought together essays from members of the Yale School of literary criticism, including Paul de Man and Harold Bloom, amongst others. The common theme of the essays in the collection was Shelley's unfinished 1822 poem *The Triumph of Life*. Derrida's disseminated reading of this poem consists of two sections of text, one body of text lies 'on' top of another which at first glance looks like an extended footnote. Both texts refer to multiple other texts and in this way they perform the impossibility of establishing the border of any text; of deciding where one text ends and another begins.[80] The top part of the pages 'read' Shelley's poem through Blanchot's 1948 work *L'Arrêt de mort*. This *récit*[81] by Blanchot translates to a certain extent the double bind of Shelley's title as both the triumph of life over death, and the triumph of death over life. Derrida in fact notes that he will not talk about Shelley's poem at all; this is part of a performative strategy he employs in order to ask whether or not one text can 'read' another without talking about it, without 'touching' it.[82] While the relation between

life and death was prominent in earlier texts by Derrida,[83] and while the reading of Husserl deployed itself around the question of the survival of meaning, it is in 'Living On' that Derrida first opens up the double and undecideable meaning of this word *survie* and its relation to translatability. The second part or section of this text, the 'Borderlines' of the text's undecided title, is addressed directly to the translator. This supplementary text acts as 'a translator's note that I [Derrida] sign in advance: What is translation?'[84] This lower level text disrupts the text that 'lives on' it despite the fact that it is intended to be 'telegraphic' in style and transparent to translation. Each of these texts read and refer to each 'from afar', that is, on the basis of a certain distancing which is also a bringing together in the sense of Heidegger's *Ent-fernung*.[85] Derrida describes the double aim for these texts in the following:

> [The above text] is not untranslatable, but, without being opaque, it presents at every turn, I know, something to stop [*arrêter*] the translation: it forces the translator to transform the language into which he is translating or the 'receiver medium', to deform the initial contract, itself in constant deformation, in the language of the other. I anticipated this difficulty of translation, if only up to a certain point, but I did not calculate it or deliberately increase it. I just did nothing to avoid it. On the contrary, I shall try here, in this short steno-telegraphic band, for the greatest translatability possible.[86]

The idea being that, in the upper text Derrida will engage with a certain playfulness of language, a richness of references which he terms 'semantic accumulation and overloading'[87] that will constantly pose the 'problem of translation'. Meanwhile the bottom text will seek to efface this problem towards 'maximal translatability.'[88] In other words, each text enacts the limits of translatability, one, the upper one, 'untranslatable' and the other, the bottom one 'translatable'. A double performance thus of 'maximum' and 'minimum' translatability which echoes Derrida's comparison of Joyce and Husserl as two poles of translatability.[89] Of course in the end both will be translated, and Derrida knows this from the moment of writing. In the end both texts 'live on' in their translation and are inhabited by their other, not only the so called original in French but also the

multitude of texts that Derrida makes passing references to. Nor should it be passed over that the upper text explores the question, from Shelley, of what is life?[90] This question of life and 'living on' is inscribed above, 'on' a text which problematizes the question of translation and translatability in general. The 'two texts' which make up this text might be said to pose the question of the relation between life/death as sur-vival and translation.

Survie in French is usually and somewhat un-problematically translated as 'survive' in English. Both words (the English word arriving through French)[91] are modifications of the Latin *supervivere*, a combination of *super* meaning 'over', 'beyond' or 'on (top of)' and *vivere* meaning 'to live'. In French *sur* is generally a preposition meaning 'on', so that *survivre* would be literally translated as 'on-living' and it is with this question that the text begins: 'But who's talking about living? In other words on living?'[92] It is this 'on' that Derrida is particularly interested in, how would this 'on' of 'living on' or this *sur* of sur-vive be translated or read? Sur-vive can mean a type of reprieve, a life after death as in 'afterlife'; it can also mean 'more than life', a kind of 'super-life' or better life; or it can also mean, and this will be key, a 'state of suspension.'[93]

The idea of this suspension—which is both a suspension of life that is not quite death *and at the same time* a suspension of death that is not quite life—was described by Blanchot in his 1973 text *Le pas au-delà*[94] as a movement supplementing life and stopping [*arrêter*] dying by making the dying itself last or endure. Particularly important is the word *arrêter* from which the English word 'arrest' derives, meaning 'to stop or cease', or 'to interrupt'. *Arrêt* can also be understood as 'sentence' or 'judgement' and is hence necessarily linked to the question of decision. Derrida illustrates how '*L'arrêt de mort*', the very title of the text, forces a situation of undecidability in terms of the translation. The title is divided from within; it cannot be translated simply as *Death Sentence*[95] for it is also inhabited by the idea of a 'suspension' of death, a reprieve from death. The decision 'about death' [*de mort*] is suspended and deferred, not least because that which the decision is about, namely death, is itself undecideable—an unexperienceable experience as Blanchot describes it.

> [The a*rrêt de mort*] arrests death by suspending it, interrupting it, deferring it with a 'start' [*sursaut*], the startling starting over, and starting on, of liv-

ing on. […] The indecision of the *arrêt intervenes* not *between* two senses of the word *arrêt* but *within* each sense, so to speak. For the suspensive *arrêt* is *already* undecided *because it suspends*, and the decisive *arrêt* undecided because what it decides, death, *la Chose*, the neuter, is the undecidable itself, installed by decision in its undecidability.[96]

This 'crisis' is for Derrida the moment of an impossible decision,[97] however, this does not produce a paralysis; rather, the suspension sets things in motion. It makes the title of Blanchot's *récit* unreadable and untranslatable according to certain understandings of those terms. Translatability is for Derrida the thesis at the origin of philosophy, or at least at the origin of a certain philosophy whose epoch he describes as closed.[98] Philosophy concerns itself with truth or meaning which is 'before or beyond language' and hence translatable without remainder. As such, philosophy stumbles when it encounters words with more than one meaning, as Derrida showed in his earlier text 'Plato's Pharmacy' with the word *pharmakon*.[99] Regardless of how this word is translated—'poison' or 'medicine'—something is lost. Not only one word, for example 'poison' if it is translated as 'medicine', but more importantly for Derrida what is lost is the very situation of undecidability itself.

As such for Derrida *pharmakon* acts as 'one of the verbal forms […] marking the limit of philosophy as translation.'[100] If we think of reading as something which makes a meaning accessible in its pure self-identity, and if we think of translation as the transmitting or 'carrying across' of this pure self-identical meaning; then Derrida insists on the unreadability and untranslatability of Blanchot's title in a manner analogous to the situation of *pharmakon*.[101] However, this situation of undecidability and unreadability does not paralyze reading or translation; on the contrary, it 'starts reading and writing and translation moving again.'[102] As Derrida notes, the unreadable should not be thought of as the opposite of reading but rather as that which gives reading a certain momentum. This at first glance seems more than a little paradoxical. However, Derrida's point here is that what would be most readable or most translatable would be that where meaning was transparent to the word, where meaning was immediately present *im selben Augenblick*. As I highlighted in the reading of Husserl, such a situation is unattainable. So long as there is language,

there is mediation and differentiation: there is meaning which can't quite be separated from the word. When Derrida describes the Blanchot title as unreadable he is emphasizing this differentiation and division within language which allows for oscillation and hence the movement of reading and translating itself.

It is worth at this point offering a very brief summary of Blanchot's *récit*. The narrative is composed of two different accounts which on the one hand are separate and function wholly on their own and yet on the other hand relate to each other.[103] The first is a story of two lovers the 'I' of the narrator and 'J' whose names are never revealed to the reader. In this first story J is dying, she is suffering so much that she asks for a lethal dose of morphine to alleviate her pain in death. As she approaches death her nurse telephones the narrator to tell him to come, when he arrives, J is already dead. At the exact moment that he leans in and calls her name (without revealing that name to the reader) she takes a breath and comes back to life. During this period of resurrection (and of course one could make much of the initial J and the Christ parallel), she is exceptionally happy. She subsequently again asks for death and it is granted. This second death is final.

The second story is set in Paris during World War II and tells the tale of the narrator, another 'I' (although in the absence of the proper name the identity of this 'I' remains ambiguous), and another woman, Nathalie. The narrator and Nathalie speak in different languages to each other. Nathalie speaks in French, though her mother tongue is a Slavic language and the narrator speaks in Nathalie's language though his mother tongue is French. In the first edition of this story in 1948 there was a third part; an epilogue which gathered the two stories together. This was removed from the later 1971 edition which leaves only the two stories with a single space between them. Derrida notes that, while he will not discuss it in this text, the effacement of this epilogue, raises the issue of when or by whom a text is considered 'finished'; an issue Derrida relates to the so-called 'unfinished' poem by Shelley *The Triumph of Life*.[104] Derrida's reading of *L'arrêt de mort*, consists of what he terms a 'mad hypothesis:' that there is a relation between the two women in these separate stories, 'J' and Nathalie, that they 'telephone' each other across the space on the page that separates them. The question of 'madness' or 'mania' will be central to understanding the idea of *survie* and translation.

Reading the first of the two stories of *L'arrêt de mort*, Derrida notes that the character J in her resurrection or 'living on' exhibits a great deal of gaiety. This gaiety Derrida describes as an affirmation but also an interdiction. The narrator feels he cannot tell J what has happened; cannot reveal that she died and now lives again.[105] The 'I', the narrator, cannot tell what has happened, that is, cannot recount a past event, that was nonetheless never present as such. For J's resurrection takes place *at the same time* as the narrator calls her name and if J was dead then the question would be: who was present in the experience of that death? The resurrected J who lives on or sur-vives could not have been *present* to herself *as* dead. The event of the resurrection, of the coming back from the dead, is described by the narrator as a 'terrible thing' he cannot describe; ineffable and unnarratable. And yet, the narrator *does* describe the 'terrible thing', as Derrida notes: 'The interdiction transgresses itself and produces the *pas* ['step', 'not'] that crosses it: the *récit*.'[106] *La Chose*, the thing itself, argues Derrida, is that which has always escaped happening in philosophy. As *hypokeimenon* or *rēs* it is that *to which* accidents happen or *to which* predicates attach; but as a thing, it itself does *not happen*.[107] In relation to the Blanchot story Derrida states:

> Here, *la Chose* is 'terrible' because in its very not-happening it happens (comes about) to the 'Come', in its *pas de chose* [no thing, thingly step, thingly 'not']: proceeding, progression [*procés*], as *arrêt de mort* that cannot be decided, neither life nor death, but rather LIVING ON [SUR VIVRE], the very progression that belongs, without belonging, to the progression of life and death. Living on is not the opposite of living, just as it is not identical with living. The relationship is different, different from being identical, from the difference of distinctions—undecided, or, in a very rigorous sense, 'vague'[108]

Derrida ended his reading of Husserl with the claim that 'the thing itself always escapes', the thing, *la Chose* is never fully present to the subject. Due to the operation of différance, there is always mediation, delay, differentiation. *La Chose* in the Blanchot *récit* happens, it is an event—the character J comes back from the dead—but even here its operation is 'vague'. For if death is the 'unexperienceable experience' by whom was J's death experienced? *La Chose* as living on or sur-vival cannot be described

or decided upon, 'neither life nor death' it is the undecidable play between the two. It is 'terrible' in the Blanchot story not only because it happens but also because it does not happen as such. Further, it demands of both the narrator and reader a decision and a 'decision is something terrible.'[109] Blanchot describes J's resurrection as a 'triumph' in which she needed a firm decision, could no longer be happy with the 'vague objective—living, living on [*vivre*, *survivre*].'[110] Here, death and life are delayed for Derrida, 'living, living on' differ and defer like différance.

J's 'triumph' over death is not a total triumph, her living-on is ambiguous and not quite the same as living. Her resurrection also comes to an end; the triumph of life over death is only transient. This word, 'triumph', used by Blanchot and at play in the equivocal title of the Shelley poem *The Triumph of Life*, is further linked by Derrida to both Nietzsche and Freud. I wish to highlight again here Derrida's strategy of constantly referring to other texts outside this text's border, a strategy of overrunning borders to illustrate the manner in which any single text is never pure but always points beyond itself—is always a kind of 'translation' of another text. Derrida points out that Nietzsche describes writing as a 'triumph' over oneself, an 'overcoming' (*Überwindung*) of oneself without using force on others.[111] A description with which Derrida on the one hand agrees; 'all writing is triumphant'[112] yet on the other hand goes against: 'I say it against Nietzsche, perhaps: triumph over oneself is also pursuit of power.'[113] But what is the nature of this power that is pursued? For Derrida, writing as triumph acts as a type of insurance policy for the author. The power pursued is a manic afterlife through which the text, signed in some way by its author, demands to be read and translated. 'Writing is triumph (*Schreiben und Siegen-wollen*), manic insurance of sur-vival. That is what makes it unbearable, essentially indiscreet and exhibitionistic.'[114]

From Freud, Derrida takes the notion of 'triumph' as a phase in the process of mourning and so moves 'from *Überwindung* [overcoming] to *Triumphieren* [triumphing].'[115] The triumph of mourning, the manic phase of mourning, is a process through which the subject overcomes either the loss of the object, the object itself or the mourning for the loss. Yet at the same time what the subject has overcome or triumphed over is *concealed* or unknown. As with the character J in the Blanchot *récit*,

her mania, her gaiety, reveals itself as a manic mourning; an overcoming of something that must remain unconscious. J overcomes death, she sur-vives, by remaining ignorant of the fact of her own death. As I will describe in the next section on Benjamin, a translation permits an afterlife to an 'original' text, allows it to 'live on'. Nonetheless, this sur-vival of a text is based on a certain manic mourning. The translated text conceals the untranslatability of the original; it overcomes this untranslatability by concealing it in its translating. What is mourned here is the original and the remnant; the remainder of what cannot be 'carried across'. A translation conceals this loss from itself and from its reader in order that it might 'live on'.

Derrida's 'mad hypothesis'—that the two women in the Blanchot *récit* call or *tele-phonē* to each other across the space of the pages—reflects a disruption of traditional theories of reading and translating which remain tied to institutional and political norms.[116] I will deal with these political norms in the next chapter but, since I've mentioned Freud, I'll mention another of Derrida's 'mad hypotheses'. That is that texts, and particularly texts and their translations, 'love' one another:

> I say what must not be said: for example, that a text can stand in a relationship of transference (primarily in the psychoanalytical sense) to another text! And, since Freud reminds us that the relationship of transference is a 'love' relationship, stress the point: one text loves another (for example, *The Triumph of Life loves*, transferentially, *la folie du jour*, which in turn …). It's enough to make a philologist laugh (or scream).[117]

This 'mad hypothesis' which would drive a philologist mad, ties with another of Derrida's understandings of the relation between texts and their translations as a wedding vow, a relation of promise.[118] In terms of the notion of sur-vival, the question of love reminds us of the notion of love in Levinas. The biblical *Song of Songs* describes love 'as strong as death;' Levinas reformulates this to 'love is *stronger* than death': 'What we call, by a somewhat corrupted term, love, is *par excellence* the fact that the death of the other affects me more than my own.'[119] The relation between a text and its translation as a relation of love and transference overcomes the death/life opposition. One text, the so-called

original, survives in its translation; it does not yet die nor could it be said to be in itself alive. However, and we will explore this more fully when we reach Derrida's reading of Benjamin, equally the translation gains its 'life' not only from the original but also from the manner in which it is transformed by welcoming the original to its 'home' language. This situation of inter-dependency born of an undecidable life/death relation would indeed appear to be one of love, understood as that which overcomes (*Überwindung* as *Übersetzen*) death in equally overcoming life. In the next chapter I return to the second part of this Blanchot *récit*.

Survie and Benjamin

While Derrida takes a certain understanding of *survie* from Blanchot, he inflects this understanding with the concepts of *Überleben*/*Fortleben* as they occur in Walter Benjamin's essay 'The Task of the Translator'.[120] In this essay Benjamin argues that the original text is always structured according to the modality of survival; that it demands to continue beyond the life of its author and that it does so through translation. Crucially, however, the translation, which would modify its own language in an effort to accommodate the original, would also contribute to the growth of language *in general*. However, this structure of survival is unique to the original for Benjamin; what a translation achieves is a 'carrying across' of the 'tenor' of the language of the original in a somewhat mutated form. This carrying across of the tenor of language is possible only once; a translation of a translation, for Benjamin, is always less than a translation of an original. At play here is a presupposition of the unity of the original, whereas for Derrida the original is always already a translation of a multitude of other texts—as we saw in what he terms the 'intertranslatability' of Blanchot's *L'arrêt de mort* and Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*.[121] As much as Derrida would seem to adapt and embrace the notion of *Überleben* from Benjamin; he is highly critical of the latter's insistence on the original/translation distinction. This distinction, for Derrida, reveals in Benjamin a continuation of certain traditional understandings of translation; albeit in an original form:

> To understand a text as an original is to understand it independently of its living conditions—the conditions, obviously, of its author's life—and to understand it instead in its *surviving* structure. At times he [Benjamin] says '*Überleben*' and at other times '*Fortleben*'. These two words do not mean the same thing ('*Überleben*' means above life and therefore survival as something rising above life; '*Fortleben*' means survival in the sense of something prolonging life), even though they are translated in French by the one word '*survivre*', which already poses a problem.[122]

For Benjamin, therefore, a text must be understood in its structure of sur-viving; a word which can mean both an 'afterlife', an overcoming of death through a different mode of 'life' (*Überleben*); and a continuation of life, a deferral or suspension of death (*Fortleben*). A translation would mark an essential stage in the original's history, that is in the life of the original as its sur-vival.[123]

As Derrida notes, Benjamin problematizes a number of the traditional understandings of translation. Translation is not to be based on a theory of reception; its focus should not be its reader. Translation is not communication; it is more than the transmission of a subject matter or meaning. And finally, translation is not a reproduction or copy of the original.[124] Now if the task (*Aufgabe*) of the translator is traditionally understood as 'to render (*wiedergeben*) what was first *given*'[125] and yet what was given is not necessarily the meaning—or at least the task is not to transmit that meaning—how are we to understand this task? What is the task in relation to the original's sur-vival? Benjamin employs a genealogical vocabulary in describing the relation between the text and its translation. A translation 'issues from' the original, and its task is the 'ripening' of the seeds of the original.[126] For Derrida these notions of 'life' and 'family' are to be understood by 'starting from the notion of language and its "sur-vival" in translation […] *Überleben* has an essential relation with *Übersetzen*.'[127] For Benjamin everything that has a history of its own has life. 'Life' must thus be understood on this basis of history, not only on the basis of organic corporeality.[128] In a movement that Derrida describes as Hegelian, Benjamin argues for sur-vival as history or spirit which exceeds biological life and death; and in this exceeding produces both.[129] Derrida highlights that Benjamin's essay is titled 'The Task of

the Translator' and not the task of 'translation'.[130] The translator would therefore seem to act as the agent of sur-vival, but however much a text may contain its author's name or signature, the sur-vival facilitated by the translator is that of the work or text and *not* of the author.[131] In creating this sur-vival the translator gives the work more than just life:

> Such sur-vival gives more of life, more than a surviving. The work does not simply live longer, it lives more and better, beyond the means of its author. Would the translator then be indebted receiver, subject to the gift and to the given of an original? By no means. For several reasons, including the following: the bond or obligation of the debt does not pass between a donor and a donee but between two texts (two 'productions' or 'creations').[132]

Initially this would seem contradictory since Benjamin gives the debt (and 'debt' and 'gift' are part of how Derrida translates Benjamin's *Aufgabe* or task)[133] to the translator not the translation. However, the law of this debt is issued in the original as a demand for translation and not only a translator. As Derrida notes, the structure of this demand would not, for Benjamin, pass through the *content* or theme of the original or the to-be-translated; since the content of a literary work is not what is essential to it for Benjamin.[134] Rather the demand passes or is formulated in the *form* of the original and translation itself is a 'form'.[135] This law as a demand poses, for Benjamin, two questions: the first is can the original find an adequate translator? And the second; can the original bear translation and if so does it require translation?[136]

The first question is problematic in that it does not appear to come from the 'internal law of the original.'[137] That is to say, regardless of whether or not a translator can be found, the demand remains. Benjamin likens this demand to an 'unforgettable event'; if the event is *in its essence* unforgettable, then any forgetting of it will be purely accidental, the finitude of memory could not change its 'unforgettableness'.[138] Similarly the law of the original as demand for translation would in no way diminish if unsatisfied. 'In this sense the *surviving* dimension is an a priori—and death would not change it at all.'[139] The law of the original or the to-be-translated is the structure of sur-vival. Nonetheless, for Derrida this

demand for translation is not restricted to only the original text, but rather operates in all texts. All texts demand to be read, translated, understood, and they survive in this demand to the other: 'This structure is the relation of life to sur-vival. This requirement of the other as translator.'[140] If the structure here with Benjamin is the relation of life with sur-vival, we might see the structure with Blanchot as the relation of death with sur-vival.

The demand is for *translation* but this demand at the same time commits a *translator*; the task is *of* the translator. Derrida observes that the debt of the translator cannot be owed to the author of the original text, the text as a structure of sur-vival presumes its author dead—as in absent—whether or not he is alive (a situation already attested to in Derrida's reading of Husserl). In the name of whom then, Derrida asks, does the translator respond to the demand of the original? The translator is committed through a structure of double indebtedness. The original in demanding its own sur-vival is 'the first debtor'. This structure of double indebtedness, between texts and between subjects and texts, passes through the outer regions of a language, through its *marches* or borders; that is through the name:

> The debt does not involve living subjects but names at the edge of language or, more rigorously, the trait which contracts the relation of the aforementioned living subject to his name, insofar as the latter keeps to the edge of language. And this trait would be that of the to-be-translated from one language to the other, from this edge to the other of the proper name. […] The signature of this singular contract needs no written document or record: it nevertheless takes place as trait or trace.[141]

The structure of sur-vival then is here tied to the relation between subject and proper name. The proper name both belongs and doesn't belong to a language. It is on the one hand what makes a language possible: 'what would a language be without the possibility of calling by a proper name?'[142] That is to say, language begins in the calling of the proper name to call upon the other. As I emphasized in the previous chapter on Levinas, it is in responding to the other that language is born. While this will be configured somewhat differently in Derrida, it is the urge of the call to and from the other from which language emerges. In

one sense, then, the proper name is untranslatable; it calls forth a relation between a particular subject and language. The proper name sur-vives the life of the subject and remains in the world as a trace of that life. On the other hand, the proper name often achieves its inscription into a language by its translatability. Derrida offers the example of the name *Pierre* which is *at once* understood to the French speaker as *pierre* ['rock']. Translating the French noun *pierre* to English as 'rock' would make sense; since nouns properly belong to a language. However, translating *Pierre* to 'Peter' would not really be a translation for two reasons. First because a proper name cannot be translated but must cross linguistic borders so that it often inhabits a foreign territory disrupting the unity of the 'new' language it now dwells in. To translate a proper name would be to re-name a subject, an operation which would in fact transgress the translator's responsibility to the other. Second 'Peter' cannot be a translation of *Pierre* because it loses the homophonic effect of this name; while Peter contains echoes of the Latin *petrus* ['rock'] this is not immediately transparent to the English language speaker in the way that it is to the French.[143] The relation between a subject and her proper name operates thus both within and outside language. This bond between subject and language which is not yet *a* language, is also that which bounds a text and its translation; an undecidable bond which points to what Benjamin terms the 'reconciliation' of language as its sur-vival.

The double indebtedness between the traces that link subjects to their names, and bind one text to its translation, acts as a contract between languages which takes place as trace. This singular and unique contract between languages acts as a 'transcendental contract, since in truth it renders possible every contract in general.'[144] This contract is another name for the origin of languages (plural) and another name for what Benjamin calls the 'kinship' of languages. As Derrida notes, kinship here does not refer to 'families of languages'—as one might speak, for example, of the Romance or Germanic languages—but is to be understood more as an alliance. An alliance of translation which associates not natural lives or blood ties but rather sur-vival; a yet to come reconciliation of language promised in every act of translation.[145] Translation for Benjamin is not the communication of a meaning or content to a foreign reader. Rather, and essentially, its goal is to express the relation between languages or, as Derrida puts it, 'to exhibit its own possibility.'

For Derrida, Benjamin's understanding of translation as a 'supplement' is not thought deeply enough. While Benjamin uses this very word, to say that a translation supplements and enriches the 'original' text,[146] he limits translation to a derivation from the original and this is seen most clearly in the manner in which he distinguishes them. A translation of a translation will always be significantly less than a translation from an original. As Benjamin writes:

> While content and language form a certain unity in the original, like a fruit and its skin, the language of the translation envelops its content like a royal robe with ample folds. For it signifies a more exalted language than its own and thus remains unsuited to its content, overpowering and alien. This disjunction prevents translation and at the same time makes it superfluous. For any translation of a work originating in a specific stage of linguistic history represents, in regard to a specific aspect of its content, translation into all other languages. Thus translation, ironically, transplants the original into a more definitive linguistic realm since it can no longer be displaced by a secondary rendering.[147]

Derrida highlights that for Benjamin thus, there is a 'core' in the original, like the core of a fruit which holds the fruit tightly together; in the original this core is what holds the language and the tenor or mode of intention together. Once translated this relation, between language and tenor, becomes looser. In a translation the tenor and language are held together no longer like the core of a fruit but limply, like a cape draping the king's body. As Derrida stresses, Benjamin's axiom is that there is no translation of a translation. Truth, understood here as the mode of intention of an original—untouchable and invisible but in some way pointed towards—would be beyond transference.[148] 'Truth would rather be the *pure language* in which the meaning and the letter no longer dissociate.'[149]

I noted in the reading of Husserl that for Derrida the dissociation of signifier from signified could never be pure. Here in his reading of Benjamin Derrida criticizes the idea that truth would *only* be in the letter, that there would be no space between word and meaning. Translation, as that which practises the difference between signified and signifier would in such a case be impossible. 'Pure language' where meaning and letter

are welded together and inseparable would be as impossible as Husserl's claim for access to meaning in 'the blink of an eye'. As Derrida points out, if such a truth took place then there would in fact be nothing left to distinguish the original from the translation.[150] In maintaining a strict and clear division between an original and a translation Benjamin repeats the usual law of distinguishing between expression/expressed, signifier/signified or form/substance: 'as if the presumed creator of the original were not—he too—indebted, taxed, obligated by another text, and a priori translating.'[151] This is not to say that for Derrida there is no relation between the translated and the original; it is rather to highlight that the separation between an original and its translation is never clearly decideable.

While Derrida criticizes this aspect of Benjamin's understanding of translation, he retains a certain affinity with the idea that in translation one language gives to another that which it lacks (although this process would of course never be complete). In this sense, every language contains its other in its demand for the other, through a linguistic supplementarity which assures the growth, rebirth and eternal sur-vival of languages.[152] While Benjamin would posit the 'pure language' as that towards which translation points, for Derrida what is pointed towards is not a reconciliation to some former unity, but rather the Babelian event of a multiplicity of language. This Babelian situation means that translation is as necessary as it is impossible, 'its necessity *as* impossibility.'[153] It is this necessity *as* impossibility which translation reveals, rather than a reconciliation of tongues. In the same way that Derrida ended his critique of Husserl by saying that one cannot escape the gallery of infinite representations, no more so can one escape the plurality of languages. What translation reveals is that there are multiple languages and multiple meanings within each language so that translation—a double meaning or a double language—is always taking place but can never take place *as such*, that is without remainder. This is the situation of all experience: '[l]et us say that the translation is the experience, that which is translated or experienced as well: experience is translation.'[154]

<div align="center">***</div>

If translation for Derrida, operates both as a suspension of death (an *arrêt de mort*) and a more than living (an *Überleben*) it does so by being both possible and impossible at the same time. As I have emphasized here a text sur-vives only by being *both* translatable and untranslatable *at the same time*.[155] A translation is not the life or death of a text but its living-on or sur-viving structure. Equally every text is always already a translation echoing other texts in its own pages. And finally, a text is not merely a collection of words on a page but situations, experiences, subjects; a text is writing in its broadest sense. As such the condition of experience itself is the impossible one of being both translatable and untranslatable at the same time. But what does this double and paradoxical claim mean? In the next chapter I seek an answer to this question by examining how Derrida himself translates a particular text.

Notes

1. Points p. 298 /trans. pp. 283–4.
2. This is stated in an interview with Henri Ronse, first published in *Lettres françaises* no. 1211, December 1967. Later published in 1972 in Pos. p. 13 /trans. p. 5.
3. Patrick O'Connor, *Derrida*: *Profanations* (London, New York: Continuum, 2010) p. 28.
4. Pos. p. 13 /trans. p. 5.
5. See VP p. 5 /trans. p. 6 where Derrida describes phenomenology as 'tormented from within' as a result of this account of temporality which destabilizes the account of meaning; see also VP pp. 67–77 / trans. pp. 60–70 & passim.
6. Husserl, *Ideas I*, *op.cit.* p. 288 /trans. p. 297.
7. VP p. 84 /trans. p. 75.
8. VP p. 15 /trans. p. 16.
9. VP pp. 14–15 /trans. pp. 15–16.
10. Intro., see in particular pp. 56–69 /trans. pp. 66–76.
11. VP p. 85 /trans. p. 76.
12. VP p. 85 /trans. p. 76.
13. VP p.87 /trans. p. 78.

14. VP p. 87 /trans. pp. 77–8.
15. Intro. p. 71 /trans. p. 77.
16. As in touching oneself or seeing oneself.
17. As in feeling the inwardness of one's bodily movements.
18. Heidegger, SZ p. 169 /trans. p. 212.
19. VP p. 91 /trans. p. 81.
20. Intro. p. 84 /trans. p. 87.
21. VP p. 91 /trans. p. 81.
22. 'This body proper to words expresses something only if it is animated (*sinnbelebt*) by an act of meaning (*bedeuten*) which transforms it into a spiritual flesh (*geistige Leiblichkeit*). But only the *Geistigkeit* or *Lebendigkeit* is independent and primordial. As such, it needs no signifier to be present to itself. Indeed, it is as much in spite of its signifiers as thanks to them that it is awakened or maintained in life.' (VP p. 91 /trans. p. 81). This was explored in detail in the *Introduction*; Derrida's point there being that Husserl, while recognizing the necessity of writing, nonetheless privileges 'life-giving spirit' as that which guarantees truth's ideality. In this way, argues Derrida, Husserl ends up effacing the body or *Körper* of writing in favour of its *Leib*. This is a theme throughout the *Introduction* though of particular note (and Derrida references it himself in this section of VP) are pp. 83–100 /trans. pp. 87–99 where Derrida argues: 'If writing is *both* a factual event and the upsurging of sense, if it is both *Körper* and *Leib*, how would writing preserve its *Leiblichkeit* from corporeal disaster? Husserl […] is going to track down the intention of writing (or of reading) in itself and in its purity; in a new reduction he is going to isolate the intentional act which constitutes *Körper* as *Leib* and maintain this act in its *Leiblichkeit*, in its living truth-sense. Such an analysis no longer has any need of *Körper* as such.' (Intro. pp. 97–8 /trans. p. 97).
23. VP p. 93 /trans. p. 82.
24. VP p. 92 /trans. p. 82.
25. VP p. 92 /trans. p. 82.
26. Edmund Husserl *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893–1917)*, (HUA X) trans. by John Barnett Brough, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (Dordrecht:

Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991) [hereafter Husserl PZ] p. 40 / trans. p. 41 [my italics].

27. Husserl PZ pp. 127–8 /trans. p. 131.
28. VP p. 95 /trans. p. 85.
29. VP pp. 95–6 /trans.(modified) p. 85.
30. VP p. 96 /trans. p. 86.
31. Intro. p. 87 /trans. p. 90.
32. Husserl, *Ideas I* p. 288 /trans. p. 297.
33. VP p. 97 /trans. p. 87.
34. VP p. 97 /trans. p. 87.
35. DG p. 224 /trans. p. 155.
36. DG p. 223 /trans. p. 154.
37. Pos. p. 31 /trans. p. 20.
38. VP p. 98 /trans. p. 88.
39. VP p. 98 /trans. p. 88.
40. DG pp. 220–6 /trans. pp. 153–7.
41. VP p. 99 /trans. p. 89.
42. VP p. 100 /trans. p. 89.
43. VP p. 102 /trans. p. 91.
44. VP p. 102 /trans. pp. 91–2.
45. VP p. 102 /trans.(modified) pp. 91–2.
46. VP p. 102–3 /trans. p. 92 Derrida is here referring to Husserl, LI, 1, §9.
47. VP p. 104 /trans. p. 93.
48. VP p. 104 /trans. p. 93.
49. Husserl, LI, 1, §26 cited in Derrida, VP p. 105 /trans. p. 94.
50. VP p. 105 /trans. p. 94.
51. Husserl, LI, 1. §26 cited in Derrida, VP p. 106 /trans. p. 95.
52. Husserl, LI, 1. §26 cited in Derrida, VP p. 107 /trans. p. 96.
53. VP p. 107 /trans. pp. 95–6.
54. VP p. 108 /trans. p. 96.
55. Joseph Claude Evans *Strategies of Deconstruction Derrida and the Myth of the Voice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991) [Hereafter Evans] p. 136.
56. Evans pp. 136–7.

57. For his reading of the last chapter of VP see Evans, pp. 129–43 where he carefully picks apart Derrida's discriminative reading of Husserl. However, while critical here, Evans is complimentary elsewhere and as a whole admirably succeeds in his own aim of navigating between simply 'nailing' Derrida on misreadings of Husserl and on the other hand blindly accepting the deconstructive project (as he explains in his introduction, see in particular pp. xiv–xix).
58. Evans p. 137.
59. Derrida, VP p. 8 /trans. p. 10.
60. VP p. 108 /trans. p. 97.
61. VP p. 109 /trans. p. 97.
62. Husserl, LI, 1,§11 Cited in Derrida VP p. 109 /trans. p. 97.
63. VP p. 109 /trans. p. 98.
64. For more on this see Timothy Mooney, 'Derrida's Empirical Realism' in *Philosophy and Social Criticism* Vol. 25 No. 5, Sage, 1999 pp. 33–56) [hereafter Mooney 1999] p. 36.
65. VP p. 111 /trans. p. 99.
66. VP p. 112 /trans. p. 100.
67. Husserl, LI, 1, §28.
68. VP p. 113 /trans. p. 101.
69. VP p. 114 /trans. p. 102.
70. VP p. 114 /trans. p. 102; see also VP p. 111 /trans. p. 99.
71. VP p. 117 /trans. p. 104 Derrida's malleable reading of Husserl here must again be noted. Mooney nicely sums up the point: 'It is Husserl who says that the thing itself is an Idea in the Kantian sense which no one experiences as really seen. It is Husserl who, in *Logical Investigations*, already takes all fulfilment as provisional. And it is Husserl, finally, who argues that my experiential outlook is affected by an ultimate genesis or psychophysical origin which cannot be accessed, since I can reach no first moment of awareness which would not be preceded by retentions and sedimented memories' (Mooney 1999 p. 50).
72. VP p. 115 /trans. p. 102.
73. VP p. 115 /trans. p. 103.
74. VP p. 116 /trans. p. 103.
75. See note 23 in the Introduction on the translation of this term.

76. Intro. p. 85 /trans. p. 88.
77. VP p. 2 /trans. p. 4.
78. SZ pp. 175–80 /trans. pp. 219–24 & *passim.*
79. Survivre, pp. 147–9 /trans. p. 82–3.
80. Survivre p. 126 /trans. p. 67.
81. The term *récit* is difficult to translate into English; most generally it means 'narrative' or 'account' told by an author; as a remembering or accounting for herself. André Gide demonstrates the genre in *Straight is the Gate* (*La Porte Étroite*); an author recounts a series of events and in so doing reveals a moral tale. It could be understood as a 'fiction' in the sense in which Borges uses the term (*ficción*). However, Blanchot's work problematized and embraced this term as part of a strategy of genre disruption. Noting the difficulty of the term in an address to the translator, Derrida advises: 'Perhaps it will be better to leave the French word *récit*. It is already has enough to understand, in Blanchot's text, in French.' (Survivre p. 130/trans. p. 70) I will thus take Derrida's cue and retain the French word in my own reading above.
82. Survivre p. 124 /trans. p. 65.
83. As I just illustrated with the reading of Husserl, or one could cite the question of the *pharmakon* as the death and/or life of memory or writing as the life and/or death of meaning (see 'La Pharmacie de Platon' in Diss. in particular pp. 78–84, pp. 102–111 /trans. pp. 75–80; 94–100) although one could of course here refer to a myriad of other texts.
84. Survivre p. 121 /trans. p. 63.
85. Survivre p. 122 /trans.p. 63 Here, as elsewhere, Derrida translates the Heideggerian *Ent-ferung* as *é-loignement*. The Heideggerian term is generally translated in English as *de-severance*, in order to capture the idea of a distance that is also a proximity [SZ §23 (pp. 104–113 /trans. pp. 138–148) see also the translator's note to this term SZ trans. n.2 pp. 138–9].
86. Survivre pp. 134–5 /trans. pp. 71–2.
87. Survivre p. 137 /trans. p. 74.
88. Survivre p. 136 /trans. p. 73.
89. Intro. pp. 104–106 /trans. pp. 102–104.

90. Percy Bysshe Shelley *The Triumph of Life*, line 544: ' "Then, what is Life?" I said'.
91. On the influence of the French language on Middle English see for example Albert C Baugh & Thomas Cable *A History of the English Language* 4th ed. (Routledge: London 1994) [hereafter Baugh & Cable] pp. 105–123, and in particular pp. 163–181 which notes that the Latin influence on the English language was often via the French borrowing of Latin terms rather than a direct adoption of Latin by English.
92. Survivre p. 119 /trans. p. 62.
93. Survivre p. 121 /trans. p. 62.
94. Maurice Blanchot, *Le pas au-delà*, (Paris: Gallimard 1973). This text was translated by Lycette Nelson as *The Step Not Beyond* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992). However, the references in Derrida's text here obviously precede this translation and are directly translated by Hulbert.
95. Blanchot's *L' arrêt de mort* is translated as *Death Sentence* by Lydia Davis (New York: Station Hill Press, 1998).
96. Survivre p. 159 /trans. p. 94.
97. Survivre p. 160 /trans. p. 95 *l'instance de la décision impossible* where 'instance' is both 'moment' or 'instance', but also as Hulbert notes 'lawsuit' or 'tribunal'.
98. VP p. 115 /trans. p. 102.
99. Diss. pp. 71–197 /trans. pp. 71–168.
100. OA p. 160/trans. p. 120.
101. Survivre pp. 160–1 /trans. p. 95.
102. Survivre pp. 160–1 /trans. p. 95.
103. This 'doubling' of course is a strategy employed in Derrida's own reading of the story; the top section of the pages telling one 'story' so to speak and the bottom half another, although they stand alone they do call to each other.
104. Survivre, pp. 146–148 /trans. pp. 83–5.
105. Survivre, p. 176 /trans. p. 108.
106. Survivre, p. 178 /trans. p. 109.
107. Survivre, p. 178 /trans. pp. 109–10.

108. Survivre, pp. 178–9 /trans. p. 110 italics and capitalization in original. In the French there is a play on the word *procés* which can also mean 'trial'.
109. Jacques Derrida, 'Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility, A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida', in Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley (eds.), *Questioning Ethics, Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*, (London, New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 65–83. [hereafter HJR] p. 68.
110. Blanchot, *L'arrêt de mort*, cited in Derrida, Survivre p. 179 /trans. p. 110.
111. Survivre p. 151 /trans. p. 85 Derrida cites Nietzsche, *Opinions et sentence mêlées* a translation he describes as 'quite inadequate, precisely in its triumph.'
112. Survivre p. 169 /trans. p. 98.
113. Survivre p. 169 /trans. p. 99 Derrida here cites Nietzsche in terms of the feminine & masculine: 'I am my father who is dead and my mother who is alive, announces Nietzsche at the midpoint of his life' (Survivre p. 137 /trans. p. 75). A point he often returns to, for example in OA where, in a discussion on Nietzsche and the (im)possibility of autobiography he notes: 'Inasmuch as *I am and follow after* my father, I am the dead man and I am death. Inasmuch as *I am and follow after* my mother, I am life that preserves, I am life that preserves [...] The mother is living on, and this living on is the name of the mother. This survival is my life whose shores she overflows.' (OA pp. 28–9 /trans. p. 16).
114. Survivre p.169/trans. (modified) p.98 See also Derrida's commentary on Blanchot's claim that writing (in particular writing an autobiography) is a manner by which one seeks to survive but only through a type of suicide in *Demeure* [(Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1998) trans. by Elizabeth Rottenberg, *Demeure Fiction and Testimony* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000)] pp. 50–7 / trans. pp. 43–51.
115. Survivre p. 155 /trans. p. 87.
116. In this regard, it is important to highlight that the collection in which this text by Derrida was first published centred on the role of (literary) criticism within and beyond academic institutions (see the preface to *Deconstruction and Criticism* by Geoffrey Hartman, *op.cit.* pp. vi–viii).

117. Survivre pp. 190–1 /trans. pp. 116–7.
118. See also DTB p. 220 /trans. p. 176.
119. Emmanuel Levinas, *Dieu, la mort et le temps*, (Paris: Biblio essais, 1995) trans. by Bettina Bergo, *God Death and Time*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), trans. p. 105.
120. Walter Benjamin 'Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers', first published in 1923 reprinted in *Illuminationen: ausgewählte Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969) pp. 56–69. Trans. by Harry Zorn [*recte* Zohn] 'The Task of the Translator' in *Illuminations* (New York: Shocken Books, 1969) pp. 70–82 [hereafter Benjamin]. I will continue to cite here the until recently standard translation by Harry Zohn for ease of reference. However, it should be noted that there are a number of issues with Zohn's translation including the omission of key sentences (such as that referring to messianism). For more on these problems see Steven Rendall, 'Notes on Zohn's Translation of Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers"' (*TTR: traduction, terminologie, redaction* Vol.10 No.2, 1997, pp. 191–206). For a number of years Zohn's translation was protected by copyright, however, a new translation by Steven Rendall has recently been published in *The Translation Studies Reader* 3rd Edition (London & New York: Routledge, 2012) pp. 75–83, which seeks to overcome some of these issues.
121. Survivre p. 149 /trans. p. 83.
122. OA p. 161 /trans. p. 122.
123. Benjamin pp. 56–60 /trans. pp. 71–3.
124. DTB pp. 223–224 /trans. pp. 179–180, See also Benjamin pp. 56–9 /trans. pp. 70–2.
125. DTB p. 221 /trans. p. 178.
126. Benjamin p. 58 /trans. p. 72.
127. DTB p. 222 /trans. p. 178.
128. Benjamin, p. 58 /trans. pp. 71–2.
129. DTB p. 222 /trans. pp. 178–179.
130. DTB p. 223 /trans. p. 179 See also OA pp. 161–2 /trans. p. 122.
131. DTB p. 223 /trans. p. 179.
132. DTB p. 223 /trans. p. 179.
133. DTB pp. 219–20 /trans. pp. 175–6.

134. DTB p. 225 /trans. p. 181.
135. DTB p. 225 /trans. p. 181 In the English translation by Harry Zohn 'form' is translated as 'mode'.
136. DTB p. 225 /trans. p. 181 Benjamin p. 57 /trans. p. 70.
137. DTB p. 225 /trans. p. 182.
138. DTB pp. 225–6/trans. p. 182 As Benjamin notes: 'One might, for example, speak of an unforgettable life or moment even if all men had forgotten it.' (Benjamin p. 57 /trans. p. 71).
139. DTB p. 226 /trans. p. 182.
140. DTB p. 225 /trans. p. 182.
141. DTB pp. 228–9 /trans. p. 185.
142. DTB p. 216 /trans. p. 172.
143. DTB p. 216 /trans. pp. 172–3.
144. DTB p. 229 /trans. p. 185.
145. DTB p. 230 /trans. p. 186.
146. Benjamin p. 61 /trans. p. 75 & p. 66 /trans. p. 79.
147. Benjamin pp. 62–3 /trans. p. 76 See also p. 62 /trans. p. 75 where Benjamin distinguishes translation from art on the basis of the fact that art has 'permanence' whereas a translation does not.
148. See also OA p. 152 /trans. pp. 115–6 where Derrida discusses an 'untouchable kernel' in relation to Heidegger and to Nicholas Abraham and marks that the *desire* for this 'kernel' or 'origin' of 'forgotten source' may be unavoidable, but that none of these things in fact exist as such.
149. DTB p. 239 /trans. p. 196.
150. DTB p. 239 /trans. p. 196.
151. DTB p. 242 /trans. p. 199.
152. DTB p. 246 /trans. p. 202.
153. DTB p. 215 /trans. p. 171.
154. DTB p. 246 /trans. p. 203.
155. Survivre pp. 147–8 /trans. pp. 82–3.

Derrida and Translation

Introduction

In this chapter I do three things. First of all, I explore Derrida's translation of a particular word and in so doing I reveal the (im)possible position of the translator. This (im)possibility is key to my claim that the subject/other relation is best understood as sur-viving translating, a claim I will return to in the next chapter. Second, I go on to examine the relationship between translation, political power, and the construction of identity. As I demonstrate, power is deployed through language and translation, a situation particularly evident in post-colonial states. Furthermore, the question of the 'law of translation' or the 'debt of translation' is a constant concern for Derrida; a law that is intimately linked with the relation between the subject and the other. Finally, I show how the subject/other relation is complicated by Derrida through the impossibility of an absolute border. I do this through an examination of the origins of translation in the figure of the Babel narrative. Under the rubric of this myth, I explore Derrida's interrogation of the proper name and multilingualism. In both cases I show the inherently divided nature of both names and

languages and the manner in which their 'identity' emerges only through differentiation with *multiple* others.

The Trial of the Untranslatable

In his 1998 text 'What is a "Relevant" Translation?'[1] Derrida submits translation to what he terms 'the trial of the untranslatable.' This 'trial' relates to the title of the essay and specifically to the word 'relevant' [*relevante*]. As Derrida himself notes, his interest has always been directed to 'the so-called undecidable words;' words which resist a full or complete translation into one other word.[2] Blanchot's *L'arrêt de mort*, for example, which can mean 'death sentence', 'suspension of death', or, under Blanchot's neologism of *arrête*; 'death ridge'.[3] Equally, in his commentary on Benjamin, Derrida plays with the word 'Babel' and notes that the word as a proper name means 'City of God', while as a common noun means 'confusion'.[4] A similar situation takes place with *pharmakon* or the name/noun *Pierre/pierre*. These homophonic and/or homonymic words reveal something not only about translation but about philosophy itself. Insofar as philosophy seeks an identifiable, stable, and thus essentially transferable truth or meaning; it rests on the presumption of translatability. That is, 'the transfer of a meaning or a truth from one language to another *without any essential harm being done*.'[5] Homophonic and homonymic words in their resistance to translation reveal this presumption to be impossible. 'Relevant' is another such word, which allows Derrida a playful performance of the necessity and impossibility of translation.

As Lawrence Venuti points out, throughout this particular essay Derrida deliberately spells this word both in its 'French' form as *relevante* and in its 'English' form 'relevant' in order to highlight that this word not only possesses an undecidable meaning; but is in fact in an undecidable language.[6] For it is unclear whether this is a French word that has become English or an English word in the process of 'Frenchification'.[7] Coming from Latin through various linguistic paths it operates on the borders of language. It is a word which has no linguistic home so to speak and as such is untranslatable.[8] The issue becomes even more complicated in Derrida's hands given that *relevante* has been 'indispensable' to him in

the translation of many words coming from and into many languages. Most notably as his proposed translation of Hegel's *Aufheben*; a heritage which thus inflects *relevante* with a certain philosophical sense. In the end Derrida describes his title as 'untranslatable' while at the same time claiming: 'I don't believe *that anything can ever be untranslatable—or, moreover, translatable.*'[9]

To justify such a claim Derrida appeals to what he terms the condition of a certain economy which relates the translatable to the untranslatable. Economy, οἰκονομία [*oikonomia*] *as the* νόμος [*nomos*] or law which relates to the οἶκος [*oikos*] or home, signifies two things for Derrida. Firstly property; as in what is proper to itself, what is proper for a translation to bring 'home' or to appropriate. And secondly; quantity, how many words a translation would bring home to itself in this appropriate manner. A 'relevant' translation then, would be one whose economy responds to these two senses of the word, one whose economy would be the most appropriating and the most calculably appropriate.[10] Derrida contends that translation has become governed by literality; that the measure of translation has become the word. The philosophy of translation, as it is understood in its contemporary form, 'aspires to be a philosophy of the word, a linguistics or ethics of the word. At the beginning of translation is the word.'[11] This has certainly not always been the case; Cicero, St. Jerome and Luther freed translation from this ideal and called forth a translation of sense rather than word. Nonetheless, in its contemporary form, translation calls upon a strict economy of the word:

> [W]henever several words occur in one or the same acoustic or graphic form, whenever a *homophonic* or *homonymic effect* occurs, translation in the strict, traditional, and dominant sense of the term encounters an insurmountable limit—and the beginning of its end, the figure of its ruin (but perhaps a translation is devoted to ruin; ruin is perhaps its vocation and a destiny that it accepts from the very outset).[12]

The Merchant of Venice as the Task of the Translator

This economy of the word is put to the test with the word 'relevant' as it occurs in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. The play itself deals endlessly

in the economy of translation: The translation of a pound of flesh to a supposed monetary equivalent, Portia's translation into a male lawyer, and the translation of Shylock to Christianity. The play revolves around the law and the law of translation; of what is most calculably appropriate to the law. 'At every moment, translation is as necessary as it is impossible. […] As if the subject of this play were, in short, the task of the translator, his impossible task, his duty, his debt, as inflexible as it is unpayable.'[13] It is this notion of translation as impossible (the untranslatable) and yet at the same time necessary (translatable) that I want to focus on here. Derrida must show in this 'trial' of the untranslatable that his translation evidences the fact that translation is a supplement, a sur-vival, a neither/nor and an either/or. In other words, in this translation of Shakespeare's play Derrida must show what he means by stating that nothing is translatable and nothing is untranslatable *at the same time*.

Derrida offers four reasons for choosing this text in particular as the stage for his 'trial of translation'. The first is that the play is driven by an oath or a promise; like translation, it centres on a promise which cannot be kept. Second the play, like translation, revolves around economic conditions.[14] Third, at the heart of the play, like the heart of any translation, is an incalculable equivalence or impossible correspondence, here between flesh and money. And finally because of the relation between the translation and conversion; the destruction of the body of the text to save its sense (or its soul) and the conversion of Jew to Christian:

> This impossible translation, this conversion (and all translation is a conversion: *vertere*, *transvertere*, *convertere*, as Cicero said) between the original, literal flesh and the monetary sign is not unrelated to the Jew Shylock's forced conversion to Christianity, since the traditional figure of the Jew is often and conventionally situated on the side of the body and the letter (from bodily circumcision or Pharisaism, from ritual compliance to literal exteriority), whereas St. Paul the Christian is on the side of the spirit or sense, of interiority, of spiritual circumcision. This relation of the letter to the spirit, of the body of literalness to the ideal interiority of sense is also the site of the passage of translation, of this conversion that is called translation. As if the business of translation were first of all an Abrahamic matter between the Jew, the Christian, and the Muslim. And the *relève*, like

the relevance I am prepared to discuss with you, will be precisely what happens to the flesh of the text, the body, the spoken body and the translated body—when the letter is mourned to save the sense.[15]

While Shylock is offered three times the amount of money he is owed in place of a pound of Antonio's flesh, he refuses this substitution. The basis of this refusal is his oath to God, for the contract he made with Antonio was sworn not only amongst men but also, and more importantly, to God. This oath, made in the language of men, can yet not be undone by the language of men; a bond in language has become stronger than language itself. This leads Derrida to assert that in the act of swearing there is a type of transcendence since it leads man in language to the beyond of language; towards the divine law. 'The oath passes *through* language, but it passes beyond human language. This would be the truth of translation.'[16] Translation, as a promise, passes through language while at the same time transgressing the borders of language each time it reaches its limit—in the untranslatable.

Once Shylock refuses to accept the translation of the pound of flesh into three times its supposed monetary value, and once Antonio recognizes the bond, Portia passes her verdict: 'Then the Jew must be merciful.' For Derrida these words sign an entire history between the Jew and the Christian as a history of translation. For on the one hand it is a case, a trial, of a particular Christian (Antonio) and a particular Jew (Shylock); yet on the other hand, it mirrors the case, the history and the trial of Christian power and the Jew in general.[17] In this history it is the Christian who asks for forgiveness and the Jew who must forgive. Of course, this is according to a *Christian* history and understanding of what forgiveness is. A Christian ruse under which is hidden an economic, theological and political play of power. The power to forgive can come only from the one *in* power.[18] As we will see, Portia's speech on mercy, designed to convert Shylock and translate the bond, is not genuine but a hoax. The Christian state offers Shylock an ultimatum—forgive the bond or lose everything. It offers him the power to forgive the debt. Only the State can offer Shylock this power to forgive and thus break the law of his contract. Yet in giving this power to forgive the State is also attempting to *impose* forgiveness and as such is in fact taking away Shylock's freedom to choose.

In this vein it reflects the European relation with the Jew, based on the principle of economic power. As Simon Critchley and Tom McCarthy point out, the *Merchant of Venice* reflects the Christian, one might say Hegelian, claim that 'mercy is the truth of justice, just as the New Law is the fulfilment of the Old Law and Christianity is the truth of Judaism.'[19]

Shylock, in response to this command to be merciful, asks 'On what compulsion must I?' To which Portia responds with the speech on mercy. Mercy here is described in terms similar to Shylock's understanding of the oath. Mercy is beyond human, a taste of the divine; like the oath it passes through language but also beyond it, beyond the law. In this paean to mercy, mercy as forgiveness becomes like prayer offering a double benediction; to the one who asks and the one who receives. 'The essence of prayer has to do with forgiveness, not with power and law.'[20] Forgiveness, like prayer, has its essence and its provenance in the divinity of the divine, the eminence of the Most High. In terms of Derrida's 'trial' of translation and the untranslatable the crucial moment is Portia's speech on mercy. This Derrida cites in English and translates in two parts, with the final part of his analysis offering his own translation of Shakespeare.

The first movement of the speech is as follows: 'The quality of mercy is not strain'd,/It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven/Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest,/It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes'[21] In this way then, mercy is free; it cannot be commanded or ordered (an ironic point given that Portia has just demanded it from Shylock). Mercy is beyond decision, foreign to the law and to economic calculation; it is like a gift. Like the rain, it is uncontrollable and like the rain it comes from above. A movement which, in descending from the Most High to the below, hints at its hierarchical nature for Derrida. Finally, mercy is a mutual exchange, a translation between giving and taking.[22] The second movement of the speech describes the relation between mercy and power:

> 'Tis the mightiest in the mightiest, it becomes
> The throned monarch better than his crown.
> His sceptre shoes the force of temporal power,
> The attribute to awe and majesty,
> Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings:
> But mercy is above this sceptred sway,

It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.[23]

For Derrida this reveals forgiveness or mercy as the almightiness of the Almighty, it is the very essence of power, of omnipotence, and also beyond them both. The question this raises is that of the superlative; if mercy is *more* divine *than* the divine, *more* monarchical *than* the monarch or *mightier than* the *mightiest*; it must belong to a different order than might. Mercy must belong to order of 'the impossible that is *more than impossible and therefore possible*.'[24] This understanding of the most impossible *as* possible is discussed at length by Derrida in *Sauf le nom*, and will form one of the principal focuses of the next chapter. However, in terms of my current interest here in the untranslatable as the limit of the translatable, this 'order' of the impossible is important. As Derrida notes, through his reading of the Christian mystic Angelus Silesius, God (and indeed in a different way death) would belong to the order of the *most impossible*. What is *more than* impossible would be beyond the impossible; that is, of a different order than the impossible *in general* and therefore possible. Derrida claims that the possible is transformed or 'mutated' at the limit of the impossible, at the more than impossible. In this way 'there is no longer any possible contradiction between possible and impossible since they belong to two heterogeneous orders.'.[25]

To rephrase this in terms of translation, translatability might be understood as having undergone a 'mutation' at the limit of un-translatability, so that both terms now belong to a different order. The question of the untranslatable and translatable as being both possible and impossible at the same time is therefore reconfigured so that Derrida's claim that 'nothing is translatable; nothing is untranslatable' is to be understood as 'something is translatable and something is untranslatable'. In this way the translation of any text will fall into an 'economy of in-betweenness;' being on the one hand the successful 'carrying across' of meaning, while on the other hand and at the same time failing to 'carry across' a meaning. The challenge of course, with Derrida's thinking here is to think of this as success and failure at the same time. It is not the case that Derrida argues

for a 'relative' translatability or a 'relative' untranslatability but rather the two at once. As Davis points out, a 'relative translatability' and 'relative untranslatability'—or similarly, a 'relative good' and a 'relative evil'—simply does not work for Derrida. Such a thinking would merely 'leave the conceptual poles, as well as their assumptions and problems, intact.'[26]

Derrida notes that what is at play in this speech on mercy, and in particular in this section, is the relation between the power to pardon, the letter of the flesh and spirituality. What is 'divine' here, what is 'likest God's' is the power to forgive interiorized in the power of the state; in the heart of the monarch. It is a power that is not reflected in earthly attributes—the sceptre or the crown—rather being a God-*like* invisible power. 'This *like*, this analogy or resemblance, supports a logic or analogic of the theologico-political translation, of the translation of the theological into political.'[27] Mercy is what inflects the political with the theological permitting a certain translation of one into the other.

The Untranslatable Translation

The French translation of Portia's speech by Hugo, renders 'seasons' (in 'when mercy seasons justice') as *tempère*. While Derrida does not see this as an 'incorrect' translation, he wishes to replace it with the word *relève*. This translation will not pay off all its debts, it in fact will not answer to the name 'translation' if we think of translation merely as the unproblematic transfer of a pure signified from one signifier to another. Derrida's translation will rather be a transformation that supplements what is lacking in the word 'seasons' by substituting it with *relève*. For his choice of word Derrida offers three justifications—culinary, elevatory, and dialectical.

The word *relève* responds to the culinary sense of 'seasons'. As Derrida notes *un plat relevé* means a 'seasoned dish'; a dish which has been made better and whose taste has been heightened. It is this sense of 'seasons' that Portia appeals to when she speaks of mercy. The addition of mercy to justice means justice keeps its taste, keeps *more* of its taste and is thus changed without being changed, converted without being converted—justice is improved and exalted.[28] Derrida's second justification for his 'untranslatable translation' is that *relever* expresses the notion of eleva-

tion. Mercy elevates justice to a higher realm, towards the Most High; mercy, in spiritualizing justice, offers it its own transcendence. 'Mercy sublimates justice.'[29] In this sense Derrida's third justification is an expansion of this second notion of *relève* as 'sublimation'; a word most often (problematically) encountered in a Hegelian context.

Derrida notes that the noun *relève* and the verb *relever* are the words he used to translate the Hegelian terms *Aufheben* and *Aufhebung*.[30] These German terms were hailed by Hegel himself as reflecting 'the speculative risk of the German language' and as such are often cited as being untranslatable.[31] They tie too with the notion of economy. Derrida argues that the deconstruction of metaphysics requires the move from a speculative and restricted philosophical economy to a general economy.[32] 'Restricted philosophical economy' would be that of the traditional understanding of philosophy which leaves no remainder, no unknown outside of its own closed system. In contradistinction to this, deconstruction's 'general economy' would allow for the remainder *as* remainder—an always possible outside that would remain unknown. This was already indicated in Derrida's reading of Husserl where he called for 'an unheard-of question that opens neither upon knowledge nor upon some non-knowledge which is a knowledge to come' in response to which we must answer '*we no longer know.*'[33] This also parallels Derrida's concerns regarding translation. Against an understanding of translation that carries across a self-identical signified from one signifier to another and without remainder; Derrida seeks a translation which embraces its necessary loss as constitutive. In terms of the *Aufhebung*; the Hegelian notion leaves nothing outside, even after traversing differences it, like so many philosophical concepts, seeks to escape the effect of *différance*. Derrida's French translation of the term questions this 'operation without remainder', as translator Alan Bass stresses:

> Derrida's playful translation of *aufhebt* (third person singular of *Aufheben*) keeps the *hebt* (*lève*, lifts), but changes the *auf-* (up) to a *re-* […] the stress is on the effect of substitution and difference, of *re*petition, that is inscribed in *auf*hebt. Further, the *auf-* is related to *negation*-and-preservation in a *higher* sphere; the *re-* questions the metaphysics of negation, the theology implicit in dialectical negation as a raising *up*.[34]

Thus in translating 'seasons' with *relève* Derrida offers a 'philosophical meaning' to the discourse on justice seasoned with mercy. The movement of *Aufhebung*, argues Derrida, is a process of establishing relevance; a justified and appropriate relation between terms. It would thus, in this instance, relate mercy to justice as a coherent elevation. The movement in Hegel is always one of interiorization and spiritualization, reflecting in this translation the relation of spirit and flesh, of Christian and Jew. All of which is not, as Derrida notes, unrelated to a certain European post-Lutheran understanding of translation.[35] For Hegel, furthermore, mercy is a critical stage in the movement towards absolute knowledge as the truth of the Christian religion. Hegel's *Aufhebung* is a type of translation into absolute knowledge of the Christian narrative of the resurrection. All of which leads Derrida to claim: 'Mercy is a *relève*, it is in its essence an *Aufhebung*. It is a translation as well.'[36] Mercy, like *Aufhebung*, elevates and preserves justice at a higher level. At the same time it negates justice as the law, in that it *exceeds* the law. In this sense it mirrors Benjamin's understanding of translation as that in which 'the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air.'[37] Mercy most resembles the divine when it elevates, preserves and negates the law (justice) and as such 'is a sort of human translation of divinity.'.[38]

Do these justifications suffice for Derrida's translation? As noted, it is perhaps not really a translation in the strictest sense but 'rather one of those other things in *tr.*, a transaction, transformation, travail, *travel*—and a treasure trove [*trouvaille*].'[39] The word *relève* is involved in a transaction with 'seasons'; it substitutes it—relieves [*relève*] it of its duty—in exchange for transforming it. It is travail or work, in that it sets to work not only a multiplicity of meanings but also a multiplicity of languages; French, German and English, and because of this richness it is a semantic treasure trove. More importantly for Derrida, it demonstrates that 'every translation should be relevant by vocation.'[40] Here we find the answer to the title of Derrida's essay 'What is a "Relevant" Translation?', that is, 'what should a translation be?' A translation should be relevant; which would mean that a translation should answer to the call of the original ('by vocation') to elevate it, preserve it, negate it, interrupt it, transform it, and put it to work. In this way it would guarantee the original's sur-vival in all the senses outlined in the previous chapter: prolonged life and life after death. As Derrida phrases it:

Isn't this what a translation does? Doesn't it guarantee these two survivals by losing the flesh during a process of conversion [*change*]? By elevating the signifier to its meaning or value, all the while preserving the mournful and debt-laden memory of the singular body, the first body, the unique body that the translation thus elevates, preserves, and negates [*relève*]? Since it is a question of a travail—indeed, as we noted, a travail of the negative—this relevance is a travail of mourning, […] the price of a translation, is always what is called meaning, that is, value, preservation, truth as preservation (*Wahrheit*, *bewahren*) or the value of meaning, namely, what, in being freed from the body, is elevated above it, interiorizes it, spiritualizes it, preserves it in memory. A faithful and mournful memory.[41]

In terms of the 'trial of the untranslatable', how does Derrida's 'definition' of translation above account for his claim that nothing is ever translatable or untranslatable? 'Seasons' is untranslatable if we think the translatable as that without loss, remainder or mourning. It is endlessly translatable if we reconsider the very idea of translation as transformation, negation and elevation.

Language of Power and Language of the Other

Throughout his writings on the question and problematic of translation, Derrida seeks to question the 'ordinary' or 'a certain' concept of translation. This would be tied to, indeed part of, an 'ordinary' or 'a certain' concept of reading. These traditional understandings of reading and translation (and ultimately philosophy) presuppose the possibility of a pure meaning which might be dissociated from its form or body of a written signifier.[42] This was a question already operative in Derrida's interpretation of Husserl. However, for Derrida, the indissociability of signifier and signified is not itself what 'arrests' the movement of translation; it is rather the condition of economy, *oikonomia*. The limit to translation is always an external limit. This necessarily concerns the following in a web of interrelated terms: home/away, *Ent-fernung*, same/other, contract or promise, calculability, exchange value and many more. All of which leaves us with the following

questions: how does a translation fulfil its debt to the other—the 'original'? How does it bring this text 'home' without violating it? What is the nature of the alliance between these texts? How is one text so 'committed' to the other and in what language exactly is it committed? Here I attempt to answer some of these questions, initially through an examination of the relation between language and political power; and then, in a related vein, through the relation between language and power more generally—that is, the place of language in the subject/other relation.

Language and Institutional Power

René Descartes' *Discours de la méthode* [*Discourse on Method*] of 1637 had of course a profound impact on philosophy for many centuries to come. Derrida's commentary on this text is notable in that it examines the constitution of the legal and philosophical subject through the imposition of a language, and hence the imposition of translation.[43] Descartes' decision to write the *Discours* in French indicates on the one hand 'the clear event of a rupture' in that it is written in a 'natural language' and not in Latin; the traditional language of the scholar and the law. On the other hand, however, for Derrida it also indicates the continuity of a historical process.[44] In writing in French, Descartes was also conforming to the demand of the king to create not only a national French literature, but also a national French philosophy. In 1539, under the decree of Villers-Cotterêts, French became the official language of the law, although it would take almost a century for the first philosophical text to emerge in this national/natural language (in 1637). 'One century from law to philosophy [*du droit à la philosophie*], one might say.'[45] The shift from Latin to French developed gradually over time, constantly inflected by the relationship between the political and the theological; between the national power and the power of the Catholic Church. As Derrida notes, the language of the Church was Latin and it was through this 'theological' language that the Church consolidated its empire much in the same way as the Roman Empire before it. The Reformation debates raged around the issue of translation and gave birth to many of the prevailing understandings of translation theory that still hold sway today.

The imposition of French as the language of the law was designed, according to the decree of Villers-Cotterêts, to ensure a certain transparency to the law, to make the law 'clear and distinct' to the subjects of the king. Rather than having to rely on those (very few) who spoke the language of the School or the Church (Latin), subjects would now be free to read the law in the French 'mother tongue'. Neither can this urge towards intelligibility be separated from the project of philosophy; not only the philosophy of Descartes but all philosophy from Plato to Husserl via Kant:

> This concern comes up against, in fact it merges with, the properly philosophical or scientific project: to reduce the ambiguity of language. The value of clarity and distinctness in the understanding of words, in grasping significations, will at the same time be a juridical, administrative, police (and therefore political), *and philosophical value*. […] the legal text would still have to be read or comprehended through a linguistic medium purified of all ambiguity, through a language that is not divisible or does not dissipate into misunderstanding.[46]

At first glance this would seem to be an emancipatory moment for French subjects, freeing them from the violent constraint of the Latin language by allowing them to read the law themselves, without having to rely on those who spoke Latin. The king, in wishing to make them better subjects, both to the law and to himself; returns them to their 'own' mother tongue: 'as if they were being given back to their mother in order better to be subjugated to the father.'[47] However, a certain violence is hidden in this move of the French authorities: the abolition of the provincial languages. For many subjects at that time French was as paternal, as legal and as unknown as Latin. In order to plead for the right to speak their own language translation became necessary. As Derrida notes, one must speak the language of power which means one must translate; one must learn and appropriate the language of the other. Once this happens the language of the other has become one's own and the very fact of translation proves the king, the other, was right to impose it on you. 'By speaking to him [the king] in his language you acknowledge his law and authority; you prove him right; you countersign the act that proves him right over you.'[48]

This is not, argues Derrida, some kind of master/slave dialectic of languages, but rather a paradigmatic event. This is precisely what happened to representatives from Provence who wished to pass their judgements at home in their own language. They went to court to plead for this right, but were told that the king would hear them only in French. Hence, they learned French to ask to not have to learn French, proving, for the king, that learning French was not such a difficult thing to do and that therefore his decree should be enforced.[49] This situation is not merely one of a non-linguistic force acting through language; but is rather the very situation of language *as* power: 'this relationship of language, must already, as such, be the power relationship of spacing, a body of writing to clear a path.'[50]

Though beyond the scope and investigative question of this work, it is worth noting the particularly interesting case of linguistic oppression as it took place in Ireland. The varying degrees of linguistic tyranny which saw the gradual erosion of the Irish language and the adaptation of English as a 'mother' tongue for the majority of citizens leads to a strange situation, both politically and culturally. One need only think of the fact that the Irish Constitution of 1937 was written in English (language of power/language of the other) yet paradoxically names Irish not only as the nation's first language, but indeed the language of reference in cases of legal dispute. In other words, the Irish Constitution written in English subverts its own authority by reference to an Irish text, *as if* that text were an original when in fact the Irish language text is itself already a translation.[51] In cultural terms, as poet and novelist Seamus Deane has noted, Irish remains a foreign language which yet, as the 'native' language, haunts Irish artists. While most of Ireland's famous authors write in English—Wilde, Yeats, Joyce, Beckett—theirs is a distinctively Hiberno-English.[52] Joyce's *Ulysses* or *Finnegan's Wake* could not be described as 'English novels'; they remain inhabited by that spectre of a wiped out tongue, the rhythm of a lost language that came to be translated into English. Ireland remains a country of 'translated identities' where people do not speak their 'own' language, and yet have made the language of power their own in an inimitable way. Of course, the nature of a translated identity, of living in a language that is not quite one's own, leads to an imagining of an 'original' identity; a mythic Ireland lost in the past that in all likelihood

never in fact existed. Declan Kiberd argues that this was precisely what was at play in the Anglo-Irish literary movement, in particular under the penmanship of Yeats. The lost 'original' Ireland was not being *remembered* by the new poets who wrote in the language of the colonizer; rather it was being *invented as translated*.[53]

To return to the *Discours*, Descartes' relationship to language is somewhat paradoxical, and this is tied to the fact he is being pulled in two different directions. On the one hand, Descartes believes in natural reason which is universal and meta-linguistic. On the other hand, he is writing in a 'natural language' which is national, native and historically contingent. While he writes in a language accessible to everyone 'even women' (if reason is universal it knows no gender),[54] this choice is not quite as altruistic as it may at first seem and has more than a little to do with an economic concern. His bookseller warns him that books in Latin don't sell as well as books in French.[55] In addition to which, French was fast becoming the language of diplomacy, status and sophistication—by writing in French Descartes makes himself known to many European courts, expanding his readership. On top of which Descartes' choice of language authorizes the French law and the urge expressed by Henri II to 'lead out [*acconduire*]' the philosophies of the Greeks and Romans towards the French 'border regions [*marches*]'.[56] A certain economic ruse thus hides behind Descartes' apparent magnanimity.

As Derrida points out, it would seem that Descartes has always two readerships in mind, two discourses and two languages: the public (including the 'feeble minded' and women); and the learned men of the university trained in the ways of the School.[57] For the one he writes in French and for the other in Latin. This is further evidenced by the fact that the so-called original of the *Discours de la méthode* in French is in fact, argues Derrida, already a translation of a former Latin version. Derrida makes this claim on the basis of two points; firstly, the translation of the *Discours* from French to Latin loses the justificatory claims found in the 'original' French text. Secondly, the *Discours*, looks itself suspiciously like a translation of the much earlier *Regulae ad Directionem Ingenii* (*Rules for the Direction of the Mind*) of 1628.[58]

The *Discours* refers to its own language explicitly a number of times where Descartes says '[a]nd if I write in French, which is the language of

my country, rather than in Latin which is that of my teachers…'[59] In the translations of this sentence into other 'living' European languages (such as German or English) the text remains the same. That is to say, it highlights the fact that the reader is reading a translation; it *presents* itself *as a translation from French*. This is not the case with the translation into the 'dead' language of Latin. In the standard Adam and Tannery edition the omission of this sentence ('If I write in French…') is explained by saying that there was no cause to translate it: '*il n'y avait pas lieu de le traduire en effet.*'[60]

Why was there 'no cause' to translate this phrase into Latin but clearly cause enough to translate it into other languages? For Derrida this is due to the fact that Latin had a special status at the time of writing. Latin was the 'language of origin' for all philosophical texts, the Latin translation therefore does not refer to itself as a translation, does not refer *back* to an original because it itself is the 'original'. Descartes, in writing in French, was only making a pretence of beginning with the 'vulgar tongue' and there was hence cause (*il y avait lieu*) to quickly return to the normative, legal, language of origin. 'The Latin version is thus nothing more than a *restitution*.'[61] Rather than being a 'leading out' to the border regions of French, it is a leading back to the original language of Latin. Descartes displays a strange conformity to a double authority—the State and the School. The relation between the State and language mirrors the relation between the University and language:

> What this institution [the University] cannot bear, is for anyone to tamper with language, meaning *both* the national language *and*, paradoxically, an ideal of translatability that neutralizes this national language. Nationalism and universalism. What this institution cannot bear is a transformation that leaves intact neither of these two complementary poles. It can bear more readily the most apparently revolutionary ideological sorts of 'content', if only that content does not touch the borders of language and of all the juridico-political contracts that it guarantees. It is this 'intolerable' something that concerns me here. It is related in an essential way to that which, as it is written above, brings out the limits of the concept of translation on which the university is built […][62]

There are a number of points to be explored here. First that the University is built upon a recognition of the national language; it is

through this language that it grants degrees, performs examinations, employs its teachers and so on. The language of the State is the language of the University. At the same time however, there is an urge towards an effacement of language in that what must be recognized are 'clear and distinct' ideas which can easily be separated from their form, that is, the very language that they are written in. Second, that it is the presumption of translatability which guarantees a number of juridical and political contracts. And finally, that the university is built upon this 'concept' of translation. For Derrida all reading is already a translating, yet he seeks to subvert the traditional understandings of both of these practices by problematizing the idea of reading or translating as 'making accessible a meaning that can be transmitted as such.'[63] This is the concept upon which the university is built, namely, that meanings can be dissociated from their forms and transmitted freely.

The issue of a content dissociable from its form upon which a 'certain concept' of reading and writing is built, and hence upon which a 'certain concept' of philosophy and the university is built, is most notable with the paradoxical issue of copyright law. As Derrida makes obvious in his own works, all texts refer to other texts beyond their own borders; they are inflected by other works and other authors. Not only are Derrida's works always readings of other authors, they also consistently reference many further texts either by other authors or by Derrida himself. In this way Derrida explicitly marks that which he sees as implicitly taking place in all texts. In his commentary on Benjamin's 'Task of the Translator', Derrida criticizes Benjamin for maintaining the original/translation distinction not least because it reflects the presupposition of unity in the original. It is this presupposition that is at play in copyright law which 'collapses at the slightest challenge to a strict boundary between the original and the version, indeed to the identity or integrity of the original.'.[64]

On the issue of copyright law in France, Derrida notes that what is protected under this law is originality of expression rather than content or ideas, which are considered universal.[65] A novelist's work, for example, is protected in its form, in its mode of expression; whereas a novelist's schema for a story falls outside the remit of copyright. Paradoxically, this same law would therefore have to protect a translation, for surely what a translation does is to reformulate the 'original' in a different mode of

expression. However, translations are considered as 'derived creations'. This is particularly interesting when one considers the issue of royalties, the economic return for those who undertake the task of the translator. One case in point of particular interest is Argentine author Jorge Louis Borges. During his lifetime Borges worked closely with his English language translator, Norman Thomas di Giovanni, to create what Borges himself initially termed English 'versions' of his work. So highly did he esteem the task of the translator that royalties from these translations were split evenly between author and translator. This economic agreement was swiftly called to a halt by the Borges literary estate after his death so that the estate could take all royalties from newly commissioned translations.[66]

Under copyright law a translation of a translation is considered a derivation from the original work and not from the translation. Desbois in particular notes that if a translator takes different passages from various translations and brings them together in a different way, this will still be considered a translation *derived from the original* and not from the translations.[67] Throughout, the language of copyright law deals extensively with the notion of the translator as 'indebted' to the original, as 'responsible' for the original. As Derrida notes: 'The recurrence of the word 'task' is remarkable enough in any case, for all the significations that it weaves into a network, and there is always the same evaluative interpretation: duty, debt, tax, levy, toll, inheritance and estate tax, nobiliary obligation, but labor midway to creation, infinite task, essential incompletion, as if the presumed creator of the original were not—he too—indebted, taxed, obligated by another text, and a priori translating.'[68]

The Language of the Other

The paradoxical situation of the representatives from Provence who had to demand the right to speak their own language in the language of the other, is in fact the situation of every subject in relation to any language. I want to go back here to the Blanchot *récit*, *L'arrêt de mort* and in particular the second narrative. Here the narrator has a relationship with Nathalie who speaks a Slavic language. The narrator speaks in this Slavic

language and Nathalie speaks in the narrator's language, French. In other words, both characters speak to each other in the language of the other. This speaking in the language of the other creates a strange situation where characters feel themselves to be somehow at a remove from the language and therefore less committed to what is said in that language, for it is not their own. At the same time, the strangeness of the words seems to make them more true. This situation of being-in-translation creates a proximity of distance, an *Entfernung*, which both commits the speaker and absolves them. Blanchot phrases it thus:

> If it is true that a language seems so much truer and more expressive when we know it less, if words need a certain ignorance to keep their power of revelation, such a paradox is hardly likely to surprise us since translators never stop experiencing it and since it represents one of the main obstacles and main resources of all translation.[69]

In the *récit* the narrator notes that in speaking the language of the other, he and Nathalie found a sense of irresponsibility in the words they used. Yet at the same time, in being othered to themselves in this linguistic role play there was also a sense of being *more* themselves. As if the freedom of being in the language of the other allowed them the revelation of another kind of truth. As Derrida notes, 'I make the contract *and* exempt myself from it. All *at once*. I am "irresponsible" *and* absolutely committed in the establishment of the language of the other.'[70] On the one hand one may say what one likes because it is not one's *own* language. Yet, at the *same time* there is a sense of escaping a watchful eye, of no longer being under the surveillance of what is appropriate in one's home; and therefore of being free to tell the truth.[71] However, this language of the other as the language of truth, is never just the language of the other. Instead it is 'invented' at every moment. I must, to a certain extent, 'make it up', for I do not know all the rules, I do not know all the words and so I invent; I bend it, I make it my own through this fictional relation. If I speak in a foreign tongue I attempt to make it my own and to allow myself to be made of it; 'I adapt and adopt [(*m'*)*approprie*] the language.'[72] In other words, when I speak in a foreign language I attempt to expropriate myself from my 'own' language into the language of the other. At the same time

I attempt to appropriate the foreign language into myself, to bring it home 'and translation is always an attempt at appropriation that aims to transport home.'[73]

In the *récit*, there is an air-raid where everyone must rush to an underground refuge. In the surge of that rush the narrator, despite having always thought of himself as having an aversion to marriage, asks Nathalie to marry him. Before she can respond she is swept away by the crowd. What is most interesting is that the narrator proposes in his 'own' language, French. Yet this language—home language, mother tongue, language of one's own—has also now become foreign to him: 'It seems to me that I was driven by something wild, a truth so violent that I suddenly broke down all the frail supports of that language and began speaking French, using insane words.'[74] Derrida draws out three arguments from this. First, that the use of the language of the other, the fiction of the foreign language, is designed to create a distance between Nathalie and the narrator. By using a so-called foreign language the narrator remains both at a distance from and yet committed to Nathalie: '*Pas d'Ent-fernung*' in Derrida's terms. On the one hand, this French-German phrase could be understood as a 'step of de-severance'. In Heideggerian terms, de-severance is the manner in which the distance between Dasein and something it is moving towards is made meaningful and in some sense overcome. The way in which Dasein can make something far away 'be' closer to itself through understanding. So that *pas d'Ent-fernung* as 'step of de-severance' would be the manner in which Nathalie and the narrator overcome the separation between them and commit themselves to each other, by using the other's language. Yet *pas* is also 'not' so that the phrase can also mean 'not de-severance'; the distance between Nathalie and the narrator can never be overcome or converted into a proximity. It is this paradoxical double bind that makes their relationship possible. When this *pas d'Ent-fernung* as 'the fiction of a foreign language' breaks down and the narrator returns to French, a madness ('insane words') takes hold.[75]

Second, Derrida notes, the narrator does not return to his own language, the re-appropriation does not take place. Instead he finds himself a foreigner at home; speaking words that are not his. The experience of speaking in the Slavic tongue and in so doing using words he would not use in French, has 'othered' him to himself and to his apparently

'own' tongue. The 'insane' words he uses, words he would never have used before, are, argues Derrida, untranslatable for him. They are at the same time absolutely familiar yet absolutely foreign.[76]

Third and finally, Derrida highlights the strange *arrêt* of the promise of the marriage contract; the interruption of the promise of an alliance. By speaking in French as a foreign language the narrator causes the *arrêt* of the promise which 'comes about *and* is immediately forbidden. It is the double-bind structure of this event: its "madness".'[77] Only the language of the other can commit the narrator. It is only by expropriating himself that he can give himself over to a promise to be-for-the-other. Nonetheless, he can also only be committed by a language he understands, that is in some way his own. Yet this, argues Derrida, is not unique to this fictional narrator speaking between two languages: it is the situation of every speaker and every language. As Derrida notes here, taking on the voice of the narrator from the Blanchot *récit*:

> My crime is that I proposed marriage to her in a language that could commit me only if it was the other's, thus only if I did not understand it as mine and if it thus did not commit me, if even as it bound me, was binding upon me, it set me free. But this is always the case, always 'normal': a language can never be appropriated; it is mine only as the language of the other, and vice versa.[78]

'My' language is 'mine' because it was given to me from the other and because I use it to address the other. Equally the 'language of the other' is only of the other to the extent that it is mine. Though it is noted here in a text from 1979, this understanding of language as the language of the other becomes the central motif in a much later Derrida text, namely *Monolingualism of the Other* from 1996.[79] The central axiom around which this text revolves is 'I have only one language, yet it is not mine.'.[80]

'I am monolingual. My monolingualism dwells, and I call it my dwelling; it feels like one to me, and I remain in it and inhabit it. It inhabits me.'[81] Derrida first explicates this claim in relation to his own history with the French language, which is also his own history with the French state. It is important to note that in asserting his monolingualism, that is, that he speaks only one language which is not his; Derrida is not asserting

that he only speaks a *foreign* language. French is not a foreign language to Derrida, it is his *only* language; the language which he inhabits and is inhabited by. By virtue of the French language all other languages in which he reads, writes and speaks are *foreign*. Nonetheless, this language, which Derrida has made his own and which has made him who he is, is hardly his *alone*. Each person speaks a 'version' of a so-called language, an idiom of sorts that reflects numerous historical and political traces. However, the distinction between 'idiom' and 'a language' cannot be rigorously maintained, the borders between them are blurred.[82]

Derrida's own experience revolves around his status as a Franco-Maghrebian Jew. Born in Algeria to a Jewish family, Derrida was brought up speaking French and attending the French state lycée. This state institution promoted not only the French language but also French culture, to such an extent that the languages and cultures of Derrida's 'home' (Algeria) were considered alien and other. The politics of state-enforced translation was used as a means of control; as a means of deciding who was 'in' the French state (so often referred to as the 'interior') and who was outside it. While studying Arabic was an option at this state institution—'Arabic, an optional foreign language in Algeria!'[83]—such study was not encouraged. In this way the lycée made Arabic and those who spoke Arabic as their 'mother' tongue, foreigners in their home country, alienated from structures of power and self-determination. As Derrida scornfully notes, those he remembers taking up this option in the lycée appeared to do so for 'for technical and professional reasons' that is, to be better 'obeyed by their agricultural workers.'[84] The other language of Derrida's 'home' was Berber, a language not even considered a 'foreign' language worth offering by the state.[85] All in all the policy of the state—here encountered by Derrida through the state institution of the lycée—was designed to marginalize and exclude those who were not in power. By teaching only in the French language, by offering Arabic as a 'foreign' language, and by repressing the option of the Berber language completely; the lycée produced a deliberate colonial marginalization of those languages. 'Their weakening [*extenuation*] was calculated by a colonial policy that pretended to treat Algeria as a group of three French departments.'[86]

This politics of enforced translation was made even more problematic with the retraction of the 1870 Crémieux Decree under the Vichy

government. As Derrida points out, the language one speaks is tied not only to place but often more importantly to questions of citizenship. As a Franco-Maghrebian Jew Derrida was born as a French citizen; or rather this European citizenship was enforced upon him though he was born in Algeria.[87] The withdrawal of French citizenship however, was not an act forced upon the French government by the German occupation, Derrida claims it rather 'was the deed of the French alone.'[88] Derrida highlights that he gained, lost, and gained again his French citizenship. This strange situation produces what he terms a 'disorder of identity.'[89] Derrida belongs to French, yet his position, his place in France—the State—has remained ambiguous and unstable. On the one hand the French language has been his 'host', welcomed him to it and adopted him. On the other hand, as the 'guest' of this language Derrida describes himself also as its 'hostage'; for he had no choice in it being 'his' language. Furthermore, in speaking French he becomes both the perpetrator of a European colonialism—he speaks the tongue of the colonizer—and its victim—since his citizenship is withdrawn. Moreover, the French language is *not* the language of Derrida's Jewish ancestors. Rather it is the language of the other in that it belongs to the French 'Catholic' state. Language, religion and the state are intimately entwined.[90] There is hence in this politico-linguistic to-ing and fro-ing a loss of presumed origin which must be recreated as a false memory; a prosthesis of origin. In much the same way as the English speaking Irish invented a lost Ireland.

What is most interesting, however, is that this politics of linguistic-colonial violence is not unique: 'Anyone should be able to say "I only have one language (yet, but, henceforth, lastingly [*à demeure*]) it is not mine".'[91] Monolingualism thus, belongs not only to the subject but also to the other; indeed the other imposes its own monolingualism upon the subject. Like the representatives from Provence who had to speak the language of the other in order to plead for their rights and thereby proved the other right; every subject must speak the language of the other while making it their own. This inescapable monolingualism is the law:

> *First and foremost*, the monolingualism of the other would be that sovereignty, that law originating from elsewhere, certainly, but also primarily the

very language of the Law. And the Law as Language. Its experience would be ostensibly autonomous, because I have to speak this law and appropriate it in order to understand it *as if* I was giving it to myself, but it remains necessarily *heteronomous*, for such is, at bottom, the essence of any law. The madness of the law places its possibility lastingly [*à demeure*] inside the dwelling of this auto- heteronomy.[92]

Language is instituted through an 'originary' alienation. Every language is a language of the other, comes from the other and is offered to the other. In this sense we are both hostage to this language of the other and hosted in our own monolingualism at the same time. Every subject is 'thrown into absolute translation'[93] but this is a state of translation without reference. The departure or source or original language is not pure and is not known by the subject. In the case of the Algerian Jew, the 'source' language of Hebrew has been effaced and replaced by what Derrida terms 'Catholic' French. For the Irish (and we might say 'Irish Catholic') it has been erased and forgotten by ('Protestant') English. Yet for every subject whatever their language or citizenship, the language of the master—even if it is presumed to be the 'same' as the 'mother' tongue—is the language of the other. Every subject must speak the language of the law and cannot escape this language of the law as other and as appropriated. In this way, every subject is to some extent alienated from the source language.

Further, the very status of what is known as 'source' language is itself a political invention based on asserted distinctions between idioms, languages and dialects. There is no such pure and purely unified thing as a single language. Therefore, there are only languages of arrival [*langues d'arrivée*]. However, the arrival never takes place as such; one never fully possesses or is fully possessed by a language entirely despite the inherent desire to do so. Such desire to arrive fully and finally into a language leads to a desire to construct or reconstruct a *first language*. Whether the Franco-Maghrebian Jew or Irish 'Catholic', all subjects seek this original language which would be pure, uncorrupted and testify to the memory of their own historical, political, religious, ethnic, geographic origin. As Derrida notes, 'it is really a desire to invent a *first language* that would be, rather, a *prior-to-the-first* language destined to translate that memory. But to translate the memory of what, precisely, did not take place.'[94] This

hoped-for language of *origin* cannot be created and becomes rather a yet-to-arrive; a *telos* of language.

The monolingualism that Derrida speaks of, the monolingualism of the 'I' and of the other, is however, not at one with itself but divided from within.[95] It is only unified into what might properly be called 'a language' in the form of a promise of something which has never yet arrived. Every time we speak to each other we promise a language to each other; we promise to understand, to expropriate and appropriate into and out of the languages of each other. In so doing we promise a language totally translatable, a transparent meaning that remains and abides as impossible. The promise says 'there must be a language' which as Derrida notes, necessarily implies ' "for it does not exist" or "since it is lacking".'[96] This promise gathers all languages together in their multiplicity and plurivocality. The promise gathers language together not in its identity or unity (as the being-language of language that Benjamin sought); but rather in its difference *with* itself. The difference between my English and your English, between Derrida's French and the French of Blanchot, is the difference of language which permits language:

> It welcomes it, collects it, not in its identity or its unity, not even in its ipseity, but in the uniqueness or singularity of a gathering together of its difference to itself: in difference *with itself* [*avec soi*] rather than *difference from itself* [*d'avec soi*]. It is not possible to speak outside this promise that gives *a* language, the uniqueness of the idiom, but only by promising to give it. There can be no question of getting out of this *uniqueness without unity.* It is not to be opposed to the other, nor even distinguished from the other. It is the monolanguage *of* the other. The *of* signifies not so much property as provenance: language is for the other, coming from the other, *the* coming of the other.[97]

Language thus is always a promise not simply to the other but also and at the same time from the other. This promise does not promise *something*, it holds no content as such but rather promises a future yet to come. It is to be differentiated from the promise that language makes for Levinas; this is not the promise of salvation for it does not yet commit me to save the other as the absolute Other. Rather for Derrida the promise can only

resemble the salvation of the other who would be entirely Other. It is important to recognize this difference between Levinas and Derrida. For Levinas 'every other is absolutely other;' for Derrida this absolute other cannot have yet arrived. Once the other arrives, I recognize them. In Chapter Two I examined the idea of a 'translating-subject' between being and otherwise than being and the movement between other and third. For Derrida, this translation has always already taken place. Whereas for Levinas the Other ruptures the immanence of ontology producing a transcendence, for Derrida that transcendence—as a move towards an absolute Other—can only be promised.[98] The promise uttered every time language is used '*resembles* messianism, soteriology, or eschatology. It is the structural opening, the messiani*city*, without which *messianism* itself, in the strict or literal sense, would not be possible.'.[99]

Language produces isolation, a monolingualism that disrupts the ideal of a translatable language. At the same time, coming from/to the other, it postpones that isolation so that it is not pure. Language holds the subject hostage in a desert of their own and sometimes, as Derrida notes, 'there is a desert without a desert crossing.'[100] There is unreadability, untranslatability. Yet, because of this isolation and untranslatability, translatability can be promised, the impossible becomes the chance of the possible.

Babel

Translation, in its most ordinary (and indeed its most problematic sense), is the transfer of meaning from one language to another. It therefore presupposes a multiplicity of languages and it is the 'origin' of this state of multiplicity that I want to explore here. There are various myths that explain the origin of language(s), though interestingly they share a number of tropes. The moment that language emerged, or the moment it became multiple, is often mythologized as the same moment that society came into being. Society as the law, as politics, as family genealogies recognized by name, or as different nations. In myths this birth of society often takes on an architectural figure. The ability to raise a wall, construct a tower, or erect a border, is the ability to mark a citizen inside the walls from a foreigner outside them. In short the ability to 'clearly' identify.

Further, the origin of language(s) is said to take place at the same time as a dispersion: a scattering of men which allows for the space in which to build. This dispersion is also at the same time the cause of construction; the need to build a bridge across the space, to close and enclose the space and the need to translate the difference born of this space.

In this way the origin of languages and thus the origin of translation, in a certain sense describes the origin of man as man and no longer man as animal. Man speaks, translates, builds towns, writes laws, understands the relation to death—all of these things draw the line between man and beast and it is therefore unsurprising that they weave together in language myths. As Derrida notes 'one is given language and society at the same time, at the moment when the pure state of nature is crossed, when absolute dispersion is overcome for the first time. One attempts to seize the origin of language at the moment of this first crossing over.'[101]

One of the Greek 'origin' myths of translation transmitted by Latin scholar Hyginus centres on the figure of Hermes. According to this tale, all men originally lived without towns or laws under the rule of Zeus and spoke a single language. This peaceful co-existence was then disrupted by mischievous Hermes who divided languages and nations from each other leading to conflict amongst men.[102] Hermes is also the patron of the traveller and figure of border crossings; between nations (whose demarcation he made possible), and indeed between life and death. Hermes not only guides souls in their journey in the underworld but also guards the crypt to prevent the souls of the dead from travelling to the land of the living. Hermes is no doubt a translation of the Egyptian God of writing Thoth, or in its Greek form Theuth, the myth of whom Derrida explores in his essay 'Plato's Pharmacy'.[103] The passages on Theuth and Hermes are particularly interesting in that they mark the relation between the god of writing and the god of death.[104] Theuth or Hermes is a messenger, a translator of the divine logos to mortal man. Yet this messenger can also violently supplant his father Ammon; translating himself in this substitution into the place of his father or 'origin'. The Hermes/Theuth/Thoth myth marks non-identity and translating as originary rather than secondary. Derrida defines him in his ambiguity in many ways: he 'is precisely the god of non-identity,' 'god of the absolute passage between opposites,' 'a floating signifier, a wild card, one who puts play into play.'[105] Finally, as

between life and death, we might see him as the god of *survie*: 'This god of resurrection is less interested in life or death than in death as a repetition of life and life as a rehearsal of death, in the awakening of life and in the recommencement of death.'[106]

Yet another translation 'origin' myth is that of the tower of Babel from Genesis and it is this myth that I want to explore here in more detail with Derrida. The tale is as follows:

> Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, 'Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly.' They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.' But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The Lord said, 'If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.' So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.[107]

In the biblical structure this tale is situated shortly after the tale of the Great Flood and immediately precedes the account of Abraham's genealogy. As such the Babel narrative acts as a hinge between the history of man in general and the emergence of a named identifiable lineage. As Elad Lapidot phrases it: '[i]n the process of Genesis, the Tower of Babel stands at the limit between the universal and the particular.'.[108]

The myth shares the themes of building, nation making, travelling, and naming. For Derrida, it is a deeply significant myth for a number of reasons. It not only tells the origin of the multiplicity of languages and the necessity of translation, it also reflects the need for myth acting thus as a mythical origin of myth itself. It is 'the narrative of narrative, the translation of translation.'[109] Further, Babel is a narrative of interruption; the unfinished tower reflects for Derrida a structural order of incompleteness or 'the impossibility of finishing.'[110] This impossibility of finishing

is tied to the impossibility of a pure uncrossable limit which would mark a pure and self-contained identity. I will break my own reading of this myth here into two: the proper name and multilingualism.

The Proper Name

Proper names, like the subject, only come into being through differentiation. In the last chapter, I touched on the claim that the debt of translation passes through the trait which contracts a subject to their proper name.[111] Here I will show that since that trait itself is never pure, can never be fully assumed; then no more so can the debt of translation. As Davis has pointed out, the proper name 'is the most explicit example of the assumption that language names things—that words or signs can have a one-to-one correspondence with a referent that exists, as a "real" presence, before and outside language.'[112] Derrida describes the proper name as the original myth of a transparent legibility, a myth he finds operating in the work of structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. Derrida goes on to explain that a proper name purports to be a unique appellation for a unique present being, while in fact it can only function within a system of differences 'within a writing retaining the traces of difference.'[113] While Lévi-Strauss describes the Nambikwara tribe as 'prohibiting' proper names, Derrida contends that this prohibition is 'derivative with regard to the constitutive erasure of the proper name.'[114] That is, the proper name emerges only through differential traces which contaminate and thereby erase the propriety of the proper name. Even in naming it a 'proper name' we are using language, archē-writing as a differential system and hence 'obliterating' that which we claim to name in its uniqueness or propriety. What we really have are 'so-called' proper names or improper names. A proper name is 'only a designation of appurtenance and a linguistic-social classification.'[115]

This issue of the impropriety of the proper name is necessarily implicated in the name 'Babel'. What this so-called proper name names is unclear. It is the narrative text I cited above from the Bible, it is the name of the city in that story, and finally, it is the name of God which he proclaims over the city. The name 'Babel' is therefore already perform-

ing in its name the event that it describes: multiplicity. As illustrated with the example of Pierre, proper names are in general not translated. While they often begin with a meaning within a single language they, to become proper names as such, must transcend this meaning to become 'the reference of a pure signifier to a single being—and for this reason untranslatable.'[116] Of course this is precisely what Derrida seeks to show as impossible. The difference between a proper name and a common noun may appear to be revealed in translation. The proper name 'Pierre' remains 'Pierre' in English, whereas the common noun *pierre* is mutated by its linguistic crossing into 'rock'. However, we cannot pass over the fact that in French common name and proper name—these 'two absolutely heterogeneous values or functions'—are laid over each other, the one effacing the other. The proper name thus holds a strange position within language; on the one hand it begins as a common noun properly belonging to a language and hence translatable.[117] On the other hand it is untranslatable inasmuch as it purports to reference a unique being, as Derrida notes:

> [*F*]*irst* that a proper name, in the proper sense, does not properly belong to the language; it does not belong there, *although and because* its call makes the language possible (what would a language be without the possibility of calling by a proper name?); consequently it can properly inscribe itself in a language only by allowing itself to be translated therein, in other words, *interpreted* by its semantic equivalent: from this moment it can no longer be taken as a proper name.[118]

The name 'Babel', as Derrida underscores by reference to Voltaire, signifies in a double manner. 'Babel', coming from *Ba* meaning 'father' and *Bel* meaning 'God' would have been taken to name 'city of God (the father)', a frequent name of capital cities at the time.[119] However, as a common noun it also means 'confusion'. In addition, the very state of confusion is itself confused; for on the one hand it names the 'confusion' into which the people of Babel were thrown when their language was made multiple and they could no longer understand each other. And on the other hand, it names the 'confounding' of their project to build a tower reaching the heavens.[120]

What is at play in this *récit* (as Derrida refers to it) is in fact a battle of the proper name.[121] The tribe of Shem wish to 'make a name' for themselves so that they will not be scattered across the face of the earth. This urge to universalism is disrupted, however, even within their own name for 'Shem' is also the common noun 'name'. The Semites 'want to make a name for themselves, and they bear the name of name.'[122] This 'making a name' is at one with the construction of the tower and the imposition of a universal language. As Derrida notes, the passages preceding God's destruction of the tower tell of the Semites' establishment of empire.[123] The establishment of an empire, of a genealogy—and we should not forget the place of the Babel narrative as that which precedes the genealogy of Abraham—is made through construction and linguistic imposition; it is also made by controlling the border and pathways.[124]

Power exerts itself through language as illustrated by the example of the imposition of the French mother tongue under the decree of Villers-Cotterêts in 1539.[125] This decree, which might be read as making the law transparent to the king's subjects, can also be read as the violent imposition of a tongue by the one who controls the border.[126] In the same way, the universalist aspirations in Babel are double. They could be read as a move towards 'a peaceful transparency of the human community' through the goal of absolute translatability.[127] However, as Derrida notes, the Shems wish to impose a universal language 'by violence, by force, by violent hegemony over the rest of the world.'[128] This is not the universal language of Descartes or Leibniz to which everyone would have access, but rather the language of the stronger master. Absolute translatability would be the erasure of the difference that translation practices, and this erasure is rarely neutral. Whichever way we read the Semites' plan to make a name for themselves it is interrupted by another name: the name of God: '[t]hey cease to build the city. Over which he [YHWH] proclaims his name: Bavel, Confusion.'[129]

God disrupts the building of the tower by the imposition of his name; he marks with his name the communal place where understanding is no longer possible. YHWH, the bearer of an unpronounceable name, chooses this other name for himself and imposes it upon 'the children who henceforth *will bear* his name, the name that *he* gives the city.'[130] In giving his name God also gives all names in that he gives all languages;

the name of God is thus the name of the origin of tongues: Babel.[131] But this is a gift that is also a poison for it disrupts the understanding that pre-existed it. '[H]e imposes confusion on them at the same time that he imposes his proper name.'[132] This punishment imposed by God may be due to the Semites' aspiration to build a tower to the Most High, to transgress a border they had no right to cross. However, for Derrida, the punishment is more deeply linked with the Semites' plan to make a name for themselves; to give themselves a name and to gather under this name as a unity, the one as the other.[133] Lapidot on the other hand does not see this as a punishment but rather as an empowerment and takes issue with Derrida's reading. In the biblical narrative God creates through the word (a situation echoed in the Stefan George poem and Heidegger's reading of it that I discussed in Chapter One). Uttering the word for something creates it—'let there be light', for example. Lapidot argues that the word has to separate from God in order for the creation to have independence from its creator; so that in the Babel narrative God is giving this same power to man. In giving the multiplicity of languages God is giving man the difference that allows for creation. Without being able to translate man would only have limited creative power.[134] Lapidot claims 'Derrida, for his part, ultimately seems to have a tendency to understand linguistic diversity and translation as a necessary evil, one that was imposed on humanity against its will, and even against its good reason, but for its own good.'[135] While Lapidot provides an enriching analysis of the Babel text he appears to pass over Derrida's insistence that without difference—here linguistic diversity—there is nothing at all. As Davis points out, for Derrida the narrative is not about a 'fall' from some mythical universal language but rather about the manner in which language has no pure origin.[136] Nor does it indicate some nostalgia for a mythical lost origin: 'on the contrary, the disruption of such nostalgia through a demonstration that there was no 'origin' […] has been the project of deconstruction.'[137]

In this battle of proper names between Babel/God/'confusion' and Shem/'name' 'the one that will carry the day is the one that either imposes its law or in any case prevents the other from imposing its own.'[138] The law that the name of God imposes is translation; he at the same time imposes and forbids translation through his name which is both translatable and untranslatable. God, in proclaiming his name, in imposing

multiple tongues upon man, makes translation as necessary as it is impossible. As Derrida notes, the war that God declares against the Shems is already raging in his name (and we might add in the name of the Shems as well); the name itself is 'divided, bifid, ambivalent, polysemic: God deconstructing.'.[139]

The Babel narrative reveals the double bind of all proper names. God orders man to translate his name yet in the same movement illustrates its impossibility; his name cannot be translated since it is a proper name and as common noun signifies only 'confusion' or 'ambiguity'.[140] As such inflicted on man, on the tribe of Shem, is the double imperative to translate and at the same time not to translate the name:

> I would say that this desire is at work in every proper name: translate me, don't translate me. On the one hand, don't translate me, that is, respect me as a proper name, respect my law of the proper name which stands over and above all languages. And, on the other hand, translate me, preserve me within the universal language, follow my law, and so on. This means that the division of the proper name insofar as it is the division of God—in a word insofar as it divides God himself—in some way provides the paradigm for this work of the proper name.[141]

If the debt of translation passes between the traits that link subjects to their names, and yet in those very names is this double bind of translate/don't translate, then the subject as soon as she is named is indebted to translation. Language begins in naming, in calling by the proper name and the subject begins in responding to the double command of that name. The subject is hence called forth by and through the command of translation.

But names can change over time; over the course of one's life, even over the course of a single day, our relation to our own name changes. When we are called by our proper name our response depends upon the one who calls so that we respond to our proper name *as* many different people: as daughter, as teacher, as father, as student, as patient, and so on. The proper name is the name that calls us, but rarely does it call us as the *same* subject each time. If the proper name is the possibility of an address by the other (and also *to* the other), and yet if this proper name is always

already divided and ambivalent; what are the implications of the proper name for the subject/other relation? While there is not the space here to examine in detail Derrida's relation to psychoanalysis, his response to a particular psychoanalytic practice will shed a little light on this issue of the proper name. Psychoanalyst Patrick Mahony notes that throughout life we acquire a multitude of names; nicknames, names of endearment, formal titles, and so on. However, one of the distinguishing characteristics of certain psychoanalytical practices is for the analyst not to address the patient by any of these names to which she can be egocentrically bound. In freeing the patient from the self-identity bound to their name or names, the practice seeks to allow the patient to 'go towards multiple transpositions and transformations of his names.'[142]

Derrida agrees with Mahony that we have different names across our lives which both accrue and disappear over time. The hypothesis then of this particular psychoanalytic practice, rephrased by Derrida, is that there might be a secret proper name unrelated to our public or known name: a 'kind of absolutely secret first name which functions all the time without our knowing it.'[143] This name would not necessarily have to be in a language as it is ordinarily understood—we could be called by our secret name through a gesture, a smell or even a particular scene. In the experience of one of these 'names' our secret 'proper' self would then be called forth. Behind this hypothesis, however, is the presumption of a pure 'proper' idiom. A name that would be absolutely proper would be self-referential and uncontaminated by any other sign or mark; it would be an absolute idiom.[144] Indeed a secret proper name as such would also have to be untranslatable. In order to be pure, absolute, absolutely proper it could not risk itself in the mutation of a translation, for once translated it would revert to a position of common noun. Untranslatable, the secret proper name would hence remain only within us; like Husserl's pure expression, it would be lived by us 'in the blink of an eye' without the contaminating detour through 'external' time or space. Such an uncontaminated sign—linguistic or otherwise—is impossible as such. There may be gradations of the secret proper name, there may be effects of it but it remains impossible in its *pure* sense.[145] As Derrida surmises: 'the secret mark could be what it is only in a relation of differentiation and thus also of contamination.'[146] The mark to be a mark remains

inscribed in a network of differential relations and emerges only through différance so that the proper name, even the secret proper name, is, like any other name or word: both translatable and untranslatable at the same time.

This impossibility of the absolutely pure proper name affects the possibility of the address to or the call of the other. Staying with the example of this psychoanalytical practice, the goal would be to reach a point where the analyst could address the patient without any ambiguity regarding who the patient is. Derrida notes that the impetus behind this practice is to reach a moment wherein 'the analyst would say "you" in such a way that there would be no possible misunderstanding on the subject of this "you".'[147] In not addressing the patient by their public proper name psychoanalysis would find the direct path, the pure address to them. However, as Derrida highlights, if the impossibility of purity within the system of the mark is fully assumed, this contamination means that an address can be diverted. The path from one to the other, from me to you, is not direct. The proper name, caught up in a system of contamination and confusion, can always send the address off course:

> Well, if what I have just said is at all pertinent, that is, if the most secret proper name has its effect of a proper name only by risking contamination and detour within a system of relations, then it follows that pure address is impossible. I can never be sure when someone says to me—or to you— 'you, you' that it might not be just any old 'you'. I can never be sure that the secret address might not be diverted, like any message or letter, so that it does not arrive at its destination. This is inscribed in the most general structure of the mark. The proper name is a mark: something like confusion can occur at any time because the proper name bears confusion within itself.[148]

The situation is somewhat similar in the demand made by the reader of the author of a text. A reader demands narrative from a unified, single and identifiable author. The name of the author on a text, their signature, is that upon which the reader calls. It is this 'demand for narrative' that writers such as Blanchot or Joyce seek to disrupt.[149] This confusion of paths, this detouring, is in effect what happens in the *tours* of Babel and not

only in a linguistic sense but also in a geographical and cultural sense. In proclaiming his proper name imposing and forbidding translation, God also produces a scattering of the Semites across the face of the earth. This scattering produces what Derrida terms a 'disschemination', a word which plays with a multitude of meanings.[150] Phonically it echoes the sound of 'dissemination', a spreading out or scattering of the filial seed so that genealogy is no longer assured. With the French word for 'path' [*chemin*] at its centre it can be understood as a diverting from a path a 'de-*chemin*-ation.' It is also a de-'Shem'-ination; a detour from the plan of the tribe of Shem to build a tower and impose their name or tongue. It is also a 'diss-'shem'-ination', that is, a detour from the possibility of the name [*shem*] itself.

In this state of confusion what paths are open to the Biblical translator when faced with the proper name 'Babel'? Derrida praises French translator André Chouraqui for offering a particularly literal translation of Genesis, yet even Chouraqui appears to reach a limit with this word. As cited, he translates the name as 'Bavel, Confusion'. Whereas in the Hebrew text there was one word audible as 'City of God' and *at the same time* 'confusion', in Chouraqui's translation there are two words. He is forced to a certain analysis or explanation and while capitalization in 'Confusion' produces the effect of the proper name, for Derrida it is an insufficient compromise.[151] Antoine Berman describes what happens in Chouraqui's translation as an 'unfolding' of a phrase or word that in the original is 'folded'.[152] It is this 'folded' nature of a word that for Derrida is always threatened by translation while at the same time being the very 'chance' of translation. Chouraqui's translation does more than a translation, properly speaking, should:

> It comments, explains, paraphrases, but does not translate. At best it reproduces approximately and by dividing the equivocation into two words there where confusion gathered in potential, in all its potential, in the internal translation, if one can say that, which works the word in the so-called original tongue.[153]

As with *pharmakon* which can be heard *at the same time* as 'poison' and 'remedy'; what is lost in translation is this particular equivocation, the undecidability, the homonymic and homophonic effect. Could this

double meaning at play in a word be called a translation? In this regard, Roman Jakobson proposes three categories of translation; interlingual, intralingual and intersemiotic. Intersemiotic translation is translation across different signifying mediums, 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems.'[154] For example, Stéphane Mallarmé's poem *L'après-midi d'un faune* (1876) could be said to have been intersemiotically translated to Claude Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1894) which in turn was further translated to a ballet of the same name (1912) by Vaslav Nijinsky. We could also think of the *Merchant of Venice* and the intersemiotic translation of money into a pound of flesh. Intralingual translation is for Jakobson rewording, to say 'in other words'. Here the message is given different clothes but from the wardrobe of the same language. Finally there is interlingual translation, what Jakobson terms '*translation proper*' which is 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.'.[155]

Someone whose mother tongue is the same as that of the Bible would effect what Derrida terms 'a *confused* translation of the proper name [Babel] by its common equivalent without having need for another word. It is as if there were two words there.'[156] Could this be, however, Jakobson's intralingual translation? It is not a rewording as such for there is no need for another word; the translating that takes place in the name 'Babel' divides the name already without recourse to another word 'outside' itself. The name, and every name, is already divided 'inside' itself because it is already contaminated by what is 'outside' it. In other words, the name functions because it is both proper name and common noun at the same time. At issue with Jakobson's 'reassuring tripartition'[157] is the presupposed unity of any given language. As Derrida notes, Jakobson's 'intralingual' and 'interlingual' translation presuppose that one can know the limits, the beginning and end points of any one language.

Derrida further notices that Jakobson offers a 'translation' of two of his descriptions: 'intralingual translation or *rewording*' and '*intersemiotic* translation or *transmutation*'.[158] However, with the third form of translation Jakobson does not 'translate', describing it simply as 'interlingual translation or translation proper.'[159] Davis points out that Jakobson thus distinguishes between the literal and the figural,

privileging *le sens propre* 'the literal sense' of translation.[160] In this way Jakobson falls prey to the notion that the meaning of 'translation' is transparent. Derrida describes this as the presupposition that everyone knows 'what is a language, the relation of one language to another and especially identity or difference in fact of language.'[161] However it is this presumed unity and identity of a language that Derrida seeks to disrupt. If Babel names the fact of translation it is not only because it names the origin of language*s* but also because language itself, even in what is called 'one' language, is already divided. Babelization takes place in every language:

> The border of translation does not pass among various languages. It separates translation from itself, it separates translatability within one and the same language. […] Babelization does not therefore wait for the multiplicity of languages. The identity of a language can only affirm itself by opening itself to the hospitality of a difference from itself or of a difference with itself.[162]

Pas de Monolinguisme

Babel as a name both translates and does not translate itself; this is not only the case with the proper name but with all language in general. It is a situation which no theory, which is always produced in a language, can escape or dominate. This 'Babelian performance' of language serves, for Derrida, 'as an introduction to all the so-called theoretical problems of translation.'[163] One of the difficulties of these theories of translation, as described with the example of Jakobson, is the presumption of unified identity. This presumption reaches its limit when addressing the event of multiplicity. There are two kinds of multiplicity that translation struggles with. The first is that of multiple meanings in a single phrase or word ('Babel', *pharmakon*, *l' arrêt de mort*, *pas* and so on). The second is that of multiple languages in a single language (a French word in an English text, for example). While I will here examine each of these individually, it should be noted that Derrida's own logic would prevent a clear and absolute separation between the two. As he notes in 'Plato's

Pharmacy': 'Theuth is evoked indeed as the author of difference: of differentiation *within* language and *not of the plurality of languages*. But it is our belief that at their root *the two problems are inseparable*.'[164] I outlined above the manner in which the proper name is divided and here I want to explore that division in order to show that the multiplicity at play in language is mirrored in the multiplicity at play in subjectivity. That the concept of a secure and clearly defined self-identity, relies on a model of binary opposition that is inherently problematic.

I begin this mapping of multiplicity from language to subject with another 'untranslatable' phrase from Derrida: *il y va d'un certain pas*. The phrase is of particular interest here since it gathers the themes of identity, belonging, and translation together. Derrida poses this phrase within an exploration of life and death. The question of how we can understand the words 'my life' or 'my death', of how we can think of these things as 'proper' to us; raises the issue of belonging. What does it mean to say 'my life belongs to me' or, as Heidegger says, 'my death is my own most proper possibility'? What is the nature of this belonging? These questions are not unrelated to the manner in which words are said to belong to a language and the manner in which we speak of 'my language' as that which belongs to us, or as that to which we belong. All of these issues pose the question of how something (a life/a language) can be limited or absolutely determined. Death is often considered as the limit or border of life. Or it is considered as that which has no border—an infinite beyond. With either understanding death would seem to be most often construed as involving a certain step: from here to there, from life to or across death: *Il y va d'un certain pas.* Which could be literally and variously translated as: 'It is about a certain step'/'It is about a certain "not"'/'He goes along there at a certain pace'/'He goes along there with a certain gait'.

This discussion of the life/death border first took place at a conference whose title and theme was '*Le Passage des frontières* (*autour de Jacques Derrida*)'—'The Crossing of Borders around Jacques Derrida.'[165] In raising the theme of border crossings, the conference title already poses the issue of hospitality; of how to welcome the one who crosses the border. The first duty of which, argues Derrida, is to pay duty, homage and attention to linguistic difference. In order to fulfil this duty as both host and

guest, Derrida begins 'with an untranslatable sentence.'[166] We recall the manner in which Derrida insisted on the untranslatability of his title 'What is a "Relevant" Translation?' There at issue was the fact that the language to which 'relevant' belonged was undecidable. It could not be determined as French or English and nor could its German echo, as a translation of the Hegelian *Aufheben/Aufhebung*, be overcome. Now however, Derrida begins with a sentence—*il y va d'un certain pas*—which would seem to belong quite simply to the French language. Its linguistic border is not ambivalent in the way that 'relevant' was.

The sentence is no doubt difficult to translate into another language without an essential loss of some of its ambiguity. The clumsy English sentence—'it is about a certain step/not' or 'he goes along there at a certain pace/with a certain gait'—struggles to capture its polysemic play. It ends up explicating rather than translating in the same way that Chouraqui's 'Bavel, Confusion' did above. This untranslatability testifies to the phrase's belonging to the French language, since no other language could capture these multiple meanings in exactly the same way. However, the phrase's singular 'identity' as French is revealed only by its division within French. The hyper-translatability within French leads to untranslatability 'outside' of French. Not only because within French its meaning is ambiguous, but more importantly because any translation will lose the undecidable nature of this meaning.

Derrida illustrates three different ways to understand this sentence in French. Firstly the *il* may mean 'he', a masculine personal subject who 'goes' [*va*] 'there' [*y*] at a certain pace or gait. Secondly, the *il* may be the neuter 'it', so that *il y va* would be 'it is about' or 'what is concerned here'. The sentence would say that what is in question is the gait or step or traversal [*pas*].[167] Finally however, Derrida notes, we might introduce 'inaudible quotation marks or italics' through which 'one can also mention a mark of negation, by citing it: a certain "not" [*pas*] (*no*, *not*, *nicht*, *kein*).'[168] The sentence performs Babel already in its 'own' language.

One may object that surely context would provide the clue to deciphering which of these three possible pathways the phrase would answer to. However, what context cannot do is provide certainty; 'no context is absolutely saturable or saturating. No context can determine meaning to the point of exhaustiveness.'[169] Context may offer us the possibility of

excluding certain meanings, a sort of negative path to determination. Yet, even in order to be subsequently excluded, the irrelevant meaning would still arise. Any meaning chosen or determined would remain haunted by its remainder, by its excluded negative. The 'shibboleth' effect already operates within the French.[170]

If Babelization can be performed in a word or phrase within only 'one' language, what happens in a text written in more than one language at the same time? Derrida argues that translation theory tends to focus its attention on the translation of one single language into another single language. The translation of the source language or *la langue de départ*, into the target language or *la langue d' arrivée*. Translation theory assumes the unity of each of these departing and arriving languages, it assumes translation moves in a straight line from departure to arrival and that each of these are enclosed with a sure and indivisible border separating them:

> [L]et us note one of the limits of theories of translation: all too often they treat the passing from one language to another and do not sufficiently consider the possibility for languages to be implicated *more than two* in a text. How is a text written in several languages at a time to be translated? How is the effect of plurality to be 'rendered'? And what of translating with several languages at a time, will that be called translating?[171]

What happens if the departure language is already inhabited by another, its unity already disrupted form within? Walter Benjamin's essay on translation, for example, includes a quotation from the poet Mallarmé. This quotation is left entirely in French in Benjamin's German text.[172] What then is the translator to do when faced with this multilingual text? The translation of Benjamin's essay into English leaves the Mallarmé quote in French achieving, if not the same, at least a measure of the performative force achieved in the German. However, in the translation into French by Maurice de Gandillac, which Derrida cites extensively, this 'performative force' is lost. The Benjamin text in French becomes homogenous, undivided by a second language. The situation is similar with the Borges story 'Pierre Ménard: Author of the Quixote'. This 'critical essay' by Borges examines the work of the fictional French author Pierre Ménard who,

consumed by jealousy for Cervantes' work, undertakes the project of writing Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. Ménard does not translate or produce a 'version' or parody of the *Quixote* but re-creates it line by line. While Borges' fiction is written in Spanish, Derrida notes its language is inhabited by a 'Frenchness that inserts a slight division within the Spanish.'[173] Translated into French, however, this 'slight division' is lost. How is a text written in several languages at a time to be translated?

I mentioned above the strange relationship of English speaking Irish people to both the Irish and the English language. James Joyce captures this sense of disjointedness vividly and perhaps nowhere more so than in *Finnegan's Wake*, 'the major corpus, the great challenge to translation'.[174] Derrida takes the example of 'And he war' from this work to further illustrate the impossibility of deciding upon a single language for a single text. The phrase 'he war' occurs in a sentence that specifically names Babel: 'And let Nek Nekulon extol Mak Makal and let him say unto him: Immi ammi Semmi. And shall not Babel be with Lebab? *And he war*. And he shall open his mouth and answer: I hear… '[175] The phrase 'he war' may well be within what Derrida terms the dominant language of the text (English), but it is also, as Derrida highlights, haunted by the German *war* as 'was'.[176] So that the line 'And shall not Babel be with Lebab?' could in fact be read with the answer 'And he war [*was*].' I might add that there is further an echo of Dublin pronunciation at play here in that 'were' is often pronounced 'war[e]'. As such while the French translation as *il-guerre*, 'he declares war', captures what takes place–God declares war against the Shems—it nonetheless loses this German (and Dublin) echo found in the 'English' text. What is lost is 'the event which consists in grafting several tongues onto a single body.'[177] Even if one might find a translation that captured all the layers of *meaning* at play in Joyce's phrase, what translation could not capture would be the fact that there are many languages here. Yet for Derrida this pluralistic play of multiple languages, which marks translation as impossible, is not exclusive to Joyce. Translation 'can get everything across except this: the fact that there are, in one linguistic system, perhaps several languages or tongues. Sometimes—I would even say always—several tongues. There is impurity in every language.'[178]

***

All so-called identities, inasmuch as they are formed through language, are implicated in this impurity. There is always more than one: more than one meaning within a language; so that translation is always already operating within linguistic borders. But also more than one language; so that the very singularity of 'one' language is necessarily inhabited by and in fact constituted through another. The subject, called forth by language through the proper name, that is, the demand to translate and not to translate, is also multiple, divided and ambivalent. As such, the subject/ other relation becomes for Derrida, a complicated one. The address of one to the other cannot be guaranteed, it can always be diverted from its course. Not only because the call of the other must traverse a spacing which interrupts and contaminates it, but also because what is named as 'subject' or 'other' is itself already divided. The 'identity' of language is constructed by a division or difference within itself and this is also the condition of the subject as self. 'Condition of the self, such a difference from and *with* itself would then be its very thing.'[179] There cannot be a single direct call of one which directly reaches a single unified other. Once these poles are named they are already divided, the call diverted. Crossing borders—between languages, between life and death or between self and other—implies stepping across some kind of line. For Derrida that line is necessarily already divided, so that one can never be sure quite where or when the crossing takes place. The French phrase, *il y va d'un certain pas*, is divided in its meaning; Benjamin's German text is also in French; the English word 'relevant' is a French word with German echoes; and so it goes on. Borders are necessarily porous, which means identity is necessarily multiple or demultiplied:

> [W]here the identity or indivisibility of a line (*finis* or *peras*) is compromised, the identity to oneself and therefore the possible identification of an intangible edge—the crossing of a line—becomes a *problem*. There is a problem as soon as the edge-line is threatened. And it is threatened from its first tracing. This tracing can only institute the line by dividing it intrinsically into two sides. There is a *problem* as soon as this intrinsic division divides the relation to itself of the border and therefore divides the being-one-self of anything.[180]

Notes

1. This was originally a conference presentation at the *Quinzièmes Assises de la Traduction Littéraire à Arles* (ATLAS) in 1998. The translator of this article into English, Lawrence Venuti, also published an article on his experience of translating Derrida and institutional resistance to Translation Studies in general titled 'Translating Derrida on Translation: Relevance and Disciplinary Resistance' (*Yale Journal of Criticism*, 2003 Vol. 16 No.2 pp. 237–262). For Venuti's strategy of how to translate Derrida, see in particular pp. 252–7 of this article.

2. Relevant n. p. 44 /trans. p. 196 n.8.

3. In *Le pas au-delà* (1973) Blanchot introduces the neologism of an *arrête* which combines both the verb *arrêter* and the noun *arête* meaning 'ridge', 'cutting edge' or 'backbone'. This edge or sharp dividing line introduces an instability to *arrêter* making it perform in an undecidable way as something like 'death ridge' or 'suspension edge'.

4. DTB pp. 209–216 /trans. pp. 165–172.

5. OA p. 160 /trans. p. 120 [my italics].

6. Venuti, article cited, p. 255 Venuti here notes that he maintains the various spellings in his own English version of the text, as well as the numerous words in German in order to foreground the issue of translation and to turn the reader into a translator.

7. Relevant, pp. 22–3 /trans. p. 176 Baugh & Cable (*op. cit.* pp. 163–181) list the noun of this adjective, 'relieve', as coming to English through the Norman invasion and hence a contribution from French. The *Oxford English Dictionary* also cites it as arriving from Latin through the French *relever* an early meaning of which was to 'rise from the dead'. However, while one can find numerous definitions of *relever* in French dictionaries the adjective *relevante* is conspicuously absent.

8. See DG, p. 231 /trans. p. 162.

9. Relevant p. 25 /trans. p. 178 [italics in original].

10. Relevant pp. 25–6 /trans. pp. 178–9.

11. Relevant p. 27 /trans. p. 180 The 'word' here of course, carries multiple meanings. 'In the beginning was the Word [λόγος], and the Word was with God [Θεόν], and the Word was God' (John 1:1, New International Version [NIV]). On the one hand, in the context it is strictly speaking a calculable measurement. On the other hand, 'word' also means promise, honour, oath as in 'I give you my word'—'I make a promise to you'. And from this in French *parole* we derive the English word 'parole'; a prisoner gives his 'word' to abide by the law or to return to prison at a given time.

12. Relevant p. 28 /trans. p. 181 The question of translation as a ruin ties with the notion of a sur-vival; a translation makes present a trace of the original not as fully present but as a memory of what was once the 'original'. This would also be the case of all texts as translations of other texts and as containing within them their own future translations. The architectural motif should also not be passed over. As Derrida notes in a commentary on Descartes' use of the word *roman* and the dream of a universal language which would be like a completed tower of Babel; architecture and linguistics cannot be separated—see Transfert pp. 327–8 /trans. p. 32.

13. Relevant pp. 30–1 /trans. p. 183.

14. Picking up on this idea of economy in the play Simon Critchley and Tom McCarthy in their own reading argue that the play illustrates the Aristotelian distinction between two types of economy. On the one hand a 'proper' economy of the household or *oikos* which would be understood as a good, that is to say, finite or limited economy which seeks only what is necessary for the household to live well—the *oikonomia* of Antonio. And on the other hand, an illusory or indefinite economy based on the infinite exchangeability of goods through the introduction of money (*to chrema*)—the *techne chrematisike* of Shylock. (Critchley & McCarthy 'Universal Shylockery: Money and Morality in The Merchant of Venice', *Diacritics* vol.34, no.1, 2004 pp. 3–17) See in particular p. 7 and pp. 13–14.

15. Relevant p. 31 /trans. p. 184.

16. Relevant p. 33 /trans. p. 185.

17. Relevant p. 34 /trans. p. 186.

18. Relevant p. 40 /trans. p. 192.
19. Critchley & McCarthy, *op.cit.* p. 13.
20. Relevant p. 35 /trans. p. 188.
21. Shakespeare (*Merchant of Venice* [MV] 4.1.180–3) cited in Derrida, Relevant p. 39 /trans. p. 191.
22. Relevant p. 39 /trans. pp. 191–2.
23. Shakespeare (MV 4.1.184–93) cited in Derrida; Relevant pp. 39–40 / trans. p. 192.
24. Relevant p. 40 /trans. p. 193.
25. Relevant n. p. 40 /trans. n.5 p. 193.
26. Davis, op.cit., p.50.
27. Relevant p. 42 /trans. p. 194 See also 'Theology of Translation' in Transfert pp. 371–394 /trans. pp. 64–80.
28. Relevant pp. 42–3 /trans. p. 195.
29. Relevant p. 43 /trans. p. 196.
30. In a lecture delivered in 1968 and subsequently published in 1972: 'Le puits et la pyramide: Introduction à la sémiologie de Hegel' ('The Pit and the Pyramid: Introduction to Hegel's Semiology'). Published in M pp. 79–127 /trans. pp. 69–108 On the use of this translation, see also 'Les fins de l'homme' ('The Ends of Man') (in M pp. 129–164 /trans. pp. 109–136), in particular pp. 139–142 / trans. pp. 117–119.
31. Relevant pp. 43–4 /trans. p. 196 See also OA pp. 171–2 /trans. pp. 129–30.
32. 'De l'économie restreinte à l'économie générale: *Un hegelianisme sans réserve*' ('From Restricted to General Economy: A Hegelianism without Reserve') in ED pp. 369–407 /trans. pp. 327–350.
33. VP p. 115 /trans. p. 103 This of course does not mean that we know nothing but that 'we are beyond absolute knowledge.' What Derrida seeks to undermine with the idea of 'an unheard-of question' is the history of philosophy as '*an absolute will-to-hear-oneself-speak*' that would in some way come before or as foundational to representation. The question of hearing (*ouïr*) and the ear (*oreille*) remained a concern for Derrida in many ways, see for example *L'oreille de l'autre* (*The Ear of the* Other—OA) or 'L'oreille de Heidegger Philopolémologie (*Geschlecht IV*)' [in *Politique de*

205

l'amitié (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1994) pp. 341–419. Trans. by John P. Leavey Jr. 'Heidegger's Ear: Philopolemology (*Geschlecht IV*)' in John Sallis (ed.) *Reading Heidegger*: *Commemorations* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1993) pp. 163–218]. In this latter work part of Derrida's reading of Heidegger is to interrogate how one can hear what Heidegger describes as the 'unheard' essence.

34. M trans. p. 43 n.15.
35. Relevant p. 46 /trans. p. 198.
36. Relevant pp. 44–5 /trans. p. 197.
37. Benjamin, p. 62 /trans. p. 75.
38. Relevant p. 45 /trans. p. 197.
39. Relevant p. 46 /trans. p. 198.
40. Relevant p. 46 /trans. p. 199.
41. Relevant pp. 46–7 /trans. p. 199.
42. Davis notes that the 'certain concept' of translation that Derrida refers to—an unproblematic transfer of meaning 'without any essential harm being done'—is indeed that which has dominated translation theory at least since the Middle Ages (see Davis p. 18).
43. Transfert pp. 283–342 /trans. pp. 1–42.
44. Transfert p. 289 /trans. p. 5.
45. Transfert p. 290 /trans. p. 6 '*du droit à la philosophie*' could also be translated as: 'for the right to philosophy'; Derrida is playing here with what becomes the principle focus of this essay, namely that in order to plead for one's right (to philosophy or for one's rights in general) one must speak the language of the law.
46. Transfert p. 297 /trans. p. 11.
47. Transfert p. 299 /trans. p. 12.
48. Transfert p. 299 /trans. p. 12.
49. Transfert pp. 300–301 /trans. pp. 12–13.
50. Transfert p. 301 /trans. p. 13.
51. Declan Kiberd *Inventing Ireland*: *The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Random House, 1995) p. 624.
52. Seamus Deane was a founding member of the Field Day Project; a literary project that produced a number of plays (including Brian Friel's *Translations*), poems, pamphlets and recordings and in short sought to establish a cultural space within which the dual nature of

Irish identity could be mutually explored and in particular translated. See Aidan O'Malley *Field Day and the Translation of Irish Identities*: *Performing Contradictions* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), see in particular 'In Other Words: Locating a Touring Theatre Company' pp. 1–24.

53. See Declan Kiberd, op.cit. In particular: 'Writing Ireland Reading England' pp. 268–285 and 'Translating Tradition' pp. 624–638 For a detailed account of the 'translational-transnational' history of the Irish language and the history of translation in the establishment of 'Irish' identity see for example Michael Cronin *Translating Ireland*: *Translation*, *Languages*, *Culture* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1995). There is not the space here to discuss the issue of postcolonialism and translation; an area of prolific scholarship over the last thirty years.

54. Transfert pp. 321–2 /trans. p. 28.

55. Transfert p. 317 /trans. p. 24.

56. Transfert p. 295 /trans. p. 9 Derrida cites the letter of Henri II to Guy de Bruès in 1556.

57. Transfert p. 320 /trans. p. 7.

58. Transfert pp. 314–316 /trans. pp. 22–4.

59. Descartes *Discourse on Method* cited in Derrida, Transfert pp. 283–4 /trans. p. 1 and *passim.*

60. Cited by Derrida Transfert p. 308 /trans. p. 19.

61. Transfert p. 314 /trans. p. 22.

62. Survivre pp. 140–1 /trans. pp. 76–7.

63. Survivre p. 161 /trans. p. 95.

64. DTB p. 239 /trans. p. 196.

65. DTB *p*p. 239–243 /trans. pp. 196–200.

66. Kimberley Brown 'In Borges Shadow' *Janus Head* 8 (1), 2005 pp. 349–351 However, this seems to be only di Giovanni's version of events. Lawrence Venuti claims the relationship was ended by Borges himself as a result of de Giovanni's excessively free translations that Borges felt significantly distorted his work—see Lawrence Venuti *The Scandals of Translation*: *Towards an Ethics of Difference* (London & New York: Routledge, 1998) pp. 4–5.

67. Henri Desbois, *Le droit d'auteur en France* (Paris: Dalloz, 1978) p. 41 cited in Derrida DTB p. 243 /trans. p. 199.

68. DTB p. 242 /trans. p. 199 For more on the strange situation of the translator who 'both is and is not an author' in terms of copyright law, see for example Lawrence Venuti *The Translator's Invisibility*: *A History of Translation* (London & New York: Routledge, 1995) pp. 6–12.

69. Maurice Blanchot *La part du feu* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1949) p. 173 /trans. by Charlotte Mandell *The Work of Fire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995) p. 176.

70. Survivre p. 192 /trans. p. 121.

71. Survivre p. 191 /trans. p. 120.

72. Survivre p. 192 /trans. p. 121.

73. Relevant p. 26 /trans. p. 179.

74. Blanchot, cited in Derrida, Survivre p. 195 /trans. p. 123.

75. Survivre p. 196 /trans. p. 124.

76. Survivre p. 196 /trans. p. 124.

77. Survivre p. 197 /trans. p. 125.

78. Survivre pp. 197–8 /trans. pp. 125–6.

79. Originally presented in a different and shorter form at a bilingual conference in 1992 Louisiana State University, entitled *Echoes from Elsewhere/Renvois d'ailleurs*.

80. Mono. p. 15 /trans. p. 2 and *passim.*

81. Mono. p. 13 /trans. p. 1.

82. Mono. p. 24 /trans. p. 9.

83. Mono. p. 67 /trans. p. 38.

84. Mono. p. 68 /trans. p. 38.

85. Mono. p. 67 /trans. p. 38.

86. Mono. p. 68 /trans. p. 38.

87. Mono. pp. 29–51 /trans. pp. 12–27 Derrida also discusses the Franco-Algerian situation in *De l'hospitalité*: *Anne Dufourmantelle invite Jacques Derrida à repondre* (Paris: Clamann-Lévy, 1997) Trans. by Rachel Bowlby *Of Hospitality Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000) pp. 125–133 /trans. pp. 141–147.

88. Mono. p. 35 /trans. p. 16.

89. Mono. p. 32 /trans. p. 14.
90. Mono. pp. 87–8 /trans. p. 52: 'They [Franco-Maghrebian Jews] could not identify themselves in the terms of models, norms, or values whose development was to them alien because French, metropolitan, Christian, and Catholic. In the milieu where I lived, we used to say "the Catholics"; we called all the non-Jewish French people "Catholics," even if they were sometimes Protestants, or perhaps even Orthodox: "Catholic" meant anyone who was neither a Jew, a Berber, nor an Arab. At that time, these young indigenous Jews could easily identify neither with the "Catholics," the Arabs, nor the Berbers, whose language they did not generally speak in that generation'.
91. Mono. p. 42 /trans. p. 21.
92. Mono. p. 69 /trans. p. 39.
93. Mono. p. 117 /trans. p. 61.
94. Mono. p. 118 /trans. p. 61 See also, Kiberd, *op.cit.* in particular 'Return to the Source?' pp. 133–36.
95. Mono. p. 123 /trans. p. 65.
96. Mono. p. 126 /trans. p. 67.
97. Mono. p. 127 /trans. p. 68.
98. Mono. p. 128 /trans. p. 68 See also pp. 109–111 /trans. pp. 90–1 where Derrida discusses Levinas's own relation with the French language as a 'host' language though never a maternal language.
99. Mono. p. 128 /trans. p. 68.
100. Mono. p. 134 /trans. p. 72.
101. DG p. 329 /trans. p. 231 Although Derrida is here referring to Rousseau's essay 'On the Origin of Languages' and not to a myth, it nonetheless reflects many of the mythic motifs.
102. Deborah Levine Gera *Ancient Greek Ideas on Speech, Language and Civilisation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) pp. 117–118.
103. Diss. pp. 69–198 /trans. pp. 69–186
104. Diss. pp. 95–107 /trans. pp. 89–97.
105. Diss. p. 105–6 /trans. pp. 96–7.
106. Diss. pp. 105–6 /trans. pp. 96–7.
107. Genesis 11:1–9 (New International Version [NIV]).

108. Elad Lapidot 'What is the Reason for Translating Philosophy? I Undoing Babel' in Lisa Foran (Ed.) *Translation and Philosophy* (Oxford: PeterLang, 2012) pp. 89–105 [Hereafter Lapidot] p. 89.
109. DTB p. 209 /trans. p. 165.
110. DTB p. 209 /trans. p. 165.
111. DTB pp. 228–9 /trans. p. 185.
112. Davis, *op.cit.* p. 10.
113. DG p. 159 /trans. p. 109.
114. ibid.
115. DG pp. 163–4 /trans. p. 111.
116. DTB p. 210 /trans. p. 166.
117. From which it might at first seem that the measure of translatability would be equal to the measure by which a word *belongs* to a language. Paradoxically, however, we will discover further on in this chapter that the more a word or phrase *belongs* to just *one* language, the less translatable it becomes. That is to say, the more a word/phrase is particular to one language—the less open it is to the other—the less translatable it becomes. And, as we saw in the last chapter, a text if totally untranslatable in fact disappears entirely. So that it is only by belonging and not belonging to a language *at the same time* that a word/phrase/text can manage to sur-vive.
118. DTB p. 216 /trans. p. 172.
119. DTB p. 210 /trans. p. 166 (Derrida cites Voltaire's *Dictionnaire philosophique*)
120. DTB p. 210 /trans. p. 166.
121. OA pp. 135–6 /trans. p. 101.
122. OA p. 135 /trans. p. 100.
123. DTB p. 211 /trans. p. 167.
124. Transfert pp. 293–4 /trans. p. 8 'The imposition of a State language implies an obvious purpose of conquest and administrative domination of the territory, exactly like the opening of a road [...] But there is a still more urgent necessity for us, right here: that by which the aforementioned figure of the path to be cleared imposes itself, in a way, *from within*, in order to tell the progress of a language.'
125. Transfert p. 291 /trans. p. 6.
126. Transfert pp. 283–309 /trans. pp. 1–19.

127. DTB p. 218 /trans. p. 174.
128. OA p. 135 /trans. p. 101.
129. Genesis 11:8–9 translated from the French translation by Chouraqui, cited by Derrida DTB p. 214 /trans. p. 170. This 'over which he proclaims his name' is significantly different in other translations of the text. In English language versions of the text such as the NIV we read: 'That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world' and in the King James Version (KJV): 'Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth.' Similar formulations are found in both the French Louis Segond translation: 'C'est pourquoi on l'appela du nom de Babel, car c'est là que l'Éternel confondit le langage de toute la terre' [That is why it was called by the name of Babel, since it was there that the Eternal confused the language of all the earth]; and in the standard Reina Valera Spanish translation: 'Por esto fué llamado el nombre de ella Babel, porque allí confudió Jehová el lenguaje de toda la tierra' [For this reason was it called by the name Babel, because there Jehova confused the language of the all the earth]. It is worth noting in even this limited selection of translations, the number of names God has: the Lord, the Eternal, Jehova, YHWH. The next chapter looks at the impossibility of naming God and names of the impossible. What has actually happened in this English translation of Derrida's text is the effacement of ambiguity. The phrase in the Chouraqui translation is 'Sur quoi [la ville] il clame son nom: Bavel, Confusion.' The *son* here could be 'his' or 'its' and Derrida plays with the undecideability of to whom this *son* belongs. Graham, on the other hand, decides on 'his'. As Davis notes: 'This reduction, however reasonable, obscures the process of the strong reading that Derrida gives the Babel story, which keeps the plurivocality of 'Babel' as the name of both the city and of God in play, and thus demonstrates the impossibility of language naming an identity that exists before or outside context.' (Davis p. 11).
130. DTB p. 214 /trans. p. 170 See also OA p. 135–6 /trans. p. 101.
131. DTB p. 211 /trans. p. 167.
132. OA p. 136 /trans. p. 101.

133. DTB p. 213 /trans. p. 169.
134. See Lapidot *op.cit.*
135. Lapidot p. 101.
136. Davis, p. 12.
137. Davis p. 42.
138. OA p. 136 /trans. p. 101.
139. DTB p. 214 /trans. p. 170.
140. OA p. 136 /trans. p. 102.
141. OA p. 137 /trans. p. 102.
142. Patrick Mahony in Derrida OA p. 129 /trans. p. 96 Mahony's extended question takes place in the Freudian framework in relation to transference/translation and Derrida's neologism *tranchefert* which is a play on the psychoanalytical term *transfert*—'transference', see OA pp. 127–46 /trans. pp. 94–110.
143. OA p. 141 /trans. p. 106.
144. OA p. 142 /trans. p. 107 See also DG p. 162 /trans. p. 110.
145. OA p. 142 /trans. p. 107 See also DTB p. 248 /trans. p. 205.
146. OA p. 142 /trans. p. 107.
147. OA p. 142 /trans. p. 107.
148. OA p. 142–3 /trans. p. 107 The issue of being sent 'off course' and its relation with psychoanalysis was explored in Derrida's *La Carte Postale*: *de Socrate à Freud et au-delà* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980) trans. by Alan Bass *The Postcard*: *From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Christopher Norris in commenting on this work notes: 'In *La Carte postale* Derrida will play all manner of inventive games with this idea of the two postal 'systems', the one maintaining an efficient service (with the law and police on hand if required), while the other opens up a fabulous realm of messages and meanings that circulate beyond any assurance of authorized control. […] there always comes a point where meaning veers off into detours unreckoned with on thematic (or indeed allegorical) terms.' [Christopher Norris, *Derrida* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1988) p. 116] These two 'postal systems' are always operative together and at the same time—the address or the proper name function precisely because they are always under

the threat of not functioning. Their functioning can never be described as pure.

149. Survivre p. 139 /trans. p. 78: 'I shall not say that Blanchot offers a *representation*, a *mise en scène* of this demand for narrative, in *La folie du jour*: it would be better to say that it is there to be read, 'to the point of de*lire*ium', as it throws the reader off the track.'

150. OA p. 137 /trans. p. 103.

151. OA pp. 138–9 /trans. p. 104.

152. Antoine Berman 'La Traduction comme épreuve de l'étranger,' *Texte* (1985) pp. 67–81, Trans. by Lawrence Venuti 'Translation and the Trials of the Foreign' in Lawrence Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000) pp. 284–297 [hereafter Berman].

153. DTB p. 216 /trans. p. 172.

154. Roman Jakobson 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', 1st published in 1959 reprinted in Lawrence Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000) pp. 113–118 [Hereafter Jakobson] p. 114.

155. Jakobson p. 114.

156. DTB p. 217 /trans. p. 173.

157. DTB p. 218 /trans. p .174 For more on Derrida's reading of Jakobson see 'Linguistics and Grammatology' in DG pp. 42–108 / trans. pp27–73 in particular see pp. 78–80 /trans. pp. 53–55 where Derrida interrogates Jakobson's notion of writing as 'parasitic' upon speech.

158. Jakobson p. 114 cited by Derrida DTB p. 217 /trans. p. 173.

159. Jakobson p. 114 cited by Derrida DTB p. 217 /trans. p. 173.

160. Davis pp. 28–9.

161. DTB pp. 217–8 /trans. p. 174.

162. Apories p. 28 /trans. p. 10.

163. DTB p. 219 /trans. p. 175.

164. Diss. p. 100 /trans. p. 93 (my italics).

165. The conference took place in Cerisy-la-Salle in July 1992. (Apories p. 11 /trans. p.ix) The conference title, its 'proper name', could be translated in a myriad of ways: 'The passage/crossing/changeover of

borders/frontiers (around about/at the turns of [*autour* also sounds like *aux tours*—at the tower(s)/turn(s)] of Jacques Derrida'.

166. Apories p. 26 /trans. p. 8.

167. Apories pp. 27–8 /trans. pp. 9–10.

168. Apories p. 28 /trans. p. 10.

169. Apories pp. 26–7 /trans. p. 9.

170. Apories p. 27 /trans. p. 9.

171. DTB p. 215 /trans. p. 171 Derrida does not detail exactly what or whose translation theory he is discussing here. As he often does he describes it only generally as a 'certain understanding of translation' in the way he often comments on a 'certain understanding of reading'. This 'certain understanding of translation' Derrida describes as 'the transfer of meaning or a truth from one language to another without any essential harm being done.' (OA p. 159 /trans. p. 120) Davis notes that this concept of unproblematic transfer of meaning is indeed that 'which has historically dominated discussions of translation theory.' While she notes exceptions to this rule are to be found in the Middle ages, in particular in the writings of Augustine, she highlights 'such medieval theory, which accepted the arbitrary nature of 'fallen' human language, also rested upon the notion of an ultimate, divine truth, existent if not fully knowable. Like the philosophy of Plato, it subscribed to a metaphysics of presence.' (Davis p. 18) Translation theory in recent years, however, seems to have undergone a dramatic shift away from this paradigm. What is most interesting about this shift, however, is that Davis links it specifically with the impact of Derrida's work. The proponents of a more subtle understanding of translation theory—Rosemary Arrojo or Lawrence Venuti for example—do not subscribe to the idea of unproblematic transfer and are 'most notably those sensitive to deconstruction.' (Davis p. 91) See for example Arrojo 'The Revision of the Traditional Gap Between Theory and Practice and the Empowerment of Translation in Postmodern Times' in *The Translator* Vol. 4 No. 1 (1998) pp. 25–48 or Venuti *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

172. Benjamin p. 64 /trans. pp. 77–8.

173. OA p. 134 /trans. p. 100.

174. OA p. 132 /trans. p. 98.

175. James Joyce *Finnegan's Wake* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) p. 258 [my emphasis] *Finnegan's Wake* as a whole could be read as a performance of the Babelian event and it continuously references the Babel narrative—one of the principle characters, for example, is 'Shem the Penman'. Joyce was also a theme in Derrida's *Introduction* where he compares Husserl and Joyce under the rubric of translatability and 'anti-historicism' (*Introduction* pp. 104–106 / trans. pp. 102–104). His two essays on Joyce are published together in *Ulysse gramophone*: *deux mots pour Joyce* (Paris: Galilée, 1987). An extended discussion of the phrase 'he war' from *Finnegan's Wake* along with what Derrida terms 'the Joyce software today, joyceware' takes place in 'Two Words for Joyce' [trans. by Geoffrey Bennington in Derek Attridge & Daniel Ferrer (eds.) *Post-structuralist Joyce*: *Essays from the French* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984)]. In 'Ulysses Gramophone Hear Say Yes in Joyce' [trans. by Tina Kendall & Shari Benstock in Derek Attridge (ed.) *Acts of Literature* (London: Routledge, 1992) pp. 253–309] Derrida examines occurrences of the telephone in *Ulysses* to describe a type of 'pre-original yes'.

176. OA p. 133 /trans. p. 99.

177. OA p. 133 /trans. p. 99.

178. OA p. 134 /trans. p. 100.

179. Apories p. 28 /trans. p. 10.

180. Apories p. 30 /trans. p. 11.

The Impossible

Introduction

If the 'being-one-self of anything' is already divided how is the self to relate with the other? Is this relation even possible for Derrida? In this chapter I further draw out Derrida's understanding of the subject/other relation as (im)possible through the figures of the *arrivant* and *revenant*. I do this by examining the relationship between the self and what might be termed an absolute alterity either under the name of 'God' or 'Death'. Both of these names call forth an understanding of possibility and impossibility. In the first instance I examine the relations between negative theology and deconstruction. Here I point to affinities between the two discourses but emphasize their differences. Woven into this analysis is the possibility and impossibility of naming God. Under the theme of Death, I discuss Derrida's reading of Heidegger's Being-towards-death and illustrate the manner in which death as a border is always already porous. Once again I mark Derrida's insistence on the impossibility of an absolute limit. What I show here is that what distinguishes Derrida's account of the impossible is both his insistence on its radical indetermination and its essential possibility.

215

I am separating the discourses of negative theology and of Heidegger for the sake of clarity but in many senses these discourses describe one and the same structure. Derrida notably highlights this by linking Heidegger's avoidance of the word Being (when he writes it *sous rature* or 'under erasure' in 'The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics') with negative theology's avoidance of the name of God. As Derrida notes: 'with and without the word *being*, [Heidegger] wrote a theology with and without God.'[1] Whether we (un)name God through negative determinations or embrace death as our own most 'proper' possibility as impossibility; for Derrida we will have already failed to approach the impossible *as such*. 'God' and 'death' remain metonyms for 'all that is only possible as impossible' the impossible *as such* remains 'beyond the name and beyond the name of name.'[2] Of course Derrida cannot escape language and as such invariably falls back into a determination of sorts. As he himself notes, the onto-theological reappropriation is inevitable, while never being complete.[3]

Finally, in the last section of this chapter I bring a number of the themes from previous chapters together under the rubric of mourning, sur-viving and translating. I argue that these modalities are fundamentally interconnected precisely because of the impossibility of a pure limit and, crucially, because that impossibility is itself inherently possible. I conclude by offering an understanding of the subject/other relation as sur-viving translating.

Un-Naming God

The tradition of negative theology, or *via negativa*, seeks to uncover a path to God through negativity or more particularly through emptying God of all attributes. It is exemplified by Angelus Silesius, Meister Eckhart, or Dionysius the Areopagite (Pseudo-Dionysius) amongst others, and is characterized by formations such as 'God is neither/nor' or 'God is without'. Such characterizations have led to comparisons with deconstruction due to the often negative definitions that Derrida offers of the term. For example Derrida is quite clear that 'deconstruction is neither an *analysis* nor a *critique,*' that deconstruction is not a method[4] and most importantly that attempting to define deconstruction as one thing or the other

is to already misunderstand what Derrida aims at with the term: '[a]ll sentences of the type "deconstruction is X" or "deconstruction is not X" a priori miss the point.'[5] So is it possible to say that deconstruction is, as some critics argue, 'a bastardized resurgence of negative theology?'[6] In what way can the differences and/or similarities between deconstruction and apophatic discourse delimit the manner in which we approach the other?

Deconstruction understood as an experience of the impossible, understood as putting terms such as 'politics', 'law' and 'morals' under quotation marks would be very close to *apophasis*.[7] On the other hand, deconstruction is very far from negative theology to the extent that the latter is involved in what Derrida terms an 'ontological wager of hyperessentiality' which deconstruction would wholly reject.[8] John Caputo, in commenting on the relation between what he terms the 'armed neutrality' of deconstruction and negative theology makes the same point but adds that one might find traces of deconstruction in the texts of authors such as Meister Eckhart: 'while it would be comical to find a negative theology in deconstruction, it would not be at all surprising to find deconstruction in negative theology—as a practice, as a strategy, as a way that negative theologians have found to hold the claims of cataphatic theology at bay.'[9]

I have already described the necessity for multiplicity and the inherently divided nature of 'identity'—of a language and also of a subject. In Chapter Four I illustrated the strange relation between a subject and language as a promise to and from the other; so that while we have only one language, it is not our own. Language is rather 'for the other, coming from the other, *the* coming of the other.'[10] Such a divided identity and divided relation with language means that while the subject may be unique, its uniqueness is without unity.[11] For this reason in order to speak it is necessary always to be 'more than one,' several voices are necessary for speech.[12] This is 'exemplarily' the case, claims Derrida, when the theme of speech is God.[13] This multiplicity of voices needed to speak to and of the absolute other, multiplies itself even further in 'the white voice' of negative theology or *apophasis*.[14] However we should bear in mind that 'God' here, for Derrida could name many things, anything which can only be approached in an indirect way, including the absolute other:

> Every time I say: X is neither this nor that […] I would start to speak of
> God, under this name or another. God's name would then be the hyper-
> bolic effect of that negativity or all negativity that is consistent in its dis-
> course. God's name would suit everything that may not be broached,
> approached, or designated, except in an indirect and negative manner.
> Every negative sentence would already be haunted by God or by the name
> of God, the distinction between God and God's name opening up the very
> space of this enigma.[15]

Negative theology is a discourse whose very borders are difficult to
establish. It is not possible to say that there is *one* or *the* negative theol-
ogy.[16] Because of this ambiguity of belonging, *apophasis* has expanded
to designate a certain sceptical attitude to language and to predicative
attribution in particular. Derrida contends it has therefore come to share
a certain 'family resemblance' with any discourse that proceeds in a nega-
tive manner, from Plotinus up to Wittgenstein.[17] Despite this, there
are two traits common to the *apophasis* of Dionysius, Silesius or even
Augustine: the prayer and the apostrophe to the disciple, both of which
are tied to the notion of testimony.

Taking Augustine as the first example of this apostrophe, the question
is, to whom are these writings addressed and why? Augustine writes the
Confessions to his brothers in love of God.[18] He asks why he would con-
fess, why he would perform this autobiographical testimony, to a God
who already knows all. For Derrida, Augustine's response reveals that tes-
timony in its essence is not concerned with the 'transmission of positive
knowledge.'[19] Rather Augustine's writing performs an act of charity and
of love, love of Christ demonstrated as love of men. Augustine writes to
provoke, or 'stir up', love among men and towards God.[20] Derrida offers
two reasons why Augustine's testimony must be written. First, in this way
it will be made public and therefore reach the greatest number of men.
Second, and perhaps more interestingly in terms of my concerns; a writ-
ten testimony ensures its own sur-vival and it is this element of sur-vival
that is for Derrida the very essence of testimony itself. Testimony must
sur-vive, it must continue to bear witness beyond the moment of its own
creation. Augustine writes not only for his contemporary readers but also
because he wishes to effect love and fraternity in the future; to 'leave a

trace for his brothers to come' so that the 'moment of writing is done for "afterwards".'[21] Furthermore, this moment of writing is not only done *for* afterwards but *is itself* an 'afterwards'. What Augustine confesses or testifies to is his own spiritual journey, 'a conversion of existence.'[22] The writing that Augustine leaves for afterwards, for his brothers to come, takes place *after* this conversion:

> But it [the writing] also follows the conversion. It remains the trace of a present moment of the confession that would have no sense without such a conversion, without this address to the brother readers: as if the act of confession and of conversion having *already* taken place between God and him, being as it were written (it is an *act* in the sense of archive or memory), it was necessary to add a *post-scriptum*—the *Confessions*, nothing less—addressed to brothers, […] the address to God itself already implies the possibility and the necessity of this *post-scriptum* that is originally essential to it.[23]

Testimony is always an act of memory; even in its 'wildest present' it writes a post-scriptum to an experience remembered *for* an other and addressed *to* an other. Augustine's confession and conversion take place or are *written* as an act between himself and God. Yet for Derrida what is essential to this act, this writing, is the possibility and necessity of its repetition or quotation which are inscribed in the structure of every mark. In this way when Augustine writes the *Confessions* he is writing after writing, hence the *Confessions* itself becomes a scriptum-post-scriptum. It is a quotation to his brothers in love of his own address to God.

This style of writing afterwards, of a writing that turns towards the other while at the same time being turned towards and addressed to God, is also employed by Dionysius. Autobiographical writing can take place only as an address to the other which must also be turned to the other of the other at the same time. For if autobiography is to write oneself, to relate to oneself through the mediation of language, and if language is both from and to the other; then the self-relation of autobiography is not possible before the relation to the other.[24] Derrida cites Dionysius' *Mystical Theology* which begins with a prayer. Dionysius writes his prayer addressed to a 'you', who is God, and after having done so he writes: '[t]his

is my prayer. And *you*, dear Timothy.'[25] The text is thus addressed to more than one 'you'. *After* having prayed Dionysius writes his prayer, quotes his prayer in a post-scriptum, addressed to his own disciple Timothy whom Dionysius wishes to lead on the path to God.

Turning towards the other in order to lead is not the simple turning *away* from the initial addressee, God. Rather, this apostrophe to the other is only made possible by *not* turning away from God. 'It is exactly because he does not turn away from god that he can turn toward Timothy and *pass from one address to the other without changing direction*.'[26] What makes this apostrophe possible is the possibility of quotation and of repetition in general. It is because the prayer can be quoted and repeated in an apostrophe that one can address more than one other (here God and Timothy) at the same time. So that through quotation, through the post-scriptum, one can speak to 'several people at once […] from one you to the other.'[27] I might add that the address is also *from* several people at once, in that Dionysius addresses God as supplicant and Timothy as teacher, so that both the one who addresses and the one who is addressed are several. Furthermore, this 'being turned towards more than one' is precisely the position of the translator. The translator, in the ordinary understanding of translation, is turned towards both the author and the future reader of her work at the same time.

This writing after writing is not unlike translation, another post-scriptum to the extent that it is 'the nonoriginal version of textual event that will have preceded it.'[28] If the writing of *apophasis* takes place under the name of charity or love for the other (in order to lead her to God), then at its heart is the hope of sharing, the hope that it will become a discourse shared among men like the very word of God. This desire to be shared is also the desire for sur-vival, a demand for translation, even for 'an incomparable translatability in principle without limit.'[29] Translation and apophatic discourse share this movement of love or of friendship towards the other in the hope of both sharing and testifying. In the reading of Blanchot, I mentioned Derrida's 'mad hypothesis' that one text can 'love' another, and within the context of a discussion of negative theology he returns to this point:

> Friendship and translation, then, and the experience of translation as friendship […] it is true that one imagines with difficulty a translation, in the current sense of the term, whether it is competent or not, without some *philein*, without some love or friendship, without some 'lovence' [*aimance*], as you would say, borne [*portée*] toward the thing, the text or the other to be translated. Even if hatred can sharpen the vigilance of a translator and motivate a demystifying interpretation, this hatred still reveals an intense form of desire, interest, indeed fascination.[30]

It is worth noting that a 'demystifying interpretation' would, for Derrida, be motivated by hatred. To explicate, to fail to respect the essential ambiguity at a play in a text or in an other would be to perform a violence. Of course at the same time this ambiguity can only ever be partially respected, so that violence here remains inescapable. The law of the to-be-read or to-be-translated is a violent double bind. A text demands to be read, translated, touched in order to live; while at the same time, forbidding its transformation into something that can be conveniently appropriated into the economy of one's own.[31]

The phrase 'the text or the other to be translated' may lead one to think that Derrida ends up in a type of linguistic solipsism where everything is reduced to the endless play of language. However, 'text' is not reducible to words written on a page but rather encompasses experience, situations or relations between people. As Timothy Mooney has pointed out, language in Derrida 'is any system of indications articulated for or apprehended by a conscious subject.' As such, the word 'text' 'can denote a certain context or segment of the world or the world as a general text.'[32] This broadening of the concept of text is due to an expanded or deconstructed notion of writing which emerges from a historical engagement with that term. In my reading of Derrida's commentary on Husserl in Chapter Three, I highlighted the manner in which Derrida argued for the impossibility of a pure unmediated presence of meaning to the self *im selben Augenblick*. For Husserl as read by Derrida 'the moment of crisis' was the moment of signs, since signs as exterior carried within them the possibility of the death of the living voice.[33] For Derrida, this possibility of the death of the living voice was not 'crisis' but rather the essential and necessary possibil-

ity of a sign's sur-vival. Derrida argues that this understanding of signs as 'crisis' is not particular to Husserl.

The general understanding of writing as a derivative practice which 'comes after' living speech emerges from what Derrida terms 'the epoch of the logos.' This epoch is also where signifier and signified are distinguished absolutely and made radically exterior to each other. While this difference between signifier and signified belongs to the entire history of metaphysics, it reaches its most explicit articulation in 'the epoch of Christian creationism and infinitism when these appropriate the resources of Greek conceptuality.'[34] This description would capture precisely the tradition of *apophasis* which promises the presence of a signified in the realm of the intelligible before its 'fall' into sensible exteriority. This promise is of an absolute logos or divinity to which the subject may be united.[35] Derrida's consistent claim, throughout his work, is that this interior/exterior division or border is not impermeable, but is always already porous. As such language presupposes writing to the extent that signs, spoken or inscribed, are exterior and interior at the same time. Language can no longer be understood as that which is 'preceded by a truth or a meaning already constituted by and within the element of a logos' and writing can no longer be understood as that which follows 'a signifier itself signifying an eternal verity, eternally thought and spoken in the proximity of a present logos.'[36]

Bearing this in mind, it becomes clear that in referring to 'the text, or the other to be translated' Derrida is not referring to a book as a closed totality whose translation could therefore be finished or complete. Rather that the text 'or the other' (which would also be a text in the Derridean sense) are to-be-translated; transformed though their entanglement between inside and outside. This transformation, however, should not be understood as secondary, as an event that happens to some pre-existing identity. Rather it is the relation of one to the other that brings 'identities' (which are nonetheless never fixed nor unified) to light. As Davis aptly summarizes:

> When a translator, or translating culture, reaches to translate a 'foreign' text, both the translator and the foreign become co-defined; they do not, as such, pre-exist this gesture. Each initiating gesture, specific of course to its

historical moment, designates identities […] that emerge through exclusions. That which is excluded in order for these identities to emerge is the 'wholly other'. The irreducibly foreign, then, does not lie waiting in the source text, but *becomes* with the conception of the translation.[37]

Further, the move towards the other is a movement of love, where love is understood as surrendering to the other. Love as a movement towards the other without crossing their threshold, in fact respecting and even loving 'the invisibility that keeps the other inaccessible.'[38] This movement of love is akin to that of desire. Derrida echoes the Levinasian account of desire which distinguishes it from need on the basis of fulfilment. For Levinas, need is that which can be fulfilled through a movement of appropriation. If I am hungry I satisfy my hunger by eating and thus the need disappears. Desire, in contrast, is that which cannot be fulfilled. It is a movement towards the Other which only deepens the desire for the Other.[39] Derrida describes this as the necessity for desire to contain within itself its own interruption. If desire which moves us towards the other were to be wholly fulfilled, it would defeat not only the other's alterity, but also itself. In the erasure of the other through absolute appropriation that which is desired would also be erased. For this reason desire which seeks its own sur-vival must contain its own suspension within its movement.[40]

I mentioned above the manner in which the marriage of Christianity with certain Greek concepts, and certainly with the Neoplatonic tradition, gave birth to an understanding of writing as derivative. This marriage of traditions, while necessary and essential to any thinking that follows it, nonetheless takes part in, perhaps *the* part in, a metaphysics of presence wherein a transcendental signified guarantees the clear and distinct separation of sensible from intelligible or signifier from signified. In the tradition of *apophasis*, that transcendental signified would be God, even if it would be a God emptied of all predicates. Negative theology would be differentiated from deconstruction not only by the fact that the former posits this transcendental signified, but also by the hyperessentiality it accords it:

No, what I write is not 'negative theology'. First of all, *in the measure* to which this belongs to the predicative or judicative space of discourse, to its strictly propositional form, and privileges not only the indestructible unity of the word but also the authority of the name […] Next, in the measure to which 'negative theology' seems to reserve, beyond all positive predication, beyond all negation, even beyond Being, some hyperessentiality, a being beyond Being.[41]

Dionysius, for example, uses the term *hyperousiotes* in describing God as both beyond being and without being. Meister Eckhart describes God in the same way, while being careful to note that such propositions do not deny God being but rather exalt being in him.[42] This hyperessentiality is further testified to by the apophatic promise of presence, of a silent union with God. Despite the fact that this is certainly a 'vision of a dark light,' a union with the ineffable, it remains for Derrida the possibility of an absolute union in absolute presence. Citing Dionysius, Derrida notes that this union is a type of unknowing, an emptying of predicative knowledge to reveal a truth that is not adequation but unveiling—a peculiarly Heideggerian term. Nonetheless, it remains tied to the notion of an elevation towards pure unmediated presence. This presence is arrived at through a process of emptying and negating. As Derrida notes, this process would in fact have to negatively travel back and through all the stages of positive theology in order to negate the predicates it attaches to God. As such negative theology remains 'co-extensive' with its positive counterpart precisely because it does not, and could not, contain its own interruption within this movement. 'It can only indefinitely defer the encounter with its own limit.'[43] There are two claims being proposed by Derrida here.

On the one hand *apophasis* does not break completely from positive theology in that it takes its terms from the latter, negating them or emptying them with a 'without'.[44] Second, its 'limit' here is both its telos and its origin from which it emerges and with which it promises a reunion.[45] This limit may well not be reached, in that it is 'indefinitely deferred', but it acts as a transcendental signified, here (un)named as God or the Trinity. In fact, as Derrida makes clear, apophatic texts reveal a place of waiting wherein one awaits the 'realization of the promise.'[46] This

promise is the promise of the return of Christ with whom the initiated would then be reunited. Deconstruction would thus be markedly different in that at play is not only the *deferral* of a limit, telos or origin, but also that limit's differentiation with itself. Under deconstruction, each time a limit or signified would seem assured it is again brought under question. Différance names difference and deferral, and the decision of which of these it names remains suspended, interrupted and divided from within.

Despite these differences between negative theology and deconstruction, I do not wish to suggest that they share no affinities. One of the most striking of these is a shared distrust of the primacy of intuitive fulfilment, a primacy that Derrida finds particularly (and problematically) prominent in phenomenology. For Derrida then apophasis destabilizes 'the very axiomatic of the phenomenological, which is also the ontological and transcendental.'[47] In other words, because *apophasis* is the emptying of discourse of intuitive fulfilment, it becomes essentially a critique of ontology, theology, and language by performing the inherent inadequation of language to God. Negative theology says first of all that language, particularly predicative language, is always inadequate to the task of thinking the impossible. Negative theology calls for language to be used otherwise. Furthermore, Derrida claims negative theology forms its own language within its very critique of language.[48]

Negative theology can be said to be a language for two related reasons. First its statements are imitable (as with any statements in any language) and second its practitioners follow within a certain tradition. The form of negative theology is essentially to do without content, to do without images or names of God. As a form then it can be copied, imitated, or become mechanical.[49] This threat of repetition, which Derrida also claims is the threat of becoming an exercise in translation, is nonetheless what gives negative theology its 'chance'.[50] The structure of the mark, of language in general, demands the possibility of repetition. Because a statement can be repeated it can be language, equally, because a statement can always be translated (while remaining at the same time untranslatable), it can be a language. As such negative theology must risk mechanical repetition or imitation in order to *say anything at all*; even if what it says is immediately denegated.[51]

Negative theology leaves behind a number of works which together form a corpus or body or archive. 'These works repeat traditions,'[52] each work comes *after* another work and is therefore in a position to repeat it. That is not to say to write the *same* thing, but rather that negative theologians such as Dionysius supplemented what went before. In this model of supplementarity they contributed to the sur-vival of negative theology, in much the same way that a translation enables the sur-vival of any text. Derrida notes of Silesius that 'already he was repeating, continuing, importing, transporting. He would transfer or translate in the all senses of this term because he already *was post-writing*.'[53] In other words, Silesius was writing *after* other negative theologians, writing within a tradition which he furthered through his own work. Nonetheless, as with any language, negative theology cannot be absolutely demarcated. This is what allows Derrida to link it with a number of other discourses including those of Heidegger, Levinas and Wittgenstein—authors whom Derrida sees as in some way repeating this tradition through, for example, their distrust of predicative language.[54] Negative theology in seeking to exceed both essence and language nonetheless testifies to itself in language; it leaves its mark in its corpus. This corpus is traced by the movement of *kenosis*, the desertification of language which nevertheless sur-vives in its own language.

Apophasis keeps the name of God 'safe' by keeping it hidden or removed from language. As such the name of God—unsaid, hidden, safe—would name the emptying of language which would never quite reach this name. Yet this keeping safe takes place both *in* language, inscribed in the corpus and tradition of *apophasis*, and *on* language which becomes traced by the negative operation:

> Certainly the 'unknowable God', the ignored or unrecognized God that we spoke about says nothing: of him there is nothing said that might hold. —Save his name [*Sauf son nom*][55]—Save the name that names nothing that might hold, not even a divinity, nothing whose withdrawal does not carry away every phrase that tries to measure itself against him. 'God' 'is' the name of this bottomless collapse, of this endless desertification of language.[56]

Such prepositions of in, on and even 'to reach' or 'to *arrive at* the name' imply a place of some sort and the name of God (like death) has often been associated with a place.[57] Negative theology threads the name of God to the experience of place, a place most often configured as a desert. '*The place is the word* [of God]' says Silesius, and given my earlier examination of Babel this should hardly be surprising. For if in the beginning there was the word and that word was already divided (as 'name of God'/'name of city'/'confusion') in its division it opened the possibility of space or of place. The spacing of language opens the possibility of place. This place, notes Derrida, is not a place in which we find the subject but is rather a place *in* the subject, a place where it is *impossible* to go. For Derrida, negative theology names the necessity of 'doing the impossible', that is, of going towards the other (in the subject/outside the subject) beyond the name of the other. To go towards only the name of the other, is to go towards a *possible* place. In this there would be no decision, no movement towards the alterity of the other. 'The sole decision possible passes through the madness of the undecidable and the impossible: to go where (*wo*, *Ort*, *Wort*) it is impossible to go.'[58] The place (*Ort*) of the word (*Wort*) is the place of the name of God.

The words of negative theology, in seeking to empty themselves of a clear referent attempt to move beyond the name, forcing the impossible or God to lose his name. The name allows us to move towards the other, it acts as a bridge we can traverse towards the other, but in so doing it is also what prevents the other from being an absolute other. To 'lose' the name then is the impossible: It is to move towards the other while simultaneously forgetting that which makes the movement possible. As Derrida notes, whatever name we give to God becomes an example of a name of God in a particular tongue and then an example of names in general; henceforth substitutable and translatable.[59] The name of God, even if it remains unsaid in silent union, would be the name of any other and it is this which is impossible. For Derrida:

> The other is God or no matter whom, more precisely, no matter what singularity, as soon as any other is totally other [*tout autre est tout autre*]. For the most difficult, indeed the impossible, resides there: there where the other loses its name or can change it, to become no matter what other.[60]

As soon as any or every [*tout*] other is every or totally [*tout*] other they become unnameable; they sever themselves from language exceeding and transcending its predicates. In this sense God would be but a metonym for the absolutely other. However, there is also a violence in this, an indifference to the alterity of the other in that they become 'no matter whom'. How do we respect the other in their alterity without reducing them to a homogenous 'any' other? This, for Derrida, is the double bind of language. For while the proper name permits an approach to the other, it is also that which 'risks to bind, to enslave or to engage the other, to link the called, to call him/her to respond even before any decision or any deliberation, even before any freedom.'[61] I will return, in the last section of this chapter, to this double bind and to the phrase *tout autre est tout autre.* Before doing so I want to look at another figure of absolute alterity: Death.

The Place of Death

If 'God' is one name of absolute alterity, then 'Death' is another and in this section I will examine Derrida's reading of Heidegger's Being-towards-death in *Being and Time.* Derrida here interrogates the possibility of either an absolute alterity or an absolute limit; as such it will illuminate part of Derrida's understanding of the subject/other relation. Derrida compares Heidegger's fundamental ontology with negative theology, claiming that the latter's existential analysis of death is both a unique account and also a repetition of the Christian-Greek tradition: another text in the European archive of death.[62] What is consistently refused for Derrida, contra Heidegger, is 'the pure possibility of cutting off.'[63] As a result of the impossibility of absolute demarcation the very possibility of an absolute other who or which would lie behind such an indivisible border comes under question. I will describe death in terms of the absolute *arrivant*, the impossible (other) and the *impossibility* of this impossible *as possible*. In the background of this description will be the motifs of border-crossing, language and hospitality.

One could read Derrida's 1993 text *Apories* as a certain performance of the form of negative theology for three reasons. First, the text is a kind

of apostrophe turned towards 'you' as a means of thanks, of *remerciement*, a movement of 'mercy' not unlike the apostrophe of Dionysius. This apostrophe is also turned to multiple others, many 'you's.[64] As noted above it is only by addressing many others at once that an address as such is possible. Second, Derrida on several occasions quotes himself, like Augustine, Meister Eckhart and Dionysius who quote their prayer in a post-scriptum.[65] And finally because Derrida quite deliberately employs the style or form of negative theology in order to describe an impossible responsibility, duty or decision—the aporia:

> How to justify the choice of *negative form* (*aporia*) to designate a duty that, through the impossible or the impracticable, nonetheless announces itself in an affirmative fashion? […] The affirmation that announced itself through a negative form was therefore the necessity of *experience* itself, the experience of the aporia (and these two words that tell of the passage and the nonpassage are thereby coupled in an aporetic fashion) as endurance or as passion, as interminable resistance or remainder.[66]

Further on I will examine this 'affirmation in negative form' which constitutes experience and which I will argue is best understood as sur-viving translating. For now I return to Derrida's claim that 'experience is translation.'[67] That is to say, experience which always emerges from différance, is necessarily undecidable and incomplete. There is always in experience something that escapes (a remainder) that resists absolute presence. There is always another way that experience could unfold, could have unfolded or might yet unfold. Derrida thinks experience, passage, and the non-passage of the aporia, together. If experience is 'passage' it is not surprising that is linked to translation—the passage from one language to another. However, the 'experience of the aporia' would be the 'passage of the non-passage'. For Derrida there is no path without an aporia; to think path or way one must think of the necessity of an impossible decision. A decision cannot be a responsible decision if it is only or merely possible. A decision cannot *limit* itself to determined or determinable pathways; it cannot be the deployment of a program for this would not be a decision at all.[68]

The nexus of possible pathways amongst which it is impossible to choose is the aporia, itself suspended between three possible translations giving rise to what Derrida terms a 'plural logic of the aporia.'[69] On the one hand, 'aporia' is generally translated as 'impasse' or 'non-passage'; the experience of an absolutely closed, impermeable, and un-crossable border. On the other hand, the experience of the aporia could arise from the absence of opposition. The aporia here could be a limit so porous that one could not speak of 'crossing' it.[70] Third and finally, there is the impossible aporia wherein there is non-passage because there is not even the space for an aporia, there is no spatial figure of a limit. In the first two cases there was a step across a border or a step that no longer crossed a border, in this third example the step itself becomes impossible because there is no space in which to step. 'There is no more path (*odos*, *methodos*, *Weg*, or *Holzweg*). The impasse itself would be impossible […] no more *trans-* (transport, transposition, transgression, translation, and even transcendence).'[71] I read this impossible aporia as the aporia of no *différance*. The absence of the spatio-temporal lag, the absence of differentiation and deferral, would indeed be the impossible and absolute aporia; this aporia could not even be experienced as such. These three translations of aporia are not opposed to each other, but rather each one 'installs the haunting of the one in the other.'[72] Aporia then, is all three of these translations moving one over the other, effacing, erasing and haunting one another in an undecideable play.

In *Being and Time* Heidegger describes death as 'the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein.'[73] Derrida proposes to read this possible impossible in light of the impossible aporia and under the framework of crossing borders.[74] He wishes to show that, as with any work, there are aporias in Heidegger's account which interrupt his proposed hierarchy and lead *Being and Time* to 'ruination'.[75] It would be too rash to describe this simply as a criticism of Heidegger. Derrida rather sees his reading as properly welcoming the 'event' of *Being and Time*. A work which really brings about thinking is one which exceeds its own borders, or at least exceeds the borders that it gives to itself—it overflows its own categorical delimitation. For Derrida the point where it does this, where it surpasses its own definition of itself, would be 'at this locus where it *experiences the aporia*.'[76] I emphasized earlier the manner in which suspension for

Derrida can set things in motion, that untranslatability or unreadability set both translation and reading in motion again.[77] Derrida employs a similar logic here in viewing the impasse of the aporia as setting in motion a surplus of pathways, an overflowing of the borders of determination. Derrida's reading of Heidegger through the aporias of *Being and Time* is an opening of the text beyond itself, and therefore might be better understood not as 'criticism', but rather as an exercise in deconstructive hospitality.

Derrida points out that in accounts of death, from Seneca to Heidegger, death is described as imminent 'at every instant'—it is always arriving.[78] The question then is how we might await this arrival. What is an *arrivant*? How does death arrive to us? How are we to await it?[79] Awaiting the *arrivant* is tied to the experience of the aporia and the possibility of this experience. If the aporia is the experience of the impossible decision, Derrida's concern is what takes place in the aporia: how we are to find a passage out of it or surpass it?[80] The word *arrivant* in French can mean 'newcomer', 'arrival' or 'arriving'. For Derrida it is a word both very familiar and uncanny. I noted above that in the phrase *il y va d'un certain pas* the *il* could be both a neutral 'it' or the masculine personal pronoun of 'he'. Similarly *arrivant* can be read neutrally as '*that which* arrives,' an event or a happening. Alternatively, it can be read as 'the singularity of *who* arrives, he or she who comes,' a person, an other who comes to us.[81]

We await this *arrivant* without expecting them, without knowing what it is that we are expecting; this for Derrida is 'hospitality itself, hospitality toward the event.'[82] It may at first seem that this awaiting entails waiting for one who crosses the threshold; waiting for the other who would come through the threshold of one's home. Yet for Derrida, the absolute *arrivant* would change the very experience of the threshold. To know where the border is would be to already identify a 'same' and an 'other', it would be to posit the other as one's *own* other in opposition to oneself. This would be to already efface the absoluteness of the other's alterity. As Derrida notes if the *arrivant* is 'new', that is unknown, and if we are to await them without expecting them, then this *arrivant* cannot 'simply cross a given threshold.'[83] Rather, the *arrivant* would in fact bring to light a threshold which we did not even know was there and would arrive before we knew there had been a call or invitation to them.

The call to the other would presuppose the possibility of the call, that is, the possibility of naming or in some way identifying. As such, to speak of the absolute *arrivant* is not to speak of the refugee, or the traveller or the émigré. While these are certainly figures of the *arrivant* they nonetheless arrive from an identifiable place, they cross a demarcated border into a place where people 'belong' or feel at home. Nor can we think of the *arrivant* as colonizer or invader, for this too presupposes identity and demarcated borders.[84] The *arrivant* is not even a guest, so that the arrival of the *arrivant* does not simply 'surprise' the host (who was not even expecting her), but in fact annihilates any and every form of prior identity. Since the *arrivant* is without identity even the *place* where she/it arrives is for Derrida 'de-identified.'[85] We do not yet know where the *arrivant* arrives, in what language or in what country.

The *arrivant* could not command but is rather 'commanded by the memory of some originary event where the archaic is bound with the *final* extremity, with the finality par excellence of the *telos* or of the *eskhaton*.'[86] If this absolute other, who could not even be described as another *person* but simply *other*, is commanded by the memory of an event where telos and arche are bound together, could we say that this other is God? Derrida certainly in these passages echoes the language of *apophasis* ('without' 'neither/nor' and so on), but is this to promise a 'being that can still be, beyond what is said?'[87] In examining the structure of this 'memory' and this 'promise' we can see that this is not the case. The *arrivant* commanded by a 'memory' must in fact be commanded of a memory of the *future*. The *arrivant*, though it 'even exceeds the order of any *determinable* promise,'[88] indeed any determinable name, is nonetheless emptily promised. It is the promise of the most impossible yet to come who/which we wait for without expecting.[89]

For Heidegger, the manner in which Dasein awaits death is of a particular order. It is not expectation; we do not expect death in the way that we expect other possibilities. Rather, authentic Being-towards-death is one of resolute-anticipation where we *own* the certainty of our own death along with its absolute indefiniteness. Authenticity is to own the possibility of our own impossibility *as* possibility (certain but indefinite).[90] Derrida wishes to read this account of anticipatory possible-impossible of Heidegger along the border of what the *arrivant* makes possible:

Now the border that is ultimately most difficult to delineate, because it is always already crossed, lies in the fact that the absolute *arrivant* makes possible everything to which I have just said it cannot be reduced, starting with the humanity of man, which some would be inclined to recognize in all that erases, in the *arrivant*, the characteristic of (cultural, social, or national) belonging and even metaphysical determination (ego, person, subject, consciousness, etc.). It is on this border that I am tempted to read Heidgger. Yet this border will always keep one from discriminating among the figures of the *arrivant*, the dead, and the *revenant* (the ghost, he, she, or that which returns).[91]

The absolute *arrivant* would be impossible as possible, in that it is that which might yet arrive but can never arrive *as such*. This impossibility to delimit or identify as 'belonging to', makes delimitation and identification possible. How does this operate? In Derrida's reading of Husserl the set of 'essential distinctions' posited by the latter were radically interrogated to reveal the manner in which they could never *in fact* be arrived at in their purity. The distinction between, for example, signifier and signified could not be maintained as pure, so that each term was already contaminated by the other. While a signifier could be somewhat separated from a signified, it could be thus only through the use of other signifiers and therefore not absolutely separated. These Husserlian distinctions were consequently characterized by Derrida as possible only on the basis of their impossibility.[92] What is erased in the *arrivant* are the characteristics of belonging and metaphysical determination. However, it is these very concepts (belonging, determination) that Derrida posits as impossible as such; their possibility is their impossibility. Because belonging is itself ambiguous, as we saw for example with the issue of the proper name, we cannot guarantee our absolute belonging to a culture, a nation, a language and so on. That belonging is itself not only always contaminated by what it excludes; it is made *possible* by that which it excludes. What is glimpsed in this experience of the *impossible* (determination or belonging) is the figure of the arrivant who makes the indeterminate belonging or determination itself *possible*.

Derrida reads Heidegger's existential analysis under his own heading which is: 'Dying—awaiting (one another at) "the limits of truth".'[93] This

phrase also plays on the experience of awaiting the *arrivant*. The German term *die Möglichkeit* has two senses of possibility which Heidegger plays with. It has both the sense of expecting something, the imminence of the future; and the sense of ability, the potentiality to do something.[94] As Derrida notes, Heidegger insists that Dasein is not an entity like an object which stands before the subject. Other disciplines make the mistake of locking Dasein into an ontological determination which is not its own, they make it *Vorhandensein* or 'present-at-hand' rather than understanding it as *Möglichsein* or 'Being-possible'. The limit drawn between Dasein, *Vorhandensein* and *Zuhandensein* [ready-to-hand] is thus crucial in the Heideggerian schema. It is on the basis of this limit that Heidegger separates his own analysis from all other analyses of death and marks it as both *fundamental* and *universal*. Since Being-possible is the Being proper to Dasein, the existential analysis must make possibility its theme and, since death is the 'possibility par excellence', '[d]eath exemplarily guides the existential analysis.'[95] Derrida identifies two types of ontological statements on possibility which supplement each other. There are first of all assertions which say that death is Dasein's most proper possibility,[96] and then there are aporetic supplements to these statements which 'add a complement of impossibility to possibility.'[97]

Heidegger describes death as 'unveiling' itself as Dasein's most proper possibility which it must face alone in anxiety. As Derrida notes the certainty around death is marked for Heidegger as distinctive from all other certainty; death is *the most* certain while remaining *the most* indeterminate. However, there are also statements characterized by the introduction of impossibility to Dasein's most proper possibility. This leads to a certain paradoxical situation for Derrida. The introduction of impossibility raises the issue of the proper and the improper. Heidegger describes death as a possibility of Dasein which is a possibility *as* impossibility.[98] Derrida's question is how can this possibility as impossibility appear *as such*, that is without its impossibility (for it has now appeared and cannot be said to be impossible) immediately disappearing? Once this 'possibility as impossibility as such' disappears it takes with it all that distinguished Dasein from other living things and it forces the contamination of properly dying with perishing and demising.[99]

François Raffoul argues that Derrida's reading here is particularly violent.[100] Derrida cites the following line from Heidegger: 'The more unveiledly this possibility gets understood, the more purely does the understanding penetrate into it *as the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all* [*als die der Unmöglichkeit der Existenz überhaupt*].'[101] Derrida emphasizes that the *als* here marks death not just as a 'possibility *of* impossibility' but also as 'possibility *as* impossibility'. Raffoul argues that Heidegger consistently describes death as 'possibility *of* impossibility' and not 'possible *as* impossible' although he makes no comment on this *als* which is crucial to Derrida's interpretation. Raffoul's main point of contention seems to be that Derrida collapses the impossible and possible in Heidegger by confusing possibility with actuality.[102] However, it seems that what Derrida is most objecting to in Heidegger is the *as such*; that we can have a relation to death as a definite possibility (of our own impossibility). Derrida's point lies much more in the fact that mediation or dissimulation is inescapable; which means the relation with death is always somewhat mediated or dissimulated and cannot be 'owned' purely.

Death, in Heidegger's analysis, as impossibility for Dasein 'can appear as such and announce itself; it can *make itself awaited* or *let itself be awaited* as possible and as such.'[103] Derrida's point is that the impossibility of Dasein that Heidegger names 'death' is the disappearance of the 'as such' and the disappearance of the possibility of a relation with the phenomenon of the 'as such'.[104] In other words, Heidegger says that my Being-possible or Being-towards-possibilities is structurally demarcated by my Being-towards-the-possibility-of-my-impossibility. This possibility (of my own impossibility) appears to me as such; that is, my own impossibility appears to me as such and as a possibility. Yet this cannot be the case, argues Derrida, for my impossibility is the annihilation of possibilities. As a Being-possible this could not appear to me as such. The impossibility of the 'as such' is what cannot appear as such. Furthermore, this disappearing of the 'as such' is found in all experiences of death; all living things perishing, demising or dying lose this 'as such'. This problematizes Heidegger's insistence that only Dasein dies whereas other living things perish. Derrida argues:

Against, or without Heidegger, one could point to a thousand signs that show that animals also *die.* […] one can say that animals have a very significant relation to death, to murder and to war (hence to borders), to mourning and to hospitality, and so forth, even if they have neither a relation to death nor to the 'name' of death as such, nor by the same token, to the other as such, to the purity as such of the alterity of the other as such. But neither does man, that is precisely the point! […] Who will guarantee that the name, the ability to name death (like that of naming the other, and it is the same) does not participate as much in the dissimulation of the 'as such' of death as in its revelation, and that language is not precisely the origin of the nontruth of death, and of the other?[105]

Heidegger asserts that Dasein has access to the *as such* of death and that this access is unique to Dasein, which is to say unique to man since man is 'the only example of Dasein.'[106] This, for Derrida, is to posit the possibility of purity. For Derrida, experience is born of mediation, differentiation, and delay. Death is 'the undecidable itself'[107] as is the absolute other. Naming death or naming the other ('and it is the same'), erases the *as such* of them both, or rather, erases the very *possibility of the as such*. Once something is named it becomes caught up in the system of differentiation and hence contamination. As Derrida continually points out, man or Dasein could therefore not have a relation to death as such. This is what Derrida means when he says that death is a 'metonym' for 'all that is only possible as impossible, if there is such a thing: love, the gift, the other, testimony, and so forth.'[108] What Derrida wishes to show in this reading of Heidegger, and as he points out the same would apply to Levinas *mutatis mutandis*, is that we must give up the idea of a fundamental demarcation or starting point.[109]

Even the aporia, which Derrida argues is 'the law of all decisions', is itself impossible. While we can with Derrida say that a decision is only truly a decision when we go through the trial of the undecidable or the aporia, Derrida's point is that '*the aporia can never simply be endured as such. The ultimate aporia is the impossibility of the aporia as such*.'[110] Ultimately the undecidable becomes decided, a passage is found among the multiplicity of pathways or even in the absence of pathways. The unreadable is read, the untranslatable translated. The aporia, for Derrida,

must remain impossible *as such*, because otherwise Derrida would be positing a ground, foundation, arché or telos. Like différance, the aporia is essentially ungraspable; once we name all the possible decisions or pathways, we have passed the aporia itself.

What is *impossible as such* can only be the *arrivant*, that is, some event/thing/person absolutely unknown and unexpected. This impossible is possible—the *arrivant* may arrive. However, once the arrivant arrives it can no longer be an *absolute arrivant*, we see it/her, we name it/her, we relate to it/her and so the absolute alterity becomes contaminated and no longer absolute. (However, as we will see further on, Derrida complicates this account of the *arrivant* through a particular understanding of the impossible.) For this reason we do not have a relation with Levinas's absolute Other or Heidegger's death; these things can only be *to come*. The relation to death, for Derrida, could only be a relation to perishing, the ending that all living things experience, or a relation to demising, that is Dasein's experience of dying. Or there would be a relation to the death of the other. In fact, for Derrida the death of the other is always first, the death of the other *to* me but also the death of the other *in* me.[111]

Heidegger's claim that death properly *belongs* to Dasein hinges upon that death being a *unified* experience—it is *Dasein's alone*. If we fully assume Derrida's argument that 'belonging to' (a language or an identity) is possible only as already divided and delimited, then death could not be experienced as a unitary mode of being but would rather have to be already contaminated by what is not properly belonging to Dasein. For this reason Derrida argues that death is Dasein's most *improper* possibility.[112]

Derrida problematizes the self-relation and the subject-other relation through what he terms 'originary mourning' which is also related to the notion of sur-vival. Every relation with the other is marked by death, mourning, and the double bind of taking the other into myself and at the same time respecting their absolute alterity. As Derrida notes, one could form a sort of 'triangular debate' on the relation with death and/or the other between Heidegger, Levinas and Freud.[113] Each of these thinkers, while engaging in a radical questioning of the traditional understanding of these relations, still begin with hastily presumed premises. With each thinker something is posited as 'fundamental': death for Heidegger, the

absolute Other for Levinas or the death drive for Freud.[114] For Derrida it is this 'fundamentalist dimension' that is impossible and untenable. He argues rather that each of these thinkers fail to acknowledge the role of originary mourning:

> This carrying of the mortal other 'in me outside me' instructs or institutes my 'self' and relation to 'myself' already before the death of the other. […] I speak of mourning as the attempt, always doomed to fail (thus a constitutive failure, precisely), to incorporate, interiorize introject, subjectivize the other in me. Even before the death of the other, the inscription in me of her or his mortality constitutes me. I mourn therefore I am, I am—dead with the death of the other, my relation to myself is first of all plunged into mourning, a mourning that is moreover impossible. This is also what I call ex-appropriation, appropriation caught in a double bind: I must and I must not take the other into myself; mourning is an unfaithful fidelity if it succeeds in interiorizing the other ideally in me, that is, in not respecting his or her infinite exteriority.[115]

I have already suggested (in Chapter Three) this understanding of translation as mourning. Unable to carry across all that a text might say, unable precisely because the text itself is delimited, translation mourns the loss of the inevitable remainder of its work. The untranslatable is concealed from a translation and in this way it 'manically mourns' its own loss which it simultaneously conceals from itself. The subject too is constituted in mourning, not only for the other whose death is presupposed in every relation, but also for itself and for the other *in* itself. The subject's relation to itself from the beginning 'welcomes or supposes the other within its being-itself as different from itself. And reciprocally: the relation to the other (in itself outside myself, outside myself in myself).'[116] This mourning pours forth in acts of survival. We leave traces of ourselves behind not merely as some ambition of immortality but as part of structural sur-vival. We are not simply Being-toward-death (Heidegger) or even being-towards-after-my-death for the other (Levinas) but rather constituted as being-sur-vival or quite simply sur-vival.

Derrida notes that in this way the question of whether or not my relation to death or my certainty of death begins with the death of the Other

(Levinas) or my own proper death (Heidegger) is always 'limited from the start.'[117] To decide to begin from *here* with the self (Heidegger) or from *there* with the other (Levinas) is to already presuppose a border between the two that can be identified, determined and assured and to make this border foundational. Derrida notes that Heidegger begins *here* with Dasein and *here* with Dasein's death and while this is a decision that Heidegger 'decisively takes' it is also a decision that Heidegger remains somewhat anxious about.[118] In terms of Levinas one might object that Levinas precisely does not limit the Other who is 'infinite' and beyond any such limitation. However, we could say that even in describing the subject as 'ruptured' by the call of the other, there remains in Levinas a certain supposed unity of the *subject*. For Derrida, on the contrary, 'circumscription is the impossible'[119] and it is the foundational approach of Heidegger and Levinas (and others) which must be abandoned. Rather the subject/other relation must be thought in terms of hospitality and through the intermediary of the ghost. The guest/ghost/host relation constitutes one of survival and mourning. Against Heidegger and Levinas, or perhaps taking Heidegger and Levinas beyond themselves; Derrida proposes a spectral relation as the only possible relation. We must welcome the other with an 'open hospitality to the guest as *ghost* whom one holds, just as he holds us, hostage.'[120]

Mourning, Surviving, Translating

This understanding of the other as 'ghost' is tied with the figure of the *arrivant* whose arrival or the arrival of which (for it can be person or event) 'can only be greeted as a return, a coming back, a spectral *revenance*.'[121] Initially this formulation may seem somewhat paradoxical: if the *arrivant* is that which/who is to arrive how can Derrida claim its arrival is a return? The reason lies in the ambiguous 'impossible' relationship between repeatability and singularity. The absolute *arrivant* must for Derrida be a complete surprise, for the *arrivant* to retain its absolute alterity it cannot be identified or pre-identified—we cannot expect it. It is for this reason that Derrida argues it 'befalls' us coming vertically upon us from on high.[122] If the *arrivant* were to arrive horizontally, that

is within a horizon of expectation, it would not be a genuine surprise but rather something that we can predict, foresee, or foresay.[123] As such the coming of the *arrivant* must at least appear impossible before its arrival. Derrida is very clear however that this should not be read as meaning the *arrivant* never arrives but rather that before the arrival it seems impossible.[124]

This much would leave us to think of the *arrivant* as an absolute singular alterity and indeed Derrida does insist on this singularity. Nonetheless, the account becomes more complex once the arrival has taken place. We might think that once the *arrivant* arrives that they lose their uniqueness, it would seem once they appear in some way we can begin to apprehend them and thus erase part of their alterity. As Derrida notes, once the *arrivant* appears it can be repeated, for once we can *say* that it has appeared it becomes repeatable or iterable.[125] This is at least part of the reason for Derrida's emphasis on mourning, as he notes:

> Likewise, repetition must already be at work in the singularity of the event, and with the repetition, the erasure of the first occurrence is already underway—whence loss, mourning, and the posthumous, sealing the first moment of the event, as originary. Mourning is already there. One cannot avoid mixing tears with the smile of hospitality. Death is on the scene, in a way.[126]

However, it would be a mistake to then think that once the *arrivant* is 'on the scene' they definitively cease to be an *arrivant*. The absolute alterity of the *arrivant*—its impossibility—remains even after its arrival, haunting it as a *revenant* to come. For the *arrivant* to be an *arrivant* it/she must be a surprise, unpredictable, absolutely unidentifiable—in other words, impossible. Once it arrives, however, its former impossibility does not simply disappear.

To explain more clearly, let us take the example of forgiveness. Derrida notes that if someone injures me in some way this can only be forgiven if the injury is unforgiveable. If it is forgivable then it cannot be such a serious injury and therefore there is nothing to really forgive. Nevertheless, once I forgive, the injury cannot then become 'forgivable' since this would erase the forgiveness itself. What Derrida argues here is that the unforgiveable nature of the injury remains in order to make forgiveness

itself possible. For there to be forgiveness there must be unforgiveability, this unforgiveability makes forgiveness possible and continues to haunt the forgiveness even after it has taken place.[127] The issue is the same with the *arrivant* the impossibility of which continues to haunt its possibility. 'We should speak here of the impossible event, an impossible that is not merely impossible, that is not merely the opposite of possible, that is also the condition or chance of the possible.'[128]

The repeatability of the *arrivant*'s singularity is in no way the annihilation of this singularity. Rather we must, for Derrida, think these two things together. I want to emphasize the ambiguity of the *arrivant* which or who on the one hand is impossible but which is also possible. I want to highlight the fact that in every other there remains something of the *arrivant*: 'that which in the other gives me no advance warning and which exceeds precisely the horizontality of expectation.'[129] My claim then is that even the other I know, the other within my horizon, retains at the same time something *arrivant* and this would also be the case for the other(s) in me.

Patrick O'Connor has argued that Derrida is a philosopher of 'this-world', is 'radically atheistic' and that claims which read Derrida as ethical are in certain ways misguided.[130] O'Connor on a number of occasions captures the ambiguity of Derrida's position on the subject/other relation. He notes, for example, 'that in all his writings, Derrida sustains alterity and worldliness in irreducible tension.'[131] However, O'Connor consistently argues that Derrida does not allow for an absolute other. In an examination of Mark Dooley's reading of Derrida, O'Connor argues that Dooley makes the 'mistake' of wishing to 'welcome the stranger while preserving their difference.'[132] For O'Connor the absolute other is absolutely ruled out by deconstruction. I would argue, however, that in wishing to rule out the 'absolute other' O'Connor falls prey to the very logic he uses to criticize so-called 'ethical' readings of Derrida.

To claim that Derrida banishes absolute alterity (or equally that Derrida is a 'radical atheist' or that 'deconstruction is profanation') is to re-inscribe the binary thinking that Derrida seeks to subvert. As I have argued above, the other retains something (unknown, unexpectable) *arrivant*. If this was not the case, then the other would *never* be able to surprise. *Tout autre est tout autre* can mean 'every other is every other', and

hence there is no absolute alterity. Crucially, however, it can also mean 'every other is absolutely other'. For Derrida, both of these notions of alterity are at play in the other *at the same time*. The *arrivant* is always both, *and at the same time*, to come and a coming back. Derrida's notion of a messianism plays precisely upon this returning. However, as it is a 'messianism without a messiah', it is the return of that which is without a name—the *arrivant.*

To the *arrivant* in every other, to this irreducible singularity we must remain hospitable. Each time we welcome the other there is implied a promise to welcome them again for this repeatability is structurally necessary to the nature of hospitality. Because we imply this possibility of repetition we imply *re-venance*; the coming *again* of the other.[133] Derrida gives the example of certain Mexican cultures wherein it is traditional to welcome the guest to one's home with tears, to cry at the arrival of the other. The reason for this strange rite of hospitality is that newcomers are considered to be ghosts of the dead coming back and as such are to be greeted with tears of mourning.[134] For Derrida hospitality and mourning are related through the figure of the ghost, which is not to say that the one who comes (back) is not new:

> The coming is absolutely new. But the novelty of this coming implicates in and of itself the coming back. When I welcome a visitor, when I receive the visitation of the unexpected visitor, it must be a unique experience each and every time for it to be a unique, unpredictable, singular, and irreplaceable event. But at the same time, the repetition of the event must be presupposed, from the threshold of the house and from the arrival of the irreplaceable. 'I welcome you,' means, 'I promise to welcome you again.' It will not do to greet someone saying 'it's alright this time, but…' There must already be a promise of repetition. Just as in the 'yes' when I say, 'yes' to someone, the repetition of the 'yes' must be immediately implicated.[135]

Before examining the nature of this 'implied yes', this affirmation, I want to draw out the structural similarity here with translation. When I examined Derrida's reading of Benjamin I highlighted that the divergence between the two thinkers was found in their relation to the original. Benjamin asserted that in an original tenor and language were held

tightly together. Once translated however, the relation between tenor and language became slack. The relation was no longer the tight core or kernel of a fruit but a cloak loosely draped around a body.[136] As such for Benjamin a translation of a translation is not a true translation, and despite many of the positive descriptions he offers of translation as a life-giving act, he insists on a translation's derivative or secondary nature. Contrary to this, Derrida argued that the original itself was already a translation and that the demand for translation that Benjamin found in the 'original' was in fact a demand for translation *in a translation*. This demand did not diminish in further translations; rather for Derrida, every text (which is to say every translation) demands its own sur-vival in the form of a demand for further translation.[137]

This may at first seem unrelated to welcoming the other, mourning and hospitality. Nonetheless, my claim is that in every translation another translation is implied; either another translation of the 'original' or a translation of the translation. Each time an other is welcomed—an other text, an other person, an *arrivant*—that welcoming implies its own repetition in the same way that each translation implies another translation. This implied repetition or coming back haunts the initial event of hospitality as a promise of a future. It is to this promise of the future and its relation to sur-vival that I now turn.

For Derrida: '[t]here is a silent, unsayable 'yes' implicit in every sentence. A sentence starts out saying 'yes'.'[138] This 'yes' is linked to the promise of language which I discussed in Chapter Four. As I noted there, Derrida insists that each time we use language we make a promise to the other, a promise to give language which itself is always a gift from and of the other.[139] However, a promise is a particular kind of saying that does not report an event but rather produces it—it is performative rather than constative in the terms of speech act theory.[140] When we make a promise to someone we are not reporting an event to them or giving them information, we are *producing* an event. For Derrida this is produced in every use of language since the 'promise is the basic element of language.'[141] Each time we use language we are saying 'yes' to the other, since even if we say 'no' we are still responding to the other, acquiescing in some way to them with this almost pre-original 'yes' or promise. Derrida links this

in particular to Heidegger's *Zusage*, Rosenzweig's 'archi-original' yes and Levinas's 'yes to [the Other]'; with certain modifications of his own.[142]

Nevertheless, Derrida complicates this promise through the introduction of a possible threat. He claims that 'serious theorists of speech acts'[143] insist a promise is always of something good. A promise of something bad, such as 'I promise to kill you', is not really a promise but a threat. In contradistinction to this Derrida argues that a promise can only be a promise if there is a chance that it will be broken, or if what it promises turns out to be something bad. If I say for example, 'I promise to be at the meeting' but the meeting is taking place where I will already be anyway and my presence there is only incidental, then this is not really a promise but a prediction. Just as I outlined with the Derridean notion of a decision, which cannot be the mere deployment of a programme: 'a promise that cannot be broken, isn't a promise: it's a forecast, a prediction.'[144] Equally, a promise can at any moment become a threat, it can be the promise of a bad thing rather than a good thing; the threat is the 'chance' of the promise in the same way that the impossible was the chance of the possible.[145] What is of interest here is the manner in which this haunting of the possible by the impossible affects Derrida's call for the affirmation of sur-vival and originary mourning:

> I maintained that survival is an originary concept that constitutes the very structure of what we call existence, *Dasein*, if you will. We are structurally survivors, marked by this structure of the trace and of the testament. But, having said that, I would not want to encourage an interpretation that situates surviving on the side of death and the past rather than life and the future. No, deconstruction is always on the side of the *yes*, on the side of the affirmation of life. Everything I say [...] about survival as a complication of the opposition of life/death proceeds in me from an unconditional affirmation of life.[146]

Nonetheless, 'life' for Derrida is not simply the opposite of death: 'life *is* survival.'[147] So that when Derrida says deconstruction calls for a 'yes', for an 'affirmation of life', what is being affirmed is in fact survival 'which is *not to be added on* to living and dying.'[148] The 'yes' to survival, this promise of survival or to sur-vive is always under threat precisely because

it cannot be decided. What is affirmed or acquiesced to is neither life nor death and both life and death *at the same time*. When we say 'yes' to the other, to what is to come, we cannot know what we are saying yes to. This 'yes', this response, is itself a *revenant arrivant*. It is worth noting that 'response' from the Latin *respondere* means the return or coming back (*re-*) of the promise or oath (*spondere*). This 'yes' is the return of the promise of the future, the promise to continue to live, but also to live *after* death. It is a promise we entrust to the other yet to come without the guarantee of knowing how they will inherit it.

This, I claim, is the very structure of translation. As I noted in the examination of Derrida's reading of Benjamin, in every text 'the *surviving* dimension is an a priori—and death would not change it at all.'[149] There I was discussing the demand for translation operative in the 'original', the call out to 'the other as translator'. I also indicated the double bind of the law of the proper name which demands 'translate me, don't translate me.' This is exactly the manner of affirming sur-vival; translation is sur-vival inasmuch as experience is translation. Derrida offers a 'dogmatic syllogism' on his understanding of translation:

1. Quasi-parricide is the condition of translation;
2. Translation always and only translates the untranslatable;
3. Therefore quasi-parricide remains the condition of the translation of the untranslatable.[150]

I want to read this syllogism in terms of my argument which is that the subject is constituted in an originary translating as sur-vival through the relation with the other. If translation translates the untranslatable how can this be read or translated to experience or existence? I think the untranslatable is what remains *arrivant* in the other, that which escapes our horizon of expectation in our relation with the other. In every other there remains this *arrivant*, this remainder that escapes our appropriation. In the relation with the other we are in the double bind of ex-appropriation: of giving oneself over to the other and of taking the other into oneself without obliterating their alterity. This is the very condition of originary mourning. To remember the dead is to keep them alive in one's own self, to appropriate them and hence erase their otherness: it

is unfaithful. To forget the dead, however, to not appropriate them, is equally unfaithful for it is to deny their living-on. Mourning thus is a constitutive failure but one which 'does not wait for the so-called 'actual' death.'[151]

We mourn in the welcoming of the *arrivant*, which is a *revenant*, not only because their mortality is presupposed but also because, as with a translation, we are doomed to failure—we can never fully welcome or finish welcoming. A translation can only translate the untranslatable; if something was simply translatable it would have no need for translation. Once a translation takes place, the untranslatable remains (the impossible haunts the possible) but its untranslatableness is now hidden. Every translation begins in failure because it cannot succeed in carrying over all that a text may say; each accomplished translation (if a translation is ever accomplished or finished) manically mourns its loss. Even an 'excellent' translation 'can only aggravate or seal the inaccessibility of the other language.'[152] The loss mourned for is not only what it could not 'carry across' but is also the untranslatable itself. Of course another untranslatable emerges as soon as another text emerges—the translation which also demands further translation has its own untranslatable. The untranslatable itself as *arrivant* lives-on. In our relation with the other—in me outside me, outside me in me—we attempt to translate them; appropriate them, take them home, offer them welcome, understand them. But they remain untranslatable; the *arrivant* is always yet to come even in its return. As such we mourn not only the other's death (to come) but also we mourn what we cannot welcome, what remains absolutely other.

The issue of translation then as a 'quasi-parricide' is crucial. Within the narrow understanding of translation as transposition of one language into another (and all the complications even this narrow understanding entails) a translation *quasiment* kills its parents. There comes to mind an initial straightforward way of reading this claim. A translation comes *after* the 'original', like a child *after* its parents. A translation takes (its) life from the parent-original and lives-on after the death of its parent. (Indeed we could not count the number of texts that have only reached us through this sur-viving structure, this living-on of the translation-child long after the deaths of their parent-originals). Yet the term 'quasi-parricide' is richer and more ambiguous than this, the '*qua si*', the 'as if' must be read

with all its force. 'Translation is an *as if-* (*quasi-*) parricide', which is to say that it is not a parricide, is not a 'murder' but merely appears as such. It is an 'almost' murder, not quite a murder, perhaps an unfinished (or unfinishable) murder. Yet the question then is who is 'as if murdered'? 'Parricide' is the *cidium*, the killing, of a relative. A translation then 'as if, almost, kills a relative' and we could think of this 'relative' as the other language. In this way a translation looks *as if* it kills the other language or text, yet it does not *in fact* do so. Rather a translation gives life to the 'original' text; allows it to live-on, to sur-vive.

What about the relation to the other person? I would like to rephrase it as follows: 1. Almost/as if killing the other is the condition of the relation to the other 2. The relation to the other always and only relates to the *arrivant* (the untranslatable) in the other and 3. Therefore as if/almost killing the other remains the condition of the relation to the *arrivant* in the other. The relation to the other as translating is to appropriate the other and hence to *almost* erase, to *as if* murder, their alterity; yet their alterity, the *arrivant* in every other, is precisely that which *remains*. Remains to come and remains to come back; the *arrivant*, the untranslatable, is always a *revenant*.

To turn to Derrida's last interview that I cited above, I want to read the affirmation of sur-vival as a call to affirm the traces that survive us. To affirm the marks we leave in language, and our living-on as ghosts in the memory of others. Translation inherits its own life from the life of the 'original'. It is a quasi-parricide in that it 'as if' kills, yet through this gives life to the 'original' at the same time. We live in this modality of sur-viving translating. In the translating and retranslating of that which went before, we live as inheritors from the ghosts of the dead. In the traces of our own translating we leave behind the inheritance of the other(s) yet to come.

Notes

1. Dénégations p. 592 /trans. pp. 59–60.
2. Apories p. 137 /trans. p. 79.
3. Dénégations p. 542 /trans. p. 9.

4. Jacques Derrida '*Lettre* à un *ami japonais*' in Derrida, *Psyché* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987) pp. 387–93 trans. by David Wood & Andrew Benjamin 'Letter to a Japanese Friend' in David Wood & Robert Bernasconi (eds.) *Derrida and Différance* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988) pp. 1–6 [Hereafter Letter] p. 390 /trans. p. 3.

5. Letter p. 392 /trans. p. 4 These examples from the Letter are only illustrative, Derrida consistently made these points throughout his career. This sentence in particular raises concerns around recent works by scholars such as Martin Hägglund and Patrick O'Connor who argue respectively that 'deconstruction is radical atheism' and 'deconstruction is profanation' [see Hägglund *Radical Atheism Derrida and the Time of Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008) and O'Connor *Derrida*: *Profanations* (London: Continuum, 2010)].

6. Dénégations p. 551 /trans. pp. 18–19.

7. SN p. 106 /trans. p. 81.

8. Dénégations pp. 540–545 /trans. pp. 7–12.

9. John Caputo 'Mysticism and Transgression: Derrida and Meister Eckhart' [in Hugh J Silverman (ed.) *Derrida and Deconstruction* (London: Routledge, 2004) pp. 24–38, hereafter Caputo] p. 24 Caputo goes on to show the way in which deconstruction operates in the work of Meister Eckhart. While deconstruction could be found in a multitude of texts, including perhaps 'exemplarily' those of negative theology, I have reservations around Caputo's use of the word 'practise' here. Caputo makes clear in the essay and elsewhere that he takes the latter's warning to heart and does not understand deconstruction as a method. Nonetheless, the word 'practise' suggests agency whereas I would see deconstruction as something that might be pointed out, shown to be operating within a text but that it lacks the strong sense of agency that 'practise' suggests.

10. Mono. p. 127 /trans. p. 68.

11. Mono. p. 127 /trans. p. 68.

12. SN p. 15 /trans. p. 35.

13. SN p. 16 /trans. p. 35.

14. SN p. 15 /trans. p. 35 The phrase in French is *la voix blanche* which Leavey translates as 'voiceless voice'. However, it seems that 'white voice' captures even more the notion of a multiplicity of voices, of so many voices that they cannot be distinguished or identified; in much the same way that 'white noise' [*le bruit blanc*] is an indistinguishable mass of noise.
15. Dénégations p. 538 /trans. p. 6.
16. Dénégations pp. 535–6 /trans. pp. 3–4 See also SN p. 27 /trans. p. 41.
17. Dénégations p. 536 /trans. p. 4.
18. SN p. 23 /trans. p. 39 Derrida cites *Confessions* 10.3–10.4.
19. SN p. 23 /trans. p. 39.
20. SN pp. 23–4 /trans. p. 39.
21. SN pp. 24–5 /trans. p. 39.
22. SN pp. 21–2 /trans. p. 38.
23. SN p. 25 /trans. pp. 39–40.
24. SN p. 20 /trans. p. 37.
25. Dionysius the Areopagite *Mystical Theology* 1:998a cited by Derrida: Dénégations p. 579 /trans. p. 47 [my italics].
26. Dénégations p. 579 /trans. p. 48.
27. Dénégations p. 579 /trans. p. 48.
28. SN p. 40 /trans. p. 47.
29. SN p. 39 /trans. p. 47.
30. SN pp. 39–40 /trans. p. 47.
31. Survivre pp. 196–204 /trans. pp. 123–30.
32. Mooney 1999 pp. 41–2 Here Mooney is defending Derrida, with some qualifications, against Dallas Willard's claim that Derrida 'falls squarely within the "Midas" tradition' where objects in consciousness are formed only through the relation between the mind and a fundamentally 'unknowable' noumenon.
33. A similar situation is explored in Derrida's reading of Plato. Plato's distrust of writing stems from the fact that 'it substitutes the breathless sign for the living voice, claims to do without the father (who is both living and life-giving) of *logos*.' (Diss. p. 104 /trans. p. 95).
34. DG p. 24 /trans. p. 13.
35. DG p. 25 /trans. p. 13.

36. DG p. 27 /trans. p. 15.
37. Davis p. 106.
38. SN p. 91 /trans. p. 74.
39. Levinas, TI pp. 33–5/trans. pp. 3–5 *ff.* The relation between love and desire in Levinas in complex; particularly in *Totality and Infinity* which offers a rather critical account of love as eros in its last pages.
40. SN p. 19 /trans. p. 37.
41. Dénégations p. 540 /trans. pp. 7–8 In this essay Derrida notes that there are two reasons why his work could not bear the name of 'negative theology'; the first which I explore above, is this hyperessentiality, a residual promise of presence. The second reason, which I do not have the space to delve into here, is that what is called negative theology is a collection of diverse concepts, corpuses and languages whose confused association would have to be fully defined in order to claim that deconstruction is or indeed is not *apophasis.* (see Dénégations p. 545 /trans. p. 12) In terms of the passage just quoted above, it is worth highlighting here not only Derrida's rejection of the 'authority of the name' but also his rejection of the 'unity of the word'. Emmanuelle Ertel argues that Derrida is a proponent of a more 'literal' approach to translation respecting the axiom of translation of one word by one word (Emmanuelle Ertel 'Derrida on Translation and his (Mis)reception in America' in *Trahir* September 2011 pp. 1–18, hereafter Ertel). However, while Ertel is particularly aware of Derrida's deployment of multiple meanings in his work, this claim remains questionable. To support it Ertel cites Derrida texts where the unity of the word is referred to by Derrida when he is citing someone else. It is the unity of the word which Derrida is in fact questioning; if a text overflows its own borders and points beyond itself to other texts, then so too does the word. It is the very undecidability of the borders of the word itself which problematizes translation for Derrida rather than the failure of translation to return to some originary unity. If 'in the beginning there was the word' then recalling the reading of Babel we can note that the 'word' here, exterior to God, entangled in language, and hence already emerging from différance; was hence already divided.

42. Dénégations p. 541 /trans. p. 8.

43. Dénégations p. 544 /trans. p. 11.

44. Dénégations pp. 540–1 /trans. p. 8 See also n.1 pp. 540–1 /trans. n.3 p. 64 Of course a 'clean break' from any tradition – theological or philosophical – is not, for Derrida, possible.

45. SN p. 20 /trans. p. 37.

46. Dénégations p. 581 /trans. p. 49 This promise is markedly different from the promise that Derrida speaks of in the promise of language that I discussed previously. It is different precisely in its respect for the 'authority of the name' (of God) and also in that it is a defined and limited promise whereas the promise announced in language remains radically unnamable and indefinable. Unfortunately, I do not have the space here to discuss Derrida's writings on *khora*. It is worth noting however, that in Dénégations Derrida markedly differentiates the experience of negative theology as the experience of place from the experience of Khora (see Dénégations pp. 566–81 / trans. pp. 34–49). '[T]he experience of the *khora* which is above all not an experience, if one understands by this word a certain relation to presence' (pp. 569–70/38–9) is to be contrasted with the experience of the place of *apophasis* which promises union with Jesus who made the promise (p. 581/49) For more on the notion of *Khora* as Derrida understands it see *Khora* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1993) Trans. by Thomas Dutoit, *Khora* in *On the Name* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995) pp. 89–130. See also Jacques Derrida & Catherine Malabou *Voyager avec Jacques Derrida – La contre-allée* (Paris: La Quinzaine Littéraire, 1999) trans. by David Wills *Counterpath Travelling with Jacques Derrida* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); here Derrida links *Khora* with faith and belief in the impossible: 'place in general, interests me only where the impossible, that is to say the incredible, encircles and harries it, [...] *Khora* is incredible. That means: one can *only* believe in it, coldly, impassively, and nothing else. As in the impossible. Absolute faith.' (*op.cit.* p. 145 /trans. p. 147).

47. SN p. 47 /trans. p. 51.

48. SN p. 41 /trans. p. 48.

49. SN pp. 47–8 /trans. p. 51.

50. SN pp. 40–1 /trans. pp. 47–8.

51. SN p. 47 /trans. p. 51.

52. SN pp. 48–9 /trans. p. 51.

53. SN pp. 50–1 /trans. pp. 52–3.

54. SN p. 79 /trans. pp. 67–8.

55. *Sauf son nom* can be translated in various ways; 'Except his name', 'Save his name', 'Safe, his name' (see the translator's introduction to *On the Name* (*op.cit.*) pp.xii-xiii). The phrase is another example which testifies to its belonging to the French language by its polysemic play within that language (as with *il y va d'un certain pas*); that is by its 'internal' translatability which produces an 'external' untranslatability. Derrida consistently links Heidegger with the tradition of negative theology and Neo-Platonism (in both *Sauf le nom* and *Dénégations*) and in this idea of 'keeping safe' one could point to another parallel with Heidegger in his notion of Saying as that which 'preserves' a thing in Being – keeping it 'safe' in its presence.

56. SN p. 56 /trans. pp. 55–6.

57. SN pp. 57–8 /trans. pp. 56–7.

58. SN p. 63 /trans. p. 59.

59. SN pp. 95–6 /trans. p. 76.

60. SN p. 92 /trans. p. 74.

61. SN p. 112 /trans. p. 84.

62. Apories pp. 137–141 /trans. pp. 79–81.

63. Apories p. 136 /trans. p. 78.

64. Apories p. 11 /trans. p.*ix*: 'Dare I say that all this will be said (destined, addressed) to you as a way of thanking? [...] I did not know whom to thank first [...] the guests [*les hôtes*] of these hosts [*ces hôtes*] whom you are, *all of you*?' [my emphasis].

65. See for example Derrida's quotation of 'Ousia et Gramme': Apories pp. 33–4 /trans. p. 14 or his extended quotations from *L'autre cap*: Apories pp. 40–1; 43–4 /trans. pp. 18–19; 20. This self-quotation was already performed in other texts, 'Survivre' for example consistently references *Glas* and *Pas*.

66. Apories pp. 42–3 /trans. p. 19.

67. DTB p. 246 /trans. p. 203.

68. SN p. 109 /trans. p. 83, Apories pp. 38–42 /trans. pp. 17–19.
69. Apories p. 44 /trans. p. 20.
70. Apories pp. 44–5 /trans. pp. 20–1.
71. Apories p. 47 /trans. p. 21.
72. Apories p. 44 /trans. p. 20.
73. SZ p. 250 /trans. p. 294.
74. Apories p. 50 /trans. p. 23.
75. Apories pp. 57–8 /trans. pp. 27–8.
76. Apories pp. 64–5 /trans. p. 32.
77. Survivre *p*p. 160–1 /trans. p. 95.
78. Apories p. 20 /trans. p. 4.
79. Apories p. 1 [*Prière d'insérer*, not included in the English translation].
80. Apories p. 65 /trans. p. 33.
81. Apories p. 66 /trans. p. 33.
82. Apories p. 66 /trans. p. 33.
83. Apories p. 66 /trans. p. 33
84. *Ibid.*
85. Apories p. 67 /trans. p. 34.
86. Apories p. 68 /trans. p. 34.
87. SN pp. 81–2 /trans. p. 69.
88. Apories p. 68 /trans. p. 34.
89. As discussed in Chapter Three this is also the structure of language as promise, as messianicty without messianism.
90. SZ pp. 235–301 /trans. pp. 278–348 This authentic resolute-anticipation is to be distinguished from the inauthentic relation to death wherein Dasein dissimulates the certainty of its death and its nature as a possibility.
91. Apories p. 68 /trans. pp. 34–5.
92. V&P p. 113 /trans. p. 101.
93. Apories p. 113 /trans. p. 62 This is the full title of this work which in French is *Apories Mourir – s'attendre aux « limites de la vérité »*. The French reflexive *s'attendre* is generally understood as 'to expect', however because of its reflexive form it could also be 'to await oneself'. I will explore this phrase more fully in the passages that follow; however it should be noted that Heidegger is quite clear that

the mode of Being-towards-death is not one of 'expectation' but rather 'anticipation' revealed in anxiety.

94. Apories p. 113 /trans. p. 62.
95. Apories pp. 114–5 /trans. p. 63.
96. Apories p. 115 /trans. p. 64 Derrida cites in particular §50–53 of SZ.
97. Apories p. 121 /trans. p. 68.
98. Apories p. 121 /trans. p. 68.
99. Apories pp. 125–6 /trans p. 71.
100. François Raffoul 'Derrida and the Ethics of the Impossible' in *Research in Phenomenology* 38 (2008) pp. 270–90.
101. SZ p. 262 /trans. p. 307, cited by Derrida Apories p. 125 /trans. p. 70.
102. See in particular Raffoul, *op.cit.* pp. 279–80.
103. Apories p. 130 /trans. p. 74.
104. Apories p. 131 /trans. p. 75.
105. Apories pp. 132–3 /trans. pp. 75–6.
106. Apories p. 69 /trans. p. 35.
107. Survivre p. 159 /trans. p. 94.
108. Apories p. 137 /trans. p. 79.
109. Apories pp. 136–9 /trans. pp. 78–80.
110. Apories p. 137 /trans. p. 78.
111. Apories p. 133 /trans. p. 76.
112. Apories p. 134 /trans. p. 77.
113. Apories p. 118 /trans. p. 66.
114. Apories pp. 74–5 /trans. pp. 38–9.
115. Points p. 331 /trans. p. 321.
116. Apories p. 111 /trans. p. 61.
117. Apories p. 111 /trans. p. 61.
118. Apories pp. 97–104 /trans. pp. 52–6.
119. Apories pp. 137–8 /trans. p. 79.
120. Apories p. 112 /trans. pp. 61–2 The English word 'ghost' is used in the original to play on the guest/ghost/host relation which, as Baugh & Cable note, no doubt originate all from the same word in Sanskrit *ghostis* leading to the Latin *hostis* (*op cit.* p. 19).
121. L'événement p. 97 /trans. p. 452.

122. L'événement p. 96 /trans. p. 451.
123. L'événement p. 97 /trans. p. 451.
124. L'événement p. 97 /trans. p. 452 see also p. 111 /trans. p. 461.
125. L'événement pp. 97–8 /trans. p. 452.
126. L'événement p. 100 /trans. p. 453.
127. L'événement pp. 98–9 /trans. pp. 452–3 For an extended discussion of forgiveness in Derrida see 'On Forgiveness' trans. by Michael Hughes in *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (London: Routledge, 2005) pp. 25–60.
128. L'événement p. 100 /trans. p. 454.
129. L'événement p. 111 /trans. p. 461.
130. Patrick O'Connor (*op.cit*) For a summary of these claims see the Introduction (pp. 1–11) in particular pp. 1–4. See also Chapter Five (pp. 109–30) where O'Connor distances his reading from that of Critchley, Bernasconi, Caputo, Dooley and Zizek (in particular pp. 110–20).
131. O'Connor p. 6.
132. *Ibid.* p. 123 O'Connor goes on to rephrase this as 'preserving the stranger' which is evidently not the same as 'preserving their difference'.
133. L'événement p. 100 /trans. p. 453.
134. L'événement p. 99 /trans. p. 453.
135. L'événement pp. 99–100 /trans. p. 453.
136. Benjamin p. 62 /trans. p. 76.
137. DTB p. 226 /trans. p. 182 & p. 239 /trans. p. 196.
138. L'événement p. 84 /trans. p. 443, an issue also explored in 'Ulysses Gramophone Hear Say Yes in Joyce'.
139. Mono. p. 127 /trans. p. 68.
140. Derrida's relation to speech act theory was first explored in 'Signature événement contexte' (Signature Event Context) a paper presented at a colloquium in Montreal in 1971 and subsequently published in *Marges de la philosophie* in 1972 (M pp. 365–93 / trans. pp. 307–30). When published in its English translation, this extended reading of J. L. Austin's *How to do Things with Words* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1962), led to a response by John Searle and an extended debate – not always about speech act

theory – ensued. The original essay, Derrida's response to Searle, 'Limited Inc. a b c...', and an extensive interview with Gerald Graff are collected together in *Limited Inc.* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1990) trans. by Samuel Weber & Jeffrey Mehlman, *Limited Inc.* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).

141. L'événement p. 107 /trans. p. 458.
142. L'événement pp. 83–4 /trans. p. 443.
143. L'événement p. 107 /trans. p. 458 Derrida doesn't name these 'serious theorists' though from 'Signature Event Context' we can perhaps guess that he means Searle.
144. L'événement p. 109 /trans. p. 459.
145. L'événement p. 109 /trans. p. 459.
146. Apprendre p. 54 /trans. pp. 51–2.
147. Apprendre p. 26 /trans. p. 26.
148. Apprendre p. 26 /trans. p. 26.
149. DTB p. 226 /trans. p. 182.
150. Jacques Derrida *H.C. pour la vie, c'est à dire...* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2000) trans. by Laurent Milesi & Stefan Herbrechter *H.C. for Life That is to Say...* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006) [Hereafter H.C.] p. 13 /trans. p. 6 This text was originally presented at a conference on the work of Hélène Cixous at Cerisy-la-Salle in 1998; the same place where Derrida presented *Apories* six years earlier. The text circles around the question of life and death as two 'sides' (*côté*s): Cixous on the 'side of life' and Derrida on the 'side of death'. Derrida describes Cixous as 'knowing' that one dies but 'believing' that one lives, whereas Derrida 'knows' that one lives and 'believes' that one dies (p. 10 /trans. p. 2). Although by the end of the text Derrida notes 'I just cannot believe her [Cixous], as far as life death is concerned, from one side to the other. I just cannot believe her, that is to say [*c'est à dire*]: I can only manage to believe her' (p. 136 /trans. p. 159). The text is marked by a constant 'beginning again' and the last lines return to the lines that the text opened with, illustrating 'the impossibility of cutting off.'
151. Apprendre p. 26 /trans. p. 26.
152. Spectres p. 43 /trans. p. 21.

Conclusion: Sur-Viving Translating

The term 'sur-viving translating' puts into play at least three meanings. On the one hand it could be understood as continuing to live after or despite the translating of the other. Despite being appropriated in their translation of 'me', 'I' would continue or persist, 'I' would survive this operation of appropriation. On the other hand, it could be understood as surviving *by* or *as* translating; living-on only through the appropriation of 'me' by the other and equally my appropriation of the other. The double sense of sur-vive, which I highlighted with Derrida's reading of Benjamin as both a *Fortleben*, 'the sense of something prolonging life' and an *Überleben*, 'survival as something rising above life,'[1] would thus be retained. For 'sur-viving translating' would hope to carry the sense of enrichment through the entanglement with what lies 'outside' and thus would 'rise above' any notion of the 'life' of a subject engaged in its own self relation without mediation or contamination. 'Survivng translating' would also carry the sense of prolonging or persisting. But there remains a third way to read this term which recalls the notion of sur-vival explored through Derrida's reading of Blanchot. 'Sur-vival', could be read as Blanchot's *arrêt de mort*, meaning the 'suspension of death'. This suspension was radically undecideable, the dividing line of the *arête*—that

which both suspends and divides the suspension from itself. The suspension of death then announced in 'sur-viving translating', would in a way, be a suspension that sets in motion the movement of 'living'.

I have been employing throughout this work and notably in the preceding paragraphs, the term 'subject'. I describe the subject as 'sur-viving translating'. This philosophically loaded term should, however, in no way be understood as a unified identity but rather a 'uniqueness without unity'.[2] The term 'sur-viving translating' adheres to Derrida's insistence on the necessity of destabilizing an understanding of the subject as 'substance, stasis, stance.'[3] With this term I want to emphasize the impossibility of 'cutting-off' and to mark an interminable opening and openness in what is called the subject. As Derrida notes, '[e]x-appropriation no longer closes itself; it never totalizes itself.'[4] By marking the affirmation that Derrida calls for as an affirmation precisely of this sur-vival, of the trace, of différance, of what cannot be decided even between life and death; I hope to have made clear that this affirmation 'is not addressed first of all to a subject.'[5] Equally however, I do not believe that we can escape responsibility. In fact nothing precedes the responsibility to the other, who, however; cannot be reduced to an other identified as 'man' but must be understood as an other yet to come (back). Finally by choosing to describe the 'subject' as 'sur-viving translating'; by marking the relation as that which precedes the term, I hope to have revealed undecideability—and therefore responsibility—at the heart of any notion of 'subject'.

Unfortunately there has not been the space here to sufficiently deal with the political—in Derrida or Heidegger or Levinas—or with the politics of translation. Such considerations have only been hinted at and would demand a whole other book. Insofar as it represents the other to the same, translation is inherently political, positively providing the possibility of approaching the other, yet simultaneously being constantly inhabited by the threat of subsuming the other into the same. For Derrida, language is power. The way in which language is used can never be taken for granted but must be constantly interrogated and disrupted. Not to reduce it to meaninglessness, but rather to remain vigilant to its authority. In her novel *The Ghost Road*, set during the First World War, Pat Barker evokes the erosion of meaning produced by the horror of war. She depicts in fiction the way in which the violence of one against the

other sucks the breath of signification out of existence; reducing language to nothing but a hollow shell echoing political rhetoric. In the words of one of her characters:

> I remember standing by the bar and thinking that words didn't mean anything any more. Patriotism honour courage vomit vomit vomit. Only the names meant anything. Mons, Loos, the Somme, Arras, Verdun, Ypres. But now I look round this cellar with the candles burning on the tables and our linked shadows leaping on the walls, and I realize there's another group of words that still mean something. Little words that trip through sentences unregarded: us, them, we, they, here, there. These are words of power, and long after we're gone, they'll lie about in the language, like the unexploded grenades in these fields, and any one of them'll take your hand off.[6]

These 'little words' of 'us' and 'them', 'here' and 'there' slip into our newspaper reports and the sound-bites of politicians. 'Unregarded' they support walls of rhetoric creating a distance between action and justice—limiting responsibility. They are words which depend upon the notion of an impermeable border and on an absolutely defined identity. By marking the radical impossibility of such a border and by his affirmation of difference over identity, Derrida de-sediments these words and the constructs they uphold. 'The question of deconstruction is through and through the question of translation.'[7] The deconstructed notion of translation which I have been developing here is one in which meaning is never guaranteed, is never fully present, but can only be promised as a 'future yet to come'. Following Derrida's account, the meaning of these 'little words' can never be simply assumed but must rather be ceaselessly questioned. Such a questioning is, for Derrida, responsibility and the promise of justice.

Indeed it was with these political implications and the injustice of enforced translation that I began this book, when I noted in the Introduction the alienation produced by speaking a language that is not one's 'own'; a situation particularly marked in Ireland. I have demonstrated that this alienation is 'originary', an effect of language which marks the relation with the other as (im)possible. The alienation of speaking the

other's language, which is nonetheless the only language we ever speak, gives the space in which a relation with the other *can* unfold. Faced with this (im)possible, and taking up Derrida's call for affirmation, we are left to embrace this alienation as constitutive; to affirm the untranslatable as the very possibility of meaning. Translation is not the death of the 'original' but its living-on. Irish expressions find their way into English, Latin words peep out from German, Sanskrit prefixes echo across Europe; in all our languages are traces of the dead and traces of the other. There are no languages without these traces, there are no 'subjects' without ghosts, and there is no meaning without the Other.

Notes

1. OA p. 161 /trans. p. 122.
2. Mono. p. 127 /trans. p. 68.
3. Points p. 285 /trans. p. 270.
4. Points p. 285 /trans. p. 270.
5. Points p. 289 /trans. p. 274.
6. Pat Barker *The Ghost Road* (London: Penguin Books, 1996) p. 257.
7. Lettre p. 387 /trans. p. 1.

Bibliography

Aristotle. 'Peri Hermeneias'/'On Interpretation'. (Bilingual Edition). Trans. by Harold P. Cook. In *Aristotle: The Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics*, 114-179. London: Heinemann, rpt. 1962.

Arrojo, Rosemary. 'The Revision of the Traditional Gap Between Theory and Practice and the Empowerment of Translation in Postmodern Times'. In *The Translator* Vol.4 No.1 (1998): 25-48.

Bambach, Charles. *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche National Socialism and the Greeks*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2003.

Baugh, Albert C & Thomas Cable. *A History of the English Language* 4th Edition. London: Routledge, 1994.

Barker, Pat. *The Ghost Road. Road*. London: Penguin Books, 1996.

Benjamin, Walter. 'Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers'. In *Illuminationen: ausgewählte Schriften,* 56-69. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969. Trans. by Harry Zorn [*recte* Zohn], 'The Task of the Translator'. In *Illuminations*, 70-82. New York: Shocken Books, 1969.

Bergo, Bettina. 'The Face in Levinas: Toward a Phenomenology of Substitution'. In *Angelaki, Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* Vol.16 No.1 (2011): 17-39.

———'Inscribing the "Sites" of Desire in Levinas'. In *Philosophy and Desire*, ed. by Hugh J. Silverman, 63-82. New York: Routledge, 2000.

———'Radical Passivity in Levinas and Merleau-Ponty'. (Talk) November 2006, accessed July 23, 2012. http://umontreal.academia.edu/BettinaBergo/

Talks/13820/In_Dreams_Begin_Responsibilities_Radical_Passivity_
in_Levinas_and_Merleau-Ponty_1954_

Berman, Antoine. 'La Traduction comme épreuve de l'étranger'. In *Texte* (1985): 67-81. Trans. by Lawrence Venuti 'Translation and the Trials of the Foreign'. In *The Translation Studies Reader* 1st Edition, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 284-297. London & New York: Routledge, 2000.

Blanchot, Maurice. *L' arrêt de mort*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1977. Trans. by Lydia Davis, *Death Sentence*. New York: Station Hill Press, 1998.

———*La part du feu.* Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1949. Trans. by Charlotte Mandell, *The Work of Fire*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

———*Le pas au-delà*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1973. Trans. by Lycette Nelson, *The Step Not Beyond*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1992.

Brown, Kimberley. 'In Borges Shadow'. In *Janus Head* Vol.8 No.1 (2005): 349-351.

Bernal, Martin. *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization (The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785-1985, Volume 1)*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991.

———*Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilisation The Linguistic Evidence (Volume III).* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2006.

Caputo, John. 'Mysticism and Transgression: Derrida and Meister Eckhart'. In *Derrida and Deconstruction*, ed. by Hugh J Silverman, 24-38. London: Routledge, 2004.

———& Emmet Cole (interview). *The Modern Word*. Accessed April 2, 2013. http://www.themodernword.com/features/interview_caputo.html

Chalier, Catherine. 'The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and the Hebraic Tradition'. In *Ethics as First Philosophy: The Significance of Emmanuel Levinas for Philosophy, Literature and Religion*, ed. by Adriaan T. Peperzak, 3-12. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Ciaramelli, Fabio. 'The Riddle of the Pre-original'. In *Ethics as First Philosophy the Significance of Emmanual Levinas for Philosophy, Literature and Religion*, ed. by Adrian Peperzak, 87-94. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Crépon, Marc. *Langues sans demeure*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2005.

Critchley, Simon. *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*, 2nd Edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.

———'Five Problems in Levinas's View of Politics and the Sketch of a Solution to Them'. In *Political Theory* Vol.32 No.2 (2004): 172-185.

———& Tom McCarthy. 'Universal Shylockery: Money and Morality in The Merchant of Venice'. In *Diacritics* Vol.34 No.1 (2004): 3-17.

Cohen, Joseph. *Alternance de la métaphysique Essais sur Emmanuel Levinas*. Paris: Galilée, 2009.

———'Lire en déconstruciton: Note sur L'écriture de Jacques Derrida'. In *Derrida et la question de l'art: Déconstructions de l'esthétique,* sous la direction de Adnen Jdey, 157-173. Nantes: Éditions Cécile Defaut, 2011.

———'Levinas and the Problem of Phenomenology'. In *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* Vol.20 No.3 (2012): 363-374.

Costanzo, W.V. 'The French Version of "Finnegans Wake": Translation, Adaptation, Recreation'. In *James Joyce Quarterly* Vol.9 No.2 (Winter 1972): 225-236.

Cronin, Michael. *Translating Ireland: Translation, Languages, Culture*. Cork: Cork University Press, 1995.

Davis, Kathleen. *Deconstruction and Translation*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 2001.

de Beistegui, Miguel. *The New Heidegger*. London & New York: Continuum, 2005.

———. *Heidegger and the Political, Dystopias*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Derrida, Jacques. *Adieu à Emmanuel Lévinas.* Paris: Galilée, 1997. Trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

———*Altérités*. Paris: Éditions Osiris, 1986.

———*Apories: Mourir – s'attendre aux « limites de la vérité »*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1996. Trans. by Thomas Dutoit, *Aporias: Dying – awaiting (one another at) the "limits of truth"*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.

———*Apprendre à vivre enfin*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2005. Trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas, *Learning to Live Finally, The Last Interview*. Hampshire & New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.

———*L'Autre cap*. Paris: Éditions Minuit, 1991. Trans. by Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———*Béliers Le dialogue ininterrompu: entre deux infinis, le poème*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2003.

———*La Carte Postale: de Socrate à Freud et au-delà*. Paris: Flammarion, 1980. Trans. by Alan Bass, *The Postcard: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

———*Chaque fois unique, la fin du monde*. Sous la direction de Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas. Éditions Galilée, 2003. [Partial] Trans. by Leonard Lawlor & others, *The Work of Mourning*, ed. by Pascale-Anne Brault & Michael Naas. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

———'Comment ne pas parler: Dénégations'. In *Psyché: Inventions de l'autre*, 535-595. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987. Trans. by Ken Frieden, 'How to

Avoid Speaking: Denials'. In *Languages of the Unsayable, The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, ed. by Sanford Budick & Wolfgang Iser, 3-70. New York: Colombia University Press, 1989.

———*De l'Esprit: Heidegger et la question.* Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987. Trans. by Geoffrey Bennington & Rachel Bowlby, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———*De la grammatologie*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1967. Trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore & London: John Hopkins University Press, 1997.

———& Anne Dufourmantelle, *De l'hospitalité: Anne Dufourmantelle invite Jacques Derrida à repondre*. Paris: Clamann-Lévy, 1997. Trans. by Rachel Bowlby, *Of Hospitality Anne Dufourmantelle Invites Jacques Derrida to Respond*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

———*Demeure: Maurice Blanchot*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1998. Trans. by Elizabeth Rottenberg, 'Demeure Fiction and Testimony'. In Blanchot, Maurice *'The Instant of my* Death' and Derrida, Jacques '*Demeure: Fiction and Testimony*', 13-108. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

———'Des Tours de Babel'. In *Difference in Translation,* ed. by Joseph F. Graham, 209-248. London & New York: Cornell University Press, 1985. Trans. by Joseph F. Graham, 'Des Tours de Babel'. In *Difference in Translation,* ed. by Joseph F. Graham, 165-207. London & New York: Cornell University Press, 1985.

———*Donner la mort*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1999. Trans. by David Wills, *The Gift of Death*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

———*La Dissémination*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1972. Trans. by Barbara Johnson, *Dissemination*. London & New York: Continuum, 2004.

———*L'Écriture et la difference*. Paris: Les Éditions du Seuil, 1967. Trans. by Alan Bass, *Writing and Difference*. London & New York: Routledge, 2001.

———*Éperons Les Styles de Nietzsche/Spurs Nietzsche's Styles*. (Bilingual edition). Trans. by Barbara Harlow. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

———*H.C. pour la vie, c'est à dire…* Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2000. Trans. by Laurent Milesi & Stefan Herbrechter, *H.C. for Life That is to Say…* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.

———*Introduction a 'L'Origine de la géométrie' de Husserl*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962. Trans. by John P. Leavey Jr., *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry An Introduction by Jacques Derrida*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.

———*Khora*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1993. Trans. by Thomas Dutoit, 'Khora'. In *On the Name*, 89-130. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

———'*Lettre* à un *ami japonais*'. In *Psyché: Inventions de l'autre*, 387-393. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987. Trans. by David Wood & Andrew Benjamin, 'Letter to a Japanese Friend'. In *Derrida and Différance*, ed. by David Wood & Robert Bernasconi, 1-6. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988.

———*Limited Inc*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1990. Trans. by Samuel Weber & Jeffrey Mehlman, *Limited Inc*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988.

———'La main de Heidegger (*Geshlecht II*)'. In *Psyché: Inventions de l'autre*, 415-451. Paris: Éditions Galillée, 1987. Trans. by John P. Leavey Jr., '*Geshlecht II:* Heidegger's Hand'. In *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida*, ed. by John Sallis, 161-196. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

———*Marges de la philosophie*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972. Trans. by Alan Bass, *Margins of Philosophy.* Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982.

———*Mémoires pour Paul de Man*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1988. Trans. by Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler, Eduardo Cadava and Peggy Kamuf, *Memoires for Paul de Man (revised edition) The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

———*Le Monolinguisme de l'autre ou la prothèse d'origine*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1996. Trans. by Patrick Mensah, *Monolingualism of the Other or the Prothesis of Origin*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

———'On Forgiveness'. Trans. by Michael Hughes. In *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, 25-60. London: Routledge, 2005.

———*L'Oreille de l'autre: Otobiographies, transferts, traductions*. Montéal: VLB Éditeur, 1982. Trans. by Avital Ronell & Peggy Kamuf, *The Ear of the Other*. New York: Shocken Books, 1985.

———Giovanna Borradori & Jürgen Habermas. *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

———*Points de suspension, Entretiens*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1992. Trans. by Peggy Kamuf & others, *Points… Interviews, 1974-1994*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

———*Positions*. Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1972. Trans. by Alan Bass, *Positions.* London: The Athlone Press, 1981.

———'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction 'relevante'?' In *Quinzièmes Assises de la Traduction Littéraire Arles 1998*, 21-48. Arles: Actes Sud, 1999. Trans. by

Lawrence Venuti, 'What is a 'Relevant' Translation?' In *Critical Enquiry* Vol.27 No.2 (2001): 174-200.

———*Sauf le nom*. Paris: Galilée, 1993. Trans. by John P. Leavey Jr., 'Sauf le nom'. In *On the Name*, 35-85. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.

———*Spectres de Marx: L'Etat de la dette, le travail du deuil et la nouvelle Internationale*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1993. Trans. by Peggy Kamuf, *Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. New York & London: Routledge, 2006.

———'Survivre: journal de bord'. In *Parages*, 117-218. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1986. Trans. by James Hulbert, 'Living On / Borderlines'. In Bloom, Harold, Paul de Man, Jacques Derrida, Geoffrey H. Hartman, and J. Hillis Miller, *Deconstruction and Criticism,* 62-142. London & New York: Continuum, 2004.

———'Transfert *ex cathedra:* le langage et les institutions philosophiques'. In *Du Droit à la philosophie*, 283-394. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1990. Trans. by Jan Plug & others 'Transfer Ex Cathedra: Language and Institutions of Philosophy'. In *Eyes of the University, Right to Philosophy 2*, 1-80. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

———'Two Words for Joyce'. Trans. by Geoffrey Bennington. In *Post-structuralist Joyce: Essays from the French,* ed. by Derek Attridge & Daniel Ferrer, 145-160. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

———*Ulysse gramophone: deux mots pour Joyce*. Paris: Galilée, 1987.

———'Ulysses Gramophone Hear Say Yes in Joyce'. Trans. by Tina Kendall & Shari Benstock. In *Acts of Literature*, ed. by Derek Attridge, 253-309. London: Routledge, 1992.

———'Une Certaine possibilité impossible de dire l'événement'. In Derrida, Jacques, Alexis Nouss and Gad Soussana, *Dire l'événement, est-ce possible?: Séminaire de Montréal pour Jacques Derrida*, 79-112. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001. Trans. by Gila Walker, 'A Certain Impossible Possibility of Saying the Event'. In *Critical Inquiry* Vol.33 No.2 (Winter 2007): 441-461.

———*La Voix et le phénomène*. Paris: Quadrige/PUF, 1993. Trans. by David B. Allison, *Speech and Phenomena*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.

———& Catherine Malabou. *Voyager avec Jacques Derrida – La contre-allée*. Paris: La Quinzaine Littéraire, 1999. Trans. by David Wills, *Counterpath Travelling with Jacques Derrida*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Digeser, Elizabeth Palma. 'Religion, Law and the Roman Polity'. In *Religion and Law in Classical and Christian Rome,* ed. by Clifford Ando & Jörg Rüpke, 68-84. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006.

Dilthey, Wilhelm. '*Der Aufbau der geschtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*'. In *Gesammelte Schriften* Vol.7, ed. by Bernhard Groethuysen. Stuttgart: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958. Trans. by H. P. Rickman, 'The Construction of the Historical World in the Human Studies'. In *Dilthey Selected Writings*, ed. by H.P. Rickman, 170-245. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Eagleton, Terry. *On Evil*. London: Yale University Press, 2010.

Emad, Parvis. 'Thinking More Deeply into the Question of Translation: Essential Translation and the Unfolding of Language'. In *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations,* ed. by John Sallis, 323-40. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Ertel, Emmanuelle. 'Derrida on Translation and his (Mis)reception in America'. In *Trahir* (September 2011): 1-18.

Evans, Joseph Claude. *Strategies of Deconstruction Derrida and the Myth of the Voice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.

Fassin, Didier. 'Ethics of Survival: A Democratic Approach to the Politics of Life'. In *Humanity* Vol.1 No.1 (Fall 2010): 81-95.

Gentzler, Edwin. *Contemporary Translation Theories*. London & New York: Routledge, 1993.

Gera, Deborah Levine. *Ancient Greek Ideas on Speech, Language and Civilisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Graf, Fritz. *Greek Mythology.* Trans. by Thomas Marier. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996.

Grondin, Jean. *Introduction to Metaphysics From Parmenides to Levinas*. Trans. by Lukas Soderstrom. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.

———*Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Trans. by Joel Weinsheimer. Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1994.

———*Sources of Hermeneutics*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.

Grube, G.M.A. *Plato's Thought*. Norwich: Methuen, 1935.

Guthrie, W.K.C. *The Greek Philosophers from Thales to Aristotle*. London: Routledge, 1997.

Hägglund, Martin. *Radical Atheism: Derrida and the Time of Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

Heidegger, Martin. 'Brief über den Humanismus'. In *Wegmarken* (GA 9), 313-364. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976. Trans. by Frank A. Capuzzi, 'Letter on Humanism'. In *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings,* ed. by David Farrell Krell, 147-181. London: Routledge, 2011.

———'Die Frage nach der Technik'. In *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (GA 7), 5-36. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2000. Trans. by William Lovitt,

'The Question Concerning Technology'. In *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings*, ed. by David Farrell Krell, 217-238. London: Routledge, 2011.

———'Identität und Differenz'. In *Identität und Differenz* (GA 11), 27-80. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2006. Trans. by Joan Stambaugh, *Identity and Difference*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

———'Logos (Heraklit, Fragment 50)'. In *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (GA 7), 211-234. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2000. Trans. by David Farrell Krell & Frank A. Capuzzi, 'Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B50)'. In *Early Greek Thinking*, 59-78. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

———'Moira (Parmenides, Fragment VIII. 34-41)'. In *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (GA 7), 235-262. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2000. Trans. by David Farrell Krell & Frank A. Capuzzi, 'Moira (Parmenides VIII, 34-41)'. In *Early Greek Thinking*, 79-101. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

———*Parmenides* (GA 54). Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1982. Trans. by André Schuwer & Richard Rojcewicz, *Parmenides*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

———*Sein und Zeit*. 7th Edition. Tübungen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1927. Trans. by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2009. Trans. by Emmanuel Martineau, *Être et temps*. Paris: Authentica, 1985.

———'Der Spruch des Anaximander '. In *Holzwege* (GA 5), 321-373. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977. Trans. by David Farrell Krell & Frank A. Capuzzi, 'The Anaximander Fragment'. In *Early Greek Thinking*, 13-58. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

———*Unterwegs Zur Sprache* (GA 12). Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1985. Trans. by Peter D. Hertz, *On the Way to Language*. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.

Herder, Johann Gottfried. 'Fragments on Recent German Literature (1767-8)'. Trans. by Michael N. Forster. In *Herder: Philosophical Writings*, ed. by Michael N. Forster, 33-65. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Hervey, Sándor G. J. 'The Logic of Structural Epistemology: Reflections on the Philosophy of Georges Mounin'. In *La Linguistique* Vol.29 No.2 (1993): 7-16.

Husserl, Edmund. *ldeen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie,* 1. Halbband: *Text der 1-3. Auflage*, (Husserliana Band III,1), ed. by Karl Schuhmann. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977.

———*ldeen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie,*2. Halbband: *Ergänzende Texte (1912-1929)*, (Husserliana Band III, 2), ed. by Karl Schuhmann. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977.

———*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: First Book General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology.* [Trans. of HUA Band III,1 & Band III,2]. (*Husserl Collected Works*, ed. by Rudolf Bernet, Vol. II) Trans. by F. Kersten. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1983.

———*Logical Investigations.* Trans. by J.N. Findlay. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.

———*Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893-1917)* (Husserliana Band X), ed. by Rudolf Boehm. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969. Trans. by John Barnett Brough, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (*Husserl Collected Works*, ed. by Rudolf Bernet, Vol. IV). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991.

Jakobson, Roman. 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation'. In *The Translation Studies Reader* 1st Edition, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 113-118. London & New York: Routledge, 2000.

Jerome. 'Letter to Pammachius'. Trans. by Kathleen Davis. In *The Translation Studies Reader* 2nd Edition, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 21-30. London & New York: Routledge, 2004.

Joyce, James. *Finnegan's Wake*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Kiberd, Declan. *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation*. London: Random House, 1995.

Kearney, Richard. *Strangers, Gods and Monsters: Interpreting Otherness*. London & New York: Routledge, 2003.

———& Mark Dooley (eds.). *Questioning Ethics*. London: Routledge, 1999.

Kristeva, J. *Strangers to Ourselves*. Trans. by Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

Lapidot, Elad. 'What is the Reason for Translating Philosophy? I Undoing Babel'. In *Translation and Philosophy*, ed. by Lisa Foran, 89-105. Oxford: PeterLang, 2012.

Lawlor, Leonard. *Derrida and Husserl: The Basic Problem of Phenomenology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

———'The Need for Survival: The Logic of Writing in Merleau-Ponty and Derrida'. In *Tympanum 4: Khoraogrophies for Jacques Derrida 15th July 2000*, ed. by Dragan Kujundzic. Accessed February 15, 2013. http://www.usc.edu/dept/comp-lit/tympanum/4/lawlor.html

Levinas, Emmanuel. *L'Au-delà du verset*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1982.

———*Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*. Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2010. Trans. By Alphonso Lingis, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981.

———*De Dieu qui vient à l'idée*. Paris: Vrin, 1998. Trans. by Bettina Bergo, *Of a God Who Comes to Mind*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

———*De l'évasion*. Paris: Biblio Essais, 1998. Trans. by Bettina Bergo, *On Escape*. Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2003.

———*De l'existence a l'existant.* Paris: Vrin, 2000. Trans. by Alphonso Lingis, *Existence and Existents*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Press, 1995.

———*Dieu, la mort et le temps*. Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1995. Trans. by Bettina Bergo, *God Death and Time*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.

———*Entre nous: Essais sur le penser-à-l'autre*. Paris: Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1991. Trans. by Michael B. Smith & Barbara Harshav, *Entre Nous: Essays on Thinking-of-the-Other*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

———*Éthique comme philosophie première*. Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1998. Trans. By Seán Hand & Michael Temple, 'Ethics as First Philosophy'. In *The Levinas Reader*, ed. by Séan Hand, 75-87. Oxford: Blackwell, 1989.

———*Totalité et infini.* Paris: Le Livre de de Poche, 2011. Trans. by Alphonso Lingis, *Totality and Infinity*. Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1969.

———'La trace de l'autre'. In *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger*, 187-202. Paris: Vrin, 1994.

Long, Christopher P. *Aristotle on the Nature of Truth*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Marx, Werner. *Heidegger and the Tradition.* Trans. by Theodore Kisiel & Murray Greene. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phénoménologie de la perception*. Paris: Gallimard, 1945. Trans. by Colin Smith, *Phenomenology of Perception*. London & New York: Routledge, 2002.

Mooney, Timothy. 'Derrida's Empirical Realism'. In *Philosophy and Social Criticism* Vol.25 No.5 (1999): 33-56.

———'On Losing Uniqueness: Singularity and Its Effacement in Derrida'. In *Human Destinies: Philosophical Essays in Memory of Gerald Hanratty*, ed. by Fran O'Rourke, 588-617. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012.

Moran, Dermot. *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005.

Nicholsen, Shierry Webber. *Exact Imagination, Late Work: On Adorno's Aesthetics*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997.

Norris, Christopher. *Derrida*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1988.

O'Brien, Mahon. 'Leaping Ahead of Heidegger: Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity in *Being and Time*'. Paper presented at 'Heidegger and the Question of Subjectivity' conference, Dublin, Ireland, 10 February 2012. (Publication forthcoming).

———. *Heidegger, History and the Holocaust*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.

O'Connor, Patrick. *Derrida: Profanations*. London: Continuum, 2010.

O'Malley, Aidan. *Field Day and the Translation of Irish Identities: Performing Contradictions*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Peperzak, Adrian. 'Beyond Being'. In *Research in Phenomenology* Vol.8 (1978): 239-261.

———'Preface'. In *Ethics as First Philosophy: The Significance of Emmanuel Levinas for Philosophy, Literature and Religion*, ed. by Adriaan Peperzak, ix-xiii. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Plotinus. *The Enneads*. Trans. by Stephen MacKenna & B.S. Page. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

Raffoul, François. 'Derrida and the Ethics of the Im-possible'. In *Research in Phenomenology* Vol.38 (2008): 270-290.

———*The Origins of Responsibility*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

Rendall, Steven. 'Notes on Zohn's Translation of Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers"'. In *TTR: traduction, terminologie, redaction* Vol.10 No.2 (1997): 191-206.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*. Trans. by John B. Thompson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

———*Sur la traduction*. Paris: Bayard, 2004. Trans. by Eileen Brennan, *On Translation*. Oxon: Routledge, 2006.

Rolland, Jacques. 'Surenchère de l'éthique'. Préface d'*Éthique comme philosophie première* d'Emmanuel Levinas, 11-63. Paris: Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1998.

Rosenfield, Kathrin H. 'Getting inside Sophocles' Mind through Hölderlin's "Antigone"'. In *New Literary History* Vol.30 No.1 (Winter 1999): 107-127.

Shakespeare, William. *The Merchant of Venice*. In *William Shakespeare The Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander, 223-253. London & Glasgow: Collins, 1965.

Shelley, Percy Bysshe. *The Triumph of Life*. In *The Selected Poetry and Prose of Shelley*, 538-555. London: Wordsworth Editions, 2002.

Schleiermacher, Friedrich. 'On the Different Methods of Translating'. Trans. by Susan Bernofsky. In *The Translation Studies Reader* 2nd Edition, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 43-63. London & New York: Routledge, 2004.

Schofield, Malcom. 'The Ionians'. In *The Routledge History of Philosophy Vol.I,* ed. by C.C.W. Taylor, 42-79. London: Routledge, 1997.

Silverman, Hugh J. & Don Ihde (eds.). *Hermeneutics and Deconstruction*. New York: University of New York Press, 1985.

Thomas, Michael. *The Reception of Derrida: Translation and Transformation*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Van der Heiden, Gert-Jan. *The Truth (and Untruth) of Language Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Derrida on Disclosure and Displacement.* Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2010.

Venuti, Lawrence. 'Foundational Statements'. In *The Translation Studies Reader* 2nd Edition, ed. by Lawrence Venuti, 13-20. New York & London: Routledge, 2004.

———*The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference.* London & New York: Routledge, 1998.

———'Translating Derrida on Translation: Relevance and Disciplinary Resistance'. In *Yale Journal of Criticism* Vol.16 No.2 (2003): 237-262.

———(ed.). *The Translation Studies Reader* 1st Edition. London & New York: Routledge, 2000.

———(ed.). *The Translation Studies Reader* 2nd Edition. London & New York: Routledge, 2004.

———*The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation.* London & New York: Routledge, 1995.

Vieira, Else Ribeiro Pires. 'Liberating Calibans: readings of *Antropofagia* and Haroldo de Campos' Poetics of Transcreation'. In *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practise*, ed. by Susan Bassnett & Harish Trivedi, 95-113. London & New York: Routledge, 1999.

Yeo, Michael. 'Perceiving/Reading the Other'. In *Merleau-Ponty, Hermeneutics and Postmodernism,* ed. by Thomas W. Busch & Shaun Gallagher, 37-49. New York: University of New York Press, 1992.

Zagury-Orly, Raphael. 'On Election: Levinas and the Question of First Philosophy'. In *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* Vol.20 No.3 (2012): 349-361.

———*Questionner encore.* Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2011.

Index

Note: Page numbers with "n" denote notes.