INTRODUCTION
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> At the word go we are within the multiplicity of languages and the impurity of the limit.
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> —JACQUES DERRIDA, "What Is a 'Relevant' Translation?"

In 1967 Derrida published three ground-breaking works in French: *De la grammatologie, La voix et le phénomène,* a study of Husserl's theory of signs (*Speech and Phenomena,* translated by David B. Allison in 1973), and *L'écriture et la différence* (*Writing and Difference,* translated by Alan Bass in 1978). When *Of Grammatology* was translated and published in English in 1976 by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, it sparked an enormous interest in Derrida that had not been widely shared outside of a small group of scholars familiar with his work in French and a few available English translations of his essays. In a way, the English translation of 1976 gave birth again to the 1967 French text *ex post facto.* The critical attention given to the translation surely reflected an anxiety about how Derrida would be received in English, but also about which version of "Derrida" would become known or knowable as a result.

There were at least two different ways that the question of whether or not Derrida would be readable in English came to the fore: (1) Could he be read, given the challenges he delivered to conventional protocols of reading?, and (2) Could he be read, given that the English version failed to capture in every detail the key terms and transitions of the original French? The answer to the first question depends in large part on whether those who police the conditions and terms of "readability" would be able to recognize the critical challenge to their own conventional ways of proceeding. In some ways, it is an empirical question, if not a psychological one, and so the publication of the text was a wager: Would they follow? Would they agree to follow? Would they shut out or shut down a way of reading that called into question what it means to follow a text in whatever direction it moves, and for what purpose? This first question was, significantly, not Derrida's own question, since for him the readability of a text is quite independent of whether or not anyone reads it. Readability is a feature of the text, one of its own proper qualities (a point to which we will return). The second question seems to pivot on questions of justice and fidelity: Is the original text rendered in English in a just or fair way? Does it approximate the original closely enough? Does it err at key points where other terms would have brought the French into the English in a more faithful way? In some ways, this question of fidelity is a moral, if not moralizing, ghost that follows any translation through its travels. Again, this was not exactly Derrida's question, even though he surely found some translations better than others. He did not, however, hold to the notion that translation should be captured by a mimetic ideal or, in this case, that translation should cede to a demand to make the English sound or seem more French. Following Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator," we might say that a translation retroactively alters the language in which the original was written as it breaks into, and augments, the language into which the original arrives.[1] The reciprocal and ongoing way that a translation acts upon both languages suggests that the translation does not simply arrive on the date of publication: that arrival is ongoing, uneven, and incomplete. Indeed, we find ourselves now, at the moment of this writing or your reading, at another such moment of arrival. Dates have something to do with this open-ended process, but they cannot explain that open-endedness.

Moreover, these ongoing transformative effects are more important for understanding the task of the translator than any mimetic or moral demand for fidelity, especially since it is not always within the control of the translator to produce those effects. They arise as much from the decisions of any individual as from the predicament of the interlinguistic encounter. It is always hard to be faithful when the terms of the encounter are unclear. One language cannot sound like another, and even if it did, it would not necessarily convey the text across the linguistic boundary (resemblance on the basis of sound can create "faux amis"—false, disloyal, and faithless friends). So should we be concerned if the English strays off from the French, or is this very straying off part of the necessary detour taken by those who seek to translate such a difficult and monumental text from one language to another without the ideal of restoring the original in a second language? If the problem of writing, the central problem of *Of Grammatology*, depends on a generative collapse of the mimetic ideal mandating that writing reiterates the sounds of speech, and if translation engages this same problem—the generative collapse of mimesis—then we should perhaps check the inevitable lamentation over the loss of the French in the English, precisely as we learn why it might be wise to question the lure of translation as a faithful sonic reincarnation. The question: How does the translation intervene in English, even transform the relationship, the missteps and anachronisms, which seem always to be happening between English and French?[2] What is lost, what lives on, and how does that living on happen? Is this translation *Of Grammatology* not a way of living on, mournful and strangely persistent?

When Derrida himself considers the conditions and limits of translation, he points out that homophones or homonyms, two words that sound (or look) the same but bear quite different meanings in different languages, show that it is not possible to translate word-to-word[3] (*CI* 2001, 181). In his article "What Is a 'Relevant' Translation?," he writes that "whenever 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." Then he adds in parentheses that seem to bear an inverse relation to the claim they contain, "(but perhaps a translation is devoted to ruin, to that form of memory or commemoration that is called a ruin; ruin is perhaps its vocation and a destiny that it accepts from the very outset)" (*CI* 181). His suggestion is couched in the "perhaps" and sequestered in parentheses, yet the claim is hardly made any smaller by those signs of reticence. One might say that one translation or another "ruins" the original, and lament that fact, but if ruin is there from the start of any translation, its condition of both possibility and of failure, then so, too, is lamentation. In "What Is a 'Relevant' Translation?" he takes up the "relevance" of translation, only to turn his attention to the different senses that *relevance* bears in French, German, and English. The word sure looks French, but *relever,* which in French means variously "to take up" or even "to preserve" or "to elevate," both loses and gains connotations as it "floats between several languages" (*CI* 181). He remarks upon "the challenge . . . to every translation that would like to welcome into another language all the connotations that have accumulated in this word [*relever*]." Those connotations have "become innumerable in themselves, perhaps unnameable: more than one word in a word, more than one language in a single language, beyond every possible compatibility of homonyms" (*CI* 198–99).

If ruin is there from the word go, then so, too, is mourning, prior to any nameable loss, which is surely why Derrida confirms that translation is a work of mourning (*CI* 199), more of a task than a given. At the same time, translation "guarantees the *survival* of the body of the original (*survival* in the double sense that Benjamin gives it in 'The Task of the Translator,' *fortleben* and *überleben;* prolonged life, continuous life, *living on,* but also life after death)" (*CI* 199). Some loss is converted into another form of life, but not without a remainder that resists all efforts at conversion. If one says that in every translation something remains irreversibly lost, that remains true, but if ruin or loss is what conditions or precipitates translation, then we cannot precisely describe this as the loss of the original. That formulation suggests that the original was intact, even nontranslatable, from the start. If ruin is there from the word go, then what is original? Here we have to pause to consider the ontological expectation of that very question. If we expect to find the origin at the beginning of the sequence we call translation, then we expect that the original "is" or that it is a certain kind of self-identical being: the original ontological status of the text itself. And yet, if any recourse to the original takes place only through what comes next (the nonoriginal, the derivative), then it seems to follow that without the derivative there is no original, and that the derivative is the condition of possibility of the original. If we stopped our analysis there, we would be properly Hegelian, but Derrida takes the analysis in another direction (if we say "one step further," then we are back working on a sequential grid, and it is that presumption of sequence we are trying to call into question). Derrida claims that "there is nothing outside the trace," which means that when we start to refer to what something is, or we start to explain what the original text is prior to any translation, any derivation, then we write not only *as if* the origin were thinkable without the derivation, but also as if the past could appear without being occulted[4] or eclipsed by the very means by which it signifies. That double movement of occultation (or erasure) and retroactive constitution is called "the trace." This usage of the term is unsettling, since we expect that where there is a trace, there is something prior to it that has left it—the trace of a life, a book, a thought. But if the trace is the means through which what is prior is marked, then it is at once lost and found in the course of that marking. In this sense, the trace is the origin of the origin. But when we make a claim like that, we distinguish between the origin of a sequence, understood as a cause or primary movement, and what originates that very way of thinking about origins, its condition of possibility, which, Derrida argues, is invariably retroactive. We could not really refer to an origin without operating within the terms of the aftermath and without subscribing to a sequential form of ordering that is effectively undone by the means by which it is articulated. Whatever origin we find is constituted and erased by that retroactive form of positing. We can no more simply point to the "trace" at the beginning moment of the sequence without that pointing becoming a problem than we can establish the "trace" as a kind of being without accounting for how that ontological field is constituted. The trace that lets us refer to the past is not continuous with that past, nor is it a kind of being. It can only be understood through another key concept, that of *différance,* spelled with the *a,* marking an interval irreducible to any prior synthesis or continuity.

As we have seen, he writes that "there is nothing outside the trace" but also "the (pure) trace is *différance*" (*OG* 62). This seems to imply that there is nothing outside of *différance,* a formulation that brings us back to the problem of writing. *Différance* "permits the articulation of signs among themselves." When we seek to describe what *différance* is, we might be tempted to use language that asserts it as a kind of entity or being, or perhaps as a concept that might be elaborated according to prevailing standards of clarity. But this term, this coinage, is neither a kind of being nor a concept (so neither, strictly speaking, a referent nor a signified). As a term, it seeks to account for what permits articulation, for whatever is "different from" the binary notion of a difference contained by a dialectical unity, a difference that differentiates internal elements that belong to a greater whole. This orthographic invention marks what cannot be gathered up and contained by binary, oppositional terms, but must remain outside, where the outside is not exactly the opposite of the inside. Indeed, the coinage asks us to broach the possibility of thinking beyond the binary oppositions. Those pairings that so pervasively govern our thinking would include inside/outside, nature/culture, mind/body, but also present/past. Those binaries are produced and maintained by excluding a set of differences that cannot appear within that relationship and that are effectively suppressed by those operations of *différance* that secure the binary frame. These differences are supplements, remainders, ruins, barred from entry by a reigning discursive field, indefinitely deferred. And if the binary framing decides in advance what can be said to exist, what kind of concept or referent belongs to the realm of what is, then there is no reference to what is outside the field constituted by this positing, exclusionary procedure. Indeed, Derrida makes clear that "the supplement is neither a presence nor an absence. No ontology can think its operation" (*OG* 342). And elsewhere he maintains, "I am not even sure there can be a 'concept' of an absolute exterior" (Positions 64).

In Derrida's view, Saussure understood rightly some of the most important points about how language must be understood as a sign-system, inadvertently pointing toward some of the more radical implications of his own view. In many ways, Derrida works within and builds upon Saussure's

Course in General Linguistics, a text which provocatively proposed that a future science of grammatology might include linguistics only as a subfield. In the course of defining language as a system of signs, Saussure proposed that writing might be the way to understand the more general structures of language. Distinguished from speech, writing includes phonic and nonphonic elements, and so offers a more capacious approach to language. Saussure proposed that the "sign" name the "signifier," or "the sound-image," that represents the "signified," or the concept. The linguistic signifier does not bear any resemblance to that which it signifies: that difference conditions the very possibility of signification. That signifier works (or *signifies*) precisely because of the specific ways it is distinguished from other signifiers. Structuralism thus initiated a break with those linguistic theories that presumed that signs maintained a necessary relation to their referents. The signifier gains its distinctiveness and its very capacity to signify by a necessary relation not to the referent (an external reality) but to the signified (a linguistically formulated notion of external reality), and both signifier and signified now have to be understood as part of the general operation of the sign. As a result, every sign refers laterally, as it were, to other signs, gaining specificity through differentiation. For Saussure there is a limited set of signs from which any sign is differentiated, since language is conceived as a totality. But for Derrida, the effect of reference relies upon and mobilizes an open field of incessantly differentiating signs. The rules governing those modes of differentiation can be understood as a generalized grammar. But a grammatology will investigate the conditions of writing understood as the conditions of language, where "conditions" are replaced by terms such as "trace," *différance,* and "arche-writing," all of which contest the possibility of establishing a set of original rules governing a closed system for accounting for the signifying process.

Derrida's way of criticizing Saussure is to enter and inhabit his position, tracking its immanent development to the point of its limit in order precisely to track *les brisures* (the joints, the hinges) that open to another way of thinking about language. He writes, "The erasure of concepts ought to mark the places of that future meditation" (*OG* 66). Derrida writes, "What Saussure saw without seeing, knew without being *able* to take into account, following in that entirely metaphysical tradition, is that a certain model of writing was necessarily but provisionally imposed . . . as instrument and technique of representation of a system of language" (*OG* 46–47). That model of writing assumed that the written character of language was but a poor substitute for speech, a derivative phenomenon operating at a distance from an original oral tradition. Indeed, a certain version of that model that

Derrida found in Rousseau maintained that only speech is full and living, and writing is necessarily more lifeless, given its distance from song, that original form of language. Derrida's *Of Grammatology* takes up the lure of phonic writing, the idea that somewhere the sound of speech still lurks in the written word or sentence. Saussure opened the way to understanding the importantly nonphonic dimensions of language, especially its graphic character specific to writing, but he retains the view that the "phonic" still operates in the signifier, whether spoken or written. The exclusion of the specificity of writing, its graphic and spatial dimensions, becomes the point of departure for a new consideration of writing, one that underscores how writing, understood as the operation of all expressive and communicative sign systems, gives forth the general structure of language. This last contention surely constitutes part of the revolutionary wager of Derrida's text.

Why, Derrida asks, is there such a widespread propensity to think that written language reproduces the sounds of speech? What model of language has overtaken us? Taken this way, the task of *Of Grammatology* may seem straightforward. Through an analysis of the graphic element of language (one that Derrida also associated with the literary dimension of language), Derrida seeks to show how a speaking subject is conjured time and again as if its living presence emanated through every written text. The presence of that subject is manifest in speech and only obliquely expressed in writing. When Derrida refers to "onto-theology," he is often pointing to that tacit but pervasive framework in which a subject that makes itself present through speech shadows an account of language, drawing on that biblical logocentrism in which a divine presence becomes available through the divine word, and the divine word performatively brings about the world, all of which gives evidence of that divine speech. This "presence" is understood as a primary and original reality, and the voice or, rather, the sounds of speech are understood to create and convey that presence in and as the world. Thus, this model for understanding language is a phonetic one in which the phoneme retains the presence of the originally speaking subject. One finds an animated shadow of this conception in Saussure's notion of the *sound-image*. Why, Derrida asks, should we assume that sound is the fundamental element in writing, and would we even assume it if we were not in the grips of this onto-theology? The point is not to invert the hierarchy, positing nonpresence over presence, or the graphic dimension of language over its sonority, the death of the subject over its life. For Derrida, the task is precisely to understand how such binary relations become established within a hierarchical framework and come to exhaustively constitute the field of linguistic intelligibility. Derrida seeks to understand the exclusionary procedures by which the supplements to this framework—"unintelligible" and "inassimilable" exterior—may effectively call into question how and why such preemptive versions of intelligibility are enforced.

Derrida describes himself modestly as "involved in the preliminary organization of a question" (*OG* 97), which is, of course, one way to start to think and to query language and writing outside of the inherited frameworks that are, for him, theologically infused and metaphysically problematic. One way of posing the question to structural linguistics is the following: What *différance* constitutes the phonic basis of language? What differentiating structures arrange for the apprehension of sound and the positing of sound as originary? At what points along the seams of a phonic theory do we discern the "incomprehensible" elements, stubborn graphic tufts or knots—metaphors that signify in a direction opposite to the argument for which they are deployed, diacritical marks without which the argument cannot proceed—that call into question the phonetic basis of language? A reading that inhabits, tracks, and foregrounds these moments in the context of the broader demonstration shows how those excluded elements operate as "supplements," troubling the comprehensive claims of the framework that impose in a preemptive way the limits of linguistic intelligibility. For Derrida, supplements include the graphic and spatial articulation of language on the page, including spacings, intervals, margins, and punctuation. None of these elements is reducible to phonetics. There is no phoneme, for example, which corresponds to the space between words, and yet without that spacing, there would be no articulation—and no way of accounting for interlinearity as a signifying feature of the text. Indeed, for Derrida, these are the very elements without which there can be no language, and no text, indicating the priority of writing and the pervasiveness of textuality.

To say writing has "priority" does not mean that it should be regarded as an "origin" in any usual sense. Writing is understood as "the trace," that is, a necessary passage and bind through which any reference to an origin retrospectively takes place. Those graphic elements of writing cannot rightly be understood as the effects of an absent subject whose voice and presence are made known through language. On the contrary, those forms of nonpresence indicated by the graphic marks and intervals, constitute an irreducibly nonphonetic element of all articulation. This nonpresence ought not to be construed as the *absence* of voice, a manifestation of a speaking subject who happens to remain silent—this was one of the problems that Derrida found in Husserl's account of speech. Nonpresence has to be thought to the side of the binary of speech/silence for it to be grasped as nonphonetic and for the conceits of onto-theology to be effectively contested.

So why is it so important that we overcome, or set aside, this phonetic understanding of language? For Derrida, there is a pervasive link between sound and being, as if reality comes forth through sound, whether it is the voice of God declaring what is, bringing reality into being through that sovereign performative act, or the human voice, establishing its own being and presence through speech, and so also establishing its mimetic relation to the divine. Writing does not depend on the continuing presence of the author. This text now circulates without its author. But from the start, writing presumes that authorial nonpresence, the author's death, one that cannot be grasped as a pause in speech. The figure of the speaking subject presumed by phonetic language is one of mastery: the subject speaks, makes itself present, brings itself forth into being, and what the subject names or speaks of acquires an ontological effect by being named or described. What if there is no such masterful subject with such linguistic powers? What if this conceit operates effectively and surreptitiously in most of the dominant accounts of language? If writing is spatial, then it cannot be understood as a temporal unfolding of some presence or truth. If it is sensible, in a Kantian way, it structures our very way of apprehending the world. And if it is incontrovertibly exterior, at a distance from the subject, articulated or inscribed on a surface, it is not then the mere externalization or expression of an internal reality. Writing understood in this way is not a degraded version of speech, but offers a nonanthropocentric way of understanding language by virtue of its distinction from speech. It opens up a version of language in which the decentered subject registers as a form of humility. If writing is no longer anchored in the subject, could it be that the subject has become less grandiose, and productively so, in and through writing? Does writing, in other words, conduct a critique of anthropocentrism, its ties to onto-theology, and their common dream of mastery?

The subject with the power to establish being through speech is posited retroactively by that account of language, which means that the master subject starts to become undone as the limits of the phonetic account are tracked and exposed. One could make this philosophically plain by claiming that neither God nor man is at the center of language, and that human speech is not the faded replication of divine speech. That seems true enough, but what such a formulation overlooks is that both "God" and "man" are signified through and by a discourse, that is, through a consequential inversion, conceived as the result of their speech. The biblical conceit that "in the beginning was the word" is more often than not taken to be an account of divine origination through speech. God names, and brings into being what he names. But what if every beginning is already belated and occulted by virtue of the way in which it is signified? What is that way? It is named or described after the fact, and so the signifier that seeks to secure that origin contaminates the "before" with the "after"? It is not that we cannot refer to origins anymore, but only that when we do, we find ourselves in a linguistic passage that is blocked from its aim, covering over and departing from whatever that origin might be.

Although Derrida does not demonstrate his claim that this phonetic account is everywhere operating in Western frameworks, he proceeds experimentally as if that were the case. There are many reasons to have doubts about such a sweeping claim, which I will enumerate below. The deconstruction of the phonetic presumption, the logocentric account that supports onto-theology (which is, of course, not simply its destruction, but, rather, the tracking of its own destabilizing supplements in the direction of a productive detour), requires a new vocabulary. And so we find that one of the defining features of *Of Grammatology* is the coining of new phrases and terms, as if we cannot stay content with the ordinary language practices that we have. They are pervaded, or sedimented, with this framework, and only through a revolutionary practice of writing can that framework begin to become dislodged. So this practice of coining new phrases unsettles those discourses pervaded by the metaphysics of presence, the speculative attribution of a substance or a subject to every possible concept, but also enacts the claim that language is in a process of becoming. Its settled conceptual frameworks can be shaken and give rise to new terms, new modes of demonstration, many of which may well seem "monstrous" from the point of view of those who uphold the norm. So part of the task of reading *Of Grammatology* is to learn a new set of terms, to ask as one reads why and where such terms are introduced and what work they do, and perhaps also to understand how they relieve the language about language of its metaphysical and theological burdens.

Derrida claims that this onto-theology, this metaphysics of presence, belongs to "the West" and that the conceits of phonocentrism are evidence of ethnocentrism. Several critical questions arise in the wake of such a claim, especially since he does not demonstrate the truth of the claim through recourse to specific languages. He singles out Saussure and Rousseau for close and critical readings. Are these authors meant to be exemplary of a "Western" discourse, or is, as he claims, the "indicative value" of any of these proper names "the name of a problem"? Or does Derrida presume that the biblical account of divine speech pervades Judeo-Christian tradition, and that that tradition is coextensive with the West? What about the importance of divine speech in Islam or other religious traditions? Perhaps the point is that more purely graphic forms of writing can be found "in the East," and we are meant to take the references to Leibniz's interest in Chinese script, and its relation to "Chinese culture," as an ethnographic and orientalist alternative to his historical present. Which languages, or which reflections on language, belong to "the West"? And how is that East/West division made, through what delimiting practice, and is that binary not subject to the same kinds of critical readings that other binary relations receive in this text? Derrida helps to undo the distinction he introduces as he underscores that the graphic elements of writing are already, and from the start, operating in speech, and so at the heart of the "Western" tradition he criticizes. The distinction between "East" and "West" turns out to be less than stable when we realize that "oral language already belongs to this [modified concept] of writing." It would seem that a more generalized claim is being made about language, namely, that writing in some sense precedes speech, and that speech is dependent on a form of writing, which means that the biblical God may well have uttered some first words, but they only come to us through a dictation that covers over and challenges the primacy of that speech.

In part II of *Of Grammatology,* Derrida focuses on the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau to lay out this controversial and counterintuitive claim that writing in some sense precedes speech and gives us the general form of language. Many problems immediately emerge with such a claim. In what sense does writing "precede" speech? What is meant by a "general form" of language? On the one hand, Rousseau offers a fictive account of how written language is derived not only from speech, but also from song. His narrative suggests that written language is a fallen state, deprived of the vital and natural dimensions of life that are found in primitive forms of vocalization. As society moves further away from a natural state, language decays, and writing is a form of decay, an estrangement from the original "voice of nature," sometimes the "simple cry of nature," a depletion of life force compelled by the increasing rationalization of society. On the other hand, Rousseau seems to understand at various points that there are dimensions of language that could not possibly be derived from such an originary voice, and that his own postulations about the state of nature are retrospectively constituted, depending on the "social" character of his own position and narrative account. For Derrida, the blind spot in Rousseau's account becomes clear when the description of language, especially voice, unwittingly draws on elements of writing. For instance, he tracks the way that "accents" are attributed to vocalizations by Rousseau, even though "accents" are diacritical marks that belong to written language. Indeed, accents suggest that grammatical inflection is already at work in the examples of melody that Rousseau describes. Grammar is not a belated and "fallen" dimension of language that has become formalized and devitalized over time, but there at the outset, conditioning the very melody that is supposed to precede the ascent of a lifeless grammar.

Time and again Rousseau seeks to describe or recount the primacy of song and the mimetic relationship of all language to this passionate vocal beginning. He recounts all this, of course, from an impossible position, since he could not have been present at the origin he describes. Even in the description, he inadvertently attributes the primacy of discourse—not speech—to the scene. So, for instance, he claims that "in all imitation, some form of discourse must substitute for the voice of nature" (*OG* 216). Even the human song that is considered to be as proximate as possible to the voice of nature is caught up in a mimetic structure that requires discourse. In other words, discourse is operating at the very moment in which the voice of nature is replicated in human song. Indeed, Derrida goes on to argue that this replication operates neither through mimesis nor through any other kind of copying, but precisely through displacement, even erasure. Here, again, the notion of "the trace" indicates how this notion of the origin is manufactured and occulted from a belated position within language. For, as we have noted, there is no reference to the origin of language that does not take place in a discourse that covers over, and displaces, the putative origin of language. If that origin is construed as voice, then the discursive conditions construing that voice effectively establish its priority. If the origin is signified, it is also eclipsed in the very act of signification. There seems to be no way out of this double bind.

Similarly, Rousseau will argue that both humans and animals have natural pity, even that natural pity belongs to all living beings. What distinguishes the human is imagination, without which pity would not be activated in human beings. So it seems that natural pity is there in human beings prior to its being activated, and yet it requires this external intervention to become, in effect, what it is. The imagination is not found in all living beings and is not considered natural; indeed, it is distinctively human and arguably the most powerful of human capacities. If this nonnatural intervention by imagination activates pity, then the question may be raised: Does pity have a natural status or, indeed, any ontological status prior to its activation? Does imagination create pity? Is the notion of a natural pity destroyed by the account of the activation of pity through imagination? Does imagination contravene nature or expose its superfluity? Imagination engages both reflection and representation, according to Rousseau, so we can experience pity only within a discourse that has already established the terms of pity, understood as an identification with another's suffering. That discourse differentiates the one who has pity from the one who is pitied, even though they are said to be united by a natural bond. What is called "identification" requires dis-identification for that differentiation to condition the very possibility of pity. Marking or inscribing an interval, that differentiation within the text operates as writing, the articulation of pity. Rousseau concedes many of these points along the way but does not let those concessions bother the narrative trajectory of his argument. In his discussion of script, Rousseau considers writing to be "exterior" to, and so distant from, the interior truth of language that is linked with voice and feeling. And in his moral discussion, representation is external to the primary, natural, internal reality of the feeling of pity. According to Derrida, however, that "interiority" is produced time and again by the power of exteriority. Writing marks the history of speech, which is to say that writing alters speech, and does so from the word go.

One of Rousseau's great writerly virtues is to reenact double binds such as these, offering Derrida a way to elaborate his own position through reading the knotty and inverted moments in Rousseau's text. In fact, in reading both Saussure and Rousseau, Derrida situates himself (or finds himself so situated) within their discourses at the same time that he probes the limits of those texts, the occasions of clear contradiction or unexpected reversal, but also, importantly, those upsurges of unintelligibility that always indicate the limit of a given, historical field of intelligibility. The point is not to affirm unintelligibility as a new virtue or even a new norm, but, rather, to show how an ostensibly coherent system admits to points of breakage precisely as it unfolds its arguments, opening up another articulation of space and time, a detour, a peregrination. Derrida's writing thus heralds a future through a break with a set of discourses that inhabit him and which he inhabits, exposing these unsettling and promising sites of breakage found "within" the discourse even as they open to the "outside." Saussure is said to "hold himself at the limit" of his own position. For Derrida, it does not suffice to say that Rousseau "thinks the supplement without thinking it," for he offers up a way of seeing how the name can move in a direction away from the thing it seeks to name. This gap between word and thing constitutes a "referential limit" that has to be marked through a supplementary means. Rousseau provides for such textual moments where this gap can be foregrounded, but does not pursue the implications of what, as it were, his writing displays. For his part, Derrida does not read these texts from a distance, but becomes bound up in these knots without precisely ceding to Rousseau. His reading is enmeshed, intimate, yet discerning. Of his own way of proceeding, Derrida writes:

> The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, nor can they take accurate aim, except by inhabiting those structures. Inhabiting them *in a certain way*, because one always inhabits, and all the more when one does not suspect it. Operating necessarily from the inside, borrowing all the strategic and economic resources of subversion from the old structure, borrowing them structurally, that is to say without being able to isolate their elements and atoms, the enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey (*est emportée*) to its own work. (*OG* 25)

Peggy Kamuf argues against those who complain that deconstruction is not "oppositional" enough, that "by emphasizing that deconstructive movements inhabit in a certain way, however, Derrida is announcing something like an *awakening* of the action that habitually slumbers passively unaware in this state called habitation or inhabiting . . . the question is *how* one inhabits there where one finds oneself and that *in which* one is already inscribed."[5] That account seems true even as there are other times when "breakage" or "subversion" become foregrounded as the paramount activities. As part of his introductory comments on part II, "Introduction to the 'Age of Rousseau,'" Derrida explains that his treatment of major philosophical figures does not simply exemplify an identical structure, although they each articulate a form of "metaphysical closure" (*la clôture metaphysique*). Indeed, in one of his most emphatic claims, he writes that "all concepts hitherto proposed in order to think the articulation of a discourse and of an historical totality are caught up within [*sont pris dans*] the metaphysical closure that we question here . . . [*que nous questionnons ici*]." Even so, Derrida does not exactly stand outside them: "we draw our argument from them [*nous en tirons argument*] in order to isolate Rousseau and, in Rousseauism, the theory of writing" (*OG* 99). As one can see by my insertion, there is no reference to a first-person "I" but rather a "we" who questions and draws out one text from another. Is there an implication that some "we" is in this bind together, breaking open a metaphysical closure that has preempted not only what can be written and understood, but the interconnected (and contingent) limits of writing and intelligibility?

How would such an idea of "inhabiting" or even plural "cohabiting" operate in the context of translation? Readers of this text agree to take on a translation. They are solicited to inhabit Derrida's language through the excellent translation that Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has so ably and carefully provided once again. It is rare to find such a combination of nuance and erudition in any translation of this magnitude. This translation has undergone a reiterative process. She translated it forty years ago, and now again, and so we are confronted with several intervals or spacings. There is the distance of the original to the translation, and now that of the second translation to the first. The sequence of publication that begins with the French text in 1967 and is followed by 1976 and now 2016 tells only one story, the story of English. At every point along the way, at least two groups of skeptics emerge: the first to ask whether the text is readable (in any language); the second, whether the text is fairly translated into English. Those who question its general readability are often considered to be unwilling to do the work. Those who quarrel about its translation tend to do a great deal of work, and want more work to be done. The first group tends to defend its own metaphysical grid of intelligibility; the second wants to make sure that the challenge to that very grid of intelligibility is delivered in precise textual ways. Police functions can flare up on either side.

Perhaps the rejoinder to entrenched battles such as these is to be found in the work of Walter Benjamin, to which Derrida returned time and again.[6] If Walter Benjamin is right in "The Task of the Translator," then every text has communicability and translatability as its own "proper" qualities. This means that for a text to be a text it must already, from the start and before any translation, bear this property of being translatable. In this sense, the translation does not come later, but is there from the start as a proper and incipient possibility of the text, one that defines it essentially.

Derrida's reflections on the possibility of identifying or securing an "origin" of the subject or the "origin" of language give us a way to understand the status of the original text in relation to the translation. Psychoanalysis has argued that the human subject cannot recover the scene of its own origin, that the scene is invariably articulated in fantasy, that the scene bars our way to return. The subject emerges in part through a repression of its origins. Cutting off, or foreclosing, that origin is thus a condition of possibility of subject-formation. A direct return to the origin of the subject would involve contravening the very conditions that make the subject possible, so to return to that origin would be to undo the very conditions of the subject, ushering in psychosis. This does not mean we cannot tell a story or provide a set of images about such a return, but those will be retroactive postulations, belated accounts that would be defined in part by the bar against return, and invariably belated, only and always getting later. Some psychoanalysts have sought to identity the origin of language with the origins of vocalization, yet others have established the priority and exteriority of language to all subject formation. For Derrida, the "fort-da" related in Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* opened up questions of how and why linguistic repetition is staged, the aims and limits of mimesis in the face of absence and loss of mastery. Derrida's connection with psychoanalysis is clear when we consider the iterability of words, their transposability from one context to another, since "fort" and "da" are already circulating before the child starts to vocalize them.[7] With such vocalizations, a child climbs on board a train that has long since left the station, entering an iterable process as he or she enacts wishful and thwarted features of performative language, since the words do not really give the child the power to send the parent away or, indeed, to reel the parent back. And yet the fantasy of such vocal power persists in performative language that seeks to bring about what it names or to initiate a set of effects in the world. Performative language is also that which, after all, both builds and unbuilds concepts in language. It helps us to understand, for instance, how an "origin" is *instituted* and what implications that has for its narrative representation.

Any account of the origin of language or the subject only carries us further away from the point we tried to reach; the representational form given for an origin marks the untraversable distance between that origin and its mode of appearing. Indeed, we cannot even say, "There is an origin" without attributing an ontological status to that which is outside the ontological field within which such claims could be made. This view does not imply that origins are simply made up or fabricated, but only that they are *instituted,* and in such a way that involves both an erasure and a deferral of the origin itself. In this sense, we might say that the problem of the origin generates linguistic effects always at a remove from that origin.

In reading Rousseau's own reflections on the origin of language in which an original unity of language breaks up into multiple languages, Derrida counters with the claim that "language could have emerged only out of dispersion" (*OG* 253). He continues, "That language must traverse space, be obliged to be spaced, is not an accidental trait but the mark of its origin. In truth, dispersion will never be a past." Perhaps we might understand this translation, and translation more generally, as this dispersion, this traversal of space that a text is obliged to undergo, most emphatically when that text seeks to return to an origin. In a way that recalls Benjamin's remark that the original text "contains the law governing the translation: its translatability" and further that "the translatability of linguistic creations ought to be considered even if men should prove unable to translate them" (*Illuminations* 70).[8] Significantly, the feature of translatability is linked not with the life of the text but rather with its afterlife (*Überleben*). The translatability of a text is one of its essential features because the "afterlife" of the text belongs properly to the life of the text. Translation marks "the continued life" (*Fortleben*) of the text, which Derrida translates as *survivre*. In this way, perhaps, translation anticipates the risk of death, the work of mourning, the continued life, if not the afterlife, of the author's text.[9] As Derrida conjectured about translation, "ruin is perhaps its vocation and a destiny that it accepts from the very outset" (*CI* 181).

The translation of *Of Grammatology* is surely a continuation of the life of that text, of what is living there, but it is one that calls into question our settled ideas of continuity. Needless to say, the text does not remain the same when it acquires life in another language, but it was never supposed to stay the same. Indeed, sometimes a text has to be betrayed to facilitate its afterlife. We surely can, and should, tell the story about how Derrida's work began to arrive in English, the conference at Johns Hopkins in 1966 which included Barthes and Lacan, and spell out the differences between Paris in 1967, when *De la grammatologie* was published, and the U.S. academic scene of 1976 when the first English translation of this book emerged. That story assumes that the text arrived on the date of its arrival. But here we are again, the text now arriving in 2016. Can we say that the text already arrived, or that it arrived twice? Yes, of course, but it has "not yet" arrived in any final and definitive sense. It has not settled into a past tense. If it now arrives again, or if its arrival is ongoing without precisely being continuous or linear, then there can be no definite date of arrival, and no calendar could help us fix its date. Perhaps it is indefinitely arriving, belonging to an afterlife that was already there, and from the outset, in 1967. It was outside of French at the very moment it was published in French. Scandalous as that might seem to some, there does not seem to be any way around that fact. Perhaps we can even say that the translation predates its origin, since the origin depends so utterly on that secondary moment. This is a text whose arrival is never definitive, and could not be definitive except within the terms of a closed economy of time that it disputes. Indeed, in our prologues, prefaces, and forewords, we are tasked with heralding the arrival of the text, replicating the introductory gestures, offering the schematic accounts that can only be displaced, corrected, or refined by a patient reading. Even as whatever is written about *Of Grammatology* is inevitably belated, it is also part of an ongoing life, a survival that could be neither anticipated nor experienced by the author, a mode of living bound to the text.

We know this perhaps most poignantly by seeing how Derrida's *Of Grammatology* continues to have provocative and productive effects throughout the human sciences, popular culture, visual art, philosophy, theology, history, literature, and literary theory, to name a few. It would be inflated to claim that he gave us writing, since surely there was a great deal of writing going on before he arrived on the scene of writing. Few of us escaped that moment of education in which we learned that our ideas lived in us internally and awaited a proper expression. That simple sequence has been common sense in so many educational scenes. It shocks still to learn that language precedes us, structuring our thought, and that writing may well be the name for that articulation that makes speaking possible. We start to speak, and we are already in someone else's language, translating what enters the ear—or registers with us through another communicative means—into a grammatical scheme that is prior to signifying sound. The risk that is run by reading this text is not so much that we will discover that we are the passive dupes of an all-powerful writing; on the contrary, it is the resistance to reading that is the greatest risk, for it leaves us clutching forms of knowledge and language that are the sign of our unknowingness. Better to tarry attentively with the unknowable—that is the wager here.

Afterword

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE to this book, written in 1972–73, gives a general background to Jacques Derrida, who at the time was at the beginning of a brilliant career and tried to say a few things about the book *Of Grammatology*. This afterword does the same, again. It will inevitably repeat, but sometimes make clearer, and perhaps sometimes contradict, what was written earlier. Now that Derrida has become his readers, I have tried to pull the book forward by considering *Rogues,* the last book by Derrida published in his lifetime, where he considers the importance of *Of Grammatology* a number of times.[1]

The word "ethnocentrism" is on the first page of *Of Grammatology*. And it is indeed a critique of the ethnocentrism and "Europocentrism"—that is the word that Derrida used in the mid- to late 1960s—of the dominant philosophical tradition, indeed, intellectual tradition, of northwestern Europe.

The general argument is most pertinent to our time: that although the cybernetic and informatics revolution, using linguistics as a scientific model, is putting emphasis on writing—all that which used to assemble itself under the name of language now assembles itself under the name of writing—in fact, the "revolutionaries" are using not a new discourse to fix these new inventions, but versions of the millennial ethnocentric and Europocentric ideology of the thinking of Europe.[2] The young Derrida writes in the hope that cybernetics and informatics will join hands with a philosophy defeating itself; and that anthropology and linguistics would train imaginations to undo "the *epistemological* phonologism establishing a science as a master-model [that] presupposes a *linguistic* and *metaphysical* phonologism that raises voice above writing" (111).

Historically, that ideology could not and still cannot accept the fact that the beginning of anything like the possibility of human society and human history (the "historial") is imbricated with writing in general, defined in the translator's preface as "the absence of the 'author' and of the 'subject-matter,' interpretability, the deployment of a space and a time that is not 'its own' " (xci). Today, in an era of fiercer identitarianism, I would expand: that ideology cannot accept the fact that the subject, inserted into a world that plays by its own rules (earlier I referred only to genetic script, but here I point to the anthropocene), is classified socially and materially before becoming "proper" in his (used advisedly) genealogy; in other words, it is hard to accept that my "self," my "identity," does not precede my impersonal classification. Because the self must protect itself against this anonymity before identity (classed/raced/and gendered before propriation), socialization thinks writing (and access to it) only as writing in the narrow sense—script. This is usually put in contrast to speech, where, through our apparent ability to use our natural breath-based voice as a bridge between nature and various versions of the transcendental domain of fullness, we can protect our sense of owning our identity. The breath is the matrix of a natural convention that will allow a conventional convention. Derrida suggests that, rather than create a binary opposition between speech and writing, we should be able to see that speech itself can only work if the code upon which it relies can also operate in the absence of the speaker and is therefore a case of writing in general: "If one stops understanding writing in its narrow sense of linear and phonetic notation, one should be able to say that all societies capable of producing, that is to say of obliterating, their proper names, and of playing classificatory difference, practice writing in general. No reality or concept would therefore correspond to the expression 'society without writing' " (118).

The first chapter shows us how this has been historically resisted. It shows how the deciphering of ancient nonphonetic scripts in the seventeenth century was co-opted by the eighteenth, so that it was not possible to imagine that phoneticization, far from being the "natural" trajectory of the formation of languages as such, might be a historical moment in the history of some languages. In the translator's preface, I had written, somewhat condescendingly, "Indeed, in Part I . . . Derrida speaks most often of re-writing the 'history of writing' in something suspiciously like the narrow sense" (cii). I missed the point that in every chapter he shows the critical problem of considering the questions at the limit—and provisionally aligning himself with the methodology he critiques—which are not aware of the questions at the limit—so that he can go forward.

e second chapter shows this resistance to writing, within a phonetic model taken as natural, within the modern science of linguistics, for some the model of science as such in the era of informatics; not only in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, but also in the work of those who questioned Saussure's insistence on naturalizing his scientific model—such as Louis Hjelmslev. The work of the Copenhagen school, for example, "is plagued by a scientificist objectivism, that is to say by another unperceived or unconfessed metaphysics. It is to escape falling back into this naive objectivism that we refer ourselves here to a transcendentality that we elsewhere put into question" (66). Elsewhere transcendentality is rewritten by trace and differance. Let us stay with that early description of "transcendental": transcendental means transcategorial.[3] Trace categorizes an unreal pastness: it was here. Differance categorizes by saying it is not all the not-its, and so on indefinitely.

In chapter 2, Derrida finds his closest ally in Charles Sanders Peirce:

> In his project of semiotics, Peirce seems to have been more attentive than Saussure to the irreducibility of this becoming-unmotivated. In his terminology, one must speak of a becoming-unmotivated of the *symbol,* the notion of the symbol playing here a role analogous to that of the sign which Saussure opposes precisely to the symbol: Symbols grow. They come into being by development out of other signs, particularly from icons, or from mixed signs partaking of the nature of icons and symbols. We think only in signs. These mental signs are of mixed nature; the symbol parts of them are called concepts. If a man makes a new symbol, it is by thoughts involving concepts. So it is only out of symbols that a new symbol can grow. Omne symbolum de symbol. (52)

At this stage, the word "deconstruction" is used to mean "desedimentation." In other words, what seems clear is shaken up by such suggestions as I have already outlined, so that the mud comes up and is then strained through. This simple model never quite disappears, but is framed in many different ways.

This, I believe, is why, in the foreword (formerly translated as "preface"), Derrida gives us a precise description of his understanding of the task of the book: to "produce the problems of critical reading" rather than "illustrate a new method," "often embarrassing myself in the process" (cxiii). A critical reading—following Kant's critique—attempts to track the structures of subjective production of the text. As Derrida writes at the end of his career: "Deconstruction does not seek to discredit critique, it ceaselessly relegitimizes its necessity and heritage, but it never renounces the genealogy of the idea of critique, not less than the history of the question and of the supposed privilege of interrogative thought" (*R* 174–75; translation modified).

Derrida walks us through our inherited presuppositions and suggests that Hegel already stages a way out of this. His most important examples are Heidegger and Nietzsche. Derrida suggests that although Heidegger's inclusion of Nietzsche in Western metaphysics is a dogmatic reading, this reading is possible and correct. On the other hand, it is also possible to notice that Nietzsche "writes" his writings, says Derrida. Instead of claiming a referential origin for his ideas, Nietzsche typically leads us back into indefinite chains or some rhetorical ruse, puts quotation marks around his arguments. Therefore, it is also possible to read Nietzsche in this other way, as exorbitant to metaphysics. Here for the first time Derrida speaks of the fact that the kind of reading that he is proposing is what we might call funky, not straight—a word from jazz which can serve us if we think of it as a loosely understood onbeat/offbeat/backbeat structure.

And because the useful desedimentation method is also part of the problem, the embarrassment, the reader's subjective structures ignored, so to speak, Derrida famously frames that method as follows: what we are calling funky, Derrida calls "a certain way." In part I chapter 2 he describes that kind of reading as follows:

> The movements of deconstruction do not put a strain on [*solliciter*] structures from the outside. They are not possible and effective, they do not focus their strikes, except by inhabiting these structures. Inhabiting them *in a certain way,* for one always inhabits and more so yet when one does not suspect it. Operating necessarily from the inside, borrowing from the old structure the strategic and economic resources of subversion, borrowing them structurally, that is to say without being able to isolate their elements and atoms, the enterprise of deconstruction is always in a certain way swept away by its own work. (25)

The new edition translates *solliciter, ajuster leurs coups,* and *emporte* differently in this passage. The task as described above is never forgotten in the book. It can even be shown (as I hope to show in a more extended forthcoming study) that the entire text teaches us how to read the book in an ongoing way.

Let us look at an important lapse in translation in the final long paragraph of part I, where Derrida describes how, in order to access other mindsets or epistemes, we must think thought as a textual blank. (This thought is itself comparable to the moment before the subject's accession to self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit:* "Self-consciousness is an object of consciousness, which, by itself, posits its other-being as a nullity."[4] Hegel is obliged to make his observation sequential.) "Textual blank" was translated in the first edition as "the blank part of the text." But since it indicates a blank space, specifically instituted by a specific text as the space of a specific method toward the execution of a task, "textual blank" would have been altogether more appropriate. You know by now that it indicates not just any blank space, but a blank space framed by a specific text. This particular idea, coming perhaps from Mallarmé, leads us toward what is one of the most important ideas in the book, namely, supplementarity:

> The constitution of a science or a philosophy of writing is a necessary and difficult task. But, having arrived at these limits and repeating them ceaselessly, a *thought* of the trace, of differance or of reserve, must also point beyond the field of the *epistémè*. . . . *Thought* is here for us a perfectly neutral name, a textual blank, the necessarily indeterminate index of an epoch of differance to come. *In a certain way, "thought" wants to say nothing.* Like all openings, this index belongs, by the face of it that is given to be viewed, inside of a past epoch. This thought weighs nothing. It is, in the play of the system, that very thing which always weighs nothing. To think, it is what we already know we have not yet begun to do; that which, measured to the *size* of writing, makes *a break* only in the *episteme.* (101)

To think out of your box, thought is a blank shaped by your box, ready to receive, perhaps—learning to translate other lingual memories. Readings look forward to the next reading, and the next. No stockpiling of self-congratulatory "deconstructive" final readings recommended.

Although Heidegger and Nietzsche are shown to be important players of the certain way, the most important person is Hegel. And Hegel, by placing a closure at the end of his philosophical system as Absolute Knowledge, effectively closes the book: "The horizon of absolute knowledge is the effacement of writing in the logos" (27). Yet he also, in the body of his philosophy, namely, in what happens before the end, opens up writing, which is always open-ended because it looks forward to being read. He is the thinker of the irreducible difference between the subject and itself. There are quotations from other writings by Hegel that back up Derrida's reading. Nietzsche and Heidegger are therefore described as post-Hegelians. And Hegel is marked as the philosopher who practices writing before the letter. That indeed is the title of the entire part I. In chapter 2 Derrida introduces the difference between words such as "sense" and "meaning," and also between "historial" and "historical," leading to thoughts of the general sense and the narrow sense.

This phrase—"a certain way"—a colloquial description of "deconstruction" in the private grammar of this book—reading and meaning in that "certain way" of self-effacing imaginative activism—is used in various parts of the book, always pointing us toward the formula described on page 25.

Following the self-locating technique—the "self" being an academic stereotype of the self that will still say "we"—of beginning a desedimentation (we can call these readings in the book desedimentations), Derrida begins the second chapter by saying that although a history of writing cannot be written—writing in general, by making the "individual" generalizable right at the start, opens the historial—he will do the wrong thing; and begins the Saussure chapter by admitting that he has to share logocentric presuppositions in order to do so; this self-framing is what I had missed earlier. Let us now persist, he writes, for a little while, "to use this opposition of nature and institution[,] of *physis* and *nomos*"—growth and law—"(which also means, of course, a distribution and division regulated in fact by law) which a meditation on writing should disturb although it functions everywhere as self-evident, particularly in the discourse of linguistics" (48). However, he is also reading Saussure against himself, discovering some things in Saussure—for example, the importance of spacing (a phenomenon that cannot be psychologized) in the production of meaning—that can produce a critique of the plenitude-ideology of Europe. This is the theory of intellectual activism that begins with the *Grammatology:* a strong text can be ideology critical in its rhetoricity. Logic nests in rhetoric, and the reader of science or philosophy cannot ignore this.

In chapter 2, Derrida also suggests that literature is an important way forward in deconstruction/desedimentation, bringing historical silt up from the bottom so that the commodity that is offered becomes really clear, except if we turn literature into "pure" play, as we do if we evoke reading literature as nothing but the restoration of an original vision.

One of the immediate tasks of deconstruction is to find texts to read. There are major texts in this book that are shown to contain within them what can only be called deconstructive possibilities. And it is the task of deconstruction to set them free. But in order to do so, the deconstructor as desedimenter must bind him/herself into a positivist position. And so on indefinitely. We can see how Derrida is activizing, taking beyond Europocentrism, un-bookending, as it were, the bound-to-be-free tradition of Kant to Sartre.

Plato and Lévi-Strauss do not qualify for such a list in this book. I have a feeling Lévi-Strauss stands in for the entire "colonial" discipline of anthropology. And, just as Derrida is a lesson for today because he reads carefully the claims to a radical post-informatics change in the 1960s, showing how every claim to rupture is also a repetition of an unexamined ideology, so Derrida can never forgive what he calls the double ethnocentrism of anthropology, abundantly in existence from research to "development" today; which, aiming to be anti-ethnocentric, in fact, through a European (today Euro-U.S., and benevolently feudal in the North-in-the-South) breast-beating, in fact performs a double ethnocentric gesture defining the savage as "without writing," but full of innocence.[5] We remember the quotation from *The Savage Mind,* as also the comment about the incest taboo as being no more than methodological.[6] As a gesture, it comes through also in the claim of having violated the innocent young girls by "exciting them" and thus making them give up the proper names not only of themselves but of all the adults. In fact, of course, there are "real" proper names, the ones in use, which are nicknames given by the Europeans. And there is no society without writing, because the writing makes sociability possible. Furthermore, there is the example of writing on mnemic material—the tremendous genealogical memories of so-called peoples without writing. The anthropologist, claiming the innocence of the object-of-investigation, and claiming that the introduction of writing all at once by the anthropologist destroys that innocence, is unable to realize that the chief is making marks precisely to communicate genealogy—not for phoneticizing convenience; as the anthropologist is still withholding writing from them, a common mistake when we decide that only the European model is what deserves the name. I am reminded of the withdrawal of the possibility of W. E. B. Du Bois's use of the concept of the general strike because he is speaking of slaves rather than factory workers.

Yet Derrida does acknowledge that Lévi-Strauss notices that there is no naming as such. He, like Saussure, has this deconstructive moment which may be used to turn his text around.

Derrida finds such possibilities in Plato from "Plato's Pharmacy" on down, moving perhaps toward the peculiarities of *Timaeus* rather than the more magisterial texts.[7] But we are not there yet in *Grammatology,* and the translator's preface obliterates this little difference, which will emerge again as a resistance to Plato, a call to "echo" him, in *Rogues.* We have no more than cursory references to *Phaedrus,* Plato dismissing writing.

At this point, Derrida is within other debates: in the chapter on method in part I, "Of Grammatology as a Positive Science," in his comments on "linearization" (93), he suggests that writing in the narrow sense (phonetic writing above all—which the global Europocentric majority considers "normal") is rooted in a past of nonlinear writing—the writing in the general sense that he has described as "originary" in so many ways in the chapters before. It had to be defeated, often by technical success—as the Indo-European languages in India; it assured a greater security and greater possibilities of capitalization in a dangerous and anguishing world. Today I know that this would travel to contemporary Africa, where the colonial disciplines of anthropology and linguistics—Derrida's specific targets—cannot understand the survival virtues of "originary" and nonlinear writing—a writing (system meaningful in the absence of the speaker) that we (Lévi-Strauss) cannot recognize or acknowledge as writing in the Nambikwara.[8]

There are thus moments sympathetic to deconstruction in Descartes, who speaks of decipherment rather than decoding, and sees the future of a universal language in fiction (84). In Hegel, who, although he fulfilled history in Absolute Knowledge, and thus demonstrated his Europocentric ideology, nonetheless, if we think of the subject in the play of the world as the road map for the Idea, "all that Hegel thought within this horizon, all, that is, except eschatology, may be reread as a meditation on writing. Hegel is *also* the thinker of irreducible difference. He rehabilitated thought as the *memory productive* of signs" (28). Thus Nietzsche and Heidegger are post-Hegelian: "The hesitation of these thoughts (here Nietzsche's and Heidegger's) is not an 'incoherence': it is a trembling proper to all post-Hegelian attempts and to this passage between two epochs. The movements of deconstruction do not destroy structures from the outside" (25). Nietzsche "wrote" his work, in other words, with no literal evidentiary material to lean on. Therefore, although it is possible to read Nietzsche dogmatically and see in him the tradition of Plato, as did Heidegger, it is also possible to read Nietzsche "in a certain way," and then his deconstructive intervention can emerge. At this stage Heidegger has a perception that allows Derrida to fashion deconstruction out of his project of Destruktion.[9]

It is upon this track that Derrida insists that psychoanalysis is not only a regional science. His first invocation of psychoanalysis is not Freud but a very long quotation from Melanie Klein (whom Marguerite Derrida was translating at the time). What he is looking at in that passage is the possibility that psychoanalysis can show that the subject can cathect (*besetzen*—occupy with desire) proper names and thus turn them into common nouns and things—in other words, undermine the proper—that belonged to the stream of writing. Freud's rebus—which is developed in "Freud and the Scene of Writing"—is brought in later in the chapter.[10] Derrida throws a challenge a any European who claims to be anti-ethnocentric. If you wish to involve the human being as such, you must consider a graphology—a world map of ways of writing. If such a graphology is to be persuasive, it must show how proper names are cathected by the subjects of all these systems of writing, even if they are technically illiterate. Such subjects include those who are the objects of anthropology's (benevolent) investigation as well as those who inhabited languages where phoneticization was only a moment in the history of the language. This kind of impossibly radical but perfectly practical request becomes altogether important if we wish to put the international civil society in perspective. Until the end of his life Derrida kept the conviction that if you want to make claims of globality you must be able to be where the globally other practices her/his lingual memory.[11] In *Rogues* he closes by assigning this task: "It remains to be known, to save the honor of reason, how to *translate*. For example, the word *reasonable*. And how to salute, beyond its Latinity, in more than one language, the fragile difference between the *rational* and the *reasonable*" (*R* p. 159).

His addressees are no longer anthropologists, linguists, philosophers, but the general activist intellectual world. The task has therefore moved from graphology to translation; but the goal remains the same: to be where the globally other practices her/his lingual memory; to learn to translate is more practical advice. The book is, then, a general critique of ethnocentrism. The word "ethnocentrism" is on page 3, and this is not a common word in 1967. Derrida's criticism of Western metaphysics is that it is ethnocentric. And in each chapter we encounter the word until we come to Rousseau.

Part II is an introduction to the epoch of Rousseau. "Epoch" is used in the usual temporal sense, but also in the "spatial" sense of the reducing-out technique proposed by Edmund Husserl, called *epokhe*. In cooking this is called "rendering." One might say this is a rendered Rousseau, as well as the era of Rousseau.

In the beginning of part II, Derrida practices a much more relentless auto-involvement in the problematic of reading a certain way. We remember that in the previous chapters he had written something like a history nonetheless, used logocentrism, and written without venturing up to perilous necessities. Here he demonstrates that he is himself involved in cathecting proper names, as indeed we are all involved in our work: the names of authors or of doctrines have here no substantial value. They indicate neither identities nor causes. It would be frivolous to think that "Descartes," "Leibniz," "Rousseau," "Hegel," and so on, are names of authors, of the authors of movements or displacements that we thus designate. The indicative value that I attribute to them is first the name of a problem (107). He makes it clear that these representative proper names are props; they also name problems. He also gives us a sense that all claims of dissent or genealogy are themselves caught within the abyss of self-representation. He is recommending a variety of the prohibition of proper names, as did the Nambikwara.

The Essay on the Origin of Languages by Jean-Jacques Rousseau is, of course, the real found text in *Grammatology*. Rousseau is a grammatologist in the only way you can be, unknowingly, looking for the opposite, to be found by another; something willed deconstruction must "in a certain way" forgo. It could be said that this book we enter tries to teach how this may be the characteristic of all books, not just this one. However, Derrida loses confidence by *Rogues* that people will learn how to read, simply by the insistence of texts on their own reading methods. By the time he comes to *Politics of Friendship*, which he insists is the frozen account of the first session of a seminar that went on for two years, he will again and again ask, "How many are we?" as if to assure himself that teaching is happening in a classroom.

Rousseau's grammatology is lodged in his repeated use of the word "supplementarity" and the related words "supplying" (*suppléer*) and "substitute." These words carry a burden of sense in the language. However Rousseau was trying to secure presence (as everyone must) or however he was Europocentric (as all folks are their own-place-centric, say I), he was in fact working with and being worked by that burden. In other words, lingual memory ties writer and reader together, away from mere intention, though that too is important. Entering Rousseau's text and driving it as it seems to want to be driven (by the protocols of the text), Derrida attempts to enter into that relationship with Rousseau that we read on page 156. I have called it "deconstructive embrace." Ackbar Abbas gave it the name "critical intimacy."[12]

The word "supplement" suggests that what it supplements already had a lack, and it is of course an excess. As the supplement is in excess, it introduces what is incalculable in terms of the status quo, pushing toward a necessarily undecidable future—therefore it is "dangerous"; it upsets plans. If there can be an earned resonance to this warning to those who plan the world, for profit or development—same difference—we might be able to hope for a change. When first-year students entering university are advised that "the intricate structure of [first-year] friendships web is similar [to that of Hadza hunter-gatherers of Tanzania . . . living as they might have 10,000 years ago]. The networks we form obey certain mathematical and sociological rules, and they have profound influence on our lives," we are engaged in the kind of mechanical subject-formation and double ethnocentrism which needs the dangerous supplement.[13] There is now an inchoate tendency in certain quarters to undo the insane digitalizing trivialization of the humanities. Perhaps we need not wait for an indefinite future for these lessons to take hold. In that sort of hope Derrida writes, connecting his almost-first book with his almost-last book, calling for venturing up to the relationship without relationship, here between law and justice—"the *reasonable* . . . would take into account the accounting of juridical *justness,* to be sure, but it would also strive, across transactions and aporias, for *justice*." And then, the dangerous supplement, introducing the incalculable, moving into the undecidable future: "The reasonable, as I understand it here, would be a rationality that takes account of the incalculable so as to give an account of it, there where this appears impossible, so as to account for or reckon *with* it, that is to say, with the event of *what* or *who* comes" (*R,* 158–59; translation modified). One looks for texts undone by what they're doing.

The supplement is dangerous because not only does it suggest that full presence can be added to, but it also suggests that presence has a lack which can be filled. This is easy to understand if one thinks of the fact that in colloquial French a substitute teacher is described as supplementary. There is a lack, and an addition can be made; so presence is undone by the supplement. This structure is shared by an entire chain of supplements, indefinitely abyssal (181). These are not analogies, Derrida insists. These items inhabit "an irreducible complex"—a structure. With no simple origin. This is also the lesson of "Structure, Sign, and Play," a much read but hardly understood text.[14]

Here, in part II chapter 2, the trace instituted by Rousseau's text dictates to him a method. The chapter introduces the question of method. The trace requires empiricism; it allows him to touch logocentrism. The binary opposition between empiricism and philosophy is not merely empirical. The kind of criticism that is informed by the instituted trace is without guarantees, and therefore the responsibility of the reader is heavy.

Reading carefully through Rousseau's text, Derrida suggests that the way Rousseau doubles and redoubles his texts makes us think that at the origin of language/languages, there is supplementing. You have just finished reading the book, so I will not attempt to summarize Derrida's argument here. I will simply say that, as a result of these discoveries, in his reading of Rousseau, Derrida is able to describe "trace," "text," "differance," and look briefly at one significant passage.

Here is the fragment of philosophizing, the passage where Derrida first launches the idea of text as text-ile, a web. (The World Wide Web works on psychologistic and positivistic reductions of the ideas of text, recovery, memory, access, and, especially, interaction.)

> It is so little a matter of looking for a *truth signified* by these writings (metaphysical or psychological truth: Jean-Jacques's life behind his work) that if the texts that interest us *want to say* something, it is the engagement and the appurtenance that mingle in the same *fabric,* the same *text,* existence and writing. "The same" is here called supplement, another name for differance. Here is the irruption of the dangerous supplement in nature, between nature and nature, between natural innocence as *virginity* and natural innocence as *uncohabited.* (163)

For all practical purposes, this is Derrida's first statement that the text is text-ile, a fabric, that life and work, even wordy work, are both woven, that the European word "text" comes from Latin *texere* (=to weave), that the verbal text is a second-degree metaphor. This allows us to conclude that the famous intentional fallacy is no more than a Cold War–era imperative to avoid looking at lives. Derrida's suggestion is that, within our limits, we look at life and the produced words as woven unevenly together. I am going to look only at the rhetorical conduct of a couple of sentences—reading philosophizing as logic nests in rhetoric, and vice versa. First in French: "c'est l'engagement et l'appartenance qui enserrent dans le même *tissue,* le même *texte,* l'existence et l'écriture. Le même ici s'appelle supplément, autre nom de la différance."[15] In English: "it is the engagement and the appurtenance that mingle in the same *fabric,* the same *text,* existence and writing. The same is here called supplement, another name for differance" (163).

Derrida is practicing a variety of the figure of speech called polyptoton, using the same word as different parts of speech. The word that is used thus is *même* or, in English, "the same," a philosophical word of authoritative significance. In its first use it is an adjective, enclitic upon a noun. In its second use it is a noun but variously nameable, the first simply dependent upon a particular time—*ici* or "here," and secondly, as another name. In the second case what the same names as an alternative is differance, with an *a.*

Already a "structure" at the origin, an irreducible set, questions the possibility of a simple origin. But differance is a peculiar structure. Because a simple origin is not everything specifically other than itself, all these specific negations crowd the possibility of this simple origin, and so on indefinitely for every item in these specific negations, and so on. What Derrida will call an abyssal structure. A clear parallel to the structure of writing in general at the origin of the proper, since the "proper" is a generalizable category, establishing history and the social, and is subject to differance. Thus "differance" is another name for writing: "Originary differance is supplementarity as *structure.* Here structure means the irreducible complexity within which one can only inflect or displace the play of presence or absence: that within which metaphysics can be produced but which it cannot think" (181).

(Most critics think of Rousseau's sexuality as an aberration to be explained diagnostically. Derrida's virtuoso reading of his auto-affection, self supplementing self, way beyond mere sexuality, as the condition of experience in general, performs the difficult task, among many others, of satisfying a feminist readership. In terms of grammatology: imagination "is the other name of differance as auto-affection" [203]).

As we must keep looking for simple origins, writing leaves traces that seem to hint at origins. Being human, we *think* the pure trace, an impossible history, a "pastness" without reference. But we can *access* the trace only as instituted trace, some mark of the origin of a particular institution. The trace simply promises, simply points in the sense of: perhaps there was something, the trace of a sense, not the indication of a meaningful system. The many traces of the many institutions that run the socius, knotting together, give us the textuality of life and fact. In the previous chapter Derrida had broached the thought of the trace. And in doing so, he had also broached something that would become very important for him without naming it yet: the relationship without relationship, *rapport sans rapport*, that I have already mentioned.

When we think of a "pure" trace, we think of the past that was not. It is possible to think about Levinas's statement that becoming human is to access an anterior posteriority or a memory-fix when there is actually no memory in the human infant. An "I remember" is inaugurated. This is to possibilize the "pure" trace. For Derrida, the only way we can access this is as a trace-structure installed or instituted into the problematic that we are studying, often to critique. And the instituted trace is unmotivated; it is implicit in the structure of the investigation. We might say that in part II, chapter 2, reading Rousseau Derrida is following the instituted trace of those questions at the origin of grammatology.

These thoughts—that we are written by writing in general and practice writing in the narrow sense (scripts), that the pure trace appears only as instituted trace—look forward to: the relationship without relation between justice and law, gift and responsibility, unconditional ethics appearing conditioned. The most important one of these is also given in the Rousseau section, while Derrida is looking at Rousseau wrestling with the burden of supplementarity: what Rousseau cannot state—although his textual practice hints it—is that the play in the world is caught in the play of the world:[16]

> That game is the play of the world. The world had to be able to play freely on its axis in order that a simple movement of the finger could make it turn upon itself. . . . But Rousseau does not *affirm* it. He resigns himself to it, he retains its symptoms in the regulated contradictions of his discourse, . . . by all that it commands in Rousseau's thought, the sense is put out of play. (283)

Rousseau names the play of the world catastrophe: "Nature denaturing itself, being separated from itself, naturally gathering its outside into its inside, is catastrophe, a natural event that overthrows nature" (44).

Derrida invokes Heidegger writing *Das Ding dingt* ("the thing things").[17] In a less poetic metaphor, as we play tennis, we are also played by the rules of thermodynamics. Those rules are our handle on the thing thinging, the play of the world in which our play in the world is held. Very broadly put (that's all I can manage), this is a rewriting of what Kant describes as the transcendental: "We will call the principles whose application stays wholly and completely within the limits of possible experience immanent, but those that would fly beyond these boundaries transcendent principles."[18] I mention my work on planetarity here simply because, if the space of the Kantian transcendental, the Heideggerian *dingen,* and Derrida's play of the world are seen as antecedents that this reopening of the book has made me acknowledge after the fact, we can see how powerful this can be against the anthropocene.[19] To remember we are played, not only playing. Given the (self-)trivialization of humanities teaching all the world over, it will be a word for the philosophers of the future—"to come," one must hope. Derrida questions the suggestion that Rousseau understands the first societies as Hobbesian and in a state of perpetual war. He shows us that by Rousseau's idea of imagination as supplementary, nature's instrument to undo nature, these societies are in possession of a pity or compassion waiting for activation by this supplement. Because it has not yet been activated, they live within a series of contradictions rather than in a state of bellicosity:

> In the *Essay,* the paragraph that occupies us comprises another proposition that forbids us to consider the moment of slumbering pity as the moment of bellicose wickedness, as a "Hobbesian" moment. How in fact does Rousseau describe that moment (here at least it does not matter if it is real or mythic), the structural instance of slumbering pity? What, according to him, is that moment when language [*langage*], imagination, relation to death, etc., are still *reserved*? At that moment, he says, "he who has never been reflective is incapable of being merciful or just or pitying" [32]. To be sure. But that is not to say that he would be unjust and pitiless. He is simply held short of

> that opposition of values. For Rousseau follows up immediately: "He is just as incapable of being malicious and vindictive. He who imagines nothing is aware only of himself; he is alone in the midst of mankind" (ibid.). In that "state," the oppositions at work in Hobbes have neither sense nor value. The system of appreciation into which political philosophy moves, has as yet no chance to function. And one thus sees more clearly within what (neutral, naked, and bare) element it enters into play. Here one may speak with indifference of goodness or badness, of peace or war: each time it will be as true as false, always irrelevant. What Rousseau thus reveals is the neutral origin of all ethico-political conceptuality, its field of objectivity, or its axiological system. All the oppositions that follow in the wake of the classical philosophy of history, culture, and society must therefore be neutralized. Before this neutralization, or this reduction, political philosophy proceeds within the naiveté of acquired and accidental evidence. (204–5)

In other words, imagination, inactive yet, is an instrument of perfectibility, and before that activation, the place of pity is filled with terror, which leads to the impulse of unorganized violence, but not sustained war. Derrida suggests that pity is there in animals as well. The extent of Derrida's engagement with the animal that we are/follow is in this sentence in *Of Grammatology*: "The imagination inscribes the animal in human society" (203), where most would go the other way.[20]

And when he comes to method in part II, embracing Rousseau, his prescription is "empiricism" without anchor. Seems to fit the popular denunciation of "deconstruction," an otherwise supportive colleague's published comment, for example, suggesting the subaltern could not speak according to Spivak because she had read post-structuralism.[21] But Derrida disarms us: he goes into great detail in the discussion of the dating of Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Languages,* from the nineteenth century on down, and makes it abundantly clear, without any argument or polemic, that the most careful and conservative traditional empiricist textual scholarship also has no guarantees. (I had misunderstood this gesture in the translator's preface.)

The book ends with Rousseau speaking rather than Derrida. It is Rousseau acknowledging Derrida's reading by naming his text a dream, saving it from falling prey, although only "in a certain way," to its own critique: "the dreams of a bad night are gravely given to us as philosophy. You will say I too am a dreamer; I admit it, but I do what others fail to do, I give my dreams as dreams, and leave the reader to discover whether there is anything in them which may prove useful to those who are awake."[22]

How much this metaphor offers us, if we have participated in the reading lessons this book gives the reader in its rhetorical conduct—logic and rhetoric nested in each other—weaving back to previous injunctions to nuance what seems a mere statement.[23] Intellectual labor, useful in our time of shortcuts, doing good, perhaps, killing the species, via feeding greed. The dream calls for an interminable analysis—the index of the indefiniteness of the detour that is another name of writing, or is it vice versa?[24]

It is as if Rousseau is himself asking the reader to analyze his dream, indistinguishable from Derrida asking the reader to analyze his and Rousseau's, and so on, indefinitely, the format of all intellectual change rather than subservience to unexamined intellectual fundamentalisms; later to be developed as a "hauntology," Derrida learning through Hamlet and his father to cathect the proper name of a Marx who seemed to offer a messianism without messianicity.[25]

Let us remind ourselves that in order to be "global" we need to be able to understand how peoples with completely different systems of writing in the narrow sense cathect proper names, to be able to touch their differentiation between "reasonable" and "rational"; and having done no more, look at how that cathexis is described in this book:

> The names of authors or of doctrines have here no substantial value. They indicate neither identities nor causes. It would be frivolous to think that "Descartes," "Leibniz," "Rousseau," "Hegel," etc., are names of authors, of the authors of movements or displacements that we thus designate. The indicative value that we attribute to them is first the name of a problem. If we provisionally authorize ourselves to treat this historical structure by fixing our attention on philosophical or literary texts, it is not for the sake of identifying in them the origin, cause, or equilibrium of the structure. But as we also do not think that these texts are the simple *effects* of structure, in any sense of the word; as we think that *all concepts hitherto proposed in order to think the articulation of a discourse and of an historical totality are caught within the metaphysical enclosure that we question here,* as we do not know of any other concepts for this and cannot produce any others, and indeed shall not produce so long as this closure limits our discourse; as the primordial and indispensable phase, in fact and in principle, of the development of this problematic, consists in questioning the internal structure of these texts as symptoms; as that is the only condition for determining these symptoms *themselves* in the totality of their metaphysical appurtenance; I draw my argument from them in order to isolate Rousseau, and, in Rousseauism, the theory of writing. Besides, this abstraction is partial and it

> remains, in my view, provisional. Further on, I shall directly approach the problem within a "question of method." (107–8)

The acknowledgment of this enclosure starts the second part of the book, the first part having ended with another acknowledgment: that grammatology can operate only after stopping short of the unanswerable questions: "On what conditions is a grammatology possible? Its fundamental condition is certainly the shaking up [*sollicitation*] of logocentrism. But this condition of possibility turns into a condition of impossibility. In fact it risks destabilizing the concept of science as well" (80).

Why is it necessary to repeat these warnings? Because the world is being destroyed and saved, and (under)development regularly sustained and its sustainability planned, by way of a general confidence in the stability of the concept of (digital techno-)science. Knowing that these operations are framed in an ignoring of first and last questions might make a world of difference. Another item for the planners of the future. As we have already seen, in part II, the method is empiricism without guarantees.

Of Grammatology ends in Rousseau's dream; *Rogues* ends in an attention to reason: "Reason reasons, to be sure, it has reason [to do so], and it gives itself reason, to keep [guard] itself, keep within reason. It is in this that it is and thus wants to be *itself,* it is its sovereign ipseity. But to make its ipseity see reason, it must be reasoned with. A reason must let itself be reasoned with" (*R* 217).

Indeed, *Rogues* is a defense of a reasonable, rather than merely rational (logocentric?), reason. One might imagine that the last book is acting out the trajectory of defeat in "a certain way" tracked out early in *Grammatology* on page 24. One might even suggest that the circling back had started with *Of Spirit.*[26] In fact, that "certain way" assures us that this is part of the same project. "The enterprise of deconstruction is always in a certain way swept away by its own work." We are measuring the distance between questioning the enabling violation of logocentrism, as in *Grammatology:*

> It is therefore as if what one calls language could have been in its origin and in its end only a moment, an essential but determined mode, a phenomenon, an aspect, a species of writing. And as if it had succeeded in making it be forgotten, and *in wilfully misleading us,* only in the course of an adventure: as that adventure itself. All in all a short enough adventure. It would be mixed up with the history that associates technique and logocentric metaphysics for nearly three millennia. And now it would be approaching what is really its own *exhaustion.* (8)

By contrast, at the end we are saving reason, only apparently in a different mode, from the autoimmunity of a self-confident logocentrism which cannot make a change that it declares and does not know it. Derrida is no longer looking for a text to deconstruct within the European tradition. He is shedding texts, here most spectacularly Kant and Plato. Reading is no longer desedimentation, but rather echoing in the strictest sense, intending to respond, but in fact obliged to attempt to repeat these great European texts from a distance: "Before trying to hear it quite otherwise, I would like, from within the very resonance of that first hearing, [to] strain to hear an even more distant provenance" (*R* 134; translation modified). And it is not working. The world and the self are "as-ifs" for Kant, an easy out for philosophizing; practical reason is right there, programmed for freedom and just cause. And so it goes.

Derrida has now gone beyond Europe, made his peace in *The Work of Mourning*.[27] He tacitly acknowledges that the supplement arising in the difference—the spacing—between the words for reasonable and rational is part of the responsibility of the non-Latin (read not Euro-U.S., read not Security Council majority, if you go back a couple of pages) countries of the world as well.[28] Therefore, he can ask Europe to rethink itself as "a new violence" is "unleashed" (*R* 156). As we watch the so-called European Union—no more than a collection of debtor and creditor states—bring itself to crisis today, in 2015, how can we ignore this line from *Rogues* ("that is why, let me repeat, the theme of spacing, the theme of the interval or the gap, of the trace as gap, of the becoming-space of time or the becoming-time of space, plays such an important role as early as *Of Grammatology* and 'Différance' " [*R* 38]).

At the head of the book is a text from which Derrida draws his initial question: "What political tale would illustrate today, in the same tradition, this morality in the fable?" (*R* xi; translation modified). The fable is a description of politics then and now: The lamb is drinking and the wolf sees the lamb and the wolf puts on his sovereign face, "Why are you transgressing my space?" and the lamb says, "Your majesty, I am not transgressing your space, as you can see I am quite further down"; "Brother, you have spoken against me, I know," and then, "Your majesty, I could not have"; "Does not matter, it was your brother." "I have no brothers, your majesty"; "One of you is the same as all of you"; and then he comes and eats up the lamb.[29]

First step out is Algeria. I have hinted in my comment on the *Grammatology* that Derrida attempts, through the nesting of logic in rhetoric, to guide the reader to read. By now the confidence in the readership is gone, so the guidance is wild. Let us see how the text moves toward Algeria and everyday political language, beginning on page 30. The steps are of course not as clear-cut as in my description.

I have spoken of Freud's use of the rebus as a way of opening up signification, as mentioned in the *Grammatology*. In *Rogues* Derrida acts it out as obviously as possible. Nuanced lessons are no longer in order. No longer the stylish polyptoton of the earlier text. He produces something that's not quite an oath, not quite an aphorism, and not quite a sentence. He repeats it, moving accents, and says it resembles a snake. Next step, the snake in the Bible, not quite good enough. And then, no transition (as in dreams), D. H. Lawrence's poem "The Snake" (4–5). The next two chapters, 1 and 2, are so full of wordplay (although there is always an argument, generally on Plato and Aristotle's dissatisfaction with democracy) that he himself asks, "But does one need etymology to discover, by simple analysis, the possibility of power . . . ?" (12; translation modified), only to continue wordsmithing.

Until, at the beginning of chapter 3, to access "the other of democracy," he falls on a "literal" text, the Quran, and goes on to discuss the suspension of the constitution in Algeria in 1992. His language becomes "literal."

Let us pause a moment on the Quran. We must be able to think that, unable to echo the great texts of the European tradition because of its wolf-eat-lamb policy, he seeks a place outside of Greek:

> One knows all too well the strategic paradoxes of the implications [of Muslim theocracies] in the geopolitics as in the economies of American and Western democracies. On the other side, all the nation-states deeply linked, if not in their constitution, at least in their culture, one time to Jewish (there's only one, Israel) or Christian faith (I will not cite them all, they are too numerous, and that large number is not insignificant), but also most of the postcolonial nation-states with a mixed religious culture, in Africa (one thinks above all of South Africa and its new constitution), in Asia (one thinks above all of India and China) *present themselves* today as democracies. They name themselves in Greek, thus in the dominant international juridico-political language [*langage*]. (29; translation modified)

The great medieval Arabic translators did not translate Plato's *Republic* or Aristotle's *Politics* (31–32). We can go to the Quran to find a place outside. If deconstruction seeks to find a text worthy of its embrace, of a critical intimacy, it is the Quran at this stage. Derrida does not have the wherewithal to access that lingual memory. But he outlines that "task," that "responsibility," as "categorically political,"

> for who[m]ever, by hypothesis, considers himself a friend of democracy in the world and not only in his country . . . , the task would consist in doing everything to help, and first of all in the Islamic world, by allying oneself with the forces which fight not only for the secularization of the political (however ambiguous it remains), for the emergence of a laic subjectivity, but also for an interpretation of the Quranic heritage that will show the prevalence, as from inside, the democratic virtualities that are no doubt no more legible to the naked eye and under that name than they were in the Old and New Testaments. (*R* 32–33; translation modified)

Deconstructive exegesis is precisely not fundamentalism. It is a supplement to whatever secularism might be. Let us repeat the formula: do not accuse, do not excuse, earn the right to enter, borrow all the structures "as from inside," try to turn around for use, knowing that you will fail in a certain way, looking for the next reader, a political philosophy of change. Without an intuition of the transcendental we can neither mourn nor judge. The "pure" trace transforms itself into the instituted trace there. *Of Grammatology* laid out the terms, found a text; the mature philosopher shows grammatology stuck against the wall.

In the extended reading of Rousseau, the critique of the sovereign plays a role. Now globally instructed, Derrida knows to extend that critique into the contradiction (aporia) that is the signature of supplementarity: "It is thus no doubt necessary, in the name of reason, to call into question and to limit a logic of nation-state sovereignty. . . . And yet, . . . one cannot combat *head-on, all* sovereignty, sovereignty *in general,* without threatening at the same time, beyond the nation-state figure of sovereignty, the classical principles of freedom and self-determination . . . . To keep within reason would be to invent maxims for deciding between two just as *rational* and universal but contradictory exigencies of *reason* as well as enlightenment" (*R* 157–58; emphasis mine).

Maxims. Kant had made a neat distinction: judge by ideas, act by subjective rules. It is this invention of maxims to solve the split between the rational and the reasonable that we must now relinquish. I understand the importance of Derrida's conviction, as I serve on the Committee on Ethics of the World Economic Forum, inventing ways of evaluating success in implementing "the basic human values." Here is Kant's description: "Practical laws, insofar as they are at the same time subjective grounds of action, i.e. subjective founding rules [*Grundsätze*], are called maxims. The judgment of morality concerning its purity and consequences take place in accordance with ideas, the observance of its laws, in accordance with maxims."[30]

In *Grammatology* we had some good examples of typographical reading. In *Rogues* this is brought further. It is beautifully deployed in Derrida's critique of Jean-Luc Nancy's *Experience of Freedom,* but a discussion of that is not appropriate here.[31] I will mention one example, which will lead us to Derrida chipping away at autoimmunity.

Derrida is reading Nancy's sentence: "Freedom: to measure oneself against the nothing." "The colon replaces the 'is,'" he writes; "it suspends the ontological copula of the 'is'"(*R* 51). In 1971 Derrida had published "The Supplement of Copula," where he suggested that the copula or "is" halts an opening to the outside, the structure of supplementarity. Especially since the suspension of the copula will be noted by him as he gives a framed account of the phrase "democracy to come" in his work, we cannot be sure why, in *Rogues,* he does not call this the suspension of the supplement, or at least give a reference to this earlier work. All we can do is remind ourselves of the question asked earlier: "What desire pushes [the linguist and the philosopher], as what they are, to proceed analogically to a supralapsarian agency [*instance*] before the supplement of copula?" (*SC* 203; translation modified). As he begins the account of his use of the phrase "democracy to come," he writes down just such a desire "to get to a place before": "That is what I tried to suggest in *Sauf le nom* (1993) with regard to . . . a spacing before all determination and all possible reappropriation by a theologico-political history, and even before a negative theology always fundamentally holding to some historical revolution, and above all Christian" (*R* 82; translation modified). Supralapsarian, not prelapsarian.

Rogues gives a sequential account of the invocation of "Democracy to come," to offer a critically constructive close-up at the end. I have tried to see the nuances of that discussion. That too lies in the future, but I have tried to show that the deep perception of Europocentrism anticipates it.

At the risk of simplifying a complex and sinuous text, let us now move to the end of the first essay, where we hear Heidegger—"someone in whom one has never been able to suspect the slightest suspicion of democratism" (*R* 110)—and then the author assuring us that "without being able to demonstrate it here, I maintain that between . . . the three senses of *salut* . . . and the question of democracy, the consequence would lead us quickly towards what came from the Terror and the Committee of Public Safety [*salut*] under the French Revolution and toward all that it is urgent to transform today and tomorrow" (*R* 114; translation modified), and, without any change in this, simply say "*salut!*" to the "democracy to come." How do we read this? Especially since, elsewhere in the text, we hear that it is time to let the outside in and are warned not to suspend the supplement; that in our global predicament, we need to step outside the Greek enclosure. The 1971 essay speaks again and again of ethnocentrism, as did *Grammatology*. He does not allow himself the double ethnocentric luxury of calling himself ethnocentric. "The very concept of ethnocentrism," he writes in 1971, "gives us no critical assurance as long as the elaboration of this other possibility [not to say that the condition of being-language depends on the presence of the word or concept "being"] remains unaccomplished" (*SC* 199–200; translation modified). The earlier essay is also about a failure of translation: "What resource of translation is set to work here?" he asks, severely criticizing Benveniste's invocation of Ewe (*SC* 198; translation modified).

Thus he tries to put his work within the Greek enclosure in place, aware of autoimmunity suppressing the copula-supplement in "democracy to come." It is outside of the scope of these comments to discuss in detail the vertiginous putting together of the problems of the great tradition, the call of the unconditional, the importance of unconditional hospitality, combined with the need to go beyond nationalism after 1989. I want to point at a long footnote where Derrida remembers the importance of *Of Grammatology:*

> I have never associated the motif of deconstruction with those that have been so often evoked in discussion, those of "diagnostics," of "after," or "post," or "death." . . . Since *Of Grammatology* (1965 [*sic*]), I have explicitly declared that it was not a question of the end of metaphysics and that the closure was certainly not the end. . . . I constantly grant a privilege to aporetic thought. . . . I would again say the same thing with regard to the hyper- or ultratranscendentalism (which is thus also a hyperrationalism) to which, in order to avoid empiricist positivism, I expressly appealed as early as *Of Grammatology.* (*R* 174; translation modified)

This is how Derrida remembers our book. I have attempted, always supported by quotations, to point at the itinerary of the critique of ethnocentrism spanning the forty years. I have attempted to understand why Derrida cannot claim it, why it cannot end his book.

This is almost the last footnote. In the text, Derrida moves, as we have seen, toward a reasonable rather than a rational deconstruction. And the critique of ethnocentrism lodges in the theme of learning how to translate. Practically, the plurality of reason is lodged in the epistemological performance of multidisciplinarity:

> The differences between mathematics, the natural or life sciences, the human sciences, the social or moral sciences, physics as well as biology, law or

> political economy, politology, psychology, psychoanalysis, literary theory, with all the techniques and institutional communities that are inseparable from their knowledge, these plural rationalities resist, in the name of their rationality itself, an architectonic ordering. . . . Is it not in the name of these heterogeneous rationalities . . . that we must call into question the masterly and mastering authority of architectonics and thus of a certain "world," of a unity of the regulative Idea of the world that authorizes in advance? (*R* 120–21; translation modified)

Each discipline teaches us how to construct ourselves and the world we study as knower and object of knowledge; it also decides what counts as the world to be chosen; and it teaches that this is the only way in which to study the world. And the subjects are ranked, inside and outside of the educational institution. To be able to break this and train the imagination to construct knower and known for knowing in different ways and understand that this does not define the truth of things is imaginative training for epistemological performance—something I have called "aesthetic education" elsewhere.

And it is in the context of these pluralized institutional rationalities that Derrida opens their difference from the reasonable—and then asks us to learn how to translate, so that this restricted judgment of pluralized reason can be supplemented. Once again, it is the classroom; if not enclosed by walls and admissions procedure: "How many are we?" It is only then that he moves in a straightforward way toward the apparent surrender to reason that we are noticing. All through this book, as through *Grammatology,* he has taught us, much more extravagantly, how to read the texts and report the conclusion. It is time for us now to notice that the use of the "we" here (in *Of Grammatology* it is uniform) is occasional and moves us toward the repeated question "How many are we?" in *Politics of Friendship*.[32] I have therefore restored the "we" in this new translation. Considering that it is an ancient scholarly European "we," in the world of 1967, when the book first appeared, it can certainly be described as "an inclusive, open-ended *we* which invites identification without flattening differences amongst those who identify with it."[33] But in *Rogues* we, I, and you can be differentiated.

In *Rogues,* as in *Grammatology,* there is not much attention paid to sexual difference. Although Derrida is aware of male supremacy and is definitively sensitive to Rousseau's labyrinthine sexualities, the agential pronouns remain "he." In the translator's preface, written in 1972–73, I tried to redress the balance by making "she" the general pronoun for the philosopher.

"Spurs," given as a lecture at Cerisy-la-Salle in 1972, reads the question of woman in Nietzsche beautifully, but there is no force of sexual difference in the argument.

But now I can say that before the first edition of the *Grammatology* came out in 1976, appeared *Glas,* recognizing the philosophical placing of the woman and the homosexual male outside of the exemplary subject-position of the human. Here I can only point at Derrida's meditation upon the question of sexual difference, the most striking, from two different points of view, being, perhaps, *Politics of Friendship* and "Circumfession."[34]

(I have almost invariably indicated if the text is using *langue*—named language—or *langage*—language in general.[35] I have also pointed out where *voix* is not simply voice but also vowel.

In 2001, at a public seminar at NYU, Derrida chided me for not having modified the standard translations of the texts he cited and read when they clearly did not follow the original. If you think I have modified them too much in this version, put it down to a private piety in memoriam.)

NOTES

Introduction

1. Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," in *Illuminations,* ed. Hannah Arendt, tr. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968).

2. In Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's translator's preface from the first publication of *Of Grammatology,* she includes Derrida's remarks on translation from *Positions* in which he disputes the "purity" of translation: "for the notion of translation we would have to substitute the notion of *transformation:* a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another. We will never have, and in fact have never had, to do with some 'transport' of pure signifieds from one language to another, or within one and the same language, that the signifying instrument would leave virgin and untouched." ("Semiology and Grammatology: Interview with Julia Kristeva," in *Positions,* tr. Alan Bass [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981].)

3. Jacques Derrida, "What Is a 'Relevant' Translation?," tr. Lawrence Venuti, *Critical Inquiry* 27 (2001): 174–200.

4. "Occultation," which describes the passing of one celestial body in front of another, blocking its illumination, is the same word in French that Derrida uses, and may easily be understood as an "eclipse." See *De la Grammatologie,* p. 35.

5. Peggy Kamuf, "A Certain Way of Inhabiting," in *Reading Derrida's Grammatology,* ed. Sean Gaston and Ian Maclachlan (London: Continuum Press, 2011), p. 37.

6. See, for instance, Jacques Derrida, "The Force of Law," tr. Mary Quaintance, in *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice.* See also Derrida, *The Work of Mourning.*

7. See Jacques Derrida, "Freud and the Scene of Writing," in *Writing and Difference,* tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

8. See Jacques Derrida, "Des Tours des Babel," ed. and tr. Joseph Graham, in *Difference in Translation* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), reprinted in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other,* vol. 1, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

9. See Derrida's reading of Benjamin on the continued life and afterlife of the text in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other,* vol. 1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 202, 203. See also Jacques Derrida, "Survivre," in *Parages* (Paris: Galilée, 2003).

phoniques du langage enfantin et leur place dans la phonologie générale," *Selected Writings* [The Hague, 1962], I: 325).

Afterword

1. Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason,* tr. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); hereafter cited in text as *R,* followed by page number.

2. See David Nofre, Mark Priestley, and Gerard Alberts, "When Technology Became Language: The Origins of the Linguistic Conception of Computer Programming, 1950–1960," *Technology and Culture* 55, 1 (January 2014): pp. 40–75, for a discussion of how the linguistic model took over information technology. Derrida's early critique reveals the psychologistic and metaphysical underpinnings of this move. It is along this line (before rereading *Grammatology*) that I had offered the possibility that programming has become an empirical representation of the metapsychological (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Why Study the Past?," *Modern Language Quarterly* 73, 1 [March 2012]: pp. 11–12).

3. *MP* pp. 177–205.

4. Hegel, *Phenomenology*, *Dis* p. 110; translation modified.

5. I thank Hélène Qiniou for showing me Lévi-Strauss's response, where the master chides a young man for daring to read varieties of anthropology as philosophy. He does not touch on the question of ethnocentrism or of rape ("A propos de 'Lévi-Strauss dans le XVIIIe siècle,'" unpublished letter). We will refer to Derrida's call for multidisciplinary pluralized rationality supplemented by translating difference from reasonableness at the end of this afterword.

6. "I believe that the anthropologists of former times were the prey to an illusion, it is time for me to explore totemism's positive side" (Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, p. xi).

7. Plato, *Timaeus*, tr. R. G. Bury, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); "Plato's Pharmacy," *Diss*, pp. 61–172.

8. Here is grant proposal prose (in collaboration with Simon Gikandi and Abiola Irele) to describe the unsystematized nonlinear mother tongues of Africa: "Neither English/French nor the systematized regional lingua francas speak to the heart of the poor. These unsystematized languages are not dying and in need of preservation. They are flexible, alive, and in use for electoral campaigning. We propose an innovative approach, making use of this existing resource, quite distinct from the past-oriented preservation of endangered languages. We research new methods, learning from below, for the robust continuation of millennial already existing survival practices now more appropriate to the digital age." As for originary, I cannot resist citing a bit of class transcript: "But, now, what is meant by the 'originary' here? And Derrida puts the word *originaire* in quotes at one point. And I always use the same example, so if you have been in my class before you [know] I use the example of starting a stick shift car: you know, you have to

put in the clutch, put it in gear, release the clutch, and move. That is 'originary.' In other words, the moves you have to make each time that something has to happen. It's not 'original.' It's not somewhere in the past."

9. The word "destruction" was still being used in the articles that became *De la grammatologie* ("De la grammatologie I," *Critique* [December 1965]: pp. 1016–42 and "De la grammatologie II," *Critique* [January 1966]: pp. 23–53). In the last footnote in *Rogues,* Derrida comments: "Finally, I hesitate to insist yet again on the difference between deconstruction and destruction, or between deconstruction and critique. Deconstruction does not seek to discredit critique; it in fact constantly relegitimates its necessity and heritage, even though it never renounces either a genealogy of the critical idea or a history of the question and of the supposed privilege of interrogative thought. All these themes, dare I say, have been the objects of long developments in numerous publications over the course of the last four decades" (*R*, p. 175).

10. Derrida, "Freud and the Scene of Writing," *WD* pp. 231–78.

11. The term itself comes from Alton Becker, "Attunement: An Essay on Philology and Logophilia," in *Beyond Translation: Essays towards a Modern Philology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), p. 394. My use is inflected by Melanie Klein, as follows: "There is a language we learn first, mixed with the prephenomenal, which stamps the metapsychological circuits of 'lingual memory.' The child invents a language, beginning by bestowing signification upon a part-object (Melanie Klein). The parents 'learn' this language. Because they speak a named language, the child's language gets inserted into the named language with a history before the child's birth, which will continue after its death. As the child begins to navigate this language, he/she is beginning to access the entire interior network of the language, all its possibility of articulations, for which the best metaphor that can be found is—especially in the age of computers—'memory.' By comparison, 'cultural memory' is a crude concept of narrative rememorization that attempts to privatize the historical record" (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Rethinking Comparativism," in *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012], p. 471).

12. Audience intervention, Conference on Criticism, National Tsinghua University, Taiwan, July 1990.

13. Nicholas A. Christakis, "Friends in New Places," *New York Times Education Life,* August 2, 2015, p. 12.

14. Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," *WD* pp. 351–70.

15. *De la grammatologie*, p. 215.

16. Paul de Man's moving essay "The Rhetoric of Blindness: Jacques Derrida's Reading of Rousseau," pp. 102–41, reveals a moment of blindness (to borrow his metaphor) when, not realizing that this symptomaticity is a tribute, he makes an uncharacteristic claim: "the existence of a particularly rich aberrant tradition of the writers who can legitimately be called the most enlightened"

(p. 141), among them Rousseau. Again, not appreciating the import of "lingual memory" (Derrida's word is "paleonymy"), he halts at a lower level of abstraction: "The key to the status of Rousseau's language is not to be found in his consciousness, in his greater or lesser awareness or control over the cognitive value of his language. It can only be found in the knowledge that this language, as language, conveys about itself, thereby asserting the priority of the category of language over that of presence—which is precisely Derrida's thesis" (p. 119). Devotion to Rousseau made him uncharacteristically pre-theoretical. When I was his graduate student, whatever his course title might be, we would say, echoing a contemporary commercial: "Promise them anything, but give them Rousseau." And in 1977, when my review article on *Glas* appeared, he told me, "You've got Jacques's game." Getting a word of praise from him was an unthinkable event. In that confidence I write this note. De Man's actual reading of Derrida's reading is, of course, superb and respectful.

17. *Grammatologie*, pp. 73–74.

18. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* tr. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 384–86.

19. "Planetarity," in Emily Apter, Jacques Lezra, and Michael Woods, eds., *The Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon,* tr. Steven Rendall (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 1220–24.

20. Jacques Derrida, *The Animal that Therefore I Am*, tr. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

21. Hamid Dabashi, *Post-Orientalism, Knowledge, and Power in a Time of Terror* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 2009), pp. 131, 161. It is my belief that I coined the ugly and inaccurate word "post-structuralism" precisely in the translator's preface to the book you hold in your hand. "Post-structuralist" seems now not to be an altogether correct description of Derrida. He is a critic of some contemporary structuralist assumptions, and a radicalizer of structure as origin or end. On this, please see Peter Pericles Trifonas, "Derrida and the Philosophy of Education," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 35, iii (2003): 255–56. His coupling of post-structuralism and the post-phenomonological is a step in the right direction.

22. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile,* p. 76; translation modified. Quoted in *Grammatology*, p. 344.

23. To repeat, this critical method is going to be developed in "White Mythology."

24. For institutional criticism of psychoanalysis as instrument, see "Geopsychoanalysis and the Rest of the world," *Psyche,* pp. 318–43.

25. My position vis-à-vis Derrida on Marx was simply that he should also focus on industrial capitalism (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Touched by Deconstruction," in *Grey Room* 20 [2005]: 95–105).

26. Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question,* tr. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

27. Jacques Derrida, *The Work of Mourning*, ed. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

28. Latin is here the language, not Latin America.

29. The book to read to support Derrida's question is Jean Franco, *Cruel Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

30. Kant, *Pure Reason,* p. 681.

31. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Experience of Freedom,* tr. Bridget McDonald (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

32. Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship,* tr. George Collins (London: Verso, 2005). I have discussed this in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Schmitt and Post-Structuralism: A Response," *Cardozo Law Review* 21, 5–6 (May 2000): 1723–37.

33. Jennifer Alzate González, "AntiRacist Activism and Community Self-Care at the University of Michigan," 17, 1–2 (January–June 2015): 12. I wanted to mention this in the interest of recognizing com-plicity, being folded together. The place of the scholar, with mass education and affirmative action, is now more equitable globally; and the ones below global class apartheid in education still remain completely excluded. Just as Ms. González's innocent tabulation and description of her inclusive "we" would also exclude an immense number of race-victims under the line of class apartheid: "For me, it represents all the freedom fighters, femme brujas, and queers of color who populate not only my academic readings but my Facebook newsfeed and Tumblr dashboard. Indeed [Sandra Cisneros's] words invite me into a movement which uplifts not only our rallies and marches, but also our Snapchat selfies, our drag balls and House trophies, and our after-hour grad lounge bachata parties as acts of resistance" (12). The Derrida of *Of Grammatology*—arrived in Paris from El-Biar—is not an elite outsider, but complicit with González in speaking from within a much expanded and diversified "we" that is still above the radar of serious class apartheid in education.

34. Jacques Derrida, "Circumfession," running subtext in Geoffrey Bennington, *Jacques Derrida,* tr. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

35. To bring into focus the kind of difference we are talking about, I cite a passage neither from Rousseau nor from Derrida, but from Jacques Lacan: "Servitude et grandeur où s'anéantirait le vivant, si le désir ne préservait sa part dans les interférences et les battements que font converger sur lui les cycles du *langage,* quand la confusion des *langues* s'en mêle et que les ordres se contrarient dans les déchirements de l'oeuvre universelle" (*Écrits* F, p. 231; emphasis mine). In other words, if one took into account that there is an incredible variety of languages [*langues*], not just my mother tongue or first language, in which the signifier has been energized, one would be destroyed because the universal law of the father, which is emerging from this grounding error of the emergence of desire from fantasy, would be shown not to be universal [*langage*]; it would destroy the subject. There is an underground resonance between Lacan and Derrida, especially

this early material that he is revising around 1966. There are of course significant differences, as Derrida points out in "The Purveyor of Truth," *Yale French Studies* 52 (1975): 31–113. In the essay we quote this from, for example, Lacan cites Lévi-Strauss's "Language and the Analysis of Social Laws," *American Anthropologist* 53 (April–June 1951): 155–63, where the latter uses women as structural units and dismisses "feminist objections" as a prime example in the new informatics-enriched anthropology. The passage above is translated thus: "Servitude and grandeur in which the living being would be annihilated, if desire did not preserve his part in the interferences and pulsations that the cycles of language cause to converge on him, when the confusion of tongues intervenes and the orders thwart each other in the tearing asunder of the universal undertaking" (*Ecrits*, p. 231). Language=*Langage*; Tongue=*Langue*.