

# Margins of Desire:

## The Foundations of Derrida's Social Ethics

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to my supervisors Prof. Michael Strauss and Prof. Oded Balaban . Prof. Strauss introduced me to the philosophy of Derrida, and Prof. Balaban guided my way with sensitivity and wisdom. To both, I owe my way of thinking. Prof. Gabriel Motzkin, who was the external advisor, encouraged me to articulate my interpretation, although it did not always fit it with the common views on Derrida's philosophy.

There were many people who gave me interesting feedback, valuable suggestions and precious support, for which I am grateful. Dr. Avner Choen and Dr. Orna Harari criticized my ideas in a very productive way. Ruthie Lustig was there for me in all my difficult moments. Dr. Albert Ginzberg patiently corrected my French spelling. Amira Kedem Ronit Rot and Tirtsa Valentine read the manuscript and helped to make it more reader friendly. Dr. Rebecca Toueg translated the thesis from the Hebrew version with great patience and a critical eye.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express tremendous thanks to my family. To my husband Amos Arav who listened to all my indecisions, read the manuscript, and did not complain even once, even though he did not always understand what I was talking about. And to my children Yehuda, Tirza and Reuma, who encouraged me and were happier than I was when I received my Ph.D.

## Introduction

Derrida, who is known for his complex and obscure style of writing, presents a challenge that is occasionally frustrating to anyone who tries to read his works. To the same extent, he is known as having introduced linguistic innovations such as deconstruction, *différance*, trace, *supplément*, etc. that have taken root in contemporary intellectual thought in the West philosophy and has influenced it. But for what purpose were these linguistic innovations created? What was the question that troubled Derrida? What was the problem he was trying to resolve? The aim of this book is to actually deal with these issues. In the course of this book I shall focus on the problems that troubled Derrida, explain the reason for the linguistic innovations in his philosophical teachings, and hopefully dispel the clouds of obscurity that pervade his writings.

One of the main reasons for the considerable difficulty in reading Derridean texts is the gap between the expectations of the reader regarding the way in which the contents of the text would be presented before him and the way in which these contents are actually presented. Readers of Derrida's writings encounter a text that seems to correspond to the strictest rules of academic composition in which an ordered set of arguments lays out the problem that the text will focus upon, the reasons for accepting or rejecting them, and finally the conclusion to be derived from what has been said so far. Normally, careful treading of this kind conducts the reader over pitfalls and provides a clear pathway from the beginning of the argument to its end. But in following Derrida, the pathway disappears and we do not know from where we have come and where we are going. Since Derrida uses his writings to converse with the reader rather than to present his philosophical arguments,<sup>1</sup> the reader finds that the more he progresses the more he becomes entangled in a mass of arguments and statements. The reader does not know how he has reached the position he is in even though he has followed the written text step by step. In the kind of writing that is conducted as a conversation between Derrida and an imaginary audience, the logic of conversation predominates,<sup>2</sup> and the subject matter is displayed before the reader through associations that the contents arouse in Derrida or in the imaginary audience with which he converses. In his book *De la grammatologie*,

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<sup>1</sup> This is more evident in the French original, and disappears to a great extent or diminishes in translation.

<sup>2</sup> On the difference between the logic of conversation and the logic of writing, see Vernant, pp. 204-208.

Derrida himself calls conventional writing (as described above) one-dimensional, and characterizes his own writing as multi-dimensional.<sup>3</sup>

The multi-dimensional writing to which Derrida refer is an indication of the world that Derrida has created. This world is not the two-dimensional one that develops linearly, but a multi-dimensional world that proliferates like a living colony. In this world, every concrete individual voice serves as a creative center. A collection of concrete individual voices creates and constitutes the phenomenon, the political reality that is linguistic, cultural, historical, scientific, aesthetic, religious, etc.

Derrida's multi-dimensional writing comprises one of the main sources for the difficulty in reading the texts. I shall therefore present in this book the multi-dimensional Derridean world in a one-dimensional form, while attempting to indicate wherever the multi-dimensional aspects of his writings are clearly expressed. The analysis that will follow the presentation of Derrida's philosophical thought is one that will transform the multi-dimensional Derridean ideas into a single objective-rational dimension. This transformation seems to me to be of the kind that the landscape artist creates when he projects a three-dimensional scene onto a two-dimensional canvas. Even when there is such a high degree of similarity between the landscape and the painting that one can say there is "no difference" between them, a real gap exists between the landscape and the painting. In the present case, the landscape is Derrida's oeuvre, and the degree to which this book is a faithful painting of that landscape others may testify. I can testify that the gap between them definitely exists. In answer to the question as to when Derrida's arguments are being presented and when it is my interpretation that is being advanced, it may be said that everything that is said is my interpretation. However, I have tried to be faithful to Derrida's arguments and to present them without judging them or presenting my position even when I disagree with Derrida's position. The working method I have adopted is aimed at exposing the presuppositions that underlie Derrida's standpoints and at clarifying the philosophical problems with which he grappled. The catch here is that this very clarification may be perceived by his disciples as depriving his writings of their radical irony. In my opinion, the interpretation that I offer does not exclude other interpretations and does not negate the many possibilities that Derrida's disciples have found in his writings. I believe that the interpretation presented here sharpens the innovation and audacity of

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<sup>3</sup> DLG, p. 130; OG, pp. 86-87.

these writings instead of blunting them. At the same time, I hope that this interpretation will be seminal in opening up a new avenue of thought in connection with Derrida's writings.

Derrida is known for his analysis of the texts of other philosophers, and therefore it is almost impossible to discuss his thought without reference to other philosophers, thinkers and writers with whom he is engaged. Since there is already an extensive literature that has dealt with these writers and the relationship between them and Derrida, I have chosen to present them very briefly and simply in a concise form and often merely by exposing the way they appear in Derrida's writings without trying to discuss their basic principles or the complex relationship between them and Derrida. This is in order to present Derrida's position apart from that of the philosophers with whom he is engaged in discussion. Even if the attempt to separate Derrida's position from the one he is criticizing and through which expresses himself, seems to me as contrary to the basic position of Derrida that appears as a dialogue between views and not as absolute and self-sufficient statements, my conformity with this position would make it impossible to present the issues that concern Derrida. For that reason, in the course of my exposition, I shall present them as though Derrida had formulated them in an absolute manner, which of course is not the case at all. For the same reasons I am not going to deal with the ironic aspects of Derrida's writings. This aspect plays a central role in the multi-dimensional writings of Derrida. Yet it seems to me that this very aspect that constitutes such an important component in his multi-dimensional writing<sup>4</sup> makes it difficult to understand his position. Another matter that will hardly be found in this book is any mention of the various influences on Derrida and a discussion of the similarities and differences between what he says and other philosophical viewpoints. Whenever this occurs in this book it will be in order to draw a comparison that can stress and clarify Derrida's position. Here, too, my guiding considerations are, on one hand, the numerous available texts that deal with this very issue<sup>5</sup> and on the other hand, an attempt to simplify the complex system as much as possible. The reduced approach described above also affected the range of texts discussed in this book. Derrida's prolific output made it necessary to decide from

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<sup>4</sup> I accept the view of Marian Hobson that Derridean irony functions as a way to indicate the multi-dimensional aspect of a certain issue and not as a way to deride or hint at the negation of the idea. See Hobson, p. 228.

<sup>5</sup> For example, one can find interesting analyses that deal with the relationship between Derrida and Husserl and between Derrida and Heidegger in the books of Lawlor (2002), Marrati-Guénon (1998) and Kates (2005) among others.

the outset which texts would be included in the discussion. Since the main interest of this book is in the fundamental ethical and social positions of Derrida, I have chosen the first two phases of his writings from which to derive the problems and some of the solutions that have been his concern throughout his life.<sup>6</sup>

Derrida himself thought that his work was of a philosophical nature; therefore this book will treat his work with philosophical tools. As I understand it, Derrida was concerned with the problem of the relationship between the individual and society: how society is composed of a collection of individuals and how the personal privacy of the individual can be preserved within a social system. This means that the problems that had already engaged Derrida's attention in his early writings were concerned with ethical problems. I will attempt to expose the basic assumptions that underlie Derrida's thought and those positions that were so self-understood by him that he did not pay any much attention to them and certainly believed they needed no explanation or elucidation. The understanding of these basic assumptions will shed light both on Derrida's point of view when he asks his questions, and on the solutions that he arrives at. The source of these assumptions lies in his perception of human reality as an irrational and emotional reality and the perception of human individual will as a creative force within the framework of this reality. In this book I shall extract these assumptions, expose their meaning, and clarify how the understanding of human reality as an emotional reality can illuminate Derrida's arguments.

In order to extract Derrida's perception of emotional reality, I have made use of the tools supplied by Cassirer in his book *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. It may be said that these tools constitute the *a priori* supposition of this book since they are presented as analytical tools that are not subject to criticism. Cassirer developed a theory about symbolic forms through which man conceptualizes his world. The choice of Cassirer was made for two reasons. The first is the perception of Cassirer's position as showing the way out from the tradition of rationality. Lofts presents Cassirer, Husserl and Heidegger as the three philosophers who have coped with the philosophical crisis that rationality had led to, and claimed that it was Cassirer who had shown the way to escape from the tradition of rationality.<sup>7</sup> On the basis of this conclusion I claim that the way in which Cassirer has presented his ideas and method

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<sup>6</sup> In the introduction to the publication of his thesis in 1990, Derrida noted that he was surprised to discover that some of the things still engaging his interest in 1990 had already troubled him in 1954 when the thesis was written. Since Derrida agreed to publish his thesis only in 1990, this book will not refer to it.

<sup>7</sup> Lofts, p. 584.

of analysis provides a point of view that seems fruitful when used to examine Derrida's work. Cassirer speaks of the various forms of conceptualizations and proposes two different kinds of logic. He claims that human reality is not a given objective reality but one that develops together with the development of human consciousness. His works are entirely devoted to proving this claim. It seems that Derrida would have accepted this claim if he had required it since for him the developing reality that Cassirer was trying to prove is something that was self-understood by him and did not require proof. After the publication of Vernant's book,<sup>8</sup> it seems that Derrida did not think he had to prove that there were several orders of thought and that rationality, which called logocentrism, was not the sole order of thought possible. The question that troubled him was not if there were mutual interactions between the reality which had its development conditioned by human consciousness and that which conditioned it, but what was the nature of such interactions. What was the order, the logic, of such interactions in which concrete human awareness creates a concrete reality common to all concrete awareness, and is created by it at one and the same time.

As for the second reason, it is an open secret that Derrida was influenced by the philosophy of Heidegger. As we shall see later on, Derrida accepted Dasein as a starting point (although he does not call the reality he refers to by that name). In spite of this, his philosophizing leads towards a non-deterministic world that does not correspond to that of Heidegger. Even Cassirer accepted the Heideggerian Dasein, but did not accept the deterministic worldview that Heidegger derived from it. In April 1929 Heidegger and Cassirer met at Davos in Switzerland and conducted an argument that aroused great public interest and has continued to be the subject of scholarly debate. This great interest was due to the fact that these two personalities, in addition to being well known philosophers, held opposing positions and were diametrically opposed in character. In this debate the sharp difference in the starting point of these two philosophers became evident. Heidegger presupposed a deterministic worldview, while Cassirer presupposed a non-deterministic worldview.<sup>9</sup> Thus the use of the tools

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<sup>8</sup> The text of Vernant, to which Derrida refers us in note 63 in his article 'Plato's Pharmacy', ends with the claim that myth activates a different form of non-contradictory logic that serves philosophy, and asks how one can give form to such a logic. See Vernant, p. 260

<sup>9</sup>The documentation of this debate can be found in the appendices to Heidegger's *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, under the title 'Davos Lectures'.

constructed by Cassirer will help in sharpening the difference between Heidegger and Derrida, and extract the special position that Derrida develops.

Throughout the book I have made wide use of the term 'politics'. This term functions as a concept that concerns the broad intersubjective-interactive experience of mankind and is not to be interpreted in the narrow sense of political activity. One may speak about ethics, religion, society, culture or history, but these ideas conceal the dimension of will that is involved in their creation. The political field, on the other hand, brings into prominence the relation between the different wills and the reality that these wills bring into existence. As we shall see later on, Derrida does not think that there exists any essence or sphere that is totally independent of the individuals that function in front of or within them, including the intersubjective sphere in which the individual functions.

The book consists of a prologue and three sections. The prologue presents the conclusions that are derived from the entire book. This course of action was done to free the reader from the need to guess in which direction the arguments are working towards. The prologue can therefore be skipped and returned to later at the end of the discussion. The first section is devoted to laying out Derrida's thought. In the second section the emotional reality that shapes the special position of Derrida is presented. In the third section I shall show how the understanding of reality as an emotional reality, which develops from a desire that things should be other than they are, makes it possible to resolve the problems of interpreting Derrida's philosophical beliefs. In this section the necessity of both the freedom of desire and its limitations are exposed, a necessity that is, in my opinion, the most significant revelation of Derrida in his early writings, and is the reason why this book is called *Margins of Desire*.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> In French as well as in English margin refers to an amount allowed or available beyond what is actually necessary and to a limit in condition. The margins stand for freedom and limitations at one and same time.

## Prologue as Epilogue

How is a society created out of a collection of individuals? How do the individuals preserve their individuality within a social system? These are the questions that troubled Derrida from the outset. Derrida's work is based on the assumption that every person is singular. The meaning of this singularity is that every person has been gifted with his own unique voice, a concrete individual voice that is free in spite of the constraints imposed upon him when he tries to realize his ends. The claim regarding the freedom of the voice stems from the assumption that the voice is the only one that determines for itself the end it tries to realize. Normally I would have said that Derrida is speaking about what we call in everyday language 'will', and therefore I would have opened by saying that every person is gifted with his own unique will. But the concept 'will' can be understood on one hand as that which determines the aim ('I want to smoke') and on the other hand as the power that prevents me from realizing a certain aim ('I have stopped smoking by my will power', which means that my will has forced me not to perform something that I am interested in doing) or has organized my aims according to an order of priority ('I want to smoke but do not want to cough as a result of smoking'. In the order of priority, the desire to prevent my coughing is prior to my desire to smoke. Therefore my will prevents me from smoking even though I desire to do so). In order to distinguish between a will that sets an aim and a will that functions as a 'superego' and prevents me from doing things that I desire to do, Derrida calls the will that sets aims without their classification, 'voice'.<sup>1</sup> Since this voice is realized in speech, in language, Derrida begins his discussion by rescuing the voice from the deterministic system within which it is revealed. He claims that the discussion within the deterministic system, the system of the signifiers and the signified to which the attention of the individual is directed, overlooks the individual himself and thus obscures the status of the voice, of the individual, as an independent and free entity who determines his own ends. The irony is that this very claim was interpreted as a discussion in language, an interpretation that deflected it from being a moral discussion regarding the responsibility that rests on the voice as an entity free to determine its own ends, and turned it into a discussion about interpretation, signs and language.

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<sup>1</sup> This essential will, that is presented here as the voice, will be called by Derrida singularity in his later writings.

Derrida begins his journey with a study of Husserl's writings. Husserl claimed that scientific research had lost its moral justification, and he called for a return to the discovery of the true aim of science. From the claims made by Derrida it may be understood that scientific research has become so abstract that it is perceived as a reality that has imposed itself upon man. The process that is perceived by thinkers (such as Cassirer for example) as releasing man from imposition, leads according to this reading to coercion and the perception of man himself as a captive of forces greater than himself. In the scientific system man is perceived as a passive creature that is not responsible for the course of events imposed upon him by genetically inherent cultural surroundings or psychological circumstances. Derrida tries once more to reveal the components of abstract concepts in order to provide man again with the understanding that he is the ruler of his world and that he is not a passive creature subject to the whims of forces greater than himself. This would be possible by linking abstract concepts once again with concrete realities.

It is not by chance that Derrida begins his philosophizing with the writings of Husserl. In a certain sense his work can be seen as a response to the challenge set by Husserl whose phenomenological philosophy was a call to return to things in themselves. Heidegger returns to things in themselves, to being, but this is an abstract being. Derrida also deals with things in themselves, but unlike Husserl and Heidegger whose work led them to even higher levels of abstraction, Derrida tries to do so literally – by relating to concrete rather than abstract things. He agrees with Husserl that that man should take responsibility for his actions by philosophical research. He repeatedly sets ethics as the goal of philosophical research just as Socrates had done, and it is in this sense one may understand his claim that his work is philosophical.

Derrida presents a concrete model and focuses attention on the concrete voice, on the individual will as a motivating force. This active, indeterminist force is not merely a force but a concrete human will. It does not wish to activate a general, abstract plan but seeks to realize its own individual concrete aims. Here we can understand Derrida's criticism of Western philosophy. In Western philosophy there is a tendency towards ever increasing abstractions and generalizations that reduce existing things to a single essence. This reduction leads to the limitation of the range of possibilities that lie before the individual in two ways. Firstly, the generalization is carried out by relating to an existing whole while discarding particular instances and emphasizing the common factor. This reference only to what actually exists assumes

that there are no other possibilities except whatever is generally thought to exist. . . Such a position contradicts the assumption that underlies the perception of the voice as a free agent in that it can see in existing things what has not yet come into existence. Secondly, a problem arises when particular instances are discarded, because their very presence can raise possibilities for the concrete individual that no one else can see. The incorporation of particular instances within the generalization conceals them and prevents the possibility of seeing them as new possibilities. The way in which Derrida copes with these problems is a double one:

1. He makes use of concrete terms, and the discussion is always concrete – confronting a concrete text and presenting concrete conclusions for the text under discussion. Sometimes the text itself is a literary one that by its very nature narrates a concrete, individual story.
2. He proposes the act of deconstruction that deals with the dismantling of generalizations and abstractions. This allows for the individual concrete voice to expose what he perceives as having been incorporated and concealed during the process of generalization and abstraction. The more these concepts are perceived as self-understood the more limited are the possibilities that they present to the individual voice. The ability of the concrete individual to expose what these concepts are saying to him opens up the possibility for him to accept or reject the messages he receives.

The individual, concrete point of view that Derrida proposes obviates the possibility of setting up an objective criterion for moral behavior to which one could refer. In his book, *After Virtue*, MacIntyre points to the loss of the objective criterion and on the individual viewpoint as the root cause of emotive ethics that threatens to disintegrate the social system. Emotive (emotional) ethics claims that ethics is actually another name for judgment that expresses preference, position or feeling. This is another kind of judgment than that which relates to facts. The judgment related to facts can be, true or false and whether it is true or false can be determined objectively. For example, if we say that someone uprooted a tree, one can go to the place where the tree had stood and see whether the tree was uprooted. On the other hand, moral judgment that expresses a position or feeling is neither right nor wrong, neither good nor evil, because there are no objective criteria. The criteria it uses may be social norms but these are not objective criteria. For example, if we say that someone uprooted a tree and by doing so committed an evil act, it is no problem to determine whether or not

the tree was uprooted but only as to whether it was an evil act, which must be examined by applying some criteria. Perhaps the tree was old and was a danger to the public, so that uprooting it was a good deed, or that the old tree was of a high historical value and therefore uprooting it was an evil act. There are no objective criteria to determine the moral status of the act. MacIntyre claims that this argument can continue and emphasize that we are using moral judgment not only to express our feelings and positions but also to create these same reactions in others. This claim assumes that there is no difference between manipulative and non-manipulative relationships. The elimination of the difference between manipulative and non-manipulative relationships stands contrary to previous moral perceptions. Kant, for example, distinguishes between the mutual relations among people that are moral relationships, and non-moral relationships, precisely on the basis of the difference between the way a person uses another in a manipulative manner, such as treating him as a means, and a non-manipulative relationship, such as treating the other person as an end. Treating the other person as an end means to present him with the reasons for an action in such a way as to enable him to weigh and consider the reasons. It means not to try to convince him only by means of reasons which the other person will think are good reasons. It implies recourse to a valid decisive criterion without relation to the specific aims for which man, as a rational creature, must carry out his own decisions. Contrariwise, to treat the other person as a means implies making use of every persuasion or consideration that might influence him effectively. Effective influence enables me to turn the other person into a tool to fulfill my own aims. In order to do so, I must make use of emotional rather than rational means of persuasion.

MacIntyre claims that if emotivism is right, the distinction between treating the other as a means or an end is illusion since it has no objective criterion and one cannot treat others as ends but only as means. In such a reality, from my point of view, everyone can help me or, alternatively, hinder me from realizing my wish. Thus the distinction between treating others as a means or an end is no distinction at all.

MacIntyre sees emotive society as a place where individual desires encounter each other, and in which each person with his own positions and preferences considers the world merely as the arena in which to obtain satisfaction and interprets reality as a series of opportunities for pleasure, as a place where the enemy is boredom. The supreme value in such world is a freedom of action. But, argues MacIntyre, such a way of life is available only to someone who is rich enough to support it. How would

a society that accepts the assumptions of emotivism appear? In MacIntyre's view, since not all the members of society are rich enough, society develops by establishing organized life with a bureaucratic structure that is sharply contrasted with the wealthy style of life described above. The life of the wealthy with their unlimited means are constantly in search of aims for which means can be used. But bureaucratic organizations are characterized as being in state of constant struggle to preserve resources. The central responsibility in the organization of bureaucratic life is to direct the human and material resources of the organization in the most efficient manner in order to realize its aim. Every economic organization weighs the cost against the benefit as a criterion of achievement. Economic rationality is the adaptation of means towards an end in the most efficient and inexpensive manner.

In a system of this kind, there is no criterion that will tell us which value is higher or lower. Values are created by human choice. Everyone has a conscience that cannot be disputed, and values are based upon a choice that has a completely subjective justification. Questions about the aims are actually questions about values that cannot be resolved but can only be chosen. As a system that is totally emotional there is no rational criterion that can be referred to in order to justify it except the criterion of utility. The application of the utility criterion will show that within the economic framework the only authority is the one in which its power is effective. The economic framework is basically a competitive one because it presupposes the accumulation of power and means that will enable the individual to realize his freedom of action. This means that within the framework of those values that are aimed as providing freedom of action, a form of life is created in which one individual can amass enough resources and power that can limit the freedom of action of other individuals without giving us an objective criterion by which we can limit this accumulation of resources in the hands of a single person or a group of people. The concentration of resources in the hand of a single person or a small group of people can lead to a society in which the range of possibilities open to most of its members is very limited.

From an analysis of Derrida's position we obtain the picture indicated by MacIntyre. Derrida claims that individual considerations are always teleological and that their rationality serves the aim that the individual wishes to realize. Therefore the attempt to claim that it is possible to set up a system of non-teleological rational arguments has no basis. The other is perceived as someone who is able to prevent me

from realizing my wish or to help me to do so. In order to obtain his cooperation in helping me to realize my wish I shall use every argument that will serve my purpose. As in the system that was sketched by MacIntyre, within the system Derrida constructs there is no possibility to resolve the differences between different aims and it is necessary simply to choose. The system of general considerations that MacIntyre presents corresponds to the general considerations presented by Derrida. That is to say, the same system described by Derrida corresponds to the emotive system described by MacIntyre.

MacIntyre analyzes the social system in this way in order to show that an emotive moral system leads to social disintegration, and as such it cannot be considered a moral system at all. Derrida, on the other hand, thinks that this is human political reality and not a moral system. From the way in which he analyzes this reality it may be said that he accepts MacIntyre's claim regarding the disintegrating forces that underlie the system. But he thinks that the limitation of possibilities among a large group of people would be a real threat to the administrative freedom of the individual and expose the need for a balance between the individual tendency to realize concrete individual aims and the threat that unlimited realization of this kind could lead to the degeneration of society and the disappearance of the individual. Therefore, although human political reality needs some ethical considerations to avert this threat of degeneration, it may by no means be considered in itself a moral system.

From an initial glance Derrida's position may be seen as a repetition of the claim that the freedom of a person ends where it clashes with the freedom of another person. But Derrida does not formulate any ethical principle, nor does he present such a principle. An ethical principle assumes the existence of society and formulates the kind of behavior suitable for that society. Derrida, on the other hand, does not assume the existence of society as an obvious fact just as he does not assume the existence of the concrete individual as self-evident. Man and society are not the creations of God who ensures their existence until he decides otherwise, irrespective of how the individuals behave in a given society. His very presentation of both the individual and society as a continuous human creation implies that their existence is not ensured. The existence of the individual and society depends on the way in which individuals act. The need to allow for the realization of desire on one hand and to limit it on the other is a fundamental necessity derived from the essential nature of man and society. For this reason, Derrida claims that in order to preserve his ability to desire, the individual

must assume responsibility for the systems he establishes, and he cannot act automatically. The responsibility that Derrida refers to is the concrete responsibility that demands intentional considerations for every action performed by the individual throughout his life.

Derridean philosophy is concerned with the concrete awareness that places every person in confrontation with a reality that is shaped by his own decision. In Derrida's view, there is no other power in which man can find refuge and to which he can transfer responsibility for the actions taken. In a certain sense this can be seen as a truly Copernican revolution that places every person in confrontation with himself, since his very existence as an individual is merely the creation of himself for which he must take responsibility.

This emphasis on concrete individuality may lead to an extreme individualistic and relativistic interpretation that dismantles the whole system of relationships between people and places each of them as a separate unit on its own. In this kind of situation there is no place for ethical considerations in order to preserve the system of human interrelations. But in Derridean philosophy the voice of the individual can only exist within the social formations in which it functions. Thus, despite the essential freedom of the voice to act without prior conditions, its ability to realize itself and act depends upon the society in which it lives. In order to act and realize his aims, a person must take responsibility to ensure that the society in which he lives will be one that will allow him to set up his aims and realize them. The viewpoint that could have been interpreted as egocentric and inconsiderate is now found to be one that demands the consideration of others. The question as to what is the framework of interrelations that will facilitate the setting up and realization of concrete and individual aims, and what are the forces that will ensure that the emphasis on the realization of individual aims will not destroy it, remains an open one.

Derridean philosophy that exposes the constant need to discuss and formulate the framework of interrelations in which freedom of action can be realized, turns out to be a philosophy in which the ethical question regarding the right way to live stands at the center of its concerns.

In this book I shall follow the path taken by Derrida by reconstructing the way in which his philosophical and ethical concerns are formulated.

## **First Section – The Concrete Individual and Politics**

In this section I shall present Derrida's philosophy as an investigation that seeks to answer the question regarding the relations between the individual and society.

Derrida tries to clarify how on one hand the uniqueness and freedom of will of the individual who is constructed and designed by society is preserved, and on the other hand how a society with a collection of common aims is being created out of individuals that have freedom of will and personal aims.

In Part I, which is devoted to the voice, I shall show the way in which Derrida presents the concrete individual will. I shall demonstrate that Derrida's concern with the concrete is expressed through the representation of the voice (and not the will) as the motivating free force to set out its aims. The voice constitutes the non-deterministic intuitive instance that is both creative and primary that gives itself presence in writing. Writing is the realization and presence of the voice in the world, and constitutes the axis that allows the phenomenon to develop.

In Part II, I shall discuss the way in which the phenomenon is created. Phenomenon is the system of social and cultural conventions that constitute what is given and is expressed in writing. In this way, writing becomes the meeting point between the presence of the individual voice and conventional social and cultural generalizations. It is important to understand that, for Derrida, writing is a general term for culture, history, politics, science, art, etc.<sup>1</sup> This means that writing is what is given. In this framework there are conventions that dictate the ends that the individual perceives as possibilities. These conventions are expressed by the generally accepted meaning of the words, the concepts and the signs, as well as in the concepts of time, space, number, and subjectivity that shape reality and constitute the system of possibilities for the concrete individual to act. All this leads to a common factor that finds expression in historicism, culture and science. For Derrida, the fact that the system of conventions changes does not mean it does not exist. At any given moment, the concrete individual experiences the system of conventions as absolute and fixed.<sup>2</sup> It seems that this is the reason why Derrida rejects the attempt to ascribe relativistic positions to him.

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<sup>1</sup> A very good explanation and expansion of this claim can be found in the introduction of Johnson, (1993): 1-11

<sup>2</sup> A similar assertion can be found in Gasché, (1994): 6-11.

This section will also clarify Derrida's position as a moral one that revolves around the axis of responsibility, which in itself is a phenomenon of the voice. In the course of this section it will be made clear that Derrida creates a revolving system that moves like the motions of a tornado, with multidimensional axes that serve as the centers of motion (voice, trace, writing, responsibility) that cannot be located or reverted to. The constant change in axes indicates perpetual change and motion in the system. As a result, the whole system evolves between concrete individual and undetermined vertices, and its development constitutes a general-abstract deterministic vertex that stands opposite the individual vertices.

In this section I have made little use of other interpretations in order to present my own close reading of the Derrida's text without interrupting the sequence. Since Derrida himself raises the issues in the form of a debate with various thinkers, an analysis of this writings may be confusing. The reader may accompany me on the journey of decipherment in discussing Derrida's debate with Husserl, for example, and the moment he begins to get used to his presence, Husserl vanishes and someone else appears in his place. Another difficulty that may arise during the reading of the first section comes from the need to present the special concepts of Derrida and the way in which he uses them. In a certain sense, this section seems to me as though it is the beginning of a novel in which the author presents the characters of his plot. The multiplicity of characters and the fabric of their lives, with their still unclear interrelationships, seem confusing at times. But as the story goes on, the characters become more familiar and the earlier details that were meaningless come together and clarify the plot. Here the characters are the concepts, and the discussion about their function and relations with other philosophical concepts corresponds to the story of their childhood and the relationships between the characters in the novel. During the course of writing, I have endeavored to clarify every new concept when it appears so as to make understanding easier even when the explanation mars the continuity of discourse.

## Part I – The Voice

One of the main forms in which Derrida's multi-dimensional writing is expressed is the way it makes use of the texts by philosophers and writers. From a first impression it seems as though his intention is to present an interpretation of the selected text, but in the course of reading it becomes clear that this is not really an interpretation but a kind of debate that he is conducting with the writer, during which his own positions are raised.<sup>1</sup> Since Derrida, who opposes the presentation of a systematic method, presents his position only in this way, I am bound to join him in his journey and retrieve his arguments from within the discussion he conducts. Below, I shall follow the way in which Derrida sets up the concrete individual will (voice) as the producer of a world. For this purpose I shall clarify what the voice is in Derrida's philosophy and show that it is concrete individual will that serves as the origin of the socio-cultural system and is free of prior conditions.

In Derrida's philosophy there is a special validity in the common expressions such as "I want to make my voice heard" or "every voice counts". Derrida claims that consciousness can only become viable through the voice, and stresses that the voice he is speaking about is not the material, physical voice.<sup>2</sup> What is the non-material voice? An examination of Derrida's arguments will show that the voice, which constitutes for him the essential aspect of his individuality, is without sound, and is not characterized by any noise that he can emit.

Traditionally, sight is perceived as the intuitive sense of perception, and therefore it is usually seen as an instance of direct apprehension and represents intuition. But in Derrida's view sight lacks immediate apprehension and is not active and creative. For this reason, Derrida believes that sight cannot fulfil its function as an instance of direct apprehension and replaces it with the voice. In this section I shall examine the way in which Derrida presents the voice and show that it embodies within itself individuality, concreteness, unmediated apprehension, independent creation and activity all together. I shall also show that this combination, that

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<sup>1</sup> For demonstration of this claim see appendix 'Parole and Discours in Derrida's *La voix et le phénomène*'

<sup>2</sup> Car ce n'est pas à la substance sonore ou à la voix physique, au corps de la voix dans le monde qu'il reconnaîtra une affinité d'origine avec le logos en général, mais à la voix phénoménologie, à la voix dans sa chair transcendante, au souffle, [...] LV p. 15 (For it is not in the sonorous substance or in the physical voice, in the body of speech in the world, that he will recognize an affinity with logos in general, but in the voice phenomenologically taken, speech in its transcendental flesh, in the breath, [...]) , S p.16

constitutes a vital component of Derrida's position, cannot be found except in the voice.

## Chapter 1 – Voice versus Sight as an Intuitive Instance

In his book *La Voix et la phénomène* (Voice and Phenomenon), Derrida conducts a debate with Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* (Logical Investigations) in which Husserl tried to form a theoretical framework that would form a solid basis for scientific knowledge. For this purpose, Husserl sought a way to make a distinction between meaning that was dependent upon its associations and pure meaning that was true under all conditions.<sup>1</sup>

Derrida says that while attempting to isolate the meaning and retrieve it from its associations, Husserl distinguishes between expression<sup>2</sup> and indication.<sup>3</sup> Indication draws attention to the predicate of interest, the object, like pointing with a finger at something to indicate "this". Indication is therefore the actual, concrete act of transmitting the meaning but is devoid of meaning in itself. Expression is the meaning<sup>4</sup> to which indication points. This meaning does not change and remains with the same content without dependence on surroundings (place), period (time) or speaker (subjectivity). The Hebrew word 'arieh', for instance, indicates the lion animal just as the English word 'lion' indicates the lion animal. In spite of the two different indications ('arieh' and 'lion'), the content indicated by them remains the same and is not dependent upon time, place and speaker. When Derrida clarifies what Husserl means by an expression without any physical-empirical elements, he claims that this is fixed expression with a meaning that is repeated without change. Pure meaning is an ideal object detached from all its associations, standing by itself and embodied in expression. Expression, Derrida claims, in the sense used by Husserl, is an action that goes beyond itself and its sense, and can remain within itself only in a phenomenological voice.<sup>5</sup> In this way expression provides the instance for preserving meaning: the phenomenological voice, that is to say the voice that is without materiality, the inner voice.

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<sup>1</sup> As I noted in the Introduction, the discussion of the relationship of Derrida to other thinkers, in this case Husserl, is concise and synoptic as far as possible. Those who are interested in a deeper study of the issue can find this in books such as Marrati-Guénon, Lawlor, (2002) Kates, (2005) and Evans, (1991).

<sup>2</sup> 'Ausdruck' in German, 'expression' in French. Derrida writes in French and refers to the text of Husserl which is written in German. Derrida's text has been translated into English. The concepts referred to in this chapter will be presented as they appear in the translated texts.

<sup>3</sup> 'Anzeichen' in German, 'indice' in French.

<sup>4</sup> 'Bedeutung' in German, 'vouloir-dire' in French.

<sup>5</sup> LV p.3, S p. 33. The phenomenological voice has the ability to suspend all relationship with the world. It does not involve any external relations by the outside world and thus preserves the pure intimacy of consciousness. From now onwards, when I mention the word voice, I mean the phenomenological voice.

Derrida does not expand on the subject of the voice in the first stage of the discussion he holds in his book *Voice and Phenomenology*. Only after he links meaning with self-consciousness as self-sufficient and analyzes consciousness as immediate and unmediated presence,<sup>6</sup> does he deal with voice once again.

Self-consciousness that is self-sufficient attains meaning through internal discourse.<sup>7</sup> Derrida presents discourse<sup>8</sup> as the unification of voice<sup>9</sup> represented as intuition and thought. Intuition means unmediated perception, a perception that does not need any intermediary, such as sound, in order to reach understanding.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, positioning the phenomenological voice as intuition can explain the lack of sound and the ability to reach understanding, but is unable to explain the very positing of voice as intuition.

In order to understand why the voice is posited as intuition, we must follow Derrida's views of thought. Derrida analyzes Husserl's position as one in which the aim of expression is to present again what has been understood in such a form that the sense,<sup>11</sup> the meaning, will be actually and immediately present (that the expression will make the meaning present without the indication that serves as intermediary). Since sense is determined on the basis of relationship to the object, the person who composes the expression must protect, respect, and preserve the present sense both as an object that is laid before us and open to observation and also as proximate to one's inner self.<sup>12</sup> At this stage, Derrida presents the perception of the object as observation. The perception of the object is a pure thought that can be conceived without the need to give it concrete form in the world. The ideal object is one that can be re-presented

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<sup>6</sup> LV, S, Chapters 3,4, 5.

<sup>7</sup> LV p. 79, S p. 70-71.

<sup>8</sup> In French 'discours'

<sup>9</sup> In French 'voix'. This concept is sometimes translated as 'speech', or 'voice', or 'discourse'.

<sup>10</sup> The English translation creates an interpretation problem when it translates 'l'instance de la voix' as 'vocal medium' in S p. 70, and LV p. 78. Instance is a stage in the course of the sentence, while medium is a means, an intermediary. The two words in French and in English are both identical in meaning. It is not clear why the translator found it necessary to use another word for that of Derrida, a word that has a meaning that represents the voice as an intermediary, as a medium, when the whole chapter deals with presenting the voice as an unmediated perception. Another interpretation besides the one given here for the voice in Derrida's writings can be found in Lawlor, p. 191-192. See also: Lawlor, (1998):185-193., Lawlor, (2004):79-80. A near understanding of the voice as what I call here intuition can be found in Haravey, (1986):104. although the whole interpretation of the book is completely different and some times even opposite to that of mine.

<sup>11</sup> In German 'Sinn', in French 'sens'.

<sup>12</sup> [...] le telos de l'expression intégrale est la restitution, dans la forme de la présence, de la totalité d'un sens donné actuellement à l'intuition. Ce sens étant déterminé à partir d'un rapport à l'objet, le médium de l'expression doit protéger, respecter, restituer la *présence* du sens à la fois comme être-devant de l'objet disponible pour un regard et comme proximité à soi dans l'intériorité. LV p. 83

([...] the telos of perfect [integral] expression is total restitution, in the form of presence of a sense actually given to intuition. Since sense is determined on the basis of relation with an object, the element of expression consequently must protect, respect and restore the *presence* of sense, both as the object's being before us, open to view, and as a proximity to self in interiority.) S p. 75 .

endlessly and its presence in front of the indicating sign<sup>13</sup> never changes because it is free of materiality. In Derrida's view, the form of presence is connected with idealism, and therefore he finds an undeniable association between idealization and the phenomenological voice that is free of all bodily aspects. The phenomenological voice, which completes this process by indicating the ideal object, is not divided into indicator and comprehendor because within the framework of the phenomenological voice there is no difference between the indicator (voice) and the indicated (the ideal object).<sup>14</sup> Understanding the nature of the ideal object indicates on the observation as essentially foreign to the ideal object because the very act of observation places what is seen in front, in an opposite position. Observation carries out the very division that the voice does not require. It stands outside the ideal object and therefore its perception is a mediating one. The ideal object is the most abstract of all objects and is not dependent upon actions of the here and now or subjective, empirical actions, but remains as it is without change forever. But an object of this kind can be expressed only by an instance that is immaterial (because everything that is material changes). This instance is the voice.<sup>15</sup>

The voice that we are dealing with keeps silent.<sup>16</sup> Can we understand from this that the voice was not chosen for its sound, for being heard, or perhaps just because it can

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<sup>13</sup> In German 'Zeichen', in French 'signe'.

<sup>14</sup> Or entre l'idéalisation et la voix, la complicité est ici indéfectible. Un objet idéal est un objet dont la monstration peut être indéfiniment répétée, dont la présence au Zeigen est indéfiniment réitérable précisément parce que, délivré de toute spatialité mondaine, il est un pur noème que je peux exprimer sans devoir, au moins en apparence, passer par le monde. En ce sens, la voix phénoménologique, qui semble accomplir cette opération "dans le temps", ne rompt pas avec l'ordre du Zeigen, elle appartient au même système et en parachève la fonction. LV p.84 (There is an unending complicity here between idealization and speech [voix]. An ideal object whose showing may be repeated indefinitely, whose presence to Zeigen is indefinitely reiterable precisely because, freed from all mundane spatiality, it is a pure noema that I can express without having, at last apparently, to pass through the world. In this sense the phenomenological voice, which seems to accomplish this operation "in time", does not break with the order of Zeigen but belongs to the same system and carries through its function.) S p.75 .

<sup>15</sup> L'objet idéal est le plus objectif des objets: indépendant du hic et nunc des événements et des actes de *La* subjectivité empirique qui le vise, il peut à l'infini être répété tout en restant le même. Sa présence à l'intuition, son être-devant le regard ne dépendant essentiellement d'aucune synthèse mondaine ou empirique, la restitution de son sens dans la forme de la présence devient une possibilité universelle et illimitée. Mais son être-idéal n'étant rien hors du monde, il doit être constitué répété et exprimé dans un médium qui n'entame pas la présence et la présence à soi des actes qui le visent : un médium qui préserve à la fois la présence de l'objet devant l'intuition et la présence à soi, la proximité absolue des actes à eux-mêmes. L'idéalité de l'objet n'étant que son être-pour une conscience non empirique, elle ne peut être exprimée que dans un élément dont la phénoménalité n'ait pas la forme de la mondanité. La voix est le no, de cet élément. La voix s'entend. LV p: 84-85 (The ideal object is the most objective of objects; independent of the here-and-now acts and events of the empirical subjectivity which intends it, it can be repeated infinitely while remaining the same. Since its presence to intuition, its being-before the gaze, has no essential dependence on any worldly or empirical synthesis, the re-establishment of its sense in the form of presence become a universal and unlimited possibility. But, being nothing outside the world, this ideal being must be constituted, repeated, and expressed in a medium that does not impair the presence and self-presence of the acts that aim at it, a medium which both preserves the presence of the object before intuition and self-presence, the absolute proximity of the acts to themselves. The ideality of the object, which is only its being-for a nonempirical consciousness, can only be expressed in an element whose phenomenality does not have worldly form. The name of this element is the voice. The voice is heard.) S p. 75-76

<sup>16</sup> Chapter 6 of LV is called *La voix qui garde le silence* (The voice that keeps silent)

be heard makes it more suitable than sight to be an intuitive instance? It seems that Derrida distinguishes between the sound of the voice and its being heard. In the French expression *La voix s'entend*, 'heard' and 'understood' are one and the same thing. For Derrida there is no intuitive understanding, which is presence, without hearing. This can be derived clearly from the fact that the only sense that can be idealized is that which can be heard and understood (*entendre*). In answer to the claim that the sensual nature of voice negates its ability to be ideal, Derrida says that the more the idealization of the object depends on the voice the more it becomes fully accessible in the voice.<sup>17</sup> The system that links between things-in-themselves and the possibility of the sign works best in voice.

Le "silence" phénoménologique ne peut donc se reconstituer que par une double exclusion ou une double réduction: celle du rapport à l'autre en moi dans la communication indicative, celle de l'expression comme coche ultérieure, supérieure et extérieure à celle du sens. C'est dans le rapport entre ces deux exclusions que l'instance de la voix fera entendre son étrange autorité. (Phenomenological "silence", then, can only be reconstituted by double exclusion or double reduction: that of the relation to the other within me in indicative communication, and that of expression as stratum that is subsequent to, above, and external to that sense. It is in relation between these two exclusion that the strange prerogative of the vocal medium will become clear)<sup>18</sup>

Derrida claims that the phoneme, the smallest unit in speech that distinguishes between one expression and another, can be considered as the ruler of the ideality of the phenomenon. The act of hearing oneself speak is a unique case of auto-affection. On one hand it acts by means of a generalization (what appears as the signified must be an ideality that can be transmitted and repeated as it is), and on the other hand the subject can listen or speak to himself and be influenced by the signs that he creates without passing through an external intermediary or something that is not part of

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<sup>17</sup> Et même si l'on voulait confiner la sonorité du côté du signifiant sensible et contingent (ce qui serait à la lettre impossible, car des identités formelles découpées dans une masse sensible sont déjà des idéalités non purement sensibles),[...] DLG p. 45 (And even if one wished to keep sonority on the side of sensible and contingent signifier (which would be strictly speaking impossible, since formal identities isolated within a sensible mass are already idealities that are not purely sensible)[...]) OG p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> LV p. 78, S p. 70.

himself.<sup>19</sup> Any other form of self-sensibility must either pass through what is outside the bounds of the self, or remain empirical and forgo general meaning.

N'y-a-t-il pas, dira-t-on, des formes d'auto-affection pure qui, dans l'intériorité du corps propre, ne requièrent l'intervention d'aucune surface d'exposition mondaine et pourtant ne sont pas de l'ordre de la voix? Mais ces formes restent alors purement empiriques, ne peuvent appartenir à un médium de signification universelle. (But, we could ask, are there not forms of pure auto-affection in inwardness of one's own body which do not require the intervention of any surface displayed in the world and yet are not of the order of the voice? But then these forms remain purely empirical, for they could not belong to medium of universal signification.)<sup>20</sup>

This is a puzzling statement to say the least. Is it only through the voice that universal significance is available? It is very strange because light is rejected to a great extent for its representation as a unification that erases the exclusivity of the individual.<sup>21</sup> Is not the erasure of the individual uniqueness the very keystone of universal significance? Is this not precisely the significance of generalization – the discovery of what is held in common and the disregard of the unique?

The puzzlement is even greater when we realize this claim as implying that all the other instances except for the voice instance remain entirely empirical. In usual circumstances, light that is often expressed through the concept of idea (*eidōs*) represents universal meaning free of all empirical connotations. If it seems as though there has been some misunderstanding here, and that Derrida did not realize that his formulation excluded light together with all the other instances. Derrida makes it clear in the text 'White Mythology' that his first and foremost intention was light.

Ce qui veut dire aussi bien que le soleil sensible est toujours improprement connu et donc improprement nommé. Le sensible en général ne limite pas la connaissance pour des raisons intrinsèques à la forme de présence de la chose sensible ; mais d'abord parce que l'aisthēton peut toujours ne pas se présenter, peut se cacher,

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<sup>19</sup> Quand je parle, il appartient à l'essence phénoménologique de cette opération que je m'entende dans le temps que je parle. LV p.87 (When I speak, it belongs to the phenomenological essence of this operation that I hear myself [je m'entende] at the same time that I speak.) S p. 77 .

<sup>20</sup> LV p. 88, S p. 79.

<sup>21</sup> L'E p. 134, W p. 90. Although this is a quotation from Levinas, one may consider it as Derrida's position. Derrida completely accepts Levinas' position regarding light as can be seen from his words regarding voice.

s'absenter. Il ne se donne pas sur commande et sa présence ne se maîtrise pas. Or le soleil, de ce point de vue, est l'objet sensible par excellence. C'est le paradigme du sensible et de la métaphore : il (se) tourne et (se) cache régulièrement. Comme le trope métaphorique implique toujours un noyau sensible ou plutôt quelque chose qui, comme le sensible, peut toujours n'être pas présent en acte et en personne, et puisque le soleil est à cet égard, par excellence, le signifiant sensible du sensible, le modèle sensible du sensible (Idée, paradigme ou parabole du sensible), le tour du soleil aura toujours été la trajectoire de la métaphore. De la mauvaise métaphore, certes, et qui ne fournit qu'une connaissance impropre. Mais comme la meilleure métaphore n'est jamais absolument bonne, sans quoi ce ne serait pas une métaphore, la mauvaise métaphore ne donne-t-elle pas toujours le meilleur exemple? Métaphore veut donc dire héliotrope, à la fois mouvement tourné vers le soleil et mouvement tournant du soleil. (Now, from this point of view, the sun is the sensory object par excellence. It is the paradigm of sensory and of metaphor: it regularly turns (itself) and hides (itself). As the metaphoric trope always implies a sensory kernel, or rather something like the sensory, which can always not be present in act and in person, and since the sun in this respect is the sensory signifier of the sensory par excellence, that is, the sensory model of the sensory (the idea, paradigm, or parabola of the sensory), then the turning of the sun always will have been the trajectory of metaphor. Of bad metaphor, certainly, which furnishes only improper knowledge. But as the best metaphor is never absolutely good, without which it would not be a metaphor, does not the bad metaphor always yield the best example? Thus, metaphor means heliotrope, both movement turned toward the sun and the turning movement of the sun.)<sup>22</sup>

If this is so, then there is no misunderstanding here. Light as derived from the image of the sun is a simile, a metaphor. As a metaphor its always has a sensual element<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> MDP p. 299, MoP p. 250-251.

<sup>23</sup> Before the quoted passage Derrida presents a consideration based on the position of Aristotle, with the implication that a metaphor always has a sensual element. At the same time he presents his own view that the sun is a bad metaphor.

and is therefore always empirical. That same empirical element prevents it from having universal significance. Also, since it is a metaphor it is not a thing-in-itself, a real thing. The voice, on the other hand, is not a metaphor. When Derrida speaks about the voice he does not intend it as a simile but as a voice in the literal (exact) sense of the word. The voice is singularity non other than himself.

Hearing oneself is an act of convergence, of unity. On the other hand, self-observation is an act of separation, of distancing, because the eye always turns in the same direction – outwards.<sup>24</sup> Therefore the sense of being outside, in the world, is an essential part of the non-phonetic signifier of the phenomenon. But since this is not the case with regard to the voice, the phenomenological interiority of hearing oneself and seeing oneself belong to two different orders of selfhood.<sup>25</sup>

From all that has been said above, it seems that the reference is to a voice that is not a simile of something else. This means that it is something that is entirely itself, a particular instance for which there is no comparable particularity. The question then is: How can a particular instance be the means for universal significance?<sup>26</sup>

A person can understand (hear) his own voice even without sound. The unity of the sound and the voice that allows the voice to be created in the world as a purely auto-affection is the only instance that evades the distinction between what is material and non-material (transcendental), and at the same time makes this distinction possible.<sup>27</sup> It seems that for Derrida, the fact that the voice is an instance that evades

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<sup>24</sup>L'œil est toujours tourné du même côté, vers le dehors, et tout se rapporte à cet orient. MDP p.338 (The eye is always turned in the same direction, toward the outside, and every thing is related to this orient.) MoP p. 284.

<sup>25</sup>[...] ; le sens "dehors", " dans le monde", est une composante essentielle de son phénomène. Rien de tel, en apparence, dans le phénomène de la voix. Dans l'intériorité phénoménologique, s'entendre et se voir sont deux ordres de rapport à soi radicalement différents LV p. 85. (The sense of being "outside," "in the world," is an essential component of its phenomenon. Apparently there is nothing like this in the phenomenon of speech [voix]. In phenomenological interiority, hearing oneself and seeing oneself are two radically different orders of self-relation.) S p.76

<sup>26</sup> En tant qu'auto-affection pure, l'opération du s'entendre-parler semble réduire jusqu'à la surface intérieure du corps propre, elle semble, dans son phénomène, pouvoir se dispenser de cette extériorité dans l'intériorité, de cet espace intérieur dans lequel est tendue notre expérience ou notre image du corps propre. C'est pourquoi elle est vécue comme auto-affection absolument pure, dans une proximité à soi qui ne serait autre que la réduction absolue de l'espace en général. C'est cette pureté qui la rend apte à l'universalité. LV pp. 88-89 (As pure auto-affection, the operation of hearing oneself speak [parler] seems to reduce even the inward surface of one's own body; in its phenomenal being it seems capable of dispensing with this exteriority within interiority, this interior space in which our experience or image of our own body is spread forth. This is why hearing oneself speak [s'entendre parler] is experienced as an absolutely pure auto-affection, occurring in a self-proximity that would in fact be the absolute reduction of space in general. It is this purity that makes it fit for universality.) S p. 79.

<sup>27</sup> Mais l'unité du son et de la voix, ce qui permet à celle-ci de se produire dans le monde comme auto-affection pure, est l'unique instance qui échappe à la distinction entre l'intra-mondanité et la transcendance et qui du même coup la rend possible. LV p.89 (But the unity of sound and voice, which allows the voice to be produced in the world as pure auto-affection, is the sole case to escape the distinction between what is worldly and what is transcendental; by the same token, it makes that distinction possible.) S p.79.

the distinction between what is material and what is transcendental gives it the status of being the means for the transmission of universal significance.

Traditionally, intuition is presented as the unmediated perception of the true essence. Derrida shows us what are the qualities that allow the voice to fill this role. He claims that the voice is consciousness, and that consciousness is not possible without voice.<sup>28</sup> The voice fulfils the condition in which there is no difference between the essence and its phenomenon.<sup>29</sup> Since the voice is not a metaphor<sup>30</sup> it is itself and not a representation of itself, and at the same time it is self-understood without mediation. It may be said that the voice is human essentiality and perceives itself in a non-mediating way, thus fulfilling all the conditions for the realization of the intuitive perception.<sup>31</sup> Yet this does not explain the importance of presenting the voice as an intuitive instance. What is so unique about the voice that makes it so important to have it presented as an intuitive instance? This is the question I shall deal with in the next chapter.

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<sup>28</sup> [...] aucune conscience n'est possible sans la voix. LV p.89, ([...] no consciousness is possible without the voice.)

La voix est la conscience. LV p. 89 (; the voice is consciousness.) S p.80

<sup>29</sup>[...]: le prédicat de l'essence et le prédicat du propre peuvent s'échanger sans que dénoncé devienne faux:[...] MDP p. 297 ([...] the predicate of the essence and the predicate of the proper can be exchanged without the statement becoming false:[...]) MoP p. 249.

<sup>30</sup> Here I disagree with Bernet who believes that the voice is a Derridean metaphor. Since Bernet sees the voice as a metaphor, he presents the literal means of the voice as a zig-zag between metaphor and literal meaning. This interpretation is a forced one because Derrida himself blurs the difference between metaphor and literal meaning. See: R. Bernet, (1993):146.

<sup>31</sup> The presentation of voice in Derrida is very close to the way in which Heidegger speaks about the voice of consciousness and characterizes it in *Being and Time*, pp. 251 ff. The basic difference is that in Heidegger the voice is not a primary, independent element but the outcome of "reading". The point of departure in Heidegger is passive (carried out against the will, p.254). A comparative study between the Derridean voice and the Heideggerian voice would be a research study in itself that exceeds the boundaries of the present discussion, and therefore, in spite of the interest in this issue, I shall not go into it.

## Chapter 2 – Active and Creative Voice

In the previous chapter it became clear that Derrida exchanges the generally accepted intuitive instance, the observation, with the voice. The presentation of the voice as the intuitive instance entails a far-reaching usage of the concept intuition, not only because this concept literally means contemplation, but because in the philosophical tradition this concept is associated with speculative, theoretical knowledge. Albertus Magnus distinguishes between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge by characterizing theoretical knowledge as that which abstracts the form of things. In such a formulation, it is things that cause knowledge. Practical knowledge on the other hand is that which gives things their form. In this sense, one may speak about theoretical knowledge as passive and practical knowledge as active, creative.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding theoretical knowledge as passive makes it possible to assume that it can, in principle, reach true knowledge because one assumes that there is something solid which can be perceived as it is without any change. According to this position, intuition is an important stage in designating speculative knowledge as passive, because it grasps things as they are without changing them before they are known. In this way intuition ensures the possibility of knowing things as they are. I assert that Derrida is particularly interested in detaching the connection between intuition and the possibility to know things as they are. Later on I shall show that since he thinks there is nothing that can stand by itself and impose itself on the knowing mind, one cannot speak about passive knowledge in the framework of his philosophical method. In his point of view, cognizance and knowledge are always a creative act, and the presentation of the voice as intuition emphasizes this. The voice has a quality that is significant for Derrida, and he repeats this again and again – voice is felt by the person who **creates** it.

*N'exigeant l'intervention d'aucune surface déterminée dans le monde, se produisant dans le monde comme auto-affection pure, elle est une substance signifiante absolument disponible. (Requiring the intervention of no determinate surface in the world, being produced in the world as pure auto-affection, it is a signifying substance absolutely at our disposition.)*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mentioned in Rotenstreich, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> LV p. 89, S p. 79.

When someone speaks he hears himself. Hearing is immediate repetition of what has been said without any external mediation. Although hearing is passive, like observation, whatever is heard has been created by the hearer. The production of voice is an active operation<sup>3</sup> that signifies something. In such a situation, the signifier refers to something that is not external while it is being formed. The teleological nature of speech creates the possibility for the signifier to be in the immediate proximity of the signified which is intuitively perceived, and which controls the significance. The signifier is fused together with the signified. This proximity is broken when instead of hearing myself, I see myself. The fusion which the voice creates between the signifier and the signified allows for the total reduction of any difference between them and enables us to speak about primary, pre-expressed meaning. The conjoining of the signifier and the signified allowed Husserl to refer to it as non-creative and reflexive. Since it was not creative, Husserl could speak about the primary, original perception of meaning, a perception of its true essence. Derrida's reading of Husserl with its emphasis on the creative aspect, indicates the problematics that underlie the assumption of Husserl.

Derrida sees in the distinction between the indicating sign and the expressing sign as analogous to the distinction between body and soul.<sup>4</sup> Only that which has life is primary and independent, and as such does not need any indicating sign to represent itself.<sup>5</sup> The expressing voice is what gives life to the indicating sign. The activation of the voice is a sense of the self, and it is this that makes independence possible. It does not belong to the transcendental subject, but is what creates the subject. The moment one recognizes that the sense of the self is a condition for independent presence, there is no longer any need to restrict the subject and to extract it from itself (to make a transcendental reduction).<sup>6</sup> The voice, as said before, does not need a mediator in

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<sup>3</sup> L'expressivité pure sera la pure intention active (esprit, psychè, vie, volonté) d'un *bedeuten* animant un discours dont le contenu (*Bedeutung*) sera présent. LV p.44 Pure expression will be the pure active intention (spirit, psyche, life, will) of an act of meaning (*bedeuten*) that animates a speech [discours] whose content (*Bedeutung*) is present. S p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> I shall deal separately with this analogy in greater detail.

<sup>5</sup> Mais seule la *Geistigkeit* ou la *Lebedigkeit* est indépendante et originaire. En tant que telle, elle n'a besoin d'aucun signifiant pour être présente à elle-même. LV p.91 ( But only the *Geistigkeit* or *Lebedigkeit* is independent and primordial. As such, it needs no signifier to be present to itself.) S p. 81. *Geistigkeit* or *Lebedigkeit* are the combination of spirit and flesh. This means that the sign is an expression only when meaning is introduced into it, as a body that contains a living spirit.

<sup>6</sup> Dès qu'on admet que l'auto-affection est la condition de la présence à soi, aucune réduction transcendantale pure n'est possible. LV p.92 As soon as it is admitted that auto-affection is the condition for self-presence, no pure transcendental reduction is possible. S p.82  
LV p. 92, S p. 82.

order to represent itself. For this reason it may be said that the voice is the best expression of freedom, of what is not dependent on signs external to itself.

Et la voix se donne toujours comme la meilleure expression de la liberté. [...] la liberté de langage, le franc-parler qui n'a pas à emprunter ses signifiants à l'extériorité du monde, [...] (And speech [voix] always presents itself as the best expression of liberty. [...]the freedom of speech which need not borrow its signifiers from the exteriority of the world, [...])<sup>7</sup>

A sense of self is not characteristic of unity or identity, but on the contrary,<sup>8</sup> the moment we admit that a sense of self is a condition for self-presence, it is impossible to speak about transcendental reduction to allow for the perception of primary essence because there is no such essence. Although transcendental reduction exposes the differences created by a sense of self between what is perceived as the same thing and what is perceived as similar but not identical with the same thing, this exposure does not imply a perception of the primary, and purely independent essence.<sup>9</sup> In fact, what lies at the basis of the differences that allow for self-perception as well as the perception of all things is the non-compulsion, the freedom,<sup>10</sup> because a sense of the self involves a recreation that is unconditional.<sup>11</sup> Here the uniqueness of the voice we sought in this chapter becomes clear: the voice is the only thing of which it can be said that it grasps meaning without mediation, intuitively, and also creates meaning. Later we shall see that this characteristic quality of the voice constitutes a key to understanding Derrida's position.

In Derrida's view, this quality of the voice exposes the problematic aspect of Husserl's position. Husserl's aim in his research was to retrieve meaning that was true

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<sup>7</sup> DLG p. 239, OG p. 168.

<sup>8</sup> L'auto-affection n'est pas une modalité d'expérience caractérisant un étant qui serait déjà lui-même (autos). Elle produit le même comme rapport à soi dans la différence d'avec soi, le même comme le non-identique. LV p.92 ( Auto-affection is not a modality of experience that characterizes a being that would already be itself (autos). It produces sameness as self-relation within self-difference; it produces sameness as he nonidentical. ) , S p.82

<sup>9</sup> Mais il faut passer par elle pour ressaisir la différence au plus proche d'elle-même: non pas de son identité, ni de sa pureté, ni de son origine. Elle n'en a pas. LV p. 92 (But it was necessary to pass through the transcendental reduction in order to grasp this difference in what is closest to it- which cannot mean grasping it in its identity, its purity, or its origin, for it has none.) S. p. 82.

<sup>10</sup> C'est-à-dire de la liberté elle-même. Différence fondamentale, donc, sans laquelle aucune autre différence au monde n'aurait de sens ni de chance d'apparaître comme telle. LV p. 10 (That is to say, freedom itself. A fundamental difference, thus, without which no other difference in the world would either make any sense or have the chance to appear as such.) S. p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Cette auto-affection doit être pure puisque l'impression originnaire n'y est affectée par rien d'autre que par elle-même, par la " nouveauté" absolue d'une autre impression originnaire qui est un autre maintenant. LV p. 95 (This auto-affection must be pure since the primordial impression is here affected by nothing other than itself, by the absolute "novelty" of another primordial impression which is another now.) S. p. 85.

under all conditions, that was unconditionally true independent of this person or that, at this or any other time or place. In order to ensure pure meaning, which is true under all conditions, without distortion in its perception, Husserl presents the intuitive perception that, by being a direct perception, will not create distortions in pure meaning. According to Derrida, Husserl's assumption of the intuitive perception as a direct perception that can grasp the primary essence of things seems to be problematic. Although the intuitive perception of the voice perceives meaning without mediation, the voice is active and the meaning that is perceived is the intention of the person expressing it.<sup>12</sup> Direct perception is seen as creative perception. If intuition perceives what it has created for itself, the whole project of Husserl goes down the drain, because Husserl is interested in a truth that is not dependent upon this or that creator. Is this analysis of Derrida really a threat against the Husserlian project? Or, in other words, can we accept Derrida's position that Husserl himself would accept the voice as an intuitive instance? In order to answer this question we must examine the assumption that meaning is *vouloir-dire* 'wants to say', and to what extent can we identify the Husserlian intentions<sup>13</sup> with the will. In the next chapter I shall clarify this question and show that through a reading of Husserl's text, Derrida formulates his own position.

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<sup>12</sup> [...] le parleur s'entend : à la fois perçoit la forme sensible des phonèmes et comprend sa propre intention d'expression. LV p.87

[...] the speaker hears himself: both that he perceives the sensible form of the phonemes and that he understands his own expressive intention. S p.78

<sup>13</sup> In Husserl's philosophy, the concept of intention indicates the human ability to separate himself from the subject of interest and to contemplate it as if it is not part of himself. This act of separation is called objectification because it makes the subject of interest into an object that stands by itself. An example of this kind of action can be seen in the tendency of some people to speak about themselves in the third person, as if speaking about someone else.

### Chapter 3 – Will and the Concept of Intentionality in Husserl

In the discussion that I have conducted so far, it has become clear that Derrida treats meaning as something that the voice intends to convey. The perception of intentionality as an act that originates in the will can lead to the identification of Husserlian intentionality with the will, as the placing of an aim and the organization of means to realize this aim. The identity of Husserlian intentionality with the will completely undermines the whole project that Husserl wishes to set up. In this chapter I shall examine whether we can accept Derrida's view that Husserlian intentionality is merely will, and what is the significance of this view in relation to the position of Derrida himself. There are interpreters who accept Derrida's reading that Husserl himself thinks the expressive aspect of the sign reflects the will of the speaker,<sup>1</sup> but as will become clear later on, this reading is not self-evident.

Derrida traces the way in which Husserl tries to separate between meaning (which is the pure essence or ideal object) which Husserl calls the 'expressing sign', and the physical appearance of the meaning which Husserl calls 'the indicating sign':

Husserl reconnaît que son usage du mot "expression" "contraint" un peu la langue. Mais la contrainte ainsi exercée purifie son intention et à la fois révèle un fonds commun d'implications métaphysiques. (Husserl recognizes that his use of the word "expression" is somewhat "forced". But the constraint thus exercised over language clears up his own intentions and at the same time reveals a common fund of metaphysical implications.)<sup>2</sup>

and identifies a metaphysical assumption<sup>3</sup> in the way Husserl copes with the difficulty in clarifying the usage of the word "meaning". In order to explain the metaphysical assumption to which he refers, he quotes the following passage:

[...] établissons que tout discours (Rede) et toute partie de discours (Redeteil), aussi bien que tout signe de nature essentiellement semblable est une expression, sans tenir compte du fait que le discours soit ou non effectivement prononcé (wirklich geredet), donc qu'il soit ou non adressé à une personne quelconque dans une intention de communication. (We shall lay down, for provisional intelligibility, that

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<sup>1</sup> Marrati-Guénon, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> LV p. 36, S p. 34

<sup>3</sup> An assumption that cannot be deduced from the given facts.

all speech (Rede) and every part of speech (Redeteil), as also each sign that is essentially of the same sort, shall count as an expression, whether or not such speech is actually uttered (wirklich geredet), or addressed with communicative intent to any persons or not)<sup>4</sup>

What is the metaphysical assumption that Derrida identifies? He claims that phenomenology is based on transcendental-intentional grounds, which means that Derrida thinks Husserl places the will as the basis of philosophy.<sup>5</sup> Motzkin claims that in his *Logical Investigations*, Husserl strives to 'anchor truth in a transcendental ideal that is so absolute that it can never be subjected to modifications of space and time'.<sup>6</sup> The identity of this transcendental area with the will, brings into question the attempt to anchor truth in it. This is because the will deals with the placement of ends, with action. The contents of the will change. How can we anchor truth, which is essentially unchanging, in changing contents? Derrida does not accept the possibility of pure meaning that stands by itself, independently. This is evident from the presentation of meaning as something that we want to say, which means that it does indeed imply content changes. In this sense, the positioning of transcendental area with the will corresponds to Derrida's position. The question is: To what extent does it correspond to the position of Husserl?

In the article that goes to the defence of Husserl against his critics, Fink clarifies Husserl's position by saying that he makes no reference to the will. The reaction to Derrida's translation of *bedeutung* as *vouloir-dire*, hovers between acceptance and rejection, sometimes through an attempt to give various meanings to the phrase "want to say".<sup>7</sup> Kates, for example, does not see in this translation any reference to the will in Husserlian intentionality, but merely as an expression of Derrida's position that there is no thought without language, and the will to say something means a desire to express.<sup>8</sup> In his analysis of the desire to express, Kates speaks about a certain type of will that remains within the framework of the "want to say". This, in his opinion, is an expression of voluntarism, but he does not develop the

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<sup>4</sup> S p. 34. LV p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> La téléologie explicite qui commande toute la phénoménologie transcendantale ne serait au fond qu'un volontarisme transcendantal. LV p. 37 (The explicit teleology that commands the whole of transcendental phenomenology would be at bottom nothing but transcendental voluntarism.) S p. 35,

<sup>6</sup> Motzkin, (1989) [Hebrew]. The position of Motzkin corresponds to that of Fink who says that the critics of Husserl do not consider "this totality of basic knowledge [...]." See: Fink, p. 76. Fink's statement is especially important since Husserl prefaces this article by saying that all that was written in it was done so with his assent (p. 74).

<sup>7</sup> Evans, Marrati-Guénon, Lawlor.

<sup>8</sup> Kates, (1998):198-199.

idea further, nor does he examine what is the meaning of this voluntarism. Although Kates believes that one can find in the Husserlian text a basis for Derrida's interpretation, yet interpreting Husserlian intentionality as the will does not seem to be self-evident and obvious.

According to Husserl, the basic aspect of consciousness is being the consciousness of something.<sup>9</sup> As the 'consciousness of ...', it is aimed at what it is conscious of. Contemplating consciousness itself, the self-reflection of consciousness, will reveal the directions of the intentions of consciousness and its various forms. Two directions of intention can be identified: the noetic and the noematic. The noetic direction is the reflexive one that contemplates consciousness itself and discovers the characteristics of consciousness such as memory, recollection, perception, the intentional will, etc. This ability to aim at what it is conscious of is called intentionality. An empty intention is such that constitutes a pure anticipation or pre-sense of an object. At a certain given point in our experience of an object, our expectations that are dependent on prior experience with that same object, may be more or less fulfilled. In any case, there will always be a certain anticipation of an object. In relation to all intentional acts there will be a horizon of possible experiences or associations in which the intentional direction towards the object will be fulfilled completely or partially, or will be frustrated. The horizon of associations that accompanies intentions indicates a process or procedure that is more or less clear for finding the object to which the empty intention is directed, or for making our knowledge of it more definite. In the best of circumstances, the process will be entirely carried out by intuition. Intuition provides the object that has to be confirmed or proved as erroneous. The essence of which Husserl speaks is an object in the sense of 'what consciousness is directed at', the nucleus that fills the empty intention, and not in the sense of an object that occupies space. Intentions come with a horizon of associations that indicate a process or procedure for discovery of the object.

Even if one can see noematic direction as an active course of operation, it seems to me that this was not Husserl's intention. In my view, if noematic intention had been based on the voluntary will in the sense of placing an aim and striving to achieve it, there was no point in indicating it by a special concept (the "noema") from the very start because as soon as intention is determined as being based on voluntary

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<sup>9</sup> Husserl, (1960):33

will, we will find on reflection that intention means voluntary will. By contrast, it seems that Derrida himself perceives will as the basis on which noetic intention is determined, and since it is obviously willed there is no point in noting this. Derrida actually says that even if the meaning of intention was never simply willed, Husserl always regarded intentional consciousness and voluntary consciousness as identical.

Car si intentionnalité n'a jamais voulu dire simplement volonté, il semble bien que dans l'ordre des vécus d'expression (à supposer qu'il ait des limites) conscience intentionnelle et conscience volontaire soient synonymes aux yeux de Husserl. Et si l'on en venait à penser - comme Husserl nous y autorisera dans *Ideen I* - que tout vécu intentionnel peut au principe être repris dans un vécu d'expression, on devrait peut-être conclure que malgré tous les thèmes de l'intentionnalité réceptrice ou intuitive et de la genèse passive, le concept d'intentionnalité reste pris dans la tradition d'une métaphysique volontariste, c'est-à-dire peut-être simplement dans la métaphysique. (For if intentionality never simply meant will, it certainly does seem that in the order of experiences (supposing it to be limited) Husserl regards intentional consciousness and voluntary consciousness as synonymous. And if we should come to think – as Husserl will authorize us to do in *Ideas I* – that every intentional lived experience may in principle be taken up again in an experience, we would perhaps have to conclude that, in spite of all the themes of receptive or intuitive intentionality and passive genesis, the concept of intentionality remains caught up in the tradition of voluntaristic metaphysics – that is, perhaps, metaphysics as such)<sup>10</sup>

It is clear to Derrida that it was not the intention of Husserl to place intentionality as a voluntary act, but since he himself perceives the entire metaphysical area as a voluntary will, everything included within this area is obviously willed.

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<sup>10</sup> LV p. 37, S p. 34.

The perception of metaphysics as an area of voluntary will is not an accepted perception,<sup>11</sup> but Derrida does not defend this position, which he perceives as being self-evident.<sup>12</sup> In other texts, it appears that Derrida abandons caution in presenting Husserl's position as a voluntary-willed position, and attributes it to Husserl as a presupposed fact.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, he even hints that he ascribes an intentional / will basis to Hegelian philosophy.

Le sens **veut** se signifier [...] Cela explique que tout ce qui échappe à la pure intention spirituelle, **à la pure animation par le Geist qui est volonté**, tout cela est exclu du *bedeuten* [...] (Sense wants to be signified; [...] This explains why everything that escapes the pure spiritual intention, **the pure animation by Geist, that is, the will**, is excluded from meaning [...])<sup>14</sup>

The Hegelian Geist (Spirit) is presented as will in Derrida's writings. As I mentioned above, will involves the setting up of ends / aims. The perception of the subject as will disregards the other aspects of the subject, such as the aspect of thinking or understanding, and subjects all its activities to its ends. In another possible interpretation of Hegel, for example the one by Fleischman, the conception of spirit as will is considered a reduction of the theoretical aspect to the practical aspect of the spirit.<sup>15</sup> According to Fleischman, the distinction between the practical and theoretical aspects is important because it allows for practical behavior on the basis of previous considerations.<sup>16</sup> Theoretical consideration is the awareness of a person regarding the possibilities open to him,<sup>17</sup> and that is what allows for human freedom. Fleischman is not alone in making this distinction. According to Rotenstreich, the distinction between theoretical considerations that concern the recognition of reality, and action that concerns the direction of the will to what is worthwhile (worth accepting, apparently, through theoretical consideration), derives from Greek philosophy, mainly

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<sup>11</sup> In philosophical dictionaries under the entry 'Metaphysics' no reference can be found to the question of will or the mention of will.

<sup>12</sup> It is interesting to note that even Levinas identifies an element of will in Husserlian intention. See Levinas, (1981):189. Cited by Llewelyn, p. 39.

<sup>13</sup> Ne faut-il pas dire que la géométrie est en route vers son origine au lieu d'en procéder? Husserl l'accorderait sans doute; le sens téléologique et le sens d'origine se sont toujours impliqués à ses yeux. HOG p.141 (Must we not say that geometry is on the way toward its origin, instead of proceeding from it? Husserl undoubtedly would agree. Teleological sense and the sense of origin were always mutually implicated for him.) O p.131

<sup>14</sup> LV p. 37, S p. 35. my emphasise

<sup>15</sup> Fleischman identifies will in Hegel with action. See Fleischman, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Fleischman, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Fleischman, p. 2.

Aristotle.<sup>18</sup> On the basis of these considerations, it appears that the conception of spirit as will, in the practical sense only, lacks the awareness of possibilities, and is likely to lead to closed, detached and mechanical automatic behavior. As we shall see later on, the problem of automatic behavior disturbs Derrida, but at this stage we shall ignore this aspect of the conception of spirit as will. Our concern at this stage is the importance of realizing that the conception of spirit as will subjects theory, the intellect, to the aims of the will. From the posing of spirit as will one may assume that Derrida's position is one that subjects conception, understanding and thought to ends.

An examination of various texts will show that Derrida indeed assumes the subjection of conception, understanding and thought to ends. For example, he says that the *eidos*, the idea, is always determined by the *telos*, the end,<sup>19</sup> or that the original meaning of every intentional act is merely its final meaning, the one that is created by the intentional act,<sup>20</sup> or that the *logos* (speech, logical thought) calls itself the *telos* (end).<sup>21</sup> The subjection of understanding and thought to ends reduces the aspect of theory to practice. It is important to remember that the concern of the practical aspect is in action and not theoretical speculation. Action concerns the concrete, the actual, the real and not the abstract, or theoretical. An examination of Derrida's position with regard to speech, discourse, and voice shows that there is no place in his philosophical thought for abstract meaning. Meaning is what is formed within the framework of discourse, mutual give and take. Meaning is something concrete and real: what someone wants to say. The instance that carries out the action, but also initiates the statement is the voice. As the initiator, voice always presents itself as the best expression of freedom.<sup>22</sup>

The voice is the aspect of the self, conscious awareness. Derrida conceives of the 'I' as referring to a concrete entity.<sup>23</sup> In philosophical tradition the 'I' is presented

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<sup>18</sup> Rotenstreich, p. 26.

<sup>19</sup> L'*eidos* est déterminé en profondeur par le *telos*. (The *eidos* is determined in depth by the *telos*) LV p.109, S p. 97.

<sup>20</sup> La sens originnaire de tout acte intentionnel n'est que son sens final, c'est-à-dire la constitution d'un objet (au sens le plus large de ces mots). C'est pourquoi seule une téléologie peut s'ouvrir un passage vers les commencements. HOG p. 53-54 (The primordial sense of every intentional act is only its final sense, i.e., the constitution of an object (in the broadest sense of this term). That is why only a teleology can open up a passage, a way back toward the beginnings.) O p. 64.

<sup>21</sup> Car ce *logos* qui s'appelle et s'interpelle lui-même comme *telos* [...] L'E p. 249 (For this *logos* which calls to itself and summons itself by itself as *telos* [...], W p.166.

<sup>22</sup> la voix se donne toujours comme la meilleure expression de la liberté, Elle est d'elle-même le langage en liberté et la liberté de langage, le franc-parler qui n'a pas à emprunter ses signifiants à l'extériorité du monde, [...] DLG p.239. (And Speech [voix] always presents itself as the best expression of liberty. It is by itself language at liberty and the liberty of language, the freedom of speech which need not borrow its signifiers from the exteriority of the world [...]) OG p.168.

<sup>23</sup> The I as referring to a concrete entity will be proved later on.

as a subject, as an abstract idea, and the subject is identified with the will, which is also an abstract idea. If we replace the 'I', the 'conscious awareness', with 'subject', and 'voice' with 'will', we shall see that the assertion changes in only one thing: from an assertion that relates to something concrete into a theoretical assertion, a change that is very significant as we shall see later on.

Intentionality, when it is identified with the will or with the 'will to say', i.e. the voice, is revealed as history.

L'histoire de la métaphysique est le vouloir-s'entendre-parler absolu. (The history of metaphysics therefore can be expressed as unfolding of structure or schema of an absolute will-to-hear-oneself-speak)<sup>24</sup>

This formulation again recalls the Hegelian spirit that is realized through history.<sup>25</sup> But the Hegelian spirit cannot be reduced to will alone, while Derrida does not include anything in it besides will. From this it appears that voice is not the expression of will but that the voice is the will itself. Intentionality cannot be identified with will. Intentionality is the act of the will. As soon as intentionality is grasped as the act of the will, it may be said that the voice is the origin of intentionality. Is this the position that Derrida presents? In order to clarify this issue I shall follow Derrida in coping with the question of origin.

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<sup>24</sup> LV p. 115, S p. 102. The English translation softens the statement by presenting the history of metaphysics as something that may be revealed through the will to say/understand. In French, Derrida says explicitly that the history of metaphysics is the absolute will to say/understand.

<sup>25</sup> Derrida does indeed refer to the Hegelian Geist without mentioning it explicitly. In the next section that deals with the historical approach in Derrida's philosophy I shall deal with this subject.

## Chapter 4 – Origin, Voice

In the previous chapter I showed that for Derrida the voice, which is a concrete individual will, creates the meaning that it wants to transmit. By presenting it as the creator of meaning, it can be considered as the origin of meaning. The problem of origin troubles Derrida, and it constantly comes up either as a central theme (*Origin of Geometry: An Introduction, Of Grammatology, 'Genesis and Structure'*) or as part of the arguments. What is this problem?

On one hand, Derrida thinks that investigating the meaning of origin means distinguishing the meaning of this word as it is used in philosophy and science in such a way as to allow us to be responsible for the absolute meaning of our experiences of science and philosophy.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Derrida sees in the idea of origin a conceptual system of primary interrelations that can supplement reality or be added to it as a structure. It is this structure that determines and shapes the interrelations between what is present and absent, within which metaphysical space is created without making it possible to think about it.<sup>2</sup> The perception of the idea of origin as determining the meaning of philosophy and science, as the structure that determines metaphysical space without making it possible to examine its presupposition or to criticize it, leads to a closed deterministic system.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Prendre conscience (besinnen) des origines, c'est en même temps se rendre responsable (verantworten) du sens (Sinn) de la science et de la philosophie; c'est l'amener à la clarté de son "remplissement" ; C'est se mettre en mesure d'en répondre à partir du sens de la totalité de notre existence. HOG p. 11 (To meditate on or investigate the sense (besinnen) of origins is at the same time to: make oneself responsible (verantworten) for the sense (Sinn) of science and philosophy, bring this sense to clarity of its "fulfill[ment]," and put oneself in a position of responsibility for this sense starting from the total sense of our existence ) O p. 31. Derrida presents Husserl's position, but it seems that he claims it as his own. This becomes clear when we read the passage quoted from Husserl to which this sentence is supposed to be a paraphrase.

<sup>2</sup> Le concept d'origine ou de nature n'est donc que le mythe de l'addition, de la supplémentaire annulée d'être purement additive. C'est le mythe de l'effacement de la trace, c'est-à-dire d'une différence originaire qui n'est ni absence ni présence. ni négative ni positive. La différence originaire est la supplémentarité comme structure. Structure veut dire ici la complexité irréductible à l'intérieur de laquelle on peut seulement infléchir ou déplacer Le jeu de la présence ou de l'absence : ce dans quoi la métaphysique peut se produire mais qu'elle ne peut penser. DLG p. 238 (The concept of origin or nature is nothing but the myth of addition, of supplementarity annulled by being purely additive. It is the myth of the effacement of trace, that is to say of an originary difference that is neither absence nor presence, neither negative nor positive. Originary difference is supplementarity as structure. Here structure means the irreducible complexity within which one can only shape or shift the play of presence or absence: that within which metaphysics can be produced but which metaphysics cannot think.) OG p.167.

<sup>3</sup> Cela signifie en particulier, pour ce qui nous intéresse ici, que les essences de la conscience, donc les essences des "phénomènes" en général ne peuvent appartenir à une structure et à une "multiplicité, de type mathématique. Or qu'est-ce qui caractérise une telle multiplicité aux yeux de Husserl, et à cette époque ? En un mot, la possibilité de la clôture. L'E p.241. (This means in particular, for what concerns us here, that the essence of consciousness, and therefore the essence of "phenomena" in general, cannot belong to structure or "multiplicity" of the mathematical type. Now what is it that characterizes such a multiplicity for Husserl, and at this time? In a word, the possibility of closure.) , W p. 162.

This closed system brings into question the demand for responsibility that Derrida requires when he clarifies what origin is. Why is this so? When a person is judged for committing a crime, he can escape punishment if he proves that he had no control over the course of events. For example, a person can claim insanity, but he cannot claim that he was drunk and therefore could not be held responsible for his actions. A state of insanity is commonly considered as not being within a person's control, and therefore such a state requires treatment, but an insane person cannot be held responsible and be punished for it. On the other hand, being drunk is a situation that one can decide to be or not to be in. The decision to be drunk includes all the actions that are done in that state, since loss of control constitutes a significant part of drunkenness. The sober person was faced with all the possibilities (including loss of control and the knowledge that actions taken in that state would be uncontrolled and lead to disaster). The decision to be in an uncontrolled state includes the decision to be prepared to bear the outcome of being out of control. This means that it can be proved that this is not an automatic act. On the other hand, a person who has lost his mind has not chosen to do so, and therefore this implies an automatic act without the possibility of choice. If the system is a closed one, and cannot be sidestepped in order to examine its assumptions and presuppositions, then this means it is a system without possibilities because the meaning is imposed upon us without any chance of alteration. What can be the interpretation of responsibility in relation to meaning in such system? Since Derrida assumes that responsibility can be demanded for meaning, it might be expected that he would want to establish an open system.

In the chapter that deals with will, the claim was made that perceiving spirit as will, as merely the practical aspect, lacks an awareness of possibilities and is liable to lead to automatic behavior, i.e. behavior that cannot account for its own presuppositions. According the recent arguments, we may accuse a person for behaving automatically and demand that he be held responsible only if we can prove that he was given another alternative. Since we saw that Derrida subordinates understanding and thought to an end and is thus in danger of establishing a closed system, which is not in his interests, we may expect that the placement of the end itself will prove to be free of coercion. This is exactly what Derrida does. We shall later on see that Derrida perceives the voice as origin and understands origin as the point in which the end is determined (and thus he remains faithful to the subordination of understanding to ends). As I have shown in the discussion about voice, one of its

main aspects is that the voice creates in a manner that is free of prior conditions. Since the voice is an individual, actual voice, being free of prior conditions establishes an open system in which the demand for responsibility is a real and not a fictive demand. In this way, perhaps, the problem of the demand for responsibility is solved, but presenting voice as the origin is not at all a simple matter. The question immediately arises: What is the meaning of presenting the voice as the origin, and in what sense can the voice be an origin?

Motzkin notes that the idea of origin has two meanings – a historiographical meaning and the meaning given to it by Kant and Cohen. In the historiographical sense, origin means the starting point, the beginning of an event or the time of the event. Kant and Cohen refer to origin as the point that serves as the basis for a new consideration.<sup>4</sup> On the assumption that this is a distinction between a deterministic event that is always and necessarily derived from the starting point (the historiographical sense) and an indeterministic event that is new in the sense that it is not necessarily derived from prior events or structure (Kant and Cohen's sense), one can say that Derrida uses both meanings. Even if he does not indicate this explicitly, he uses two different concepts each of which represents one of the two meanings that I mentioned above. When origin functions in the historical (deterministic) sense it appears as source, but when it functions in the sense used by Kant (indeterministic) it appears as origin. Derrida himself does not note any difference between the two concepts, but an examination of the different contexts in which each of them functions will clearly show this.<sup>5</sup>

What was the reason for Derrida's use of the two meanings? To answer this I shall examine the problem in the presentation of origin (Chapter 5), and then deal with the distinction between origin and source (Chapter 6). Finally, I shall show how this distinction allows Derrida to present voice as free of prior conditions (Chapter 7) and thus resolve the deterministic problem that arises from his subordination of understanding and thought to an end.

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<sup>4</sup> Motzkin, p. 260.

<sup>5</sup> In later texts, Derrida uses the word *envoi* instead of source. Regarding the way *envoi* functions as origin in a deterministic sense, see: Marrati-Guénoun, pp 111-126.

## Chapter 5 – The Problem of Origin

In his article, 'Origin(s) In (Of) Heidegger/Derrida', Casey presents Derrida's analysis of the origin, and his opposition to the unification that it implies. According to Casey, Derrida presents an alternative perception of origin as a common basis. He says that origin in Derrida's interpretation is the activity that is embodied in the re-presentation of the signified. This re-presentation creates more and more sub-signs that will unify the signified within a single and unifying framework.<sup>1</sup> In Derrida's view, indeed, the most significant discovery in examining Husserl's 'The Origin of Geometry' is that activity of re-presentation which creates more and more sub-signs that will unify the signified within a single and unifying framework, which he calls spiral motion.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he does not take this spiral motion to be an origin. Derrida does not try to find out what origin is, since in his view origin is the combination of presence and primary event.<sup>3</sup> Thus, when we talk about origin, we always talk about something that is present here and now, something particular that exists empirically, and not about a generalization. Such a perception of origin makes it unsuitable for formulations in phenomenological terms,<sup>4</sup> i.e it cannot be treated like an abstract object. The situation that combines presence and primary event is a tension between the rigid (origin, truth) and the fluid (genesis, time). The tension can be articulated by the question: How can one think at the same time about one single true meaning, something that does not change, and about genesis which implies a change of meaning?<sup>5</sup> In other words, how can continuity (genesis) be created out of an origin that is an isolated point.<sup>6</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Casey, pp. 601-610. See especially p. 605.

<sup>2</sup> Aussi, par un mouvement en vrille qui fait tout le prix de notre texte, une audacieuse percée s'effectue à l'intérieur des limites régionales de la recherche et les transgresse vers une nouvelle forme de radicalité. HOG p.14 (Also, by a spiraling movement which is the major find of our text, a bold clearing is brought about within the regional limits of the investigation and transgresses them toward a new form of radicality.) O p.33-34.

<sup>3</sup> L'origine, coïncidence de la présence et de l'événement initial. [...]: peut-on dissocier l'"événement initial" de la présence? Peut-on concevoir un événement initial sans présence. [...] ? MDP p.345 (The origin- coincidence of presence and initial event. [...] can one dissociate the "initial event" from presence? Can one conceive of initial event without presence, [...] ? MoP p.290 The same idea can also be found in DLG p. 431 / OG p. 306.

<sup>4</sup> La notion d' "origine", ou de genèse, ne pourrait plus y être reçue dans *La pure acception phénoménologique* que Husserl a distinguée avec tant d'obstination.

Invariable, le fait total qui marque l'établissement de la géométrie le serait parce qu'il a le caractère qui, aux yeux de Husserl, définit le fait, existence singulière et empirique: l'irréductibilité d'un hic et nunc. HOG p.31 (The notion of "origin" or genesis could no longer be recognized in the pure phenomenological sense that Husserl so doggedly distinguished.

Because, for Husserl, it has the characteristic which defines fact – namely, singular and empirical existence, the irreducibility of a here and now – the total fact marking geometry's establishment would be invariable.) O p.46-47

<sup>5</sup> Marrati-Guénoun, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> The first research work by Derrida, *La problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl*, published only in 1990, deals entirely with this question and continues to occupy him even afterwards: [...]; toutefois, le fil conducteur étant alors le vécu immanent ou la chose sensible Perçue originaliter, la facticité singulière est toujours présente, quoique réduite, pour guider et contrôler l'intuition de l'essence matérielle ultime. HOG p.34 (However,

puzzle is even greater as the very search for origin already assumes meaningful continuity, i.e. it implies history, and history implies origin.<sup>7</sup> The meaning of history is derived from its origin because a collection of empirical facts does not say anything about their meaning.<sup>8</sup> Only after there is an accumulation of actions that can be characterized by a common factor, these actions be seen as belonging to the same field of knowledge. But the condition for their perception as having a common factor is the knowledge of a common factor. We cannot say that red color is a common factor of meat, a fire-engine, and poppies, if we do not know what red color is. In order to be able to perceive a collection of particulars as history there is need for the concept of history. In order to understand geometry (the case given by Derrida) one has to find the origin of geometry, its meaning, i.e. there has to be some knowledge about geometry.<sup>9</sup> Therefore the origin of an event is always 'derived' from within the event after it has already taken place.<sup>10</sup> The meaning which is 'derived' from a historical continuity is not strange to history since the very institution of history

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since the clue there is the immanent lived experience or the sensible thing perceived originaliter, singular factuality is always present, although reduced, to guide and control the intuition of material essence.) O p.49.

<sup>7</sup> Premièrement, il y a une *essence-de-première-fois en général*, une "Erstmaligkiit", signification inaugurale toujours re productible quel qu'en soit l'exemple de fait. Quel qu'ait été le contenu empirique de l'origine, il est nécessaire, d'une nécessité apodictique et apriorique, que la géométrie ait eu une origine et soit ainsi apparue une première fois. Les objets idéaux de la géométries ne peuvent avoir lui lieu originel dans quelque *topos ouranios*, Husserl le soulignait déjà dans les Recherches logiques, à propos de toutes les significations et de tous les objets idéaux. Leur historicité est donc une de leurs composantes eidétiques, et il n'y a pas d'historicité concrète qui n'implique nécessairement en elle le renvoi à une "Erstmaligkeit" HOG p. 32-33 (First, there is an *essence-of-the-first-time in general*, an *Erstmaligkeit*, an inaugural signification that is always reproducible, whatever its de facto example may be. Whatever were the empirical content of the origin, it is apodictically and a priori necessary that geometry has had an origin and has appeared a first time. Ideal geometrical objects cannot have their original place in some *topos ouranios*. Husserl already emphasized this in the Logical Investigations, where he discussed all ideal significations and objects. Their historicity, then, is one of their eidetic components, and there is no concrete historicity which does not necessarily implicate in itself the reference to an *Erstmaligkeit*. ) O p. 48 .

<sup>8</sup> [...]: une telle détermination, quand même elle serait possible, flatterait notre curiosité historiques,[...] elle enrichirait notre savoir de circonstances empiriques, de noms, de dates, etc. Mais même si, à la limite, elle embrassait la totalité des faits historiques qui ont constitué le milieu empirique d'une fondation de la vérité, elle nous laisserait aveugles sur le sens même d'une telle fondation. Sens nécessaire au regard duquel ces faits n'ont dans le meilleur des cas qu'une signification exemplaire. En droit, ce savoir empirique ne peut se donner comme savoir historique de choses se rapportant à la géométrie qu'en suppurant la clarté faite sur le sens même de ce qu'on appelle la géométrie, c'est-à-dire, ici, sur son sens d'origine. La priorité juridique de cette question d'origine phénoménologique est donc absolue. HOG p. 19 (Such a determination, even if possible, would flatter our historical curiosity [...]; it would enrich our knowledge of empirical circumstances, of names, dates, and so forth. But even if, at its limit, this determination would embrace all the historical facts that have constituted the empirical milieu for truth's founding, it would still leave us blind about the very sense of such a founding: a sense that is necessary and compared to which these facts have at best only an exemplary signification. Such empirical knowledge can justifiably present itself as historical knowledge of things related to geometry only by supposing a fully developed clarity about the very sense of what is called the geometrical science. And here, this means clarity about its sense of origin. The Juridical priority of the question of phenomenological origin is therefore absolute.) O p. 38

<sup>9</sup> Il faut que j'ai déjà un savoir naïf de la géométrie et que je ne commence pas par l'origine. Ici la nécessité juridique de la méthode recouvre la nécessité factice de l'histoire. HOG p. 20 (There must always already have been the fact of history of geometry, so that the reduction can be preformed. I must have naive knowledge of geometry and must not begin at its origin.) O p.38

<sup>10</sup> Je ne pourrais pas définir le sens nécessaire et la nécessité de l'origine avant que la géométrie ne fût née en fait et qu'elle ne m'eût été livrée en fait. HOG p. 35 (I could not define the necessary sense and the necessity of the origin before geometry was in fact born and before it had in fact been given to me.) O p.49-50,

constitutes a meaningful framework. The institution of historicity is carried out through intention and therefore history is meaningful in itself.<sup>11</sup> An event that has taken place is a closed event, absolute, determined. Therefore history is final and closed.<sup>12</sup>

Does this mean that origin institutes and establishes historical meaning in the deterministic sense? In the discussion just conducted it was clarified that origin is the meaning of history.<sup>13</sup> History is created together with the meaning of its generation. Since the end determines the meaning of genesis, the meaning of history is its end. From this it appears that both end and origin are the meaning of history. This does not imply two different meanings of history but two different signifiers, end and origin, for one signified which is the historical meaning.<sup>14</sup>

It is commonly accepted that origin is a fixed and unchanging starting point. The presentation of origin as the combination of presence and primary event allows for the setting up of a closed, deterministic system of causes and effects since the primary event is the condition for the development of the system. On the other hand, the end changes according to the intention of the person who determines the end. Is it possible to identify them and claim that end is origin and origin is end? And if so, can the setting up of an end be necessarily derived from a primary event? Or does the identity between end and origin mean a reduction of the origin to the end, a reduction that opens the way for origin to change constantly in the same way as the end changes?

Since origin conditions the entire system, the end that is free of necessity requires an origin that will allow for freedom from necessity. The tension between the status of the origin as determining the course of development and the demand of

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<sup>11</sup> Dans sa plus grande profondeur [...] l'intentionnalité est la racine de l'historicité. S'il en est ainsi, on n'a pas à se demander quel est le sens de l'historicité. Dans toutes les acceptions de ce mot, l'historicité est le sens. HOG p.166 (At its greatest depth-[-...]- intentionality is the root of historicity. If that so, we do not have to ask ourselves what is the sense of historicity. In all the significations of this term, historicity is sense.) O p.150

<sup>12</sup> [...] que peut régner une pensée-finie, c'est-à-dire une histoire. L'E p.94 (...) that finite-thought, that is to say, history.) , W p.61

<sup>13</sup> I shall deal with "history" in Derrida's philosophy later on.

<sup>14</sup> Le Telos étant totalement ouvert, étant l'ouverture même, dire qu'il est le plus puissant apriori structural de l'historicité, ce n'est pas le désigner comme une valeur statique et déterminée qui informerait et enfermerait la genèse de l'être et du sens. Il est la possibilité concrète, la naissance même de l'histoire et Le sens du devenir en général. Il est donc structurellement la genèse elle-même, comme origine et comme devenir. L'É p. 250 (Since Telos is totally open, is opening itself, to say that it is the most powerful structural a priori of historicity is not to designate it as a static and determined value which would inform and enclose the genesis of Being and meaning. It is the concrete possibility, the very birth of history and the meaning of becoming in general. Therefore it is structurally genesis itself, as origin and as becoming )W p.167

Derrida that the system remain open, leads to the question whether it is at all possible to ascribe to Derrida the assumption of an origin.<sup>15</sup>

Marrati-Guénoun who realizes this problem, thinks that Derrida is referring to a dialectical origin, a reference that indicates that in the origin there is an aspect that is not origin<sup>16</sup> Dews, who deals with this very question,<sup>17</sup> claims that Derrida actually presents the inability of origin to be the epistemological basis that can be realized, but on the other hand he does not disregard the idea of origin as long as it is the unconditioned origin of meanings that conditions experience.<sup>18</sup> In his opinion, Derrida manages to maintain both positions at the same time through the transcendence of the starting point that, according to Dews, Derrida calls *differance*.

In this discussion as in all the other discussions about origin, attention has not been drawn to the different use that Derrida makes of the words origin and source. I shall show below that this usage creates a distinction that resolves the problem presented above. In the analysis that follows I accept the position of Dews regarding *differance* as the starting point, but I do not accept his claim that this is a transcendental starting point. In order to clarify this I shall discuss the way in which origin and source function in Derrida's early writings.

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<sup>15</sup> Bennington, for example, thinks that the starting point in Derrida is the sign, which proves that for Derrida there is no starting point.

<sup>16</sup> Marrati-Guénoun, p. 28, n. 58.

<sup>17</sup> Dews, pp. 164-176.

<sup>18</sup> Dews, p. 172.

## Chapter 6 – Distinction Between Origin and Source

The discussions in which Derrida makes use of the terms 'source' and 'origin' are never abstract discussions, but are those where some source or origin is being treated. In Derrida's discussion, origin is the origin of the voice ('Qual Quelle'), a geometrical origin (*Introduction to the Origin of Geometry*), the origin of language (*Of Grammatology*), or the origin of writing ('Plato's Pharmacy'). And source is mainly the source of water (spring, fountain)<sup>1</sup> that represents various meanings for Derrida.:

1. Source as the propagation of something that comes from the outside – the fountain does not create water but emits the same water that comes into it.

De ce que les historiens nommeraient peut-être les influences, nous ne remonterons pas le cours vers "les sources" cachées, ... Nous ne tiendrons pas le compte, en historiens positifs, de tout ce qui aurait pu, du dehors, affluer dans le texte. (What historians might name "influences" will not be followed upstream toward their hidden "sources", ... We will not, as do positive historians, account for all that could have flowed into this text from the outside.);<sup>2</sup>

2. Source as something from which the water that emerges serves as a mirror that gives a person (Valéry) a reflection of himself.

[...]: celles que Valéry n'a pu entrevoir que de biais, comme dans un miroitement bref, abrégé plutôt, le temps de s'y reconnaître ou réfléchir pour s'en détourner aussitôt, [...] ([...] the sources that Valery could get a glimpse of only on the bias, as in a brief, or rather foreshortened, mirroring, just the time to recognize or reflect himself [...])<sup>3</sup>

3. Source as father<sup>4</sup> who threatens.

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<sup>1</sup> MDP p. 341, MoP p. 287.

<sup>2</sup> MDP p. 327, MoP p. 275.

<sup>3</sup> MDP p. 327, MoP p. 275.

<sup>4</sup> In his translation of *Qual Quelle*, Bass notes (MoP p. 275, n. 3) that the word *Perrier* from *Source Perrier* sounds in French like *Père* y est which means "Father is there". In his discussion of the source of writing, Derrida devotes a chapter to the father as the source and origin of the *Logos*, and the *Logos* is presented as the origin of speech. I will relate later on to the double treating of Derrida with the figure of the father as source and origin.

Le bien (le père, le soleil, le capital) est donc la source cachée, illuminante et aveuglante, du logos. (The good (father, sun, capital) is thus the hidden illuminating, blinding source of *logos*.)<sup>5</sup>

Le logos est donc la ressource, il faut se tourner vers lui, et non seulement quand la source solaire est présente et risque de nous brûler les yeux si nous les fixons sur elle:[...] (*Logos* is thus a *resource*, One must *turn* to it, and not merely when the solar source is *present* and risks burning the eyes if stared at; )<sup>6</sup>

4. Source as a fountain that replenishes itself. It continually re-emerges as a completely other self, so that even if this is not the "same river twice", it is not different or separate from its original self.

A se laisser emporter par l'élan, on se précipiterait, au titre des sources, vers une thématique de l'eau, une sémantique de style "phénoménologique" ou une psychanalyse de l'imagination matérielle, toutes deux fascinées par l'unité, précisément originaire, d'un sens ou d'un thème coulant de source et s'affectant de formes, modulations et variations dans un discours. (In letting oneself be carried along by the flow, one would rush, under the rubric of source, toward a thematics of water, a semantics in "phenomenological" style or a psychoanalysis of material imagination, both spellbound by the unity, which is precisely originary, of meaning or a theme flowing from the source and affecting itself with forms, modulations, and variations in discourse.)<sup>7</sup>

If we examine what is common to all four meanings of source, we shall see that in all of them there is an element of regeneration, constancy, determinism. The transference of the water does not contribute anything to it, but simply passes onward whatever enters it. The reflection in the mirror returns whatever there was without adding anything. The threatening father inhibits and does not allow for development and

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<sup>5</sup> LD p. 102, D, 82 LD p. 104, D 84.

<sup>6</sup> LD p.104 D p. 84

<sup>7</sup> MDP p. 330, MoP p. 277.

change. And even when there is movement (of the spring) this is merely an illusion of renewal or innovation. For this reason the source is always the transmitter and not the creator or innovator.<sup>8</sup> The source, which is always produced by and derived from a prior cause, is completely different from origin.<sup>9</sup> As long as matters are conducted in an orderly manner and the procedure is carried out in the usual manner, automatically, one cannot speak about origin. This is a procedure that, like a historiographical event, is derived from what preceded it. As derivations from what preceded them, all events are considered as source. Only when there is an obstacle that interferes with the automatic course of things (of water or sounds)<sup>10</sup> can the source become origin.<sup>11</sup> This is because the interference stops the automatic procedure of things and allows for reconsideration of the data in order to decide on what should come next. As in the Kantian sense of the word, origin is always the starting point of something new and not the continuation of what came before,<sup>12</sup> while the source is always the continuation of what was, of the origin.<sup>13</sup> The source is the event that is always understood retroactively, when we reconstruct the point from which it originated.

The distinction between source and origin allows for a dual relationship. On one hand there is the deterministic component in the system – the source – that transmits what is given onwards. On the other hand, there is the indeterministic component – the origin – that determines the end independently of prior events, free

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<sup>8</sup> Coupée de la fin comme de l'origine, la source n'est plus qu'un effet de "réaction" ou, si l'on préfère, de révolution, dans un système qui ne lui aura jamais obéi. MDP p.344 (Cut off from the end as from the origin, the source is no longer anything but an effect of "reaction" or, if you will, of revolution, in a system that never will have obeyed it.) MoP p.290

<sup>9</sup> La source n'est donc pas l'origine, elle n'est ni au départ ni à l'arrivée. MDP p. 342 (The source therefore is not the origin, it is neither at the departure or the arrival.) MoP p.287 It seems that later on Derrida gives the meaning of source to the word envoi. This is already hinted in his *Introduction to the Origin of Geometry*, p. 50 (French version, p. 36). Lawlor calls this the postal analogy. See Lawlor, pp. 108-109.

<sup>10</sup> Moment où l'arbre érigé, donc traversé, en son dedans écarté de lui-même, se laisse couper de la source simple. [...] Se couper de la source, [...] c'est se laisser multiplier ou diviser par la différence de l'autre: cesser d'être (un) moi. MDP p.328-329 (This is the moment at which the erect, and thus divided, tree, separated from itself, lets itself be cut off from simple source. [...] To be cut off from the source, [...] is to let oneself be multiplied or divided by difference of the other: to cease to be (a) self. MoP p.276-277

<sup>11</sup> Pour que la source devienne à son tour image [...] pour qu'elle se voie comme regard d'origine, elle doit se diviser. MDP p.339 (For the source to become in turn an image, [...] for it to see itself as the glance of origin, it must divide itself. ) MoP p. 285.

<sup>12</sup> [...] elle n'est plus seulement ce vers quoi le mouvement s'épuise, ce qui, quelque part, se dérobe, toujours un peu plus loin, à notre prise. Elle naît de ce dérochement même, comme un mirage situé, un site inscrit dans un champ inorienté. Elle n'est rien avant qu'on la cherche, seulement un effet produit par la structure d'un mouvement. La source n'est donc pas l'origine, elle n'est ni au départ ni à l'arrivée. MDP p. 342 ([...] it is no longer only that approaching which movement exhausts itself, but also that which somewhere eludes, always a bit further on, our grasp. It is nothing before being sought, only an effect produced by the structure of movement. The source therefore is not the origin, it is neither at the departure or the arrival.) MoP p. 287

<sup>13</sup> [...] la source ne s'apparaît telle qu'à ce moment, qui n'est plus un moment, cette seconde à peine seconde de l'instante émission où l'origine se donne à recevoir ce qu'elle produit. La source reçoit, se reçoit n'interrompt la circulation que pour la saturer. MDP p. 342([...] the source appears as such only at the moment, which is no longer a moment, the barely second of the instant emission in which the origin yields itself to receive what it produces. The source receives, receives itself, interrupts circulation only in order to saturate it.) MoP p. 288.

of any predeterminations.<sup>14</sup> This means that origin can initiate at any given moment a series of events that had no other cause than its own determination. In this way origin constitutes a primary cause of freely set ends. The clarification of the relations between origin and end shows that this does not imply a reduction of origin to end. At the same time it is not clear what is the meaning of "origin determines the end independently of prior determinations". Since we have already seen that voice is an instance that is free of prior determinations, the clarification of the relationship between voice and origin will help to illuminate the origin.

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<sup>14</sup> Marrati-Guénoun formulates a similar distinction that she characterizes as a merging of finitude with infinity. See p. 6.

## Chapter 7 – Voice, Origin, End

The distinction between origin and source allows us to distinguish between events that are the cause of an action but are themselves the result of prior causes, and events that are the cause of an action and at the same time are self-caused. The discussion about origin and source referred at first to water, but it turns out that there is a complete analogy between water and sounds.<sup>1</sup> Therefore Derrida claims that when Valéry speaks about water he is speaking about speech.<sup>2</sup> It seems that the discussion about the origin of water is actually a discussion on the origin of speech. But what is the origin of speech?

Rien dans le monde, rien du moins qui s'y présente, y apparaisse comme phénomène, thème, objet, sans être d'abord pour moi pour (un) moi et n'y revienne comme à l'ouverture, à l'origine même du monde : non pas la cause de son existence, mais l'origine de sa présence, le point de source depuis lequel tout prend sens, apparaît, se profile et se mesure. Tout, c'est-à-dire tout ce qui n'est pas moi. (Nothing in the world, or at least nothing that is presented within it, appears as phenomenon, theme, or object, without first being for me, for (an) ego, and without coming back to me as to the opening, the very origin of the world: not as the cause of its existence, but as the origin of its presence, the point of source on whose basis everything takes on meaning, appears, delineates, and measures itself. Everything, that is to say everything that is not I.)<sup>3</sup>

Derrida says that everything represented in the world must first be presented before the ego, before some "I". The ego is not the cause of what is presented in the world but the origin of everything that is present in the world. The ego is the original point from which everything emerges, receives meaning, and measures itself against.

Everything except the ego itself. From what has been said above, it appears that origin is the ego, the "I". The "I" is the origin of everything that is not myself, and as such

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<sup>1</sup> Mais, comme la source lucide, la source sonore ne peut tenter [...]. MDP p.341 (But, like the lucid source, the sonorous source attempts [...]), MoP p. 287

<sup>2</sup> Et quand Valéry termine sur un "J'adore l'EAU" [...] il ne parle que de la parole, il insiste sur ce passage qui met l'eau à la bouche, engendre le discours, l'oraison, l'incantation. MDP p.330 (And when Valéry ends with an "I adore water" [...] he is speaking only of speech, insisting on transition which puts water into the mouth, engenders discourse, oration, incantation.) MoP p.277

<sup>3</sup> MDP p. 334, MoP pp. 280-281.

the "I" cannot know itself and cannot represent itself. The "I" conducts itself automatically.<sup>4</sup> According to my own estimation of the meaning of origin and source, an origin that does not know itself, that has an automatic procedure, is a source, an outcome, and not an origin. Therefore the "I" that does not know itself, the awareness that is not purely aware, is the source.<sup>5</sup> The perception of the self as source shows that the "I"<sup>6</sup> is an entity that is derived, deterministic. Voice stands in contrast to the "I".

La voix peut donc, semble-t-il, accomplir ce retour circulaire de l'origine à elle-même. (The voice, it appears, therefore can accomplish the circular return of the origin to itself.)<sup>7</sup>

For Derrida, it seems that the voice can complete the circle of returning the origin to itself. This statement stands in contrast to the statement about the "I" (to which Derrida referred earlier) that cannot return to itself.

As I have shown in the discussion on the difference between the voice and observation, one of the reasons for which the voice was chosen as the intuitive instance is the ability of the voice to be heard (to be understood) by the person creating it, to return to itself at the moment it is created, as contrasted with the eye that serves as a window to sights coming from the outside without being able to see itself.<sup>8</sup> Thus the eye, the observation, is a source while the voice is an origin.<sup>9</sup> In the discussion on the voice we saw that this is the instance that determines the end. The identity between the voice and origin indicates an origin that is directed towards an end. The fact that the origin is directed towards an end does not make it subordinate to the end because the end is not imposed upon it but is set up by it. It seems that it is in this sense that Kates claims Derrida's voice precedes experience, and through the

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<sup>4</sup> Le non-moi est pour le moi, apparaît comme non-moi à un moi et depuis un moi. Tout : c'est-à-dire que le moi, exception et condition de tout ce qui apparaît, n'apparaît pas. N'étant jamais à elle-même présente, la source existe à peine. MDP p.334 (The non-I is for the I, appears as non-I for an I and on the basis of an I. Everything: which is to say that the I, the exception to and condition for everything that appears, does not appear. Never being present to itself, the source hardly exists.), MoP p.281

<sup>5</sup> Elle est donc pour le moi qu'on appelle source. [...] Si la conscience pure et le moi pur sont comme la source, c'est de ne pouvoir revenir à eux. MDP p.336-337 ([...] it is for the I that is called source. [...] If pure consciousness and the pure I are like the source, it is in not being able to come back to it.) MoP p.283.

<sup>6</sup> I shall examine the perception of the "I" later on.

<sup>7</sup> MDP p. 341, MoP p. 287.

<sup>8</sup> Je ne me vois pas, disait la source. Mais elle le dit du moins et s'entend alors. [...] Si l'œil échoue à s'instituer en origine, la voix ne peut-elle se produire, sortir d'elle-même tout en restant ou en revenant à elle-même, sans détour, sans organe, dans le for intérieur de ce que je propose d'appeler le "s'entendre parler" MDP p. 340-341 (I do not see myself, said the source. But it says so at least, and thus hears itself. [...] If the eye fails to institute itself as origin, perhaps the voice can produce itself, emerge from itself, all the while remaining or coming back to itself, without detour or organ, in the inner instance of what I propose to call "hearing oneself speak".) MoP p.286 .

<sup>9</sup> The voice creating itself is an idea that can also be found in DLG p. 33 (OG p. 20), and in MDP p9 (MoP p.9).

voice comes the engendering of experience, language and the difference between them.<sup>10</sup>

By identifying the voice as origin, the free aspect of the voice is emphasized. Voice is the instance that refers the "I" to itself without mediation, the voice is intuition that is also free of conditions:

[...] l'esprit se rapportant à lui-même dans l'intuition pure de soi, et donc dans sa liberté [...]( [...] the spirit relating itself to itself in pure intuition of itself, and therefore in its freedom[...])<sup>11</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Derrida presents origin as a combination of presence and primary event. The identification of voice with origin provides the element of presence since the voice is present in an unmediated way. Voice is actual, concrete individuality, but the question still remains as to the free determination of the end. With regard to both the voice and the origin, Derrida repeats their representation as free since they create themselves without needing anything outside the realm of their own being, and by virtue of being the ones that determine the end.

In philosophical tradition it is will that determines the end, and Derrida does not exclude himself from this principle although he speaks about the voice and not the will. The identity of voice and will indicates the identity of will as origin.<sup>12</sup> This strengthens the claim that the theoretical aspect is subordinate to the practical aspect. In Hegel, the theoretical aspect constitutes a guarantee of freedom. The subordination of the theoretical aspect to the practical one puts in doubt whether the possibility that independent creation and the determination of the end might not be conditioned in some way by an external factor. To be conditioned by an external factor is one of the recognizable signs of the source that is, as mentioned above, subject to necessity.

In the discussion on meaning, Derrida insists that meaning is created within the framework of interrelations. Meaning is not a given but the perpetual creation of the voice. It is not imposed on the voice or external to it. The interrelations of the voice with itself are the way of giving life to the inanimate, and the creation of the subject. These interrelations repeatedly encourage the sense of a self in its unconditioned re-creation.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, the problematic of Bennington's position

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<sup>10</sup> Kates, p. 331.

<sup>11</sup> MDP p.100, MoP p. 87.

<sup>12</sup> Another perception of the voice can be found in Lawlor who identifies language as the transmitter of meaning, as a conduit (what we have here called source) with voice. Lawlor (1998): 190.

<sup>13</sup> LV p. 10, S p. 11, LV, p. 95, S p. 85.

that there is no origin becomes clearer.<sup>14</sup> When Bennington analyzes the relation between the sign and the signified he is aware of the role played by sense in this formation, but he does not take into consideration the origin of sense, that is to say, by what and how sense is determined. Bennington's position is understood when we focus only on the relations between sign and signified and assume that the sense connecting them is self-understood. In this case, it can be said that there is no origin. It appears that Derrida himself does not think that sense is already contained within the formation and places the voice as the origin of sense. Derrida's emphasis on origin as the determining factor and the point that is not derived from anything that precedes it, ensures the possibility of freedom. This emphasis shows that freedom is an essential aspect in his philosophy. In a comparison between him and Hegel, I noted that Hegel ensures the possibility of freedom by separating the theoretical aspect from the practical aspect, while Derrida ensures the possibility of freedom by separating the perception of reality as objects (the transitive aspect of intentionality)<sup>15</sup> from the perception of the self as object (the reflexive aspect of intentionality) within the framework of the practical aspect. The practical aspect in itself, according to Hegel, does not allow for freedom, and therefore it is difficult to see how this division of Derrida preserves the possibility of freedom. When I come to discuss emotional experience as the ground of thought, I shall clarify this matter.

In the analysis of origin, Derrida places the primary event side by side with presence. From this it appears that there is no difference between presence and primary event, as long as the intuitive sense of the self is a new unconditioned creation. For this reason, presence at any given moment is origin.<sup>16</sup> The claim that origin is an isolated concrete point, individual presence, is supported by this formulation. The discussion up to this point has managed to identify the components that function within the context constructed by Derrida, but this does not solve the question as to the way the possibility of freedom can be realized in practice, and the attempt to clarify the context seems to complicate it even more.

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<sup>14</sup> Bennington,(1999): 40.

<sup>15</sup> Intentionality appears here in the sense that, in my opinion, is given to it by Husserl, intentionality in the general sense and not specifically as an expression of will.

<sup>16</sup> Le présent est originaire, cela veut dire que la détermination de l'origine a toujours la forme de la présence. DLG p.436-437 (The present is originary, that is to say the determination of origin always has the form of presence.), OG p. 309

As I have noted in the Introduction, Derrida's writing is not one-dimensional that can be described as a linear continuity of events. Therefore, the attempt to describe his thought resembles an attempt to describe the concept of Babushka, the Russian doll. Until we open all the dolls and describe them one by one, the concept of "Russian doll" will not be clear to us. It is no wonder, then, that in the course of reading this thesis we get the feeling of opening a Russian doll. We receive one doll and we have a collection of dolls. Correspondingly, when we try to understand one thing in the complex whole of Derrida's philosophy, we are obliged to understand a collection of things.

The prominence given to the isolated concrete nature of origin recalls, on one hand, the question regarding the way in which these individuals belong within a certain continuity, and on the other hand, the question arises as to the meaning of real and not imaginary freedom in relation to the concrete individual. In *La Voix et la phénomène* (Voice and Phenomenon) Derrida calls the network of relationships created between the individual and the self, and between it and other individuals, phenomenon. Phenomenon is thus the continuity we were wondering about. The next section will deal with this question and with the meaning of real freedom concerning the concrete individual.

## Part II – Individual

In the previous part I dealt with Derrida's perception of the voice (will, origin, awareness) as the isolated concrete point that allows for real freedom. In this part I wish to examine the way in which the concrete voice realizes itself and presents itself as an individual. This examination will be carried out through the relationship between voice (the concrete) and the "I" (the abstract) in Derrida's philosophy, and shows that the ability of the voice to realize its freedom makes it possible to see in it the essence of phenomenon. The concept 'phenomenon' includes within it human life as a whole with all its variations. In a certain sense it may be said that phenomenon is history. This statement will be clarified later on. For our considerations here it is important to know that in Derrida's opinion, intentionality lies at the root of historicity. This intentionality is the expression of voice (concrete will) because concrete will means the ability to set up concrete aims, which is a concrete individual activity that makes the individual unique. It is will, therefore, that makes the distinctions between individuals. As I have already shown, will occupies a central place in the position taken by Derrida. It must be emphasized that will, here, is not an abstract concept – as can be seen in his presentation of will as the individual voice. I have also shown how Derrida constructs the expressive possibilities of the voice as a motivation that is free from constraints. In this part I shall examine the way in which voice is realized as individual, and how individual voices combine to create phenomenon – the expanse that is composed of the realized ends of a collection of individual voices without uniting them. This phenomenon is called writing.

In philosophical tradition, will is perceived as something that directs the actions of the subject without the subject being aware of it. Will is arbitrary in the sense that the reasons for its implementation are only known retroactively (if at all). Will is revealed in its implementation. There is an unknown aspect in will – the motivating force that is not central to consciousness and is not usually given any attention. When attention is given to it, it appears as a force that directs reality but is not included within it. In this sense, will is perceived as transcendental. This transcendental aspect of will is commonly regarded as making freedom possible.

Derrida presents a different perception of will as being concrete rather than transcendental. Will is the voice. For Derrida, it is the concrete aspect of the voice that

ensures its freedom. In the chapter that dealt with the difference between origin and source, I wondered what was the meaning of the concrete origin that determines the end free of prior determinations within a system that is realized as deterministic. In the following chapters I shall trace Derrida's line of thought that makes such a situation viable. To do this, I shall examine the distinction that Derrida makes between the 'I' and 'voice', and will show that the 'I' is what was characterized above as source, while 'voice' is the origin (Chapter 1). At the conclusion of this chapter it will become clear that voice is preserved as origin in writing. Chapter 2 will examine the possibilities of writing to preserve voice as origin. In this chapter it will be shown that writing functions as the negation of origin, as the place of source and the place of origin at the same time. These functions will be presented in three stages (2.1, 2.2, 2.4 respectively). In order to understand how writing can be the negation of origin and the place of origin at the same time, madness will be presented as that which makes this possible (2.3).

## Chapter 1 – The 'I'

Derrida distinguishes between the 'I' and the 'voice'. In the explanation given by Derrida for the title of the article 'Qual Quelle'<sup>1</sup> he refers to Hegel who attributes to Boehme the assertion that egoity is pain, oppression, and the source of nature and spirit. The entire article is included in the book *Marges de la Philosophie*. One of the possible interpretations of *marges* (and of margins) is space for action, the possibility of action.<sup>2</sup> In this book, which deals with the possibilities of philosophical activity, egoity is treated as the source both of nature and of spirit. In the previous part I dealt with the deterministic characteristics of the source and that it contained painful elements.<sup>3</sup> This apparently implies that Derrida wishes to examine the relation between egoity and the possibilities of action. What is egoity, the 'I'?

Derrida analyzes what the 'I' is for Valéry, Nevertheless, I have already shown the way he presented the voice through Husserl's writings as his way of extracting his own positions.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, even if at first reading it seems as though it is Valéry's position that is presented here, in a more precise reading it will appear that, within the presented explanation, Derrida's own position is interspersed. Derrida says that for Valéry the absolute origin takes the form of the ego, of the 'I'. Origin for Derrida is the motivation, the creator, something from which we cannot know what will be created. On the other hand, the source is passive, deterministic, and conducts onward those things that were created elsewhere. When Derrida presents what absolute origin is for Valéry, he first notes that this refers to source and not to origin.

Souvent désignée comme source, l'origine absolue a d'abord pour Valéry la forme du moi, du "moi le plus nu" du "moi pur, élément unique et monotone de l'être même dans le monde, retrouvé, reperdu par lui-même" et qui "habite éternellement notre sens" comme "la permanence fondamentale d'une conscience que rien ne supporte" (t. I, p. 1228). (Often designated as source, For Valéry the absolute origin first has the form of the ego, the I, the "most naked I", of "the pure I, that unique and monotonous

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<sup>1</sup> MDP pp. 338-339, n. 8; MoP pp. 284-285, n. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Robert quotidien*, (1996). This explanation is the reason for the title given to this thesis.

<sup>3</sup> One of the meanings that Derrida gives to origin (No. 3 in Chapter 6 that discusses the distinction between source and origin) also includes the element of pain.

<sup>4</sup> In *La Voix et le Phénomène* he says: A travers le texte de Husserl, c'est-à-dire dans une lecture qui ne peut être simplement ni celle du commentaire ni celle de l'interprétation. p.98 (When we say through Husserl's text, we mean a reading that can be neither simple commentary nor simple interpretation.)S p.88

element of each being, [that] is lost and recovered by itself, but inhabits our senses eternally" as "the fundamental permanence of a consciousness that depends on nothing" (Note and digression, 8, 101-2)<sup>5</sup>

The 'I' that is presented can be seen as origin by being the origin of the world's presence, but this is an unconscious presence – through me, besides myself, everything appears, takes shape, is measured and receives meaning for me. Since I do not appear to myself, I hardly exist. Being unconscious of myself as the origin of presence, I am merely a source. The philosophical transcendental 'I' (ego) is not something, lack characteristics, because it never makes itself present.<sup>6</sup> The transcendental 'I' (ego) that does not make itself present is pure, and therefore whatever emerges from it does not belong to it. As such, it is a point (in the geometrical sense) which is on one hand universal and abstract, and on the other hand a unit which is its function as an 'I' – to be a singular universality.<sup>7</sup> As a singular universality it is not an individual, not personal, and almost not an 'I' at all. It is incapable of grasping itself as a consciousness because self-consciousness means turning the self into an object, to a predicate of reflexive intentionality. Intentionality

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<sup>5</sup> MDP p. 334, MoP p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> Rien dans le monde, rien du moins qui s'y présente, y apparaisse comme phénomène, thème, objet, sans être d'abord pour moi pour (un) moi et n'y revienne comme à l'ouverture, à l'origine même du monde : non pas la cause de son existence, mais l'origine de sa présence, le point de source depuis lequel tout prend sens, apparaît, se profile et se mesure. Tout, c'est-à-dire tout ce qui n'est pas moi. Le non-moi est pour le moi, apparaît comme non-moi à un moi et depuis un moi. Tout: c'est-à-dire que le moi, exception et condition de tout ce qui apparaît, n'apparaît pas. N'étant jamais à elle-même présente, la source existe à peine. Elle n'est là pour personne. Car ce que Valéry appelle ici le moi pur et que les philosophes nomment plutôt le je ou l'ego transcendantal, ce n'est pas la "personne", le moi ou la conscience empirique des psychologues, Source innommable, "inqualifiable", elle n'a en effet aucun caractère déterminable puisqu'elle n'est pas dans le monde et ne se présente jamais. MDP p. 334 (Nothing in the world, or at least nothing that is presented within it, appears as phenomenon, theme, or object, without first being for me, for (an) ego, and without coming back to me as to the opening, the very origin of the world: not as the cause of its existence, but as the origin of its presence, the point of source on whose basis everything takes on meaning, appears, delineates, and measures itself. Everything, that is to say everything that is not I. The non-I is for the I, appears as non-I for an I and on the basis of an I. Everything: which is to say that the I, the exception to and condition for everything that appears, does not appear. Never being present to itself, the source hardly exists. It is there for no one. For what Valéry here calls the pure I, and what philosophers usually name the transcendental ego, is not the "person", the ego or empirical consciousness of the psychologists. An unnamable, "unqualifiable" source, in effect it has no determinable character since it is not in the world and never presents itself.) MoP p.280-281

<sup>7</sup> Le moi pur, source de toute présence, se réduit ainsi à un point abstrait, à une forme pure, dépourvue de toute épaisseur, de toute profondeur, sans caractère, sans qualité, sans propriété, sans durée assignable. Cette source n'a donc aucun sens propre. Rien ne lui appartient de ce qui d'elle procède. Point d'eau - qui soit d'elle. Elle n'a donc pas de nom propre. C'est - elle - un pronom (moi, je) si universel et si abstrait qu'il ne remplace, n'est mis pour aucun nom propre de personne en particulier. Pronom universel, mais d'une universalité si singulière qu'elle reste toujours, justement, singulière. La fonction de cette source qui se nomme je est bien, dans la langue et hors langue, celle d'un singulier universel. MDP p.335 (The pure I, the source of all presence, thus is reduced to an abstract point, to a pure form, stripped of all thickness, of all depth, without character, without quality, without property, without an assignable duration. This source therefore has no proper meaning. Nothing of that which proceeds from it belongs to it. Point d'eau – that is of it. Thus it has no proper name. It is so universal and so abstract a pronoun (me, I) that it replaces, stands for no proper name of a person in particular: A universal pronoun, but of so singular a universality that it always remains, precisely, singular. The function of this source which name itself I is indeed, within and without language, that of a singular universal.) MoP p.281

can be implemented only through a method that arranges the fixed order of elements to which intentionality is directed within the flow of events, the definition of the relationships between them, and their conversion into objects. Therefore the self is perceived as consciousness only if it turns itself into a system. As a system it cannot be said that it is present for itself, and therefore this system cannot be called consciousness.<sup>8</sup> This 'I', which is not the consciousness of myself (since it is a system and not a consciousness), is an unconscious consciousness, an empty one. As an unconscious consciousness the 'I' cannot be considered as a source because the source is not transcendental. The transcendental 'I' (ego) stands as a metaphor for the 'I'. As a metaphor, it is without its own characteristics, and therefore merely transmits onward the images that have no relation to it as a source.<sup>9</sup> The 'I' that cannot return to itself cannot serve as an origin, as a creator.<sup>10</sup> Despite this, Derrida says that the origin of subjectivity is the 'I, here and now'.<sup>11</sup>

How can we reconcile one position that claims the 'I' is not an origin with another position that claims the 'I' is an origin? One must be more precise. The 'I' is not an origin, but the origin is the 'I here, now'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ainsi, ce moi n'est pas un individu, il est presque impersonnel, tout près d'être un non-moi. Cette conscience qui ne peut se poser elle-même, se mettre en face d'elle-même, devenir pour elle-même une thèse ou un thème, nous ne pouvons même pas dire qu'elle est présente pour-soi. Cette source dont on ne peut faire un thème n'est donc pas une conscience de soi, à peine une consciences. MDP p. 336 (Thus, this I is not an individual, is almost impersonal, very close to being a non-I. Of this consciousness which itself cannot posit itself, itself come before itself, become for itself a thesis or a theme, we cannot even say that it is present for-itself. This source which cannot be made a theme therefore is not consciousness, is hardly a consciousness.) MoP p. 282

<sup>9</sup> Ce moi qui n'est pas un moi, cette conscience inconsciente, cet X qui n'a ou qui n'est proprement rien, qui n'est pas ce qu'il est parce qu'il est pur, qui est donc impur parce qu'il est pur, l'appellera-t-on encore une source ? La source est, et elle est dans le monde. Elle est donc pour le moi qu'on appelle source. Elle reste donc la métaphore déportée du moi. Mais le moi dont elle serait la métaphore étant intrinsèquement, proprement, impropre, non-propre, impur en tant que pur, il n'est rien en dehors de ses métaphores, rien en deçà de ce qui le transporte hors de lui-même et le jette à l'instant de sa naissance, comme le jaillissement irruptif, l'effraction parfois discrète mais toujours violente de la source surgissante, hors de lui-même. En tant que telle, cette source, dans la pureté de son eau, est toujours disséminée loin d'elle-même et n'a pas de rapport à soi en tant que source. MDP p. 336-337 (This I which is not an I, this unconscious consciousness, this x which properly has or is nothing, which is not what it is because it is pure, and which therefore is impure because it is pure – will it still be called a source? The source is, and it is in the world. Therefore, it is for the I that is called source. Therefore, it remains the deported metaphor of the I. But the I of which it would be the metaphor being intrinsically, properly, improper, that is, non-proper, impure to the extent that is pure, it is nothing outside its metaphors, nothing except that which transports it outside itself and throws it outside itself at the instant of its birth, as the irruptive welling up, the sometimes discreet, but always violent effraction of the emerging source. As such, this source, in the purity of its waters, is always disseminated far from itself, and has no relation to itself as source.) MoP p. 283

<sup>10</sup> This idea recurs in Derrida in other texts as well. For example in *Le puits et la pyramide* p.89-90 (*The Pit and the Pyramid*, MoP p. 78) this very idea is presented (without the use of source and origin) as the position of Hegel.

<sup>11</sup> La racine de toutes ces expressions, on le voit très vite, c'est le point-zéro de l'origine subjective, le je, le ici, le maintenant. LV p. 105 (We quickly see that the root of all these expressions is to be found in the zero-point of the subjective origin, the I, the here, the now.) S p. 94 .

<sup>12</sup> La source étant devenue - c'est l'inintelligible - le temps s'ouvre comme ce retard de l'origine sur elle-même.MDP p.345 (The source having become – which is unintelligible itself – time opens itself as delay of the origin in relation to itself.) MoP p. 290

A similar discussion from a different starting point can be found in Wheeler, p. 239.

Voice, origin, is consciousness and constitutes the full experience of presence. The moment this full experience of presence is interrupted, the moment that the element of time enters this presence, it is source, the 'I', the ego that comes into being. In fact, the statement 'I' is a kind of repetition that separates origin from its created product which is source.<sup>13</sup>

Origin depends on its ability to return to itself, but the moment it does so (an act that takes place in time) it turns into source. Why is this so? The 'I' that is revealed through reflection is fixed and systematic. The freedom of the voice lies in its unsystematic activity. But this freedom also depends on the possibility for reflexive action. In order for reflexive action to be possible there is need for system. A system means some abstraction which allows us to ignore the unique variations of the action and posit it in a larger context so that we can intend it. Therefore the question arises whether one can grasp a first-time value, which by its very nature cannot be considered as being within a system.<sup>14</sup> The question emphasizes the paradoxical point – the fact that I am an origin, i.e. not systematic and therefore free in my actions, depends on my ability to contemplate myself reflexively, but this very contemplation reveals myself to be a source, an organized system caught within a system of deterministic activity. In order to resolve the paradox it is necessary to find out within what the voice can be realized in such a way that it will be possible to return to it and to perceive it, which means that it will be systematic.

We have already seen that the 'I' cannot meet these conditions. Therefore it may be repeated once again that the 'I' as self-reflecting is not origin but merely source. The perception of the 'I' as source corresponds to positions such as that of Foucault that speak about the self as the sum total of social forces. But the Derridian subject is not confined to the 'I' alone. In addition to the 'I', the subject contains another component, the voice, the origin. In contrast to the 'I' that is compared to the source that conducts materials outward without interfering in them, the voice is constantly creating new realities through writing, and therefore Derrida claims that the voice preserves its essential nature as origin when it is realized in writing. Derrida

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<sup>13</sup> For this reason I am not talking here about a position of reflexivity. The problem of reflection is clarified at the beginning of the chapter in the section dealing with the difference between sight and voice. A well-developed discussion of Derrida's position regarding reflexivity can be found in the book by Gasché, *The Tain of the Mirror*.

<sup>14</sup> Peut-on concevoir un événement initial sans présence, une valeur de première fois qu'on ne puisse plus penser sous la forme ou la catégorie de présence? MDP p. 345 (Can one conceive of an initial event without presence, the value of a first time that cannot be thought in the form or category of presence?) MoP p.290-291

then presents writing as fulfilling the condition for preserving primary values together within the systematic conditions mentioned above. I shall now follow his train of thought.

## Chapter 2 – Writing

In the previous chapter I stated the need to find out what enabled the voice to contemplate itself without becoming systematic. On the other hand, the ability to reflect upon itself requires a systematic method. For this reason such a demand raises the need for an instance that would be both systematic and non-systematic at the same time.

Writing, says Derrida in the title of the penultimate paragraph in his article 'Qual Quelle', is the "point de philosophie". In a footnote to the translation, Bass remarks that "*point de*" is interpreted both as origin, fountain (source) and as negation, because it refers to two different words that are spelt and pronounced exactly the same. The way in which these things are formulated leaves us in a state of vagueness, so that the reader has to decide whether the reference is to a description of happenstance, philosophizing about philosophical origins, or the negation of philosophy. Any decision is syntactically valid even if the meaning of the statement will be totally altered. Although Derrida quotes Valéry who talks about philosophy, we can see that the argument does not concern philosophy only but is much more essential and deals with memory, identity and the ends of the individual. In other words, he deals with writing as origin or source or the negation of origin.

Writing, therefore, can be an origin, a source, or the negation of origin. In order to decide the matter it is necessary to turn to the context in which the statement functions, Derrida's philosophizing. I shall now examine each of these possibilities in the framework of Derrida's writing and show that Derrida intended all three of them at the same time.

### 2.1. Writing as the Negation of Origin

At the beginning of Western cultural history writing was perceived as almost the negation of philosophy. Derrida examines this perception of writing in 'Plato's Pharmacy'. He quotes Phaedros who speaks about those who are ashamed to write speeches and to leave their writings for posterity. This is because of the fear that in the future they would be called 'Sophists' and mar their good name.<sup>1</sup> Derrida says

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<sup>1</sup> [...] les citoyens les plus puissants et les plus vénérés, les hommes les plus libres ressentent de la honte (aiskhumontai) à "écrire des discours" et à laisser derrière eux des *sungrammata*. Ils craignent le jugement de la postérité, et de passer pour des "sophistes". LD p.84 . [...] the citizens of greatest influence and dignity, the men who are the most free, feel ashamed (aiskhumontai) at "speechwriting" and at leaving *sungrammata* behind them. They fear the judgment of posterity, which might consider them "sophists" (257b). D.p.68

that these lines summarize the accepted position against the written word as if its use bars the way to truth, to philosophical activity. In his view this is not Plato's position, or at least, as Derrida thinks, Plato presents an ambivalent position on this matter.<sup>2</sup> The ambivalence that he reveals enables him to examine whether writing is really contrary to philosophical activity or in other words, as I already said, contrary to the preserving of one's own ends which means the negation of origin. I shall now follow Derrida in his examination of the perception of writing as the negation of origin and show that the conclusions of this examination lead to the possibility that writing can be perceived as a source.

When Derrida comments on the birth of writing he says that the God-King does not know how to write, but this lack of knowledge or inability testifies to his sovereign powers. He has no need to write. He speaks, he pronounces, he dictates – and his spoken word is sufficient.<sup>3</sup> God does not need writing. If he dictates, this is for the sake of secondary preservation. On the face of it, there is nothing in this that changes the spoken word of the king, because very soon commentary develops in a direction that casts doubt on the written word. God the speaker is a father image, and his spoken word is the father of writing. The father is the origin of the son, his creator. Although in the discussion on the difference between origin and source we saw that the father is perceived as the source, this is a one-dimensional perception; the father, besides being the source, is also the origin.<sup>4</sup> On one hand, the separation between father and son allowed the son to pose his own new ideas and make a new start. In this situation the father can be considered as an origin of the possibility to create new ideas. On the other hand the father can be threatening and force his son to promote the father's ideas. In this situation the father can be considered as a source of expansion delivering existing ideas. Comparing the relationship between the Logos (speech) and writing to a father-son relationship allows, in Derrida's view, for the question of parricide to insinuate itself into the text. Writing has the quality of

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<sup>2</sup> LD pp. 84-85 ; D, p. 68

<sup>3</sup> Dieu le roi ne sait pas écrire mais cette ignorance ou cette incapacité témoignent de sa souveraine indépendance. Il n'a pas besoin d'écrire. Il parle, il dit, il dicte et sa parole suffit. LD p.94 (God the king does not know how to write, but that ignorance or incapacity only testifies to his sovereign independence. He has no need to write. He speaks, he says, he dictates, and his word suffices). D, p. 76

<sup>4</sup> Or de ce père, de ce capital. de ce bien, de cette origine de la valeur et des étants apparaissants, on ne peut parler simplement[ ...]

Le bien, dans la figure visible-invisible du père. du soleil. du capital, est l'origine des *onta*,[...]

LD pp. 101-102; (Now, about this father, this capital, this good, this origin of value and of appearing being, it is not possible to speak simply or directly. [...])

The Good, in the visible-invisible figure of the father, the sun, or capital, is the origin of all *onta* [...])D p. 82

putting to death. The written word, according to Plato, is more like poison than cure.<sup>5</sup> Writing in its accepted sense is dead letters.<sup>6</sup> For this reason, going into writing is like going to death.<sup>7</sup> Writing as the son of Logos can murder its father.<sup>8</sup> Murdering the father, the Logos, will allow the son, the writing, to take his place, and once he does so he can represent the father, the Logos, in an inappropriate manner.

[...] et prends garde d'avoir à te repentir un jour de ce que tu laisserais aujourd'hui se divulguer indignement. [...] take care lest you sometime come to repent of having now unwisely published your view.<sup>9</sup>

In order not to create a situation in which writing represents the Logos inappropriately, it is better not to write but to teach orally.

La plus grande sauvegarde sera de ne pas écrire, mais d'apprendre par cœur [...] It is very great safeguard to learn by heart instead of writing [...]<sup>10</sup>

In fact, throughout the text Derrida shows how it is possible to derive from the written word certain meanings that Plato never intended.<sup>11</sup> As against this example, that can in itself be proof of the claim that writing does not preserve the Logos but kills it, and which is itself posed in writing, another position can be taken with regards to writing – the possibility that writing only adds another dimension to speech. Does writing kill speech or does it supplement it (in the form of writing)? Does writing really take the place of speech, or the Logos? 'Nonsense: they do not replace each other, since they are added... [...]'.<sup>12</sup> But these pacifying words do not actually alleviate, because the supplement is added in order to replace.<sup>13</sup> If we clarify

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<sup>5</sup> LD p. 123.; D p.99

<sup>6</sup> L'écriture au sens courant est lettre morte, elle est porteuse de mort. DLG p.29 (Writing in the common sense is the dead letter, it is the carrier of death. It exhausts life.) OG p.17

<sup>7</sup> Car le dieu de l'écriture est aussi, cela va de soi, le dieu la mort LD p.113 (For it goes without saying that the god of writing must also be the god of death.) D p. 91

<sup>8</sup> [...] mais on pressent déjà qu'une origine dont la structure s'épelle ainsi - Signifiant de signifiant - s'emporte et s'efface elle-même dans sa propre production. DLG p.16 [...] but one can already suspect that an origin whose structure can be expressed as "signifier of the signifier" conceals and erases itself in its own production.) OG p. 7

<sup>9</sup> LD p. 212. ; D p. 170

<sup>10</sup> LD p. 212. ; D p. 170

<sup>11</sup> Le mot *pharmakon* y est pris dans une chaîne de significations. Le jeu de cette chaîne semble systématique. Mais le système n'est pas ici, simplement, celui des intentions de l'auteur connu sous le nom de Platon. LD p.118 The word *pharmakon* is caught in a chain of significations. The play of that chain seems systematic. But the system here is not, simply, that of the intentions of an author who goes by the name of Plato. D, p.95

<sup>12</sup> - Mais non, elles ne se remplacent pas, puisqu'elles s'ajoutent [...] LD p. 212. (-Nonsense: they don't replace each other, since they are added [...])D, p.170

<sup>13</sup> Mais le supplément supplée. Il ne s'ajoute que pour remplacer. Il intervient ou s'insinue a-la-place-de; s'il comble, c'est comme on comble un vide. S'il représente et fait image, c'est par le défaut antérieur d'une présence. DLG p.208 (But the supplement supplements. It adds only to replace. It intervenes or insinuates itself in-the-place-

once again what the problem is, we can formulate it in this way: The subject said something. In his words he presented his intention (end). The danger of writing is that this intention (end) of his will be forgotten and in its place the intention (end) of another subject will be represented. But in order that the original intention can be preserved at all, that it can enter into a collection of possible ends and can enter into history, it must be strongly encased. In order to be preserved, the end (or the meaning)<sup>14</sup> must emerge from the boundaries of the subject and become an absolute object that can stand on its own and not be dependent on the subject.<sup>15</sup> Speech frees the object from its individual subjectivity but in order that it becomes absolute it must be preserved and therefore it has to be written.<sup>16</sup>

As a replacement, writing can of course 'deviate' from the place it fills, but by filling this place it also preserves the place from being lost. The place, the context, is one of the means for preserving the sense. The replacement may find that it is trapped in that place and transmits under the constraints of circumstance a sense that is not its own. The replacement may find that like the fountain, it gushes forth the water that reaches it, but was not created by it. The replacement, the writing, can be revealed as source.

## 2.2 Writing as a Source

Everyday consciousness tends to accept writing as a source, as a technical tool that preserves and transmits the intentions of the writer as they are. Rousseau explains himself as a writer by the fact that writing is the only way to preserve speech since

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of; if it fills, it is as if one fills a void. If it represents and makes an image, it is by anterior default of presence) OG p.145

"Supplement" is the translation of the word "suppléer" which includes the double meaning that Derrida is especially concerned with – that which is both added to something else (added to it as something external to its boundaries or to its original essence and thus extends or widens it), and also replaces it with something else (fulfills its function, takes its place, and thus is supposed to represent it or even to discount it). "Plato's Pharmacy", p. 19. These views are presented in the name of Valéry, but since Derrida does not object to them, I consider them to be Derrida's position.

<sup>14</sup> The identity that Derrida sees between end, intention and sense (or meaning) was discussed at the beginning of this section .

<sup>15</sup> la sens originaire de tout acte intentionnel n'est que son sens final, c'est-à-dire la constitution d'un objets [...] HOG p. 53-54 (For a sense has entered into history only if it has become an absolute object,[ ... ]) O p.63

<sup>16</sup> La langage oral a libéré l'objet de la subjectivité individuelle, mais il le laisse enchaîné à son commencement et à la synchronie d'un échange à l'intérieur de la communauté institutrice. C'est la possibilité de l'écriture qui assurera la traditionalisation absolue de l'objet, son objectivité idéale absolue, c'est-à-dire la pureté de son rapport à une subjectivité transcendante universelle. HOG p. 84 (Speech [langage oral] has freed the object of individual subjectivity but leaves it bound to its beginning and the synchrony of an exchange within the institutive community. The possibility of writing will assure the absolute traditionalization of the object, its absolute ideal Objectivity – i.e., the purity of relation to a universal transcendental subjectivity.) O p.87

speech itself is transient as soon as it is activated.<sup>17</sup> In 'Plato's Pharmacy' there is a description of the person who invented writing that expresses the status of writing as compared with speech.

[...]le dieu de l'écriture est donc un personnage subordonné, un second, un technocrate sans pouvoir de décision,[ ... ] It is 'a subordinate character, a second technocrat without power of decision, an engineer, a clever, ingenious servant who has been granted an audience with the king of the gods [...]'<sup>18</sup>

Writing is therefore a subordinate figure, a secondary technocrat without the authority to decide. In *Of Grammatology* explicit statements are made about writing.

[...], tout signifiant, et d'abord le signifiant écrit, serait dérivé. Il serait toujours technique et représentatif. (The written signifier is always technical and representative. It has no constitutive meaning.)<sup>19</sup>

Writing passes onward whatever reaches its. Writing is the very embodiment of source.

The reconstruction of meaning from writing is the task of the receiver (the reader), but it depends on the writer. The more the writer presents a written text that has a narrow range of interpretation, the more the reader will be able to understand what the writer intended. For this reason, it is the task of the writer to formulate 'univocal' statements that will not allow the reader any latitude. The advantage in univocal writing is in the preservation of one single meaning, which facilitates communication between generations and ensures the transmission of knowledge from one generation to another.<sup>20</sup> Unified meaning will be obtained from the unity of form, from the way in which what is understood coheres the intended meaning. Such a unity will not allow for various interpretations. Therefore the most effective form is that which leaves no opening for the creation of different interpretations; it is that

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<sup>17</sup> Ecrire alors est le seul moyen de garder ou de reprendre la parole puisque celle-ci se refuse en se donnant. DLG p. 204 (To write is indeed the only way of keeping or recapturing speech since speech denies itself as it gives itself.) OG p.142

<sup>18</sup> LD p. 107. ; D p. 86

<sup>19</sup> DLG p. 23, OG p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> [...] parce qu'il a maîtrisé toute dynamique du sens, le langage univoque reste le même, Il préserve ainsi son identité idéale à travers tout le devenir de la culture. L'univocité est la condition d'une communication entre les générations de chercheurs à n'importe quelle distance. Elle assure l'exactitude de la traduction et la pureté de la tradition. HOG p. 103 ([...] because it has mastered all the dynamics of sense, univocal language remains the same. It thus keeps its ideal identity throughout all cultural development. It is the condition that allows communication among generations of investigations no matter how distant and assures the exactitude of translation and the purity of tradition.) O p. 101-102.

which imposes itself and leaves no choice.<sup>21</sup> According to Derrida, the God of Leibnitz constitutes the realization of such a form. God, by His own will, chooses the best of all possibilities, but this possibility is the best one in quotation marks. His way of presenting God as one who is bound to choose the best possibility cancels out the meaning of possibility. Whatever is not the best will, by necessity, not be chosen and therefore it is not a possibility from the very outset. Thus there are no other possibilities and no better possibility than the one adopted. Since there is only one written system, one book, God does not hover between various possibilities because there are none.<sup>22</sup> The assumption that underlies this position is that all the books eventually contain an alloy of truths. Through cleaning and sifting, one book will be revealed, the Book of Nature. This means that all writings merely represent their own interpretations of the one truly established text.

The first danger that arises from the perception of writing as source is the danger of passivity.<sup>23</sup> The danger of passivity here constitutes a threat against freedom.<sup>24</sup> The second danger is a threat to the possibility of examining things. The written text expresses the original intention of the writer. This means that writing expresses subjective sense. If it is not possible to place things under arbitrary examination, if meaning derived from the written text can only be one specific meaning, we cannot decide if a certain meaning is acceptable or not, because there are no other possibilities from which to decide and choose.<sup>25</sup> But Derrida thinks that there is no permanent, fixed independent meaning. Meaning is always something that the individual intends. Therefore, until the individual creates it, it does not exist.<sup>26</sup> This means, as has already been said, that there is not one ideal meaning that

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<sup>21</sup> La *form* fascine quand on n'a plus la force de comprendre la force en son dedans. C'est-à-dire de créer. L'E p. 11 (*Form* fascinates when one no longer has the force to understand force from within itself. That is, to create.) W p. 4

<sup>22</sup> Dieu, le Dieu de Leibnitz, [...] ne connaissait pas l'angoisse du choix entre possibles: c'est en acte qu'il pensait les possibles et en disposait comme tels dans son Entendement ou Logos; c'est le "meilleur" que, dans tous les cas, favorise l'étrécissement d'un passage qui est Volonté. Et chaque existence continue d' "exprimer" la totalité de l'Univers. L'É p.19-20 (God, the God of Leibnitz, [...], did not know the anguish of the choice between various possibilities: he conceived possible choices in action and disposed of them as such in his Understanding or logos; and, in any event, the narrowness of a passageway that is Will favors the "best" choice. And each existence continues to "express" the totality of the Universe. W p. 9

<sup>23</sup> Devant le sens sédimenté, le danger, c'est d'abord la passivité. HOG p.99 (Confronting sedimented sense, our first danger is passivity.) O p. 99

<sup>24</sup> Mais seule une liberté peut se laisser ainsi menacer; [...] HOG p. 100 (But only freedom can let itself be threatened in this way; [...]) O p. 99

<sup>25</sup> [...] l'univocité soustrait la vérité à l'histoire. L'expression univoque fait totalement surface et n'offre aucun repli aux significations plus ou moins virtuelles que les intentions pourraient y déposer tout au long des cheminements d'une langue et d'une culture. HOG p. 103 ([...] univocity removes truth out of history's reach. Univocal expression completely breaks the surface and offers no turning back [repli] to the more or less virtual significations that the intentions could deposit all the advances of language or culture.) O p.101

<sup>26</sup> Ecrire, c'est savoir que ce qui n'est pas encore produit dans la lettre n'a pas d'autre demeure, ne nous attend pas comme prescription dans quelque *topos ouranios* ou quelque entendement divin. Le sens doit attendre d'être dit ou

must be perceived, and the presentation of writing as the transmission of one content in various forms is incorrect. If this is so, there is no possibility that writing will transmit only one meaning and the reader is always free to choose meanings according to his own understanding of the text. The raising of meanings creates an active dialogue with the meanings of the text that have been revealed and are passively accepted. As such, it turns the written text into a force for the active propagation of meanings.<sup>27</sup> But there is a catch here. Without unified sense, without a single meaning there is no access to the written text. The assumption that one can awaken hidden meanings is based on the supposition that there is a known, revealed meaning. That is to say, that language constrains us to express ourselves in a certain manner.

Des communications réglées s'établissent, grâce au jeu de la langue. entre diverses fonctions du mot et, en lui, entre divers sédiments ou diverses régions de la culture. Ces communications, ces couloirs de sens, Platon peut parfois les déclarer, les éclairer en y jouant "volontairement" mot que nous émettons entre guillemets parce qu'il ne désigne, pour en rester dans la clôture de ces oppositions, qu'un mode de "soumission" aux nécessités d'une "langue" donnée. (Finely regulated communications are established, through the play of language, among diverse functions of the word and, within it, among diverse strata or regions of culture. These communications or corridors of meaning can sometimes be declared or clarified by Plato when he plays upon them "voluntarily," a word we put in quotation marks because what it designates, to content ourselves with remaining within the closure of these oppositions, is only a mode of "submission" to the necessities of given "language.")<sup>28</sup>

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écrit pour s'habiter lui-même et devenir ce qu'à différer de soi il est : le sens. L'É p.22 (To write is to know that what has not yet been produced within literality has no other dwelling place, does not await us as prescription in some *topos ouranios*, or some divine understanding. Meaning must await being said or written in order to inhabit itself, and in order to become, by differing from itself, what it is: meaning.) W p.11

<sup>27</sup> [...]; nous sommes toujours libres de réveiller le sens passivement reçu, de ranimer toutes ses virtualités et de les "convertir en retour" dans "l'activité correspondants" HOG p.100 [...]; we are always free to reawaken any passively received sense, to reanimate all its virtualities, and to "transform" them "back [...]" into the corresponding activity.") O p.99

<sup>28</sup> LD p. 118.;D p. 95-96

How is it possible to obey the constraints of a given language and at the same time to be an active creator of meanings? In order to see how Derrida solves this dilemma, I shall now examine the motif of madness that is found in his writings.

### 2.3 Madness

Maeschalck claims that for Derrida, madness functions as the expression of tension between the freedom ascribed to God and human creativity.<sup>29</sup> From his words, it appears that Derrida regards madness as the expression for the possibility in principle of man's creative freedom.<sup>30</sup> I agree with this position and think that madness is a phenomenon that proves that the voice is free in principle. But it should not be deduced from this as if Derrida thinks that only in madness is the voice free. In my view, Derrida thinks that every voice is free, which implies that the multitude of possible interpretations can be derived from each voice. But the state of madness serves as an extreme manifestation of liberty, and therefore it can be used to clarify in what way the voice is free. I shall now expose the reason why madness serves as the manifestation of liberty in Derrida's philosophy.

In the description of voice as heard and understood at the same time, there is an inherent assumption that two things are implied: hearing and speaking. The perception of the individual as a complex entity and not as a unified one is a basic assumption that stresses the mutual relationship on which speech is based.<sup>31</sup> This assumption is expressly stated when Derrida tries to retrieve the dimension of freedom for the voice. It is not unusual for a person to perceive himself as two entities.

Quand je (me) parle sans remuer la langue et les lèvres, je crois m'entendre alors que la source est autre; ou je crois que nous sommes deux, alors que tout se passe "en moi". (When I speak (to myself) without moving tongue and lips, I believe that I hear

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<sup>29</sup> Maeschalck, pp. 37, 40.

<sup>30</sup> Maeschalck, p. 47.

<sup>31</sup> Marrati-Guénoun speaks about a merging that does not lead to the reduction of one component to the other. I accepted her argument that this merging activity is fundamental to Derrida's position, and in my opinion this is also expressed in his perception of the individual as a complex entity that cannot be reduced to one single component.

myself, although the source is other; or I believe that we are two,  
although everything is happening "in me".<sup>32</sup>

The illusion of experiencing oneself as two entities is a normal one.

[...]cette possibilité de double hallucination "normale" me  
permet de me donner à entendre ce que je désire entendre,[...]  
([...]this possibility of a "normal" double hallucination permits  
me to give myself to hear what I desire to hear, [...])<sup>33</sup>

However, there are moments in which this experience ceases to be normal and becomes mania, madness or inspiration. This moment or point is a crisis point, a moment of pain in which a person considers himself not to be self-understood within a known systematic framework,<sup>34</sup> but as an origin. Madness is not silence as Foucault presents it but another method. The similarity of the word logos (speech) to logic as the application of a method of thinking, of one specific way to analyze and combine data, leads to the denial of other ways as if they did not exist, as if they were unintelligible. As long as this way of thinking bursts out and threatens to disturb the accepted order, it is condemned as madness.<sup>35</sup> But the threat of disturbing the order is necessary in Derrida's opinion, in spite of the great difficulty it causes and despite the possibility that it would be perceived as madness.

Je dirais plutôt dissension pour bien marquer qu'il s'agit d'une  
division de soi, d'un partage et d'un tourment intérieur du sens en

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<sup>32</sup> MDP p. 354, MoP p. 297.

<sup>33</sup> MDP p. 354, MoP p. 297.

<sup>34</sup> [...]; ce n'est plus celle qui divise et constitue "normalement" le moi, si l'on peut dire, encore que comme à Freud la notion de normalité apparaisse ici à Valéry comme "sommaire et trop simple" MDP p.355 ([...] it is no longer the source which "normally" divides and constitutes the I, if we might put it thus, although for Valery, as for Freud, the notion of normality appears to be "cursory and too simple" ) MoP p.298

<sup>35</sup> Puisque le silence dont on veut faire l'archéologie n'est pas un 'mutisme ou une non-parole originaire mais un silence survenu, une parole interloquée sur ordre, il s'agit donc, à l'intérieur d'un logos qui a précédé la déchirure raison-folie, à l'intérieur d'un logos laissant dialoguer en lui ce qu'on a appelé plus tard raison et folie (déraison), laissant librement circuler en lui et s'échanger raison et folie comme on laissait circuler les fous dans la cité au Moyen Age, il s'agit, à l'intérieur de ce logos du libre-échange, d'accéder à l'origine du protectionnisme d'une raison qui tient à se mettre à l'abri et à se constituer des garde-fous, à se constituer elle-même en garde-fou. Il s'agit donc d'accéder au point où le dialogue a été rompu, s'est partagé en deux soliloques: à ce que Foucault appelle d'un mot très fort la Décision. La Décision lie et sépare du même coup raison et folie; elle doit s'entendre ici à la fois comme l'acte originaire d'un ordre, d'un fiat, d'un décret, et comme une déchirure, une césure, une séparation, une discussions. L'E p. 62 (Because the silence whose archaeology is to be undertaken is not an original muteness or nondiscourse, but a subsequent silence, a discourse arrested by command, the issue is therefore to reach the origin of protectionism imposed by a reason that insists upon being sheltered, and that also insists upon providing itself with protective barriers against madness, thereby making itself into a barrier against madness; and to reach this origin from within a logos of free trade, that is, from within a logos that preceded the split of reason and madness, a logos which within itself permitted dialogue between what were later called reason and madness (unreason), permitted their free circulation and exchange, just as the medieval city permitted the free circulation of the mad within itself. The issue is therefore to reach the point at which the dialogue was broken off, dividing itself into two soliloquies – what Foucault calls, using a strong word, the decision. The decision, through a single act, links and separates reason and madness, and it must be understood at once both as the original act of order, a fiat, a decree, and as schism, a caesura, a separation, a dissection.)W p.38

général, du logos en général, d'un partage dans l'acte même du sentire. (I would prefer dissension, to underline that in question is a self-dividing action, a cleavage and torment interior to meaning in general, interior to logos in general, a division within the very act of sentire.)<sup>36</sup>

Ce parricide, qui ouvre le jeu de la différence et de l'écriture, c'est une décision effrayante. Même pour un Étranger anonyme. Il y faut des forces surhumaines. Et il faut risquer la folie ou de passer pour fou dans la société sage et sensée des fils reconnaissants. Aussi l'Étranger a-t-il encore peur de ne pas avoir la force, de jouer le fou, certes, mais aussi de tenir un discours qui pour de bon serait sans queue ni tête. (This parricide, which opens up the play of difference and writing, is a frightening decision. Even for an anonymous Stranger. It takes superhuman strength. And one runs the risk of madness or of being considered mad in the well-behaved, sane, sensible society of grateful sons. So the Stranger is still afraid of not having the strength, not only to play the fool, but also to maintain a discourse that might - for real - be without head and tail;<sup>37</sup>

This situation is that of 'Qual Quelle' – a situation in which the creative source of egoism is revealed,<sup>38</sup> and the freedom of the voice becomes evident. Madness is not silence, but another method of behavior.<sup>39</sup> The person who is perceived by those around him as mad because he does not follow accepted behavior, does not think that he is mad. For him, this is the way things are. But in a certain sense, it is the very freedom of voice that appears so clearly in madness, that brings silence back again. The very act of speech is a systematic method. The voice to which we refer lacks sound and is silent in its spontaneous aspect,<sup>40</sup> and the method it uses is not necessarily methodical. In this sense it can be said that it does not speak. The silent

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<sup>36</sup> L'E p. 62, W pp. 38-39.

<sup>37</sup> LD pp. 205-206. ; D p. 164-165

<sup>38</sup> In the explanation that Derrida gives to the name of the article 'Qual Quelle' he directs us to Hegel who ascribes to Boehme the claim that egoism is pain, torture, and the source of nature and spirit.

<sup>39</sup> The perception of madness as another method of behavior, as another kind of logic, is not unique in Derrida. It can be found in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* in the figure of Dionysus as shown by Sallis, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> MDP p. 352, MoP p. 296.

dimension of voice is the dimension that evades systematic method. Since voice is a non-mediated instance, it allows the voice to be intelligible even when it is not systematically arranged. This dimension of silence is the essence that is realized in style, modulation of voice, when the voice takes form. This silence is that which develops the perception of life as historicism.<sup>41</sup> The methodology of writings is sufficiently flexible so as to include the method in which the individual voice takes its form. The flexibility of writing is preserved even after its composition. Every individual who faces written signs and reads can find in them the levels that reflect his own voice. Here, too, as in the case of the writer who cannot identify the quality of his own voice, the reader reads the written words without being aware that he is listening to his own voice. In this sense there always remains a hidden aspect, and writing is preserved as an origin even for the person who did not compose it. Thus reflexivity exists (a necessary condition for origin) without allowing the "I" to contemplate itself fully. The situation described here is different from the pathological state called insanity, since insanity as a pathological condition imposes upon the individual a form of behavior that he is unable to criticize, oppose, or stop. On the other hand, the madness that is presented here refers to the ability to use another method, but this ability does not impose upon behavior. The individual who suffers from madness can examine his method of behavior and criticize it. Thus it is possible to respond to the constraints of language while preserving the voice as an active creator. This analysis recalls the way in which will is perceived in philosophical tradition. Here, too, the subject does not pay attention to it, and it is discovered only retroactively. On the other hand, this explanation sharpens the distinction between the concrete position of Derrida and the abstract position in philosophical tradition such as that of Hegel or Schopenhauer. In Hegel as in Schopenhauer, the will that is realized in the world (as metaphor or history) is one

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<sup>41</sup> [...] puisque faire une phrase, c'est manifester un sens possible. La phrase est par essence normale. Elle porte la normalité en soi, c'est-à-dire le sens, à tous les sens de ce mot, celui de Descartes en particulier. Elle porte en soi la normalité et le sens, quel que soit d'ailleurs l'état, la santé ou la folie de celui qui la profère ou par qui elle passe et sur qui, en qui elle s'articule. Dans sa syntaxe la plus pauvre, le logos est la raison, et une raison déjà historique. Et si la folie, c'est, en général, par-delà toute structure historique factice et déterminée, l'absence d'œuvre, alors la folie est bien par essence et en général, le silence, la parole coupée, dans une césure et une blessure qui entament bien la vie comme historicité en général. L'E p.83-84 ([...] for to make a sentence is to manifest a possible meaning. By its essence, the sentence is normal. It carries normality within it, that is, sense, in every sense of the word – Descartes's in particular. It carries normality and sense within it and does so whatever the state, whatever the health or madness of him who propounds it, or whom it passes through, on whom, in whom it is articulated. In its most impoverished syntax, logos is reason and, indeed, a historical reason. And if madness in general, beyond any factitious and determined historical structure, is the absence of a work, then madness is indeed, essentially and generally, silence, stifled speech, within a caesura and a wound that open up life as historicity in general.) W p. 54 This idea will be elaborated in the chapter about historicism

will, general and abstract, which stands outside the realized system. Derrida, who speak of the concrete voice, is actually speaking about many personal wills. Each of these wills is found within the system and is part of it. Later on I shall clarify what this implies. At this stage I shall re-examine the possibility of the perception of writing as origin in order to sharpen the understanding of the possibility to respond to constraints of language and at the same time to be actively creative.

#### 2.4 Writing as an Origin

So far I have examined two possibilities out of the three that were raised by presenting writing as "*point de*". During the examination it became clear that writing can be revealed as both preserving the sense given it by the writer and also as concealing it. But neither of these two possibilities explains the ability of the voice to remain unsystematic and at the same time to be able to reflect upon itself. I identified the ability of the voice to remain understood by itself unsystematically as the silent aspect revealed in the voice. Every concrete individual voice is endowed with a silent aspect, that is to say an aspect that is unsystematic, and in this sense every voice has a unique point of origin that is not organized within any system. But this uniqueness is clearly exposed when the voice grasps reality by means of method other than the accepted one. This other method is called madness, so long as other individuals did not accept it. If the method is accepted by a large group of concrete individuals it shapes reality. This means that such a reality is the product of a method agreed upon. This state of affairs was given expression in the framework of an analysis of the status of scientific theories by Kuhn.<sup>42</sup> One may speak about writing in a similar manner as a system of signs that is decoded according to a certain method. The method is a system of conventional meanings that has been accepted by a given society. For that reason it may be asserted that writing preserves the sense that was given it by the writer so long as the writer and reader are using the same conventional method. But if the reader is using another conventional method, the sense given to it by the writer is lost. Whenever a reader activates a method that has not been given the official approval of other individuals he behaves like a madman, but if he succeeds in convincing other individuals to make use of his method, this

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<sup>42</sup> Kuhn's book describes a process of this kind.

method will become the new convention. In this section I shall trace in detail how Derrida presents this situation.

Valéry, says Derrida, reminds philosophers that philosophy is written, and that the philosopher is a philosopher so long as he forgets that this is so.<sup>43</sup> The two points mentioned here are very important for the continuation of the argument: that the written text is written and that it is forgotten as being a written text.<sup>44</sup> Since the text is written, it leads to the disruption of the immediacy of heard-speech (understanding). In the disruption of immediacy, the advantage is lost of unmediated access of the voice and truth-value<sup>45</sup> that is attributed to the voice by virtue of its intuitive status. Since the truth-value is lost, the philosopher confronts writing while forgetting and denying that the truth-value is lost. Writing allows the writer to establish an ideal presence that he knows, but by putting this ideal presence into words, this truth has already waned. This is because the voice itself has been subjected to delay, discontinuity, and otherness, which create it as method of different traces. The writer, in expressing himself, does not pay attention to the special use he makes in choosing a certain composition of words. In his view he is presenting his ideas and his knowledge by means of a tool that he did not create. This generates a sense of alienation that occurs when reading these words retroactively.<sup>46</sup> The philosopher is terrified by the gap that arises within speech through the use of

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<sup>43</sup> Valéry rappelle au philosophe que la philosophie s'écrit. Et que le philosophe est philosophe en tant qu'il l'oublie. MDP p.346 (Valéry reminds the philosopher that philosophy is written. And that the philosopher is philosopher to the extent that he forgets this.) MoP p.291 This is presented in the name of Valéry, but since Derrida does not object to them, I consider it as Derrida's position. Norris, who refers to this article on this subject, presents it as Valéry's position adopted by Derrida (Norris, pp. 22-23), but actually finds this idea in 'Plato's Pharmacy' (Norris, p. 33).

<sup>44</sup> In this case, the argument concerns philosophy, except that what is being asserted is not exclusive for philosophy. This matter is clarified through the way Derrida analyzes literary and dramatic works in the same way he analyzes philosophical texts. It is commonly accepted that Derrida's analysis should be seen as the presentation of philosophical texts as literary texts. But since the arguments are philosophical in nature, it is reasonable to suppose that he may be regarding literary texts and philosophical texts. From this we may deduce that for Derrida the definition of texts as literature, philosophy or anything else is secondary to the fact that they are written, and therefore he can make general assertions regarding writing. In an interpolated statement that appears in 'Cogito and the History of Madness', Derrida ratifies this by saying [...] tout philosophe ou tout sujet parlant (et le philosophe n'est que le sujet parlant par excellence)[...] L'E p.84 ([...] any philosopher or speaking subject (and the philosopher is but the speaking subject par excellence) [...]) W p.54 that all philosophers and all subjects speak, and the philosopher is a subject par excellence. W p. 54, This argument does not intend to blur the differences between philosophy and literature but to expose an aspect that is obvious but forgotten – that both of them are written texts. On the other hand, in the discussion conducted by Norris on this subject, he stresses the need to preserve each field separately. See Norris, pp. 23-24.

<sup>45</sup> The truth here is in the sense of explicit and tested criteria.

<sup>46</sup> Effrayé par la différence dans le s'entendre-parler, par l'écriture dans la parole,[...] MDP p.346-347 (Terrified by the difference within hearing-oneself-speak, by the writing within speech [...]) MoP p. 291.

fixed forms in writing, because for him writing is supposed to close the gaps that are created.<sup>47</sup>

Consciousness is discourse, it is speech making use of words that are in themselves forms that await filling with content that voice will give them. As forms, they are traces of past contents, but as we see from the way that Derrida himself activates language, the degree of rigidity in the forms into which content will be poured is not total.<sup>48</sup> This means that they are able to receive various contents, which leaves space for the voice to maneuver. Tension thus arises between the fixed and alienating quality of writing and its being a sufficiently flexible means to contain new contents. On the basis of this tension, the philosopher is presented as an artist of form.<sup>49</sup> But philosophers are artists that deny being artists, and their artistry is given expression in the style of writing that corresponds to the timbre of the voice, to its particularity. This particularity cannot be identified by the writer because from his viewpoint he is using the form in the way that he understands it. In order to identify its particularity he must be capable of seeing what he does not see.<sup>50</sup> In a note (No. 25), the translator of the text into English observes that Derrida inserts the word "sourdre" which comes from the word "sourd", meaning deaf, so that the sounding of the voice, its emission into the air, causes deafness.<sup>51</sup>

The mechanism that is evident here is suitable for everything that Derrida has so far presented. On one hand, this movement does not eliminate the proximity of the voice to itself, to be heard/understood to itself, which is an essential quality for being presented as intuitive, creative will, as origin. On the other hand, it is incapable of returning to itself except as an "I" that is realized as source. Derrida

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<sup>47</sup> L'écriture philosophique vient alors, littéralement, colmater cette brèche, fermer la vanne et rêver la vierge continuité. MDP p.346 (Philosophical writing, then, literally comes to bridge this gap, to close the dike, and to dream of virgin continuity.) MoP p.291

<sup>48</sup> There is no intention here of innovations suggested by Derrida but the use that he makes of various meanings that a word possesses or meanings that are acceptable through similarities of sound. An example of this can be found in his use of the word "points" or the play on Hegel's name in *Glas*.

<sup>49</sup> En tant qu'artiste de la forme, ce qu'il est aux yeux de Valéry, le philosophe MDP p.347 [...] (As an artist of form, which is what he is from Valéry's point of view, the philosopher[...] MoP p. 292

<sup>50</sup> Le timbre de ma voix, le style de mon écriture, c'est ce qui pour (un) moi n'aura jamais été présent. Je n'entends ni ne reconnais le timbre de ma voix. Si mon style se marque, c'est seulement sur une face qui me reste invisible, illisible. Point de speculum : j'y suis aveugle à mon style, sourd au plus spontané de ma voix. C'est, pour reprendre de plus haut la formule, et la détourner vers une monstruosité lexicographique, le sourdre de la source. MDP p.352-353, (The timbre of my voice, the style of my writing are that which for (a) me never will have been present. I neither hear nor recognize the timbre of my voice. If my style marks itself, it is only on a surface which remains invisible and illegible for me. Point of speculum: here I am blind to my style, deaf to what is most spontaneous in my voice. It is, to take up again the formulation from above, and to make it deviate toward a lexicographical monstrosity, the sourdre of source.) MoP p.296

<sup>51</sup> MoP p. 296.

himself remarks in that same place (Note 25) that once again source must be dissociated from origin.<sup>52</sup> As presence, writing returns endlessly.

La vérité de l'écriture, c'est-à-dire, nous allons le voir, la non-vérité, nous ne pouvons la découvrir en nous-mêmes par nous-mêmes [...] par l'écriture ou par le mythe, se signifient la rupture généalogique et l'éloignement de l'origine. On remarquera surtout que ce dont l'écriture sera plus loin accusée - de répéter sans savoir - définit ici la démarche qui conduit à l'énoncé et à la détermination de son statut. On commence par répéter sans savoir - par un mythe - la définition de l'écriture : répéter sans savoir. (The truth of writing, that is, as we shall see, (the) nontruth, cannot be discovered in ourselves by ourselves. [...] through writing or through myth, the genealogical break and the estrangement from the origin are sounded. One should note most especially that what writing will later be accused of – repeating without knowing – here defines the very approach that leads to the statement and determination of its status. One thus begins by repeating without knowing – through a myth – the definition of writing, which is to repeat without knowing.)<sup>53</sup>

As source, as an event, writing cannot be presented to itself and therefore this is a return without knowledge, but the spontaneity that is expressed in writing, and is revealed in style and in the timbre of the voice, cannot be subjected to change or reduction.<sup>54</sup>

On one hand we have the presence of the unique quality of the voice, of the timbre of the voice, in writing style, and on the other hand, as something that is not aware of itself, writing is not immediate self-presence. Although the writing articulates the voice, it is a mediator. This quality of writing is supplément. Supplément, as

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<sup>52</sup> Une fois de plus, il faut donc dissocier la valeur d'origine de la valeur de source. MDP p.353 § 19 (Once more, then, the value of the origin must be dissociated from the value of the source.) MoP p. 296 §.25

<sup>53</sup> LD p. 92. D p. 74-75

<sup>54</sup> Le spontané ne peut surgir comme initialité pure de l'événement qu'à la condition de ne pas se présenter lui-même, à cette condition de passivité inconcevable et *irrelevant* où rien ne peut se présenter à soi-même. Nous requérons ici une logique paradoxale de l'événement comme *source qui ne peut pas se présenter, s'arriver*. La valeur d'événement est peut-être indissociable de celle de présence, elle reste en toute rigueur incompatible avec celle de présence à soi. MDP p.353, (The spontaneous can emerge as the pure initiality of the event only on condition that does not itself *present itself*, on the condition of this inconceivable and *irrelevant* passivity in which nothing can present itself to itself. Here we are in need of paradoxical logic of the event as a *source which cannot present itself, happen to itself*. The value of the event is perhaps indissociable from that of presence; it remains rigorously incompatible with that of self-presence.) MoP p. 296-297

replacement, has two meanings as I have shown above: 1. As taking the place of something so that it will not be lost, and thus preserves the intended meaning. 2. Replaces it, standing in place of the intended meaning, and thus changes the meaning into something else. Derrida recognizes writing as a unique connection that can only be found within it between origin and source, between a systematic, fixed dimension and a free, unpredicted dimension, a connection that preserves the uniqueness of all its components.

Here Derrida's position with regard to writing becomes clear. For him, writing is the origin of philosophy and is prior to speech, just as origin is prior to source, and thus the claim that writing is origin is clarified. The identity of the silent dimension as the dimension of voice shows that the reference is not to exceptional people (those who are mad or inspired). Madness, genius, and aesthetic expression are unique events in which the voice is revealed in its freedom, but Derrida does not intend to say that they are the only things endowed with freedom.<sup>55</sup> Everyone is endowed with voice, with freedom, but in a way that is more difficult to release it and therefore more difficult to express. Accordingly everyone is (at least potentially) an origin and not only a source.

The individual voice through its reading of what is written buries the intention of the voice that precedes it, and this intention can be given a solid casing in writing so that another individual voice can disclose it. At this point the possibility recurs of negating the origin and raises its head once again. The deliberations we have followed up to this point seem to have returned us to the starting point. If we examine the entire process we shall find that same movement that Derrida thinks is the greatest discovery of the introduction to Husserl's *Origin of Geometry* – a movement that is an endless creation of meanings. This is the greatest discovery because it is the mechanism that will ensure a non-deterministic system in the world of action, in the world that is entirely a world of will.<sup>56</sup> Without writing, both origin (the voice) and source (the "I") cannot be realized, and so cannot exist.

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<sup>55</sup> Freedom here is the freedom to see things differently from what they are. I shall deal with this later on in greater detail.

<sup>56</sup> Aussi, par un mouvement en vrille qui fait tout le prix de notre texte, une audacieuse percée s'effectue à l'intérieur des limites régionales de la recherche et les transgresse vers une nouvelle forme de radicalité. A propos de l'histoire intentionnelle d'une science éidétique particulière, une prise de conscience de ses conditions de possibilité nous révélera exemplairement les conditions et le sens de l'historicité de la science en général, puis de l'historicité universelle comme horizon dernier de tout sens et de toute objectivité en général. HOG p. 14 (Also, by a spiraling movement which is the major find of our text, a bold clearing is brought about within the regional limits of the investigation and transgresses them toward a new form of radicality. Concerning the intentional history of particular eidetic science, a sense-investigation of its conditions of possibility will reveal to us

The dynamics of the creation of meanings indicates the possibility that what has been pushed to the margins can return to the center. For this reason precedence is not given to the internal, to the voice, instead of the external (or vice-versa). The understanding of the relationship between the voice as origin and the "I" as source through the mediation of writing, sharpens the claim of Derrida that there is no place for duality that gives precedence to one aspect over the other that characterizes Western philosophy.

The movement that is an endless creation of meanings is entirely man-made. Expressed in this movement is the human ability to see in reality what is not yet there, to aspire, and to carry out an action. The products of this merging of the ability to see what is not yet there, and the ability to bring out what is seen from potentiality into actuality, are the cumulative acts of history and create phenomena, the area of human life.

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exemplarity the conditions and sense of historicity of science in general, then of universal historicity – the last horizon for all sense and Objectivity in general.) O p. 33-34.

### **Part III – Generation of the Phenomenon (Politics)**

In Part II I claimed that Derrida establishes a non-deterministic system by positing the voice as a creator that is unaware of the novelty of its creation except retroactively. But during the discussion in which the freedom of the voice was made clear, the essential nature of this non-deterministic system established by the voice was not clarified. Part III will deal with this issue. The non-deterministic system established by the voice is the phenomenon. During the discussion it will appear that in the phenomenon, just as in the individual, there is a non-deterministic aspect that is history (to be presented in Chapter 1) and a deterministic aspect that is historicism (to be presented in Chapter 2). In those chapters we will see that the parallel between the presentation of the phenomenon and the presentation of the individual is also expressed in the components that constitute history and historicism. Within the area of phenomenon there appears *différance* that parallels writing, and *trace* that parallels voice. When Derrida examines the realized area, he once again reveals the concrete individuals that construct it. This area is the result of the activity of many individuals whose ability depends on the relationship between them and the possibilities that this area opens and/or closes before the individuals who are realizing it. When these relationships become a conscious experience for the individuals who are involved in them, they are called ethics. Chapter 3 will examine the possibility of Ethics of which Derrida speaks (3.1) and expose its essential nature (3.2).

## Chapter 1 – History

In her book *Jacques Derrida: Opening Lines*, Marian Hobson says that Derrida examines the problem that history poses for phenomenology in his thesis and in the book *The Origin of Geometry: An Introduction*. In that book, when Derrida mentions Husserl's perception of history, he states in a footnote that with regard to the question of history in the philosophy of Husserl he has recourse to the interpretation of Paul Ricoeur.<sup>1</sup> Besides this, Derrida does not clarify what is history, even though this concept occupies a central role in his philosophical thought.<sup>2</sup>

Ricoeur, to whom Derrida sends his readers, distinguishes between the deterministic dimension that is controlled by tradition (historicism) and the infinite dimension that gives actuality to human intelligence (history).<sup>3</sup> What can the infinite dimension that actualizes human intelligence, and the deterministic dimension that is controlled by tradition mean to Derrida?

History, says Derrida, is the knowledge and mastery over representation, production, and the collection of presence entities existing in the present.<sup>4</sup> What are these present entities? 'Timber' for example is a present entity. When Derrida speaks about presentation, production, and the collection of present entities he means that human history is the way in which people bring together entities, objects, into a group (production) give them a name (presentation), remember them as such (collection) and make use of these objects. For example, a group of objects that are characterized as having common properties (tree growth, woody center, etc.) while overlooking differentiating qualities (form of leaves, deciduous/ evergreen, various heights, etc.) was given the name 'timber' which represents it. This specific characteristic remains in human consciousness through the name given to it, and therefore the name given to this group of objects makes it possible to refer to it and remember it. The knowledge of the presentation and the mastery over it find expression in the ability to make appropriate use of the concept and the object 'timber'. Appropriate use applies to the qualities included in the object. During the course of human life this object may

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<sup>1</sup> HOG p. 8 §2, p. 29 §8.

<sup>2</sup> Opinions are divided regarding the place of history in Derrida's philosophy. I hope that the discussion presented here will show that this concept does play a central role in Derrida's early position.

<sup>3</sup> Ricoeur (1967):143-174.

<sup>4</sup> [...] car "histoire" n'a jamais voulu dire que cela : présentation (Gegenwärtigung) de l'être, production et recueillement de l'étant dans la présence, comme savoir et maîtrise. LV p.115 ([...] for "history" has never meant anything but the presentation (Gegenwärtigung) of Being, the production and recollection of beings in presence, as knowledge and mastery.) S p. 102

acquire additional qualities that indicate uses that were not known earlier. For example, if the qualities that had been included in the object 'timber' referred at first only to its combustibility, when it is discovered that one can carve timber to make a statue or boards, this quality is added to the object and the concept of timber. The ability to turn into boards for a building that protects one from the cold or a structure that floats on water adds to the object and the concept of timber an addition system of possible behavior in connection with it. The history of timber is the process of the adding and preserving of possibilities inherent in the object that is called 'timber'. These possibilities are the sense of the concept 'timber'. Similarly, in order to be able to produce, present, collect and find out the geometrical meaning of the entities, it is necessary that there should be a geometrical sense, a history of geometry. A collection of empirical entities still says nothing about their meaning as geometrical objects.<sup>5</sup> The sense can be a present entity that enters history (and in fact makes the engendering of history possible), only if it becomes an absolute, ideal object.<sup>6</sup> The noun (e.g. the word 'timber') is an absolute object. The end of the absolute, ideal object, what is intended in its meaning is clarified in retrospect through examining the way in which the object is constituted,<sup>7</sup> because it is dependent upon the qualities included in the sense. The constitutive principle of an ideal object is the same in all languages. In every language the name of an object is related to all the possibilities that society perceives as being contained within that object. In being the same principle for all languages, the construction of the concept does not depend on this or that language but on language in general, in the possibility of language,<sup>8</sup> in the very

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<sup>5</sup> En droit, ce savoir empirique ne peut se donner comme savoir historique de choses se rapportant à la géométrie qu'en supposant la clarté faite sur le sens même de ce qu'on appelle la géométrie, c'est-à-dire, ici, sur son sens d'origine. HOG p. 19 (Such empirical knowledge can justifiably present itself as historical knowledge of things related to geometry only by supposing a fully developed clarity about the very sense of what is called the geometrical science.) O p. 38 . The discussion is focused on geometry but geometry is only an example. Derrida repeatedly mentions that this is an example for history in general, for example, on p. 64 in the Introduction to Geometry. Therefore in spite of the fact that the discussion refers to geometry, one can deduce that it relates to other historical subjects.

<sup>6</sup> Car un sens n'est entré en histoire que s'il est devenu un objet absolu, [...] HOG p.53 (For a sense has entered into history only if it has become an absolute object [...]) O p.63 The absolute object is the object that exists without dependence on any condition or presentation. The absolute object is also an ideal object because as the product of thought that exists in the mind only, it constitutes a perfect model for what it represents.

<sup>7</sup> On ne peut ainsi éclairer le sens pur de la praxis subjective qui a engendré la géométrie que rétroactivement et à partir de son résultat. Le sens de l'acte constituant ne peut se déchiffrer que dans la trame de l'objet constitué. HOG p.53 (Thus, only retroactively and on the basis of its results can we illuminate the pure sense of subjective praxis which has engendered geometry. The sense of the constituting act can only be deciphered in the web of the constituted object.) O p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> [...]: l'objectivité idéale de la géométrie est d'abord présentée comme caractère commun à toutes les formes de langage et de la culture [...]. C'est dire qu'elles ne s'enracinent que dans un langage en général, non dans la facticité d'une langue et dans ses propres incarnations linguistiques. HOG p. 57 (...the ideal Objectivity of geometry is first presented as characteristic common to all forms of language and culture [...] ideal formations are rooted only in language in general, not in the factuality of languages and their particular linguistic incarnations.) O p.66

possibility to isolate the possibilities included in the object and to ignore those qualities that are not part of the possibilities embodied within it. Derrida does not think that one can speak about meaning in itself. Meaning is always the result of intention, of the will-to-speak, of the positing of some end. This means that meaning is always the product of voice. From this we find that history is the method for organizing voices that give meaning to entities. The meaning that the voices give consists of those very possibilities that I spoke about in the example of timber. The method of organization is called 'history' when the meaning is agreed upon by many individual voices, that is to say when many individuals agree that the possibility that one individual has indicated is possible. The more the voice is required to create, represent and collect the present entities in order to realize its aim, there is a difference between it and the entities. The positing of an end by the voice is metaphysical because it sees the things not as they are but as what they might be. As long as this difference exists, the correlations between presence and voice that is carried out through creation, representation and collection is infinite. Therefore the history of metaphysics can be expressed as the unfolding of a structure or of the desire to hear oneself speak.<sup>9</sup> The desire to listen (understand) oneself indicates a distinction between myself, the voice, and the entities. As long as there is a separation between the voice and entities, the voice gives meaning to the entities in accordance with its ends.<sup>10</sup> When there is no longer any difference between the voice and the entities and the correlation is complete, one can see only what there is without any possibilities and no end can be established. This is the state of closure, of absolute knowledge. In a state of wholeness experience, of closure, of absolute knowledge, there is no history<sup>11</sup> because in a state in which there is no end to establish there is no creation, representation and the collection of present entities, and consequently that there is no method for organizing this activity.

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<sup>9</sup> L'histoire de la métaphysique est le vouloir-s'entendre-parler absolu. LV p.115 (The history of metaphysics therefore can be expressed as the unfolding of the structure or schema of an absolute will-to-hear-oneself-speak.) S p. 102

<sup>10</sup> Autrement dit, la possibilité de quelque chose comme une histoire de la science impose une relecture et un réveil du "sens" de l'histoire en général: son sens phénoménologique se confondra en dernière instance avec son sens phénoménologique. HOG p.5 (In other words, the possibility of something like a history of science imposes a rereading and reawakening of the "sense" of history in general: ultimately, its phenomenological sense will merge with its teleological sense O p. 27

<sup>11</sup> L'histoire de l'être comme présence, comme présence à soi dans le savoir absolu, comme conscience (de) soi dans l'infinité de la parousie, cette histoire est close. LV p.115 (The history of being as presence, as self-presence in absolute knowledge, as consciousness of self in the infinity of parousia – this history is closed) S p.102

Language is a means for turning the end into an object. Language itself is composed of words, of ideal objects, whose essence is not identical with any empirical aspect.<sup>12</sup> It is precisely because the essential objectivity and ideality of words is not identical with any empirical aspect that it depends on factual, historical and empirical context that will ensure the formal and essential determination of the object.<sup>13</sup> The factual, historical contexts (that are themselves the realizations of the voice because they are the way in which the end posited by the voice is realized) are expressed in language, and therefore, says Derrida who quotes Husserl, ideality becomes objective only through language.<sup>14</sup> The recognition of language as that which makes it possible to constitute ideal objects presupposes an inter-subjective relationships,<sup>15</sup> and therefore the consciousness of being within society in a commonly shared world and the establishment of the possibility of a universal language are one and the same thing.<sup>16</sup> Language is the order of signs intended for meaning. The subject that shares a common world with other subjects can grasp the meaning intended by another subject by means of the same signs and order of signs.<sup>17</sup> Yet even when the subjects share among themselves the same principle of order, the meaning that they intend changes according to the end of that moment,<sup>18</sup> so that it is necessary to find the way in which they can share a meaning that does not change.

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<sup>12</sup> Le mot a donc une objectivité et une identité idéales, puisqu'il ne se confond avec aucun de ses matérialisations empiriques, phonétiques ou graphiques. HOG p. 58 (Thus, the word [mot] has an ideal Objectivity and identity, since it is not identical with any of its empirical, phonetic, or graphic materializations.) O p. 67 67.

<sup>13</sup> Mais le degré d'objectivité idéale du mot n'est, pourrait-on dire, que *primaire*. C'est à l'intérieur d'une langue factio-historique que le nom "Löwe" est libre, donc idéal, au regard de ses incarnations sensibles phonétiques ou graphiques. HOG p. 62 (But the word's degree of ideal Objectivity is only, we could say, *primary*. Only within a factio-historical language is the noun "Löwe" free, and therefore ideal, compared with its sensible, phonetic, or graphic incarnations.) O p. 70

<sup>14</sup> "C'est par la médiation du langage qui lui procure, pourrait-on dire, sa chair linguistique"(O. 181) que l'idéalité en vient à son objectivité. HOG p.69 (Ideality comes to its Objectivity "by means of language, through which it receives, so to speak, its linguistic flesh") , O p. 76

<sup>15</sup> Car reconnaître dans le langage ce qui constitue l'objectivité Idéale absolue, autant qu'il l'exprime, n'est-ce pas une autre façon d'annoncer ou de répéter que l'intersubjectivité transcendantale est condition de l'objectivité? HOG p. 73 (For, is the recognition in language of what constitutes absolute ideal Objectivity, as far as it states this Objectivity, not just another way of announcing or repeating that transcendental intersubjectivity is the condition of Objectivity?) O p.79

<sup>16</sup> La conscience de l'être-en-communauté dans un seul et même monde fonde la possibilité d'un langage universel. HOG p.74 (Consciousness of being-in-community in one and the same world establishes the possibility of a universal language.) O p. 79

<sup>17</sup> Le langage oral a libéré l'objet de la subjectivité individuelle, mais il le laisse enchaîné à son commencement et à la synchronie d'un échange à l'intérieur de la communauté institutrice. HOG p.84 (Speech [langage oral] has freed the object of individual subjectivity but leaves it bound to its beginning and the synchrony of an exchange within the institutive community.) O p. 87

<sup>18</sup> Avant d'être l'idéalité d'un objet identique pour d'autres sujets, le sens l'est ainsi pour des moments autres du même sujet. HOG p.82 ( thus, before being the ideality of an identical object for other subjects, sense is this ideality for other moments of the same subject.) O p. 86

A lui seul, le sujet parlant, au sens étroit du terme, est incapable de fonder absolument l'objectivité idéale du sens. HOG p.83 (By itself the speaking subject, in the strict sense of the term, is incapable of absolutely grounding the ideal Objectivity of sense.) O p.87.

The mechanism that allows for the (relative) preservation of a fixed meaning, is writing.<sup>19</sup> The writing that preserves a fixed meaning is writing in the sense of source, but it should not be forgotten that writing has also the meaning of origin, and therefore intersubjectivity lies at the basis of the relationship between one voice and another, between one origin and another (or between one will and another).<sup>20</sup>

In the discussion on writing as origin, we saw that the whole text serves as origin, as the expression of the voice that realizes it (reads it) and not specifically that of the writer. From the viewpoint of the writer, the text is always source, but when one reads things that he himself wrote it is a meeting of his voice as the origin of writing with his voice as the origin of the interpretation of the writing, which is the state of intra-subjectivity that becomes time.<sup>21</sup> Intra-subjectivity is the state in which the individual reflects upon itself as the 'I', as the 'I' that thinks. This reflexive movement is a temporal movement and therefore the cogito, the 'I' that thinks, must be situated within time, the movement of which ensures the existence of intra-subjectivity.<sup>22</sup> For this reason, the accumulation of time, history, is the only thing that begins with self-reflexivity.<sup>23</sup> At this point the claim becomes crystal clear that on one hand, history can be expressed as the unfolding of self-expression,<sup>24</sup> and on the other hand, this is a situation in which there is no history.<sup>25</sup> A situation in which there is no history is created when there is a fulfilment of intuitive experience that is expressed in absolute knowledge so that there is no need for self-reflexivity.

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<sup>19</sup> C'est la possibilité de l'écriture qui assurera la traditionalisation absolue de l'objet, son objectivité idéale absolue [...] .Elle le fera en émancipant le sens à l'égard de son évidence actuelle pour un sujet réel et de sa circulation actuelle à l'intérieur d'une communauté déterminée. HOG p.84 (The possibility of writing will assure the absolute traditionalization of the object, its absolute ideal Objectivity – [...] . Writing will do this by emancipating sense from its actually present evidence for a real subject and from its present circulation within a determined community.) O p. 87.

<sup>20</sup> L'intersubjectivité est donc d'abord, d'une certaine façon, le rapport non empirique de moi avec moi, de mon présent actuel avec d'autres présents comme tels, c'est-à-dire comme autres et comme présents (comme présents passés), d'une origine absolue avec d'autres origines absolues, qui sont toujours miennes malgré leur altérité radicale. HOG p.82 (Intersubjectivity is the relation of an absolute origin to other absolute origins, which are always my own, despite their radical alterity) O p. 86. Note that the source here should not be translated as the 'I' as we saw in previous sections dealing with the meaning of 'I' in source, origin and writing.

<sup>21</sup> La source étant devenue – c'est l'initelligible – le temps s'ouvre comme ce retard de l'origine sur elle-même. MDP p. 345 (The source having become – which is unintelligible itself – time opens itself as the delay of origin in relation to itself.) MoP p. 290.

<sup>22</sup> C'est-à-dire dès qu'il doit temporaliser le Cogito qui ne vaut lui-même que dans l'instant de l'intuition, de la pensée attentive à elle-même, dans ce point ou cette pointe de l'instant. Et c'est à ce lien entre le Cogito et le mouvement de la temporalisation qu'il Faudrait se rendre ici attentif. L'E p. 89 (That is to say, he must temporalize the Cogito, which itself is valid only during the instant of intuition, the instant of thought being attentive to itself, at the point, the sharpest point, of the instant. And here one should be attentive to this link between the Cogito and the movement of temporalization.) W p.58

<sup>23</sup> La seule chose qui commence par la réflexion, c'est l'histoire. L'É p.100 (The only thing that begins by reflecting itself is history.) W p.65

<sup>24</sup> LV p. 115, S p. 102.

<sup>25</sup> LV p. 115, S p. 102.

From the deliberations that have been presented so far, it appears that time is dependent upon self-reflexivity and is essentially a movement – the movement in which the individual relates to himself. As long as self-reflexivity does not exist it may be said that the phenomenon of time does not exist. Without the existence of the time phenomenon, there is no possibility for the existence of history, since history is the accumulation of time. Reflexivity is possible only in a state of duality, in the situation in which something may be posited as reflecting upon itself. The state of duality becomes possible by means of writing. Writing is an anchoring point through which the individual can reflect upon himself. As that which allows separation between the individual and himself, writing constitutes a place of non-fulfilment, of a breach in the individual. This breach is space. It is the spatial relationship between the 'I' which is the source (finite) and the voice which is origin (infinite) and it is what makes self-consciousness possible.<sup>26</sup> By also being the point of anchorage that allows for the movement of the individual towards himself (i.e. time), and also the breach between the 'I' and voice (i.e. space), writing unifies space and time.<sup>27</sup> In order to emphasize that space and time are a single, indivisible essence, Derrida calls writing *différance*.<sup>28</sup> *Différance* is written with an 'a' in order to stress its space-time essence.<sup>29</sup> *Différance* is the relationship of duration/spacing in the being, or an ontological difference that is given to the organization in various methods. Various organizational methods are expressed in different periods, and therefore *différance* is simply the historical and periodical manifestation of a being. The 'a' which

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<sup>26</sup> Il situe l'espace où la conscience se signifie à elle-même la prescription de l'Idée et se reconnaît ainsi comme conscience transcendante à travers le signe de l'infini : c'est l'intervalle entre l'Idée de l'infinité dans son évidence formelle-finie, mais concrète, et l'infinité elle-même dont on a l'Idée. HOG p.154 (He locates the space where consciousness notifies itself of the idea's prescription and thus is recognized as transcendental consciousness through the sign of infinite: this space is the interval between the Idea of infinity in its formal and finite (yet concrete) evidence and the infinite itself of which there is the Idea.) O p. 140

<sup>27</sup> La pratique de la langue ou du code supposant un jeu de formes, sans substance déterminée et invariable, supposant aussi dans la pratique de ce jeu une rétention et une protention des différences, un espacement et une temporisation, un jeu de traces, il faut bien que ce soit une sorte d'écriture avant la lettre, une archi-écriture sans origine présente, sans archie. MDP p.16 (The practice of a language or of a code supposing a play of forms without a determined and invariable substance, and also supposing in practice of this play a retention and protention of differences, a spacing and temporization, a play of traces – all this must be a kind of writing before the letter, an archi-writing without a present origin, without archi- ) MoP p. 15

<sup>28</sup> Que l'écriture soit l'autre nom de cette *différance*, nous ne cesserons maintenant de Le vérifier. DLG p. 378 (From here on, I shall constantly reconfirm that writing is the other name of this *différance*.) OG p. 268

<sup>29</sup> C'est cette déperdition de sens que devrait compenser - économiquement - le mot *différance* (avec un a), Celui-ci peut renvoyer à la fois à toute la configuration de ses significations. MDP p. 8, (Thus the word *différance* (with an a) is to compensate –economically- this loss of meaning, for *différance* can refer simultaneously to the entire configuration of its meaning). MoP p.8

Mais séjournons d'abord dans la problématique sémiologique pour voir s'y conjoindre la *différance* comme temporisation et *La différence* comme espacement. MDP p.10 (But first let us remain within the semiological problematic in order to see *différance* as temporization and *différance* as spacing conjoined.) MoP p.10 MDP p. 8, MoP p. 8; MDP p. 23, MoP p. 22.

emphasizes the space-time essence, indicates the movement embodied in historical manifestation, so that there is no stable system that has reached fulfilment.<sup>30</sup> From this it appears that, for Derrida, history is the form of ordering that is shared by the subjects. Various forms of ordering are called different periods. This ordering is expressed in an organizational method called reason,<sup>31</sup> or book. Writing, the ordering that is called history, is the infinite dimension that human intelligence realizes. Derrida calls the area that is obtained from this realization on one hand, and that establishes it on the other hand, into reason or book, historicism.

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<sup>30</sup> [...] nous désignerons par différance le mouvement selon lequel la langue, ou tout code, tout système de renvois en général se constitue "historiquement" comme tissu de différences. MDP p.12-13 ([...] we will designate as différance the movement according to which language, or any code, any system of referral in general, is constituted "historically" as a weave of differences.) MoP p.12

Sur une certaine face d'elle-même, la différance n'est certes que le déploiement historique et époqual de l'être ou de la différence ontologique. Le a de la différance marque le mouvement de ce déploiement. MDP p.23 (In a certain aspect of itself, différance is certainly but the historical and epochal unfolding of Being or of the ontological difference. The a of différance marks the movement of this unfolding.) MoP p. 22 MDP pp. 12-13, MoP p. 12; MDP p. 3, MoP p. 22.

<sup>31</sup> Il sort de soi pour se reprendre en soi, dans le "présent virant" de sa présence à soi. Sortant de lui-même, le s'entendre-parler se constitue en histoire de la raison par le détour d'une écriture. Il se diffère ainsi pour se réapproprier. L'origine de la géométrie décrit la nécessité de cette exposition de la raison dans l'inscription mondaine. L'É p. 248 (In emerging from itself, hearing oneself speak constitutes itself as the history of reason through the detour of writing. Thus it differs from itself in order to reappropriate itself. The Origin of Geometry describes the necessity of this exposition of reason in a worldly inscription.) W p. 166

## Chapter 2 – Historicism

In the previous chapter I showed that the essential nature of historical and periodical being is differance. Thus in a certain sense it may be said that being is revealed through differance.<sup>1</sup> Differance itself is duration and extension, which means that differance is difference. In the previous chapter writing was shown to be the same thing that divides voice (origin) from the 'I' (source). For this reason writing is called differance. More precisely, writing seems to be too general a system for clarifying the way in which the difference between the voice and the 'I' is made. Difference is the relation of one thing to another, and therefore one cannot think about difference without some anchorage point that can be related to another anchorage point. When we pay attention to the aspect that composes the possibility of relationship, comparison and difference we reveal the trace. One cannot think about difference without trace,<sup>2</sup> and therefore it can be said that trace is that which makes difference possible.<sup>3</sup> Derrida sees trace as the preservation of otherness, of what is not known openly, of possibility. In his opinion, trace precedes all determination: it is not the preservation of "the past of what is present".<sup>4</sup> Trace is the point of connection between feeling and understanding since it points to something other than it is (traces that was left imprinted in the sand point to a person who walks and leave them behind.) In this sense it is not felt and does not exist (because neither the person nor the leg are present). On the other hand trace is sensibility and understanding at the same time (since trace itself is present and as such is sensed, and is self-evident since whoever sees it knows that it is evidence of something that was), and it is this that makes the expression of the sign possible.<sup>5</sup> In the discussion on the voice it was made

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<sup>1</sup> MDP pp. 12-13, MoP pp. 12, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Et la différence, nous l'éprouverons progressivement, ne se pense pas sans la trace. DLG p. 83 ([...] difference cannot be thought without the trace.) OG p. 57

<sup>3</sup> La trace est la différence qui ouvre l'apparaître et la signification. DLG p. 95 (The trace is the difference which opens appearance [l'apparaître] and signification.) OG p. 65

<sup>4</sup> MDP p. 22, MoP p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Bien qu'elle n'existe pas, bien qu'elle ne soit jamais un étant-présent hors de toute plénitude, sa possibilité est antérieure en droit à tout ce qu'on appelle signe (signifié/signifiant, contenu/expression, etc.), concept ou opération, motrice ou sensible. Cette différence n'est donc pas plus sensible qu'intelligible et elle permet l'articulation des signes entre eux à l'intérieur d'un même ordre abstrait - d'un texte phonique ou graphique par exemple - ou entre deux ordres d'expression. Elle permet l'articulation de la parole et de l'écriture - au sens courant - comme elle fonde l'opposition méta- physique entre le sensible et l'intelligible, puis entre signifiant et signifié, expression et contenu, etc. Si la langue n'était pas déjà, en ce sens, une écriture. aucune ~ notation ~ dérivée ne serait possible; et le problème classique des rapports entre parole et écriture ne saurait surgir. DLG p.92 (Although it does not exist, although it is never a being-present outside of all plenitude, its possibility is by rights anterior to all that one calls sign (signified/signifier, content/expression, etc.), concept or operation, motor or sensory. This difference is therefore not more sensible than intelligible and it permits the articulation of signs among themselves within the same abstract order – a phonic or graphic text for example – or between two orders of expression. It permits the articulation of speech and writing – in the colloquial sense – as it founds the metaphysical opposition between the

clear that voice is both sensibility and understanding, and this gives it the status of an intuitive unmediated instance. Trace is presented here as that which fulfills this function. Yet if this characterization is not sufficient enough to identify trace with voice, Derrida then says that writing preserves the trace, makes it possible. As recalled, writing gives presence to the individual voice, the intention, the individual sense. Voice is the intuitive instance that is heard (sensed) and understood. This is as long as it concerns the subject in relation to itself. Writing, as we have seen, gives presence to the voice of the writer and the voice of the reader. It gives presence to the positing of an end and expresses the gap between what is and what the voice would like it to be. Trace, through which writing is created, also embodies the gap within it (in this sense it is differance) and also the end (in this sense it is voice). Writing is subjectivity and inter-subjectivity. In the discussion that I held earlier about writing I showed the subjective side of it. When Derrida presents writing as preserving the trace he goes over to the inter-subjective side in which the trace is fulfilling the same role in the inter-subjective viewpoint as that which the voice fulfills in the subjective viewpoint.

We shall now follow the way in which Derrida presents the function of writing from the inter-subjective aspect. Meaning enters history only if it becomes an absolute, ideal object.<sup>6</sup> The ideal object is such that it does not change from different viewpoints. Therefore it may be said that the ideal object is such that its fixed place is exposed to pure gaze<sup>7</sup> and language is the setting in which one can place the ideal object.<sup>8</sup> Since thought manipulates ideal objects, it may be said that there is no thought outside of language.<sup>9</sup> But the spoken language is not sufficient to posit the ideal object. The spoken language is subject through speech to the influences of present changes. While speaking people can explain what they mean by using one

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sensible and intelligible, then between signifier and signified, expression and content, etc. If language were not already, in that sense, a writing, no derived "notation" would be possible; and the classical problem of relationships between speech and writing could not arise.) OG p. 62-63

<sup>6</sup> Car un sens n'est entré en histoire que s'il est devenu un objet absolu, c'est-à-dire un objet idéal qui, paradoxalement, doit avoir rompu toutes les amarres qui le retenaient au sol empirique de l'histoire. HOG p. 53 (For a sense has entered into history only if it has an absolute object, i.e., an ideal object which, paradoxically, must have broken all the moorings which secured it to the empirical ground of history.) O p.63-64

<sup>7</sup> Constituer un objet idéal, c'est le mettre à la disposition permanente d'un pur regard. HOG p.72 (To constitute an ideal object is to put it at the permanent disposition of a pure gaze.) O p. 78 Pure gaze means a viewpoint that does not belong or is dependent upon any subject. As such, this point of view represents what "really is".

<sup>8</sup> [...] l'idéalité linguistique est le milieu où l'objet idéal se dépose comme ce qui se sédimente ou ce que l'on met en dépôt. L'É p. 72 ([...] linguistic ideality is the milieu in which the ideal object settles as what is sedimented or deposited.) O p. 78. La pensée est parole [...] L'É p.149 (Thought is speech[...]) W p. 100

<sup>9</sup> [...] n'y a pas de pensée avant le langage et hors de lui L'É p.163 ([...] there is no thought before language and outside of it [...]) W p. 110

word or another. As every word has more than one possible meaning, the ability to explain and to lead the listener to the exact meaning enables the speaker to express himself freely but not very accurately. Words can change their meaning, or have a unique meaning used by a closed group, etc. Therefore, in order for the object to be ideal, it must be released from any empirical connection that is dependent upon time and place. This release can be carried out only through writing.<sup>10</sup> Inter-subjective communication is conducted through agreed conventions between speakers in the course of speaking. Writing releases one from personal connection by linking one conventional meaning to other conventions.<sup>11</sup> The instance that preserves conventional meaning and links it with other conventions is trace. Trace is the common root of writing and speech<sup>12</sup> in the sense that it allows to set individual ends<sup>13</sup> and as there is always a rift between ends and reality, it also actualizes the gap between voice and entities. Therefore, writing can never be considered under the category of subjectivity.<sup>14</sup> There is no private writing. I hear/understand myself through words that I found and that no longer belong to me.<sup>15</sup> Since I did not create them but only found them, these are not my words, which mean to say that they do not attain my ends. The words that I found signify the ends of other voices. The traces stand for the ends of other voices and their use promotes the ends of other voice. In this sense trace is the eradication of independence.<sup>16</sup> Without words that signify

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<sup>10</sup> Le langage oral a libéré l'objet de la subjectivité individuelle, mais il le laisse enchaîné à son commencement et à la synchronie d'un échange à l'intérieur de la communauté institutrice.

C'est la possibilité de l'écriture qui assurera la traditionalisation absolue de l'objet, son objectivité idéale absolue c'est-à-dire la pureté de son rapport à une subjectivité transcendante universelle. Elle le fera en émancipant le sens à l'égard de son évidence actuelle pour un sujet réel et de sa circulation actuelle à l'intérieur d'une communauté déterminée HOG p.84 (Speech [*langage oral*] has freed the object of individual subjectivity but leaves it bound to its beginning and to the synchrony of an exchange within the *institutiv community*.)

The possibility of writing will assure the absolute traditionalization of the object, its absolute ideal Objectivity – i.e., the purity of its relation to universal transcendental subjectivity. Writing will do this by emancipating sense from its *actually present* evidence for real subject and from its present circulation within a determined community.) O p.87

<sup>11</sup> Le langage écrit fixerait des conventions liant entre elles d'autres conventions. DLG p. 22 (Written language would establish the conventions, interlinking other conventions with them.) OG p.11

<sup>12</sup> [...] la trace, écriture en général, racine commune de la parole et de l'écriture, [...] DLG p. 109 ([...] the trace, writing in general, common root of speech and writing[...]) OG p.74

<sup>13</sup> La trace est en effet l'origine absolue du sens en général. Ce qui revient à dire, encore une fois, qu'il n'y a pas d'origine absolue du sens en général. DLG p.95 (The trace is in fact the absolute origin of sense in general. Which amounts to saying once again that there is no absolute origin of sense in general.) OG p.65

<sup>14</sup> [...] écriture est autre que le sujet, en quelque sens qu'on l'entende. Elle ne pourra jamais être pensée sous sa catégorie : [...] DLG p.100 ([...] writing is other than the subject, in whatever sense the latter is understood. Writing can never be thought under the category of the subject; [...]) OG p.68.

<sup>15</sup> Dès que je parle, les mots que j'ai trouvés, dès lors que ce sont des mots, ne m'appartiennent plus, sont originellement répétés [...] L'É p. 264 (As soon as I speak, the words I have found (as soon as they are words) no longer belong to me, are originally repeated [...]) W p.177

<sup>16</sup> La trace est l'effacement de soi, de sa propre présence, elle est constituée par la menace ou l'angoisse de sa disparition irrémédiable, de la disparition de sa disparition. L'É p.339 (The trace is erasure of selfhood, of one's own presence, and is constituted by threat or anguish of its irremediable disappearance, of the disappearance of its disappearance.) W p.230

conventional ends there is no possibility for the correlation of ends among different individuals and no cooperation between them in order to realize common ends. Since society cannot exist without cooperation between individuals in the realization of common ends, it may be said that language institutes society.<sup>17</sup> There is no social structure without language. Language is a social matter, and humanity is conscious of itself as a language-based society.<sup>18</sup>

Trace fills a double role. On one hand it connects the voice with its ends by allowing the subject to attain its desired ends, and on the other hand it connects subjects and individuals. The connection of the voice with its ends means the realization of the voice. Therefore one may be confused between the voice and trace, and see voice in it, but voice is origin. Trace on the other hand cannot be origin.<sup>19</sup> As trace, as the realization of voice, it is revealed by the subject as actual source.

We have seen that writing serves both as origin and source. Since writing is difference as well as trace, both aspects of writing are made possible. Difference allows for the aspect of being origin, but as long as it is trace it allows the writing to be source. In the discussion about writing I showed that since writing is both origin and source, they can be distinguished but not separated. The presentation of writing as difference/trace distinguishes different aspects that cannot be separated. The distinction here is between the subjective and inter-subjective aspects of writing. As an inter-subjective component, trace can be called writing only within the context of history that is expressed in scientific or philosophical systematization.<sup>20</sup> To study science as a tradition and a cultural form is to study the meaning of its complete

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<sup>17</sup> Il n'y a pas d'institution sociale avant la langue, celle-ci n'est pas un élément de la culture parmi d'autres, elle est l'élément de l'institution en général; elle comprend et construit toute la structure sociale. DLG p,313 (There is no social institution before language, it is not one cultural element among others, it is the element of institutions in general, it includes and constructs the entire social structure.) OG p. 219

<sup>18</sup> La conscience de l'être-en-communauté dans un seul et même monde fonde la possibilité d'un langage universel. L'humanité prend d'abord conscience d'elle-même " comme communauté de langage immédiate ou médiate" HOG p.74 (Consciousness of being-in-community in one and same world establishes the possibility of universal language. Mankind is first conscious of itself "as an immediate and mediate linguistic community") O p. 79

<sup>19</sup> La trace n'est pas seulement la disparition de l'origine, elle veut dire ici - dans le discours que nous tenons et selon le parcours que nous suivons - que l'origine n'a même pas disparu, qu'elle n'a jamais été constituée qu'en retour par une non-origine, la trace, qui devient ainsi l'origine de l'origine. DLG p,90 (The trace is not only the disappearance of origin – within the discourse that we sustain and according to the path that we follow it means that origin did not even disappear, that it was never constituted except reciprocally by a nonorigin, the trace, which thus becomes the origin of origin).OG p. 61

<sup>20</sup> Cette racine commune, qui n'est pas une racine mais le dérochement de l'origine et qui n'est pas commune parce qu'elle ne revient au même qu'avec l'insistance si peu monotone de la différence, ce mouvement innommable de la différence-même que nous avons stratégiquement surnommé trace, réserve ou différence, ne pourrait s'appeler écriture que dans la clôture historique, c'est-à-dire dans les limites de la science et de la philosophie. DLG p, 142 (This common root, which is not a root but the concealment of the origin and which is not common because it does not amount to same thing except with the unmonotonous insistence of difference, this unnamable movement of difference-itself, that I have strategically nicknamed trace, reserve, or difference, could be called writing only within the historical closure, that is to say within the limits of science and philosophy.) OG p. 93.

historicity.<sup>21</sup> This is because the systematization of thought as consciousness is historicism.<sup>22</sup>

Historicism is realized meaning.<sup>23</sup> Meaning that is historicism is the individual intention that has been realized in a conventional framework. Meaning is realized in writing, and therefore writing is the source of historicism.<sup>24</sup> Conventions are the fixed intentions of individuals that have been accepted as possibilities in a social framework and in a given period. Whenever the intentions that are perceived as possibilities change, conventions also change. Tradition is the comprehensive phenomenon of the course of intentions by various voices, and this is what shapes the horizon of possibilities that are given to a society with that tradition.<sup>25</sup> This horizon is the structure that gives form to life developing within it. An analogy can be made with a population of fungi developing in a round, long, and narrow glass or in a wide square bowl. In the round glass the fungi population can be seen as being very deep with small round facial surfaces. In the wide bowl the fungi population will seem shallow with large square facial surfaces. The vessels are what give shape to the way in which the population appears. The horizon could have been compared to those vessels if it were not in itself part of the population to which it gives shape in the sense that is given to a comparison with skin or a plant peeling. But it cannot be so compared since these encapsulate the collection of cells that are the individual and constitute the borderline between the individual and its surroundings. The horizon on the other hand does not encapsulate what is inside as against that which is outside. From the viewpoint of the individual, the horizon is full of possibilities that lie before him

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<sup>21</sup>Prendre conscience d'une science comme tradition et forme de la culture, c'est prendre conscience de son historicité intégrale. HOG p.112 (To investigate the sense of a science as tradition and as cultural form is to investigate the sense of its complete historicity.) O p. 108

<sup>22</sup> Dans ses implications les plus radicales, Méthode n'est donc pas la préface neutre ou l'exercice préambulaire d'une pensée, mais la pensée elle-même dans la conscience de son historicité intégrale. HOG p.166 (In its most radical implications, then, Method is not the neutral preface or perambulatory exercise of thought. Rather, it is thought itself in the consciousness of its complete historicity.) O p.149

<sup>23</sup> Dans toutes les acceptions de ce mot, l'historicité est le sens. HOG p.166 (In all the significations of this term, historicity is sense.) O p. 150

<sup>24</sup> l'écriture ne sera jamais la simple "peinture de la voix " (Voltages) [...] ; et l'écriture comme origine de l'historicité pure, de la traditionalité pure, n'est que le telos d'une histoire de l'écriture [...] L'E p.24 ([...] writing will never be simple "voice-painting" (Voltaire). [...] :and writing as the origin of pure historicity, pure traditionality, is only the telos of a history of writing [...]) W p. 12

<sup>25</sup> Il est la traditionalité qui circule de l'un à l'autre, éclairant l'un par l'autre, dans un mouvement où la conscience invente son chemin en une réduction indéfinie et toujours déjà commencée, où toute aventure est une conversion et tout retour à l'origine une audace vers l'horizon. HOG p.165-166 (Traditionality is what circulates from one to other, illuminating one by the other in a movement wherein consciousness discovers its path in indefinite reduction, always already begun, and wherein every adventure is a change of direction [conversion] and every return to the origin an audacious move toward the horizon.) O p. 149 .

infinitely.<sup>26</sup> Therefore society is contained within history and historicism is the essential horizon of humanity.<sup>27</sup> Historicism is the language that allows the subject to appear and experience his own presence as an inter-subjective relationship, to experience himself within time.<sup>28</sup> For this reason it may be said that life develops as historicism.<sup>29</sup> Intentionality is the root of historicism, or in other words, writing is the origin of historicism.<sup>30</sup> But the desire to write, as we have already seen, is not the determination of a previous desire, On the contrary, the wish to write constantly proves that the aspect of will is the basic meaning of writing. This meaning is freedom.<sup>31</sup>

In an analysis of the way in which inter-subjectivity is realized as historicism, inter-subjectivity is seen as creating the deterministic/ non-deterministic extent of a phenomenon. Writing as origin and source of the voice on one hand, and as subjective and inter-subjective expression on the other, allows for the establishment of a socio-cultural expanse that, despite its enclosure, preserves the non-deterministic dimension. Writing is a given, a reality that is not closed off and does not impose possibilities because although writing has conventional meaning it is always open to other or new interpretations.

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<sup>26</sup> Sa notion convertit donc la condition de possibilité abstraite du criticisme à la potentialité infinie concrète qui y était secrètement présupposée; elle fait ainsi coïncider l'apriorique et le téléologique. HOG p.123 (The noting of horizon converts critical philosophy's state of abstract possibility into the concrete infinite potentiality secretly presupposed therein. The notion of horizon thus makes the a priori and the teleological coincide.) O p.117

<sup>27</sup> que l'historicité est l'horizon essentiel de l'humanité, dans la mesure où il n'y a pas d'humanité sans socialité et sans culture. HOG p.120-121 ([...] that every community is in history, that historicity is the essential horizon of humanity, insofar as there is no humanity without sociality and culture) O p.115.

<sup>28</sup> [...] l'historicité est prescrite à l'Être; que le retard soit la destinée de la Pensée elle-même comme Discours, seule une phénoménologie peut le dire et faire affleurer en une philosophie. Car seule elle peut faire apparaître l'historicité infinie, c'est-à-dire le discours et la dialecticité infinis comme la possibilité pure et l'essence même de l'Être en manifestation. Seule elle peut ouvrir à l'Être-Histoire la subjectivité absolue du Sens en faisant apparaître, au terme de la plus radicale réduction, la subjectivité transcendantale absolue comme pure temporalité passive-active, comme pure auto-temporalisation du Présent Vivant, c'est-à-dire déjà, nous l'avons vu, comme intersubjectivité, Intersubjectivité discursive et dialectique du Temps avec lui-même en l'infinie multiplicité et l'infinie implication de ses origines absolues, donnant droit à toute autre intersubjectivité en général et faisant irréductible l'unité polémique de l'apparaître et du disparaître. HOG p.170 ([...] historicity is prescribed for being: that delay is the destiny of Thought itself as Discourse – [...] For phenomenology alone can make infinite historicity appear: i.e., infinite discourse and infinite dialecticalness as the pure possibility and the very essence of Being in manifestation. It alone can open the absolute subjectivity of Sense to Being-history by making absolute transcendental subjectivity appear (at the end of the most radical reduction) as pure passive-active temporality, as pure auto-temporalization of Living Present –i.e., as we already saw, as intersubjectivity. The discursive and dialectical intersubjectivity of Time with itself in the infinite multiplicity and infinite implication of its absolute origins entitles every other intersubjectivity in general to exist and makes the polemical unity of appearing and disappearing irreducible.) O p.152

<sup>29</sup> L'E p. 84, W p. 54.

<sup>30</sup> L'E p. 24, W p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> Le vouloir-écrire ne se comprend pas à partir d'un volontarisme. L'écrire n'est pas la détermination ultérieure d'un vouloir primitif. L'écrire réveille au contraire le sens de volonté de la volonté : liberté, rupture avec le milieu de l'histoire empirique en vue d'un accord avec l'essence cachée de l'empirie, avec la pure historicité. L'E p. 24 (The will to write is not an ulterior determination of primal will. On the contrary, the will to write reawakens the willful sense of the will: freedom, break with the domain of empirical history, a break whose aim is reconciliation with hidden essence of empirical, with pure historicity.) W p.13

The system that Derrida establishes preserves a concrete, singular individualistic aspect throughout the course of its argumentation. On one hand the system is established through the relations between subjects, each of which is a subject that is established by means of a system that is created without him. But on the other hand, the positing of writing as a given, as an axis from which the system develops and to which it recurs, creates a movement that is motivated by the force of individual voices that cannot be anticipated as one cannot predict what ends will be posed tomorrow. This axis, which is constructed of a collection of individual voices that cannot be unified, constitutes that concrete, individual aspect. Derrida calls the movement that forcefully motivates the voices of individuals - historicism. As a movement that is created by the force of individual voices, and not by the force of objective laws dictated by a superior power, it is a political movement. The concept of politics here does not reflect the specific will of a certain person but the fact that the entire system is a realization of different wills, the sum total of the relationships between the different wills, or more precisely, this is the consensus formed through the struggle between different wills. It seems that Derrida sees the non-deterministic component of the socio-cultural expanse as that which gives validity to the identification of a moral act that is not derived from the command of a divine power and does not depend on a generalization regarding the character or nature of man. The ethical act that Derrida identifies is no different in this sense from the whole argument: it does not concern generalization, and the act is immanent within the created space.

In the discussion on the voice, there was a repeated demand concerning the conscious awareness of the voice. Consciousness is that which ensures that the activity of the voice will not be automatic, closed off. During the discussion that I have conducted so far, the mutual and essential relations that exist between the individual voice and concrete society within which it lives, have also been clarified. The deliberations that have been brought forward until now imply that even in the political expanse there is the possibility of conscious awareness and freedom of decision with regard to the character of this expanse. This possibility is ethics. When a balancing is made between individual wills in such a way that the individuals are aware of it, this is ethics. In the next chapter I shall present the ethical act that arises from the early writings of Derrida, and show how it is derived from the argument, supporting it and complementing it.

## Chapter 3 – Ethics

As I have shown so far, Derrida posits the voice as being free of conditions. This freedom from conditions is immanent for the voice and is a basic component in the absence of which there is no voice at all, and therefore there is no question of the possibility for the voice to remain free. For this reason, ethical requirements are not based on the tension between the possibility of the voice being free and the possibility that it is derivative and dependent. Derrida claims that there is a free component in every person that allows us to demand that he be held responsible for his environment and his actions. In his opinion, a person is responsible whether he chooses to realize his responsibility or not. There is no possibility that a person has not chosen either of these two options. In this chapter we shall examine what is responsibility and what is the meaning of realizing responsibility.

### 3.1 Deconstruction

In the discussion on historicism I showed that, for Derrida, life can be perceived when it appears as historicism. Historicism itself is book or writing in the sense of being a collection of conventional determinations in connection with and in relation to other conventions. This determination is realized in the trace. If we regard the presentation of life as historicism, as a book, or conventional connections, as a metaphorical statement, Derrida says that for him there are no concepts that are not metaphorical. Concepts concerning nature are no exception. Even the sun is an artificial structure.<sup>1</sup> This means that the perception of life as historicism is not metaphorical, and is not an exaggeration. This is the way in which Derrida regards the human sphere that is perceived through language (writing) and does not exist (is not perceived) if it is not

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<sup>1</sup> Nous disons plus haut: le soleil est ce référent unique, irremplaçable, naturel, autour duquel tout doit tourner, vers lequel tout doit se tourner. Nous devons maintenant, suivant pourtant le même trajet, retourner la proposition : le soleil proprement dit, le soleil sensible, ne fournit pas seulement de mauvaises connaissances parce que de mauvaises métaphores, il est seulement métaphorique. Puisqu'on ne peut plus s'assurer, nous dit Aristote, de ses caractères sensibles comme de ses "propres", le soleil n'est jamais présent en propre dans le discours. [...] Si le soleil est métaphorique déjà, toujours, un lustre, on dirait une construction artificielle si l'on pouvait encore accréditer cette signification quand la nature a disparu. Car, si le soleil n'est plus tout à fait naturel, que reste-t-il de naturel dans la nature? MDP p.300 (Above we said that the sun is unique, irreplaceable, natural referent, around which everything must turn, toward which everything must turn. Now, following the same route, however, we must reverse the proposition: the literally, properly named sun, the sensory sun, does not furnish poor knowledge solely because it furnishes poor metaphors, it is itself solely metaphorical. Since, as Aristotle tells us, we can no longer be certain of its sensory characteristic as of its "properties", the sun is never properly present in discourse. [...] If the sun is metaphorical always, already, it is no longer completely natural. It is always, already a luster, a chandelier, one might say an artificial construction, if one could still give credence to this signification when nature has disappeared. For if the sun is no longer completely natural, what in nature does remain natural?) MoP p.251

written.<sup>2</sup> All writing has a horizon of meanings, an aggregate of associations and understandings that determine the system of possibilities opened by the world of the individual who reads the written text. In order to clarify what this means, I shall take one part of the discussion in which Derrida analyzes a concept and indicates what is incorporated within it<sup>3</sup> - a geological image of "sedimentation" that unifies in an extraordinary way various images, but which also incorporates a perception of "the reality of something that is placed there", which is passive in meaning (instead of an image that has active, creative significance).<sup>4</sup> The person who uses a geological image accepts as self-understood the assumption that something is there, and he merely finds it. He does not perceive himself as someone who is a partner in the creation of that which is found. In the framework of this image, the person is passive in the sense that he does not have, in his view, any control over what he will find. The understanding of the perception incorporated within this image allows for a reasoned judgment concerning perception, which was not within the range of possibilities when the assumption was incorporated. The raising of the question concerning the way in which the individual perceives his relationship to the world halts automatic behavior and makes the relationship of the individual to his world a conscious one. In the discussion that I conducted on the difference between source and origin, I showed the importance in turning the position of the individual from an automatic stance to the stance of conscious awareness. That same discussion referred to the individual's self-perception. The discussion here concerns the relationship of the individual to his environment.<sup>5</sup> When Derrida speaks about an active role, about freedom, what he is referring to is the freedom to see and **choose** the possibility that is appropriate for his needs and ends.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The written word functions here, in the sense that Derrida claims it, as an intelligible convention. This idea is also expressed by Norris in presenting the analysis of Rousseau's position that Derrida gives in his *Grammatology*. See Norris, pp. 119-120.

<sup>3</sup> 'Plato's Pharmacy' is a complex example of this kind of analysis. The text of Derrida is entirely based on the analysis in question. The example that I chose here was selected because it is very simple and brief.

<sup>4</sup> L'image géologique de la "sédimentation" traduit remarquablement le style de cette implication, Elle rassemble - virtuellement elle aussi - l'image du niveau, de la couche [...]

Devant le sens sédimenté, le danger, c'est d'abord la passivité. HOG p.99 (The geological image of "sedimentation" translates remarkably well the style of that implication. It brings together, for all intents and purposes, the following images: The image of level or stratum - [...]

Confronting sedimented sense, our first danger is passivity.) O p.98-99

<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that the relationship of the individual to his environment does not include any reflexive relationship. Gasché shows that deconstruction has no connection with reflexivity. Gasché, *The Tain of the Mirror*.

<sup>6</sup> [...] nous sommes toujours libres de réveiller le sens passivement reçu, de ranimer toutes ses virtualités et de les "convertir en retour" dans "l'activité correspondante" HOG p.100 [...] we are always free to reawaken any passively received sense, to reanimate all its virtualities, and to "transform " them "back [...] into the corresponding activity" O p.99

The ability of the individual to deconstruct the trace that presents him with conventional meaning in such a way that there will not be any automatic reaction to the stimulus, allows him to determine the end he wishes to realize and the action that must be taken in order to activate it. Any decision regarding the possibility to which the individual relates, opens and closes a system of possibilities not only for the individual himself but also for other individuals. This is because the possibility that is acceptable in the opinion of other individuals becomes conventional meaning, the end that can be realized and/or the end to which one can aspire. Conventional meaning indicates one end and blocks other ends, and therefore the convention that has been set is what Derrida calls "univocal". Without the assumption of univocality there is no sense in the attempt to understand a sign as relating to one single meaning, and therefore univocality is the a priori and teleological condition for any historicism that is created from the aggregation of conventions, from the collection of voices that are perceived as univocal.<sup>7</sup> Univocality at its best only renders one single sense, and as such it constitutes a thread of intelligibility that links generations.<sup>8</sup> But there is no culture that is univocal,<sup>9</sup> because culture is made up of many voices. Meaning, as we have already seen, is the way in which the voice posits its ends within the inter-subjective space. For this reason the univocality of every voice is also teleological and not only a priori. At this point the circularity that I had indicated in the analysis of source / origin reappears. Univocality is not possible without multi-vocality, but multi-vocality is also impossible without univocality. This endless circularity of lacing conventions together and their unlacing is history.

L'ouverture de l'infini, loin d'être l'accès à quelque possible, anhistorique en soi et découvert dans une histoire qui en serait transfigurée, n'est au contraire que l'ouverture de l'histoire elle-même, dans la plus grande profondeur et la plus grande pureté de son essence. (Far from being the access to some possibility that is itself

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<sup>7</sup> 7 [ ...], mais la condition à la fois apriorique et téléologique de toute historicité. Elle est ce sans quoi les équivoques de la culture et de l'histoire empiriques elles-mêmes ne seraient pas possibles. HOG p.107 (Rather, univoicity is both the apriori and teleological condition for all historicity; it is that without which the very equivocations of empirical culture and history would not be possible.) O p. 104-5

<sup>8</sup> C'est dire qu'au moment même où elle soustrait le sens à la modification historique, elle seule rend possible, d'autre part, une histoire pure comme transmission et recueillement du sens, HOG p.103 (...the very moment univoicity removes sense beyond the reach of historical modification, it alone makes pure history possible, i.e., as transmission and recollection [recueillement] of sense.) O p. 102

<sup>9</sup> L'équivocité est la marque congénitale de toute culture. Cette première hypothèse d'une langue univoque et naturelle est donc absurde et contradictoire. HOG p.106 Equivocity is the congenital mark of every culture. O p. 103

ahistoric yet discovered within a history (which would in turn be transfigured by it), the openness of the infinite is only, on the contrary, the openness of history itself, in the utmost depths and purity of its essence.)<sup>10</sup>

The way in which conventions are interwoven with each other, the ordering of conventions, is also a convention (we noted that anyone who links conventions in a manner that differs from the acceptable one is a madman).

The act of linking conventions in a new order develops and terminates ends that were not included in the conventions of the old order. Conventions are linked together and are replaced, and the world changes. The exposure of new ends is seen as increasing the reservoir of possibilities. As such, the exposure of new ends is a creative act that creates a new world (from the god-creator of one world to the god-creator of a new world), a new historicity space, a new book.<sup>11</sup>

The axis from which this circular movement emerges and to which it returns and circles upon is trace. But since trace itself is subject to a process of perpetual change, a movement of constant accumulation of new meanings and the elimination of old meanings, a circular movement that resembles a tornado spinning around a center that can be presented as death.<sup>12</sup> The center can be presented as death because the acceptance of old meanings as imperative commands and not as possibilities negates the voice of the individual. This negation of the voice is like death for the individual since it does not allow the individual voice to posit its ends, an action that is the very essence of voice. The presentation of the center as death nullifies its

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<sup>10</sup> HOG p. 143, O p. 131.

<sup>11</sup> Mais dans le mouvement de cette succession, l'écriture veille, entre Dieu et Dieu, le Livre et le Livre. Et s'il se fait depuis cette veille et depuis l'outré-clôture, le retour au livre ne nous y renferme pas. Il est un moment de l'errance, il répète l'époque du livre, sa totalité de suspension entre deux écritures, son retrait et ce qui se réserve en lui. L'É p.429 (But within this movement of succession, writing keeps its vigil, between God and God, between the Book and Book. And if writing takes shape on the basis of both this vigil and beyond of the closure, then the return to the book does not enclose us within the book. The return is a moment of wondering, it repeats the epoch of the book, its totality suspended between two forms of writing, its withdrawal, and that which is reserved within it.) W p. 294-295

<sup>12</sup> Dès qu'un signe surgit, il commence par se répéter. Sans cela, il ne serait pas signe, il ne serait pas ce qu'il est, c'est-à-dire cette non-identité à soi qui renvoie régulièrement au même. C'est-à-dire à un autre signe qui lui-même naîtra de se diviser. Le graphème. à se répéter ainsi, n'a donc ni lieu ni centre naturels. Mais les a-t-il jamais perdus ? Son excentricité est-elle un décentrement ? Ne peut-on affirmer l'irréférence au centre au lieu de pleurer l'absence du centre ? Pourquoi ferait-on son deuil du centre ? Le centre, l'absence de jeu et de différence, n'est-ce pas un autre nom de la mort ? Celle qui rassure, apaise mais de son trou angoisse aussi et met en jeu ? L'É p.432 (As soon as a sign emerges, it begins by repeating itself. Without this, it would not be sign, would not be what it is, that is to say, the non-self-identity which regularly refers to the same. That is to say, to another sign, which itself will be born of having been divided. The grapheme, repeating itself in this fashion, thus has neither natural site nor natural center. But did it ever lose them ? Is its excentricity a decentering ? Can one not affirm the nonreferral to the center, rather than bemoan the absence of the center ? Why would one mourn for the center ? Is not the center, the absence of play and difference, another name for death ? The death which reassures and appeases, but also, with this hole, creates anguish and puts at stake ?) W p.297.

unifying quality and places in question the need for any axis at all. As a closed movement, historicism is book, the space for human activity, and is dependent upon a reservoir of possibilities that lie open in the text that is placed before the reader.<sup>13</sup> As long as the reader treats the book as an axis that requires defined aims and not as a means for the development of new possible ends, this axis is annihilation, death. What will prevent annihilation is the ability to consider possibilities, which Derrida calls deconstruction.

Here we have once again Derrida's position with regard to automatic action. The automatic act means death. The weighing of possibilities is the act of deconstruction that was mentioned above, which is established as the relationship between source and origin, as that movement that ends in creating something new without the 'I' being able to identify the source of what is new in its own egoity. It is therefore possible to understand Derrida's position that deconstruction occurs without the reflexivity of the ego or consciousness, and Gasché's analysis that sees deconstruction primarily as a criticism of reflexivity and speculation.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, for this reason precisely, one cannot accept Gasché's statement that deconstruction is not the outcome of subjective will.<sup>15</sup> Voice is the concrete will of the concrete subject, and any action that it carries out is a subjective act (even if it is not reflexive). Deconstruction is the act of a concrete voice and is not imposed upon someone as can be understood from the way it is rendered by Gasché. His claim that deconstruction is subject to the cultural convention within which it is done is correct. In this sense one cannot speak about an act of free will without limitation, but this does not diminish the central place that voice has in the activation of deconstruction. Presenting it as a necessity completely overlooks the openness that deconstruction makes possible.

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<sup>13</sup> Ici ou là, nous avons discerné l'écriture : un partage symétrique dessinait d'un côté la clôture du livre, de l'autre l'ouverture du texte. D'un côté l'encyclopédie théologique et sur son modèle, le livre de l'homme. De l'autre, un tissu de traces marquant la disparition d'un Dieu excédé ou d'un homme effacé. [...]

Et pourtant ne savions-nous pas que la clôture du livre n'était pas une limite parmi d'autres? Que c'est seulement dans le livre, y revenant sans cesse, y puisant toutes nos ressources, qu'il nous faudrait indéfiniment désigner l'écriture d'outre-livre? L'É p. 429 (Here or there we have discerned writing: a nonsymmetrical division designated on the one hand the closure of the book, and on the other the opening of the text. On the one hand the theological encyclopedia and, modeled upon it, the book of man. On the other a fabric of traces marking the disappearance of an exceeded God or of an erased man. [...] And yet did we not know that the closure of the book was not a simple limit among others? And that only in the book, coming back to it unceasingly, drawing all our resources from it; could we indefinitely designate the writing beyond the book?) W p. 294

<sup>14</sup> Gasché, (1979):183.

<sup>15</sup> Gasché, (1986):123.

In philosophical tradition it is commonly accepted that the theoretical field is open to possibilities.<sup>16</sup> Kant designates mathematics and the natural sciences as the areas that indicate a wide variety of possibilities, but in these areas the possibilities are presented as a system of cause and effect and are constrained by the necessity of choosing the cause to suit the effect.<sup>17</sup> The theoretical system that is intended to free us from the world of practical activity and make free acts possible, turns out to be a deterministic system. Rotenstreich points to Kant's recourse to the will as being determined by freedom, as something that is self-caused, as an activating factor in his discussion concerning ethics.<sup>18</sup> Derrida, who presents the will as the origin of the human sphere as a whole, reduces the theoretical field to the field of practice and creates an area of freedom in which the possibilities that are presented there do not establish a necessary causal system. As I have shown above, for Derrida, a necessary causal system in which the will is not consciously activated means death, and therefore it is important for Derrida to show the way in which the activation of the will is possible. In Derrida's writings, the way in which the activation of the will is possible is through deconstruction.

Deconstruction concerns the expanse of human activity and as such it is ethical.<sup>19</sup> Ethical activity results from the understanding that the way in which I realize what is written, the meaning that I insert within it, does not only concern me but it establishes the world anew at every instant. Deconstruction does not present rules about what is appropriate to do. This seems to be the reason why Derrida does not present rules for deconstruction but merely makes use of this activity. But as Norris repeatedly stresses, it is important to the same extent to recognize that the breaking down of textual and semantic barriers cannot be done in a free style that ignores the demand for disciplined reading,<sup>20</sup> since the proposed analysis is one that is available (as he finds it to be) and is concerned with examining what is the justification for presenting this specific reading or these possibilities and not others. Since for Derrida what is available is everything that is written, the area of human

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<sup>16</sup> Rotenstreich, pp. 18-19.

<sup>17</sup> Rotenstreich, p. 46.

<sup>18</sup> Rotenstreich, p. 46.

<sup>19</sup> The use here of the term ethics accords with the views of Critchley on the relationship between ethics and deconstruction. Since I have accepted the way in which Critchley develops the subject, I have not felt it necessary to do so myself, and his views are presented very briefly. See Critchley, (2002): 2

<sup>20</sup> Norris, p. 44.

activity, whatever is understood from the available deals with human activity, in the area of inter-subjectivity.

The ethical standpoint to which Derrida refers does not present positive or negative rules. In this sense, Bennington is right by saying that deconstruction cannot posit ethics.<sup>21</sup> In my view, Derrida's position is ethical so long as it exposes the free dimension of the voice and tries to realize it without unravelling the intersubjectivity, the political area. Derrida realizes the ethical dimension of the voice through deconstruction. The ethical behavior to which the early writings refer is the responsibility for realizing the free dimension without which human society has no meaning. In the next section I shall examine responsibility and the way in which it is presented in Derrida.

### 3.2 Responsibility

In the course of this discussion the motif of the freedom of the individual voice is repeatedly raised. In my view, this is a central motif in Derrida's position. Throughout the discussion I have shown how the reality to which Derrida refers is the concrete reality in which the individual voice has freedom in setting its own ends. Here I wish to show that the responsibility of which Derrida speaks is the complete realization of the freedom to set these ends.

The inter-subjective area, historicism, is possible only by virtue of writing. Writing is the realization of the individual voice that is revealed as ego. Without writing the voice does not exist. But the subjective ego cannot write without the inter-subjective, political area.<sup>22</sup> In this section I shall deal with the final link that ensures the coherence of the circular-spiral formation already referred to during this discussion. This link is the axis from which the political sphere emerges and to which it returns, comparable to writing in which the individual enters and from which he emerges, and like the trace into which historicism enters and emerges. This link is responsibility. I shall claim that responsibility fulfils the same role in politics as trace fulfils in historicism, and writing fulfils in the individual.

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<sup>21</sup> Bennington (2000): 34.

<sup>22</sup> De ce devenir, qui se totalise sans cesse dans un Présent absolu, la subjectivité égologique ne peut être responsable. HOG p.49 (Egological subjectivity cannot be responsible for this development, which is continually totalized in an absolute Present. Only a communal subjectivity can produce the historical system of truth and be wholly responsible for it.) O p.60

The starting point for Derrida's position is ethical-political and not analytical, as we can see from the following quotation.

Il n'y a aucune chance pour que dans la thématique de la métaphysique quelque chose ait bougé quant au concept de temps, d'Aristote à Hegel. Les concepts fondateurs de substance et de cause, avec tout leur système de concepts connexes, suffisent, quelle qu'ait pu être leur différenciation et leur problème- tique Interne, à (nous) assurer le relai et à nous assurer de la continuité ininterrompue, quoique fort différenciée, de tous les moments de la Métaphysique, de la Physique, de la Logique, en passant par l'Ethique. Faute de reconnaître cette puissante vérité systématique, on ne sait plus de quoi l'on parle [...] (There is no chance that within the thematic of metaphysics anything might have budged, as concerns the concept of time, from Aristotle to Hegel. The founding concepts of substance and cause, along with their entire system of connected concepts, suffice by themselves – whatever their differentiation and their internal problematics – to ensure (us of) the transmission and uninterrupted continuity – however highly differentiated – of all the moments of Metaphysics, Physics, and Logic, passing through Ethics. If one does not acknowledge this powerful, systematic truth, one no longer knows what one is talking about [...])<sup>23</sup>

The analytical position is itself a system of writing connected to a certain framework of order, and as such it opens possibilities and closes others. For this reason it is subject to examination. In so far as the analytical position is presented as objective and independent, it is presented clearly as an unethical position. This is because the results of an investigation that assumes the analytical position are beyond the field of responsibility of the person who writes it, and therefore cannot be subjected to critical (ethical) examination. This is the main argument against the position that Derrida calls logocentrism, palogocentrism.<sup>24</sup> In his opinion this position is not ethical

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<sup>23</sup> MDP p. 42, MoP p. 39.

<sup>24</sup> Dans l'aphasie originaire, quand manqua la voix du dieu ou du poète, il faut se contenter de ces vicaires de la parole : le cri et l'écriture. C'est le Livre des questions, la répétition nazie, la révolution poétique de notre siècle, l'extraordinaire réflexion de l'homme tentant aujourd'hui enfin - et pour toujours en vain - de reprendre, par tous les

because it exempts individuals from the need to examine the product of analytical thought, implants within them the passive illusion that they are not required to decide, and prevents them from discovering the possibilities that were discarded by the person who wrote the text.<sup>25</sup> As mentioned before, the area of possibility for Derrida is history. Derrida believes that the prevention of discovering new possibilities is degenerative because one possibility means fullness, wholeness, completeness which means lack of possibility. Wherever there is not possibility there is not life, which implies that a lack of possibility means death. Therefore philosophical truth that excludes all possibility is death.<sup>26</sup> Yet philosophical truth, wholeness is not possible because it is based on difference, on differance which is in itself a bundle of possibilities,<sup>27</sup> which means that philosophical truth is based on writing.<sup>28</sup> Writing is the origin of historicism.<sup>29</sup> The will to write is not the product of an earlier, larger will (often described as the force that imposes itself on the writer). On the contrary, the will to write means the will to set ends. The very essence of will is the freedom to set ends. This is not a desire motivated by some foreign influence and that indicates ulterior motivation. Modern thought sees all empirical events as derived from previous causes, as every cause leads automatically to its consequence, this state of affairs leads to a closed system in which there is no choice. When we understand that the will to write means the freedom to set ends, we recognize the aim of pure speech as the setting of ends, as writing, and as the responsibility to establish writing as writing, as someone who sets aims that are not part of a causal system. The setting of ends that are not derived from any previous cause is a breakdown of closed empirical

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moyens, par tous les chemins, possession de son langage, comme si cela avait un sens, et d'en revendiquer la responsabilité contre un Père du Logos. L'E p.110 (Within original aphasia, when the voice of the god or the poet is missing, one must be satisfied with the vicars of speech that are the cry and writing, this is *Le livre des questions*, the poetic revolution of our century, the extraordinary reflection of man finally attempting today – and always in vain- to retake possession of his language (as if this were meaningful) by any means, through all routes, and to claim responsibility for it against a Father of Logos.) W p.73

<sup>25</sup>Voyez-vous, ce qui m'a paru nécessaire et urgent, dans la situation historique qui est la nôtre, c'est une détermination générale des conditions d'été des limites de la philosophie, de la métaphysique, de tout ce qui la porte et de tout ce qu'elle porte. C'est tout ce qui se rassemble - je ne peux en dire plus ici – sous ce titre de *logocentrisme* que j'ai proposé dans *De la grammatologie* simultanément avec le projet de *déconstruction*. Po p. 69 (Don't you see, what has seemed necessary and urgent to me, in the historical situation which is our own, is a general determination of the conditions for the emergence and the limits of philosophy, of metaphysics, of everything that carries it on and that it carries on. In *Of Grammatology* I simultaneously proposed everything that can be reassembled under the rubric of *logocentrism* – and I cannot pursue this any further here – along with the project of *deconstruction*. P p.51)

<sup>26</sup> Or qu'est-ce que l'impossibilité d'une vérité ou d'une présence pleine de l'étant, du pleinement-étant? Ou inversement, puisqu'une telle vérité est la mort comme absolu de l'aveuglement, qu'est-ce que la mort comme vérité? LD p.208 (But now, what is the impossibility of any truth or any full presence of being, of any fully-being? Or inversely, since such truth would be death as the absolute form of blindness, what is death as truth? D p.166)

<sup>27</sup> MDP p. 3, MoP p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> D 166; LD p. 208.

<sup>29</sup> L'E p. 24, W p. 2.

control.<sup>30</sup> Freedom is expressed by choice.<sup>31</sup> The choice between different senses of the source according to the end that had been set concerns a different realization of the source. For this reason the understanding of the possibilities that are opened by the source makes the individual responsible for the chosen meaning.<sup>32</sup> Responsibility is based on perceiving the events of life as the result of acts and not as decreed by some superior power.

This is the response given by Derrida to the problems raised in presenting the Hegelian spirit as mere will. As Fleischman claims, the distinction between will (the practical aspect) and understanding (the theoretical aspect) allows for behavior that is not enforced. Derrida identifies writing as a means to retrieve different possibilities. But the way in which these possibilities are created remains hidden. The aspect of understanding is incorporated within the voice, merges with the will, and becomes inaccessible. In the next section I shall deal with the reason for presenting things in this manner.

Intentionality, the aim of the voice, underlies the sense that will be presented and realized. This sense is that which constructs the area of historicity. The area of historicity appears as a weaving together of many voices. The woven cloth derived from an aggregation of voices is a political area that is created by activation of different individual wills.<sup>33</sup> But in order that the individual can realize his aims he

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<sup>30</sup> Le vouloir-écrire ne se comprend pas à partir d'un volontarisme. L'écrire n'est pas la détermination ultérieure d'un vouloir primitif. L'écrire réveille au contraire le sens de volonté de la volonté : liberté, rupture avec le milieu de l'histoire empirique en vue d'un accord avec l'essence cachée de l'empirie, avec la pure historicité. vouloir-écrire et non pas désir d'écrire, car il ne s'agit pas d'affection mais de liberté et de devoir. [...]

Dans la mesure où l'acte littéraire procède d'abord de ce vouloir-écrire, il est bien la reconnaissance du pur langage, la responsabilité devant la vocation de la parole "pure" qui, une fois entendue, constitue l'écrivain comme tel. LE p.24-25 (The will to write is not an ulterior determination of primal will. On the contrary, the will to write reawakens the willful sense of the will: freedom, break with the domain of empirical history, a break whose aim is reconciliation with the hidden essence of empirical, with pure historicity. The will and the attempt to write are not the desire to write, for it is a question here not of affectivity but of freedom and duty. [...])

In the extent to which the literary act proceeds from this attempt-to-write, it is indeed acknowledgment of pure language, the responsibility confronting the vocation of "pure" speech which, once understood, constitutes the writer as such.) W p. 13.

<sup>31</sup> HOG p. 100, O p. 99.

<sup>32</sup> Prendre conscience (besinnen) des origines, c'est en même temps se rendre responsable (verantworten) du sens (Sinn) de la science et de la philosophie; c'est l'amener à la clarté de son "remplissement" ; C'est se mettre en mesure d'en répondre à partir du sens de la totalité de notre existence. HOG p.11 (To meditate on or investigate the sense (besinnen) of origins is at the same time to: make oneself responsible (verantworten) for the sense (Sinn) of science and philosophy, bring this sense to the clarity of its "fulfill[ment]", and put oneself in a position of responsibility for this sense starting from the total sense of our existence) O p. 31

<sup>33</sup> La liberté politique n'est pleine qu'au moment où la puissance du représentant est suspendue et rendue au représenté : [...]

Il faudrait donc atteindre à ce point où la source se retient en soi, revient ou remonte vers soi dans l'immédiateté inaliénable de la jouissance de soi, dans le moment de l'impossible représentation, dans sa souveraineté. Dans l'ordre politique, cette source est déterminée comme volonté : [...] DLG p.418-419 (Political liberty is full only at the moment when the power or the representer is suspended and given back to the represented:[...])

needs writing. Writing already presents the aims of another individual. The unintelligent use of the written text, the acceptance of the convention that the writing offers without determining its meaning will prevent the individual from realizing his own ends. It seems that this is the reason why Goekjian claims that deconstruction does not validate the sign as sign, but expresses doubt as to the stability and originality of the sign, and sees this as an ethical aspect that people tend to ignore.<sup>34</sup> The understanding of the possibilities embodied in writing will allow the individual to choose the possibility that advances his purpose, but at the same time will impose upon him the responsibility for his choice.<sup>35</sup>

Scientific investigation, as already noted, is not an exception. On the contrary, scientific investigation exhausts everything that has been said so far. On one hand, research is dependent upon the researching subject, and on the other hand, the researching subject is dependent upon the community even though he is an absolute origin. Mutual dependence creates mutual responsibility.<sup>36</sup> Thus responsibility is seen on the one hand as the revelation of the free aspect of the voice, without which there is no phenomenon or politics, and on the other hand, responsibility for the phenomenon (politics) is seen as that which ensures the possibility of the voice.

In this chapter I have made clear the way in which the individual and politics, or in Derrida's language, voice and phenomenon, are interrelated. As a sensitive area that does not stand independently for itself, politics needs mechanisms that will

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It is necessary, then, to reach the point where the source is held within itself, where it returns or reascends toward itself in the inalienable immediacy of self-possession [jouissance de soi], in the moment of the impossible representation, in its sovereignty. In political order, that source is determined as will:[...], OG p. 297.

<sup>34</sup> Goekjian, pp. 359, 361.

<sup>35</sup> Par exemple, ce qui unit le mot "supplément" à son concept n'a pas été inventé par Rousseau et l'originalité de son fonctionnement n'est ni pleinement maîtrisée par Rousseau ni simplement imposée par l'histoire et la langue, par l'histoire de la langue. Parler de l'écriture de Rousseau, c'est tenter de reconnaître ce qui échappe à ces catégories de passivité et d'activité, d'aveuglement et de responsabilité. DLG p. 214-215 (For example, what unites the word "supplement" to its concept was not invented by Rousseau and the originality of its functioning is neither fully mastered by Rousseau nor simply imposed by history and the language, by the history of the language. To speak of the writing of Rousseau is to try recognize what escapes these categories of passivity and activity, blindness and responsibility.) OG p. 150.

<sup>36</sup> La totalité de la science étant ouverte, la communauté totale a aussi l'unité d'un horizon, De plus, l'image de la "chaîne ouverte" n'épuise pas la profondeur de cette subjectivité communautaire. Car elle n'a pas seulement l'unité de la solidarité et de la co-responsabilité. Chaque savant ne se sent pas seulement lié à tous les autres par l'unité d'un objet ou d'une tâche. Sa propre subjectivité de savant est constituée par l'idée ou l'horizon de cette subjectivité totale qui se rend responsable en lui et par lui de chacun de ses actes de savant. En lui et par lui, c'est-à-dire sans se substituer à lui, car, dans le même temps, il reste origine absolue, source constituante et présente de la vérité. HOG p.49-50 (Since the totality of science is open, the universal community also has the unity of horizon. Furthermore, the image of "open chain" does not exhaust the depth of this communal subjectivity. For it not only has the unity of interrelatedness and co-responsibility – each investigator not only feels himself tied to all the others by the unity of an object or task – but the investigator's own subjectivity is constituted by the idea or horizon of this total subjectivity which is made responsible in and through him for each of his acts as a scientific investigator. In and through him, that means without being substituted for him, because, at the same time, he remains the absolute origin, the constituting and present source of truth.) O p. 60-61.

ensure its existence. These mechanisms are deconstruction and responsibility. Responsibility ensures that the interrelations between individuals, or politics, can exist. Deconstruction ensures the possibility of responsibility. Since deconstruction as well as responsibility are themselves interrelated, they constitute part of politics. Politics appears as conditioned by the individual, but it also conditions him.

## Chapter 4 – Concrete Individual and Politics

In the discussion above, I showed that Derrida constructs a philosophy that deconstructs generalization and puts the concrete individual at its center. This is not an attempt to reverse the direction of the discussion. Derrida does not wish to exchange the derivation of a particular instance from a generalization through a system of rules (deduction) with the derivation of a generalization by a collection of particular instances and their inclusion by means of the system of rules (induction). The system he intends does not belong to any order of generalization. It may be said that the project Derrida intends to carry out concerns on one hand the preservation of the concrete individual – the voice – without generalizing it, and on the other hand to present the whole, the phenomenon, or historicity, that constitutes the sum total of those concrete individuals, but not their generalization. The presentation of the project intended by Derrida as bi-polar, with the individual at one pole and the phenomenon at the other pole, simplifies the structure but is misleading. This is because for him the individual and the phenomenon are not two opposing poles but a whole in which both individuals and phenomenon can be identified. He explains society by means of the individual but at the same time the individual is explained through an inclusive system, society. A more accurate way to present the polarity of his thought is to place the free, non-deterministic aspect embodied in the individual voice in opposition to the deterministic aspect that is embodied in the concrete phenomenon. Although one can argue that this does put the individual (free, non-deterministic) and phenomenon (deterministic) at opposing poles, it has to be remembered that the voice exists only through and in the phenomenon. From this it appears that Derrida is developing a concrete-individual philosophy that stands in contrast to the generalization that is commonly accepted in traditional philosophy. It seems that the project intended by Derrida cannot be placed within the framework of traditional philosophical discussion and therefore requires a different system of relationships. In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida announces that he is sketching a general theoretical structure, and shows how this structure functions. The task, he says, is to change existing categories.<sup>1</sup> Later on he calls for the establishment of a new logic,<sup>2</sup> and claims that grammatology shows signs of release from what he calls logocentrism.<sup>3</sup> Logocentric philosophy is

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<sup>1</sup> DLG p. 7, OG p. lxxxix.

<sup>2</sup> DLG pp. 16-17, OG p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> DLG pp. 12-13, OG p. 4.

characterized by the attempt to include the changing particular instances of reality and to unify them within a single entity or alternatively to find the principle of particular instances that will explain their variation.<sup>4</sup> It seems that in *Of Grammatology*, Derrida presents those new categories that allows for intelligent discussion that does not generalize, that preserves the concrete individual and can explain the phenomenon not as a generalization. In the next section I shall present and analyze the new categories that Derrida presents and uses. In the section after that I shall show how an understanding of the categories used by Derrida resolves problems of interpretation.

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<sup>4</sup> Cassirer, I, pp. 73-77.

## Second Section - Conceptualization of Reality in Derridean Philosophy

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida declares that he offers a theoretical network in the first part of the book. He claims that this theoretical network is constructed of a number of critical concepts that he will examine in the second part.<sup>1</sup> I shall now follow his lead and retrieve the concepts he sets up and show that the reality which Derrida calls writing (as shown in the previous chapter) is emotional reality. The retrieving of the concepts will be carried out through the discussions of Cassirer.<sup>2</sup>

In his analysis, Cassirer distinguishes between two forms of thought: mythic and objective. The difference between them, he asserts, arises from the special axis of development for each of them. Mythic thinking develops through the tension between the sacred and the profane, while objective thought develops on the basis of a characterization of reality as a tension between physical forces, as the relationship between forces that are conceptualized by laws. The different axes of development led to different concepts of space, time, number and subjectivity and are governed by them. Even if it concerns different types of relationship and not different concrete realizations, the reality that is obtained as a result of the different types of relationship is different. This is because a reality that is conceived through objective concepts of time and space is completely different, in view of the possibilities it opens before a person, from the possibilities that are opened in a reality that is conceived in terms of time and space that are constituted around a sacred focal axis. For example, the faith in the possibility of magic or witchcraft, in contrast with the rejection of this faith, teaches us about various perceptions of reality that lead eventually to different realities. In order for magic or witchcraft to work it has to constitute the perception of a whole group of people. It is not enough for just one person to believe in magic or witchcraft. As long as a certain perception or certain standpoint has not received the status of social convention, it has no validity. This requirement is valid for Derrida as well. In the previous chapter I showed that Derrida expresses this standpoint with regard to metaphor, claiming that when metaphor becomes a convention it ceases to be a metaphor and becomes a fact.

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<sup>1</sup> DLG p. 7, OG p. lxxxix.

<sup>2</sup> On the reasons for the reference to Cassirer see the introductory chapter to this study.

In the course of his work, Derrida organizes his subjects in relational systems, in categories, that are neither mythological nor objective. Since Derrida uses such categories the resultant reality is neither mythological reality nor objective reality. This means that actions or standpoints that are perceived as possible in the framework of Derrida's philosophy are not open to those who accept mythological or objective categories, or are not understandable for him, just as the possibilities and standpoints open to those who accept mythological categories are not open to those who accept objective categories. Derrida himself does not relate to the question of the nature of reality, or any ontological standpoint. The nature of reality that is presented here is derived only from what Derrida thinks is possible.<sup>3</sup>

An examination of the categories that Derrida uses will show that the axis of development of these categories is the tension between the sense of ability and the sense of disability.<sup>4</sup> I shall show that along the axis of ability / disability to which Derrida refers, a reality develops that is different from both mythological and the scientific reality, and the concepts of time, space, number and subjectivity that function in it are different from those that function in objective thought and in mythic thinking.

The theoretical network that Derrida presents in *Of Grammatology* refers to the way in which categories develop from the individual concrete voice while building it up. Derrida is not the first to assume that it is the individual from whom the system develops. Heidegger<sup>5</sup> does this when he presents the *Dasein* as the starting

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<sup>3</sup> Je n'ai jamais identifié, de près ou de loin, comme on voudrait le faire croire pour des raisons qui restent à analyser, l'écriture au mythe. J'entends ici le concept d'écriture tel que j'ai tenté de le déterminer. Inversement, je me suis parfois intéressé au geste par lequel la philosophie excluait l'écriture de son champ ou du champ de la rationalité scientifique pour le maintenir dans un dehors qui prenait, parfois, la forme du mythe. C'est cette opération que j'ai interrogée, en particulier dans "La pharmacie de platon", ce qui réclamait des voies nouvelles et ne pouvait procéder ni de la mythologies, bien sûr, ni du concept philosophique de science. Il s'agit en particulier de déconstruire pratiquement l'opposition philosophique entre philosophie et mythe, entre logos et mythos. Cela ne peut se faire, pratiquement, j'insiste, textuellement, que selon les voies d'une autre écriture, avec les risques que cela comporte. L'incompréhension dont nous parlons en est un. Je crains qu'ils ne doivent s'aggraver encore. Pos p.71-72 (I have never, directly or indirectly, as is alleged for reasons that remain to be analysed, identified writing with myth. Here, I understand the concept of writing as I have attempted to determine it. Inversely, I sometimes have been interested in the gesture by means of which philosophy excluded writing from its field, or from the field of scientific rationality, in order to keep it in an exterior that sometimes took the form of myth. This is the operation that I investigated, particularly in "La pharmacie de Platon," which demanded new ways, and could proceed neither along the lines of mythology, of course, nor the philosophical concept of science. In particular, the issue is to deconstruct practically the philosophical opposition between philosophy and myth, between logos and mythos. Practically, I insist, this can only be done textually, along the lines of an other writing, with all the implied risks, And I fear that these risks will grow greater still.) P. p.52-53.

<sup>4</sup> The sense of ability is that everything is possible, a feeling of unlimited activity. The sense of disability is that everything is given and predetermined, a feeling of passive determinism.

<sup>5</sup> I do not intend to present the position of Heidegger, and whatever is attributed to him here are presented in the simplest possible way. A detailed discussion that presents conclusions similar to those given here with regard to Derrida's view of Heidegger can be found in the book by Marati-Guénoun.

point of the relationship to the world. Even if the point of origin is the same, the position of Derrida is different from the position of Heidegger. Derrida remains throughout his philosophical speculations at the concrete individual level and does not accept generalization as a possible assertion. The choice in the voice and not in the Dasein emphasizes this concrete point of origin. The way in which Dasein is presented shows that it has a core that does not change, that is authentic. For Derrida, the unchanged core is the voice, but by being concrete and individual, and thus lacking the possibility of generalization,<sup>6</sup> it cannot be referred to in terms of an unchanging core. From this difference, another is derived: Derrida shows in his philosophical speculations that the voice is not subject to any kind of regulation, and in this sense voice is indeterministic. This position is contrary to that of Heidegger who thinks that Dasein, from the moment it enters the world, is subject to regulation and its conduct is fixed and determined for it.

Derrida himself is not sure that the concepts he presents will allow one to grasp the reality he intends. This is because he is aware of the closure that a period can impose on consciousness, and the difficulty of breaking through this barrier.<sup>7</sup> In spite of this awareness, he does not flinch from the attempt to describe a reality that does not correspond with scientific thought, and is not compatible with the scientific determinism dominant in our period. The axis around which the reality he describes is developing is the axis of ability / disability,<sup>8</sup> and it is placed in opposition to the objective axis that develops on the basis of characterizing reality as a tension between physical forces, as the relationship between forces that are conceptualized by laws. The objective axis is referred to by Derrida as phonocentrism, logocentrism, or the scientification of science.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This issue was developed and stressed in the previous chapter in the paragraphs dealing with the relation between writing and voice.

<sup>7</sup> [...] une telle science de l'écriture risque de ne jamais voir le jour comme telle et sous ce nom. De ne pouvoir jamais définir l'unité de son projet et de son objet. De ne pouvoir écrire le discours de sa méthode ni décrire les limites de son champ. Pour des raisons essentielles : l'unité de tout ce qui se laisse viser aujourd'hui à travers les concepts les plus divers de la science et de l'écriture est au principe, plus ou moins secret ment mais toujours, déterminée par une époque historico-métaphysique dont nous ne faisons qu'entrevoir la clôture. DLG p. 14 ([...] such a science of writing runs the risk of never being established as such and with that name. Of never being able to define the unity of its project or its object. Of not being able either to write its discourse on method or to describe the limits of its field. For essential reasons: the unity of all that allows itself to be attempted today through the most diverse concepts of science and of writing, is, in principle, more or less covertly yet always, determined by an historico-metaphysical epoch of which we merely glimpse the closure.) OG p.4

<sup>8</sup> Disability is the position that assumes there is a closed, fixed system in which there is no place for positing subjective aims. For example, natural laws are perceived as a fixed and closed system that is not dependent upon subjective aims. Ability is the position that assumes that future events have not yet been formed and therefore we are capable of shaping them and influencing them.

<sup>9</sup> DLG pp. 13-14, OG pp. 4-5.

Cassirer, in his discussion of the relations between the forms of thought regarding reality, begins with a discussion about language and shows how the duality of subjectivity / objectivity is constructed within human consciousness. Cassirer claims that man first grasps reality, and only after a long process does he become aware of himself as the one who is grasping this reality. However, Cassirer tells us that this is not a passive perception of a given reality, but a process of creating reality side by side with its perception. In order to prove his claim he shows how the concepts of space, time, number and subjectivity are constructed, and how the changes in their construction changes reality in the sense of what can be expected from it. Derrida assumes the reality that Cassirer tries to prove. He also thinks that reality changes the subject and is also changed by it.<sup>10</sup> Yet we cannot say that their perception of reality is the same. The starting point of Cassirer's discussion is an objective one. In it, Cassirer contemplates the entire system and describes its development from a viewpoint that is presumably not part of the process being described. The starting point of Derrida, on the other hand, is that of subjectivity. The discussion is part of the development and does not constitute an objective description of the development. For him, there is no question of generalization, of human beings creating reality, but of a concrete, individual person creating a concrete individual reality. The question that concerns him is the way in which individual, concrete reality is woven into a unified reality to include all the individuals that live within it without becoming a closed, deterministic reality. For this reason, the discussion in *Of Grammatology* begins with the concept that incorporates within itself a principle of his philosophy – the concept of *supplément*, and not the construction of the concepts of space and time as Cassirer does.

In modern 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy, the assumption of subjectivity has become so obvious that there are those who claim it is merely an illusion. Cassirer traces the appearance and development of subjectivity. Derrida, on the other hand, does not ask how subjective consciousness was formed. For him, subjectivity as the awareness of oneself is self-evident. The subjective consciousness to which Derrida refers is not an illusion and is not a simple unity without parts. In his discussion, subjectivity itself is

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<sup>10</sup> Par le mouvement de sa dérive, l'émancipation du signe constitue en retour le désir de la présence. Ce devenir - ou cette dérive - ne survient pas au sujet qui le choisirait ou s'y laisserait passivement entraîner. Comme rapport du sujet à sa mort, ce devenir est la constitution même de la subjectivité. DLG p.100 (By the movement of its drift/derivation [dérive] the emancipation of the sign constitutes in return the desire of presence. That becoming - or that drift/derivation - does not befall the subject which would choose it or would passively let itself be drawn along by it. As the subject's relationship with its own death, this becoming is the constitution of subjectivity). OG 69.

composed of different aspects that cannot be reduced, and their concrete functions must be treated separately. In the previous chapter I showed that these functions are expressed through voice, origin, source, and supplément. Therefore, there is not place within the framework of Derrida's thought to discuss subjectivity as a unity and to place it as a keystone in the system of relationships that construct reality, as Cassirer does.

What are the basic principles that apply when the concrete individual constructs reality? What perception of space, time, and number is accepted when mutually related experiences are assumed between concrete individuals? We shall see below that these mutual relationships change the meaning of the concepts of number, time and space in such a way as to demand their conceptualization through linguistic innovations / neologisms.

## **Part I - Principles of Order in Derridean Philosophy**

Derrida's perception of the subject as self-understood is expressed through the way in which he lays out his analysis. When Cassirer analyzes the development of the categories of thought, he begins with space and then goes on to time, number and subjectivity. He claims that this is the way in which consciousness is formed, by first discovering space, time and number and only at the end, subjectivity. On the other hand, Derrida who assumes subjectivity in the concrete individual voice, begins with writing that is the realization of *supplément* (the aspect of the concrete individual voice that allows for subjectivity) and then goes on to *différance* that makes *supplément* possible and is revealed through it. *Différance* itself is not a unity and its examination reveals trace, space and time. In my view, trace in Derrida's philosophy functions in the same way that number functions in Cassirer's analysis. Since this part (Part I) is presented as parallel to the Derrida's progress in the course of his book *Of Grammatology*, the analysis will begin with writing (Chapter 1) and continue with *différance* (Chapter 2), which is subdivided into trace (2.1), time (2.2) and space (2.3) that constitute the categories for the organization of reality.

## Chapter 1 – Writing: Realization of the Supplément

Writing makes alienation possible, which enables the 'I' to transform itself from being a source, that acts automatically and projects contents that have reached it without specifying them, into origin, the voice that determines its ends and is responsible for them. The ability to transform individual ends into objects to which one can refer is realized in writing. The voice adds its own ends to the contents placed before it. The increment (supplément) is what the voice adds. Therefore writing constitutes the groundwork for the realization of what the individual voice has added to the given reality. This characteristic quality of writing is what Derrida calls supplément. The discovery of this quality of writing as a supplement allows for the release of the dimension of capability within reality as opposed to the dimension of determinism dictated by reality. As the link between ability and inability, this mechanism allows the voice to preserve itself as an unrestricted component in writing.

Derrida begins *Of Grammatology* with the declaration that the perception of reality as a book with only one meaning has now ended.<sup>1</sup> Reality for him is not closed or determined, but is sufficiently pliable so that any voice can create it according to its ends, imbuing it with a meaning of its own. In order to emphasize the flexible quality of reality, he presents it to us as writing. In discussing writing, there is no doubt that it is a human product, created in order to determine and transmit onwards the meaning intended by the writer. This position in relation to reality is more difficult to explain and understand.<sup>2</sup> Writing for Derrida is the way in which the individual voice formulates and sets down the meanings it gives to his world. In this sense, every reading is also writing because it realizes the meanings subjectively understood by the reader.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis on writing as reality sets up the axis upon which Derridean reality revolves and develops, as the axis of ability /inability.

From Derrida's claims regarding writing, it might have been supposed that the discussion does not deal with reality but with the relationship between writing and speech, were it not that Derrida forestalls us by saying that the thing itself, the

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<sup>1</sup> The book here is the Book of Nature, reality written in mathematical language, a language that has only one meaning. This book is the reality that Leibniz has established. W p. 9. The first chapter in *Of Grammatology* announces the end of this book and the introduction of writing as indeterministic realization that has interminable meanings.

<sup>2</sup> This is testified by the works of Cassirer, which are aimed entirely at proving reality as a human creation. DLG pp. 16-17, OG, pp. 6-7.

<sup>3</sup> A detailed discussion of writing can be found in the previous chapter. Writing as reality is expressed in DLG p. 19, OG p. 9.

phenomenon, is the sign.<sup>4</sup> In the previous chapter I showed that Derrida perceives reality which he calls phenomenon, as the revolving movement that spins outward from a concrete individual center, from the voice. This reality is constructed, as I claimed, through writing. Writing is the realization of a supplément, the dimension that expands on the basis of the tension between ability and inability. The contribution of Nietzsche, says Derrida, is in presenting reading, and by implication writing, as an original act that is not dependent upon any kind of logic or ontology.<sup>5</sup> The individual voice of the reader establishes writing, a reality and at the same time that writing establishes the individual voice.<sup>6</sup> In such a system there is no place for questions regarding the link between language and reality. The very question whether there is any real connection between them shows that the assumption is that the function of thought is to reflect and replicate the essence of things, and the function of language is to reflect and replicate the essence of thought. This way of presenting matters indicates a perception of reality as something that exists by itself without dependence upon the knower. Derrida thinks that the philosophy of Saussure functions within a system of metaphysical assumptions of this kind. Derrida presents Saussure's position that there is both signifier and signified.<sup>7</sup> The signifier is the phonetic sound for which the relationship between it and the signified is determined arbitrarily. In this situation, Derrida claims, there is no essential distinction between language and a graphic sign. Language like graphic signs are signifiers indicating a certain content that is distinct from them and stands apart by itself.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ce qui entame le mouvement de la signification, c'est ce qui en rend l'interruption impossible. La chose même est un Signe. DLG p.72 (What broaches the movement of signification is what makes its interruption impossible. The thing itself is a sign.) OG. 49.

<sup>5</sup> [...] Nietzsche, [...] aurait puissamment contribué à libérer le signifiant de sa dépendance ou de sa dérivation par rapport au logos et au concept connexe de vérité ou de signifié premier, en quelque sens qu'on l'entende. DLG p. 31-32 ([...] Nietzsche, [...], contributed a great deal to the liberation of the signifier from its dependence or derivation with respect to the logos and the related concept of truth or the primary signified, in whatever sense that is understood.) OG p.19.

<sup>6</sup> Ce n'est pas un hasard si la pensée de l'être, comme pensée de ce signifié transcendantal, se manifeste par excellence dans la voix : c'est-à-dire dans une langue de mots. [...] C'est l'expérience unique du signifié se produisant spontanément, du dedans de soi, et néanmoins, en tant que concept signifié, dans l'élément de l'idéalité ou de l'universalité. [...] Cette expérience serait considérée dans sa plus grande pureté - et en même temps dans sa condition de possibilité - comme expérience de l'"être". DLG p.33-34 (It is not by chance that the thought of being, as the thought of this transcendental signified, is manifested above all in the voice: in a language of words [mots]. [...] It is the unique experience of the signified producing itself spontaneously, from within the self, and nevertheless, as signified concept, in the element of ideality or universality. [...] This experience is considered in its greatest purity - and at same time in the condition of its possibility - as the experience of "being". )OG. p. 20 .

<sup>7</sup> Although the signified is also a sign, for the sake of simplicity I do not wish to deal with this issue.

<sup>8</sup> La thèse de l'arbitraire du signe (si mal nommée, et non seulement pour les raisons que Saussure reconnaît lui-même) devrait interdire de distinguer radicalement signe linguistique et signe graphique. Sans doute cette thèse concerne-t-elle seulement, à l'intérieur d'un rapport prétendument naturel entre la voix et le sens en général, entre l'ordre des signifiants phoniques et le contenu des signifiés ("le lien naturel, le seul véritable, celui du son"), la nécessité des rapports entre des signifiants et des signifiés déterminés. seuls ces derniers rapports seraient réglés par l'arbitraire. A l'intérieur du rapport "naturel" entre les signifiants phoniques et leurs signifiés en général, le rapport

Derrida does not think that one can speak about reality by itself as separate from language,<sup>9</sup> and therefore he does not think that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is an arbitrary one. After showing how the signifier (external) and the signified (internal) are distinguished by means of the writing, he shows that the internal and external are a matter of viewpoint and not of structure. The viewpoint is possible by virtue of the fixed nature of writing. From the way in which Derrida presents language it seems that for him the content and the acquisition of the ideal form are not constructed by the replication of something that is objectively present, but by the creation of a new relationship, a unique correlation between the 'I' and reality, between the objective sphere and subjectivity.<sup>10</sup> It appears that this is the reason for the claim that writing (or arche-writing) cannot serve as a scientific object. The object of science lies in front of the scientist, and it can be taken apart to find the law that regulates it. But when a relationship is frequently altered, and it is not possible to fix it within a regulated framework, science cannot have access to it and in a certain sense it has no presence at all<sup>11</sup> Derrida describes the attempt to find a universal language that can contain all the possibilities, and thus grasp truth and avoid error. Even if the project is by its very nature directed towards a closed language, Derrida says that in the end the system will always remain open. The attempt to set up

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entre chaque signifiant déterminé et chaque signifié déterminé serait "arbitraire". DLG p. 65 (The thesis of arbitrariness of the sign (so grossly misnamed, and not only for the reasons Saussure himself recognizes) must forbid a radical distinction between the linguistic and the graphic sign. No doubt this thesis concerns only the necessity of relationships between specific signifiers and signified within an allegedly natural relationship between the voice and sense in general, between the order of phonic signifiers and the content of the signified ("the only natural bond, the only true bond, the bond of sound"). Only these relationships between specific signifiers and signifieds would be regulated by arbitrariness. Within the "natural" relationship between phonic signifiers and their signifieds in general, the relationship between each determined signifier and its determined signified would be "arbitrary".) OG. p.44

<sup>9</sup> He holds a more detailed discussion on this issue in *Voix et le phénomène* with its subtitle that refers to the problem of the sign in the philosophy of Husserl. In the previous chapter I dealt with this issue in detail.

<sup>10</sup> La brisure marque l'impossibilité pour un signe, pour l'unité d'un signifiant et d'un signifié, de se produire dans la plénitude d'un présent absolue. C'est pourquoi il n'y a pas de parole pleine, qu'on veuille la restaurer par ou contre la psychanalyse. Avant de songer à réduire ou à restaurer le sens de la parole pleine qui dit être la vérité, il faut poser la question du sens et de son origine dans la différence. Tel est le lieu d'une problématique de la trace. DLG p. 102 (The hinge [brisure] marks the impossibility that a sign, the unity of a signifier and a signified, be produced within the plentitude of a present and an absolute presence. That is why there is no full speech, however much one might wish to restore it by means or without benefit of psychoanalysis. Before thinking to reduce it or to restore the meaning of the full speech which claims to be truth, one must ask the question of meaning and of its origin in difference. Such is the place of a problematic of the trace.) OG .69-70

<sup>11</sup> Cette archi-écriture, bien que le concept en soit appelé par les thèmes de l' ~ arbitraire au signe ~ et de la différence, ne peut pas, ne pourra jamais être reconnue comme objet d'une science. Elle est cela même qui ne peut se laisser réduire à la forme de la présence. Or celle-ci commande toute objectivité de l'objet et toute relation de savoir. DLG p.83 (This arche-writing, although its concept is invoked by the themes of "the arbitrariness of the sign" and of difference, cannot and can never be recognized as the object of a science. It is that very thing which cannot let itself be reduced to the form of presence. The latter orders all objectivity of the object and all relation of knowledge.) OG. p. 57.

a linguistic system such as algebra, in the sense that every graphic sign will carry only one meaning within a given theoretical framework, will prove to be impossible.<sup>12</sup>

From this it will appear that Derrida makes the same assumption that Cassirer tries to prove in his philosophy of symbolic forms. Cassirer claims that even if it not possible to say that reality is identical with the symbolic forms that represent it, reality acquires its unique character by means of symbolic form, and in this sense there is no difference between them. Reality is the substance, the content, and symbol is the form. But reality as substance without form is not reality. Mutual interrelations exist between reality and knowledge. As a system of interrelationships, there is no meaning to one pole of the relationship without the other. There is no knowledge without reality, but there is also no reality without knowledge. Cassirer analyzes the way in which space, time, and number are constructed together with the development of linguistic form. He claims that space, for example, is constructed when language develops as a sensuous-mental circle around the speaker. The center of the circle is marked as the 'I' and the periphery is marked as 'you' and 'he' that correspond to the spatial characteristics of 'here', 'near this place', 'there far away'.<sup>13</sup> Derrida says similar things,<sup>14</sup> but Cassirer analyzes the way in which objectivity and subjectivity are constructed in human consciousness in the course of history, while Derrida assumes its mutual construction as the starting point.

It seems for this reason Derrida can claim that, since grammatology asks the question of subjectivity, the question regarding the name of man,<sup>15</sup> it cannot be a science. In order to be a science, grammatology has to assume that it is possible to speak about

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<sup>12</sup> DLG pp. 112-121, OG pp. 76-81.

<sup>13</sup> Cassirer I, pp. 198-215.

<sup>14</sup> [...] l'élément phonique, le terme, la plénitude qu'on appelle sensible, n'apparaîtraient pas comme tels sans la différence ou l'opposition qui leur donnent forme. Telle est la portée la plus évidente de l'appel à la différence comme réduction de la substance phonique. Or ici l'apparaître et le fonctionnement de la différence supposent une synthèse originaire qu'aucune simplicité absolue ne précédé. Telle serait donc la trace originaire. Sans une rétention dans l'unité minimale de l'expérience temporelle, sans une trace retenant l'autre comme autre dans le même, aucune différence ne ferait son oeuvre et aucun sens n'apparaîtrait. Il ne s'agit donc pas ici d'une différence constituée mais, avant toute détermination de contenu, du mouvement pur qui produit la différence. La trace (pure) est la différence. Elle ne dépend d'aucune plénitude sensible, audible ou visible, phonique ou graphique. Elle en est au contraire la condition. Bien qu'elle n'existe pas, bien qu'elle ne soit jamais un étant-présent [...] DLG p. 91-92 ([...] the phonic element, the term, the plentitude that is called sensible, would not appear as such without the difference or opposition which gives them form. Such is the most evident significance of the appeal to difference as the reduction of phonic substance. Here the appearing and functioning of difference presupposes an originary synthesis not preceded by any absolute simplicity. Such would be the originary trace. Without a retention in the minimal unit of temporal experience, without a trace retaining the other as other in the same, no difference would do its work and no meaning would appear. It is not the question of a constituted difference here, but rather, before all determination of the content, of the pure movement which produces difference. The (pure) trace is difference. It does not depend on any sensible plentitude, audible or visible, phonical or graphic. It is, on the contrary, the condition of such plentitude. Although it does not exist, although it is never a being-present )OG. p. 62.

<sup>15</sup> DLG p. 121, OG p81

the essential nature of mankind separate from its history. It is as though one must assume objectivity as separate from subjectivity, as if the two poles have been pre-formulated. For Derrida, there are no pre-formulated poles. Grammatology, the methodology expressed in writing, is the same objective pole in front of which a person formulates his subjectivity. The relationship between the objective pole and subjectivity can be compared to the relation between the mirror and the observer. Without the observer the mirror will not reflect him, while without the mirror the observer will not be able to see himself. The reflected image provides the observer with the ability to become known to himself, an ability that was not available to him without the mirror. Nevertheless, this comparison can deceive us because the mirror and the observer who is reflected in it are themselves two well-formulated poles, a situation that is completely different from what Derrida assumes.

The physical activity of making marks on paper that is perceived as writing is merely a technical activity, and not an essential one. Writing has a meaning beyond the technical activity, and its perception as being only technical is ethnocentric.<sup>16</sup> Writing is the range of human experience in general. One can call this range history, culture, politics, society, science or nature. All these are ways to conceptualize reality that cannot be realized without writing. A person cannot meet himself, become aware of himself, be a concrete individual, without writing. This is because writing constitutes the basis, the point of rest or reference that allows for detachment from what is immediately present, that is to say it allows for *différance*.<sup>17</sup> As such, writing constitutes the aspect that establishes a person as someone. Writing is phenomenological reality. In the reality which is the subject of discussion, history is not the development of a one-dimensional line but is multi-dimensional. This is not

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<sup>16</sup> Délivrer l'unité du concept d'homme, c'est sans doute renoncer à la vieille idée des peuples dits "sans écriture" et "sans histoire". A. Leroi-Gourhan le montre bien : refuser le nom d'homme et le pouvoir d'écriture au-delà de sa propre communauté, c'est un seul et même geste. En vérité, les peuples dits ~ sans écriture ~ ne manquent jamais que d'un certain type d'écriture. Refuser à telle ou telle technique de consignation le nom d'écriture, tel est l'"ethnocentrisme" qui définit le mieux la vision préscientifique de l'homme ~[...] DLG p. 124-125 (To free unity from the concept of man is undoubtedly to renounce the old notion people said to be "without writing" and "without history". André Leroi-Gourhan shows it well; to refuse the name of man and the ability to write beyond its own proper community, is one and the same gesture. Actually, the peoples said to be "without writing" lack only a certain type of writing. To refuse the name of writing to this or that technique of consignment is the "ethnocentrism that best defines the prescientific vision of man" [...]) OG. p.83.

<sup>17</sup> Mais il ne suffit pas de dénoncer l'ethnocentrisme et de définir l'unité anthropologique par la disposition de l'écriture. A. Leroi-Gourhan ne décrit plus ainsi l'unité de l'homme et l'aventure humaine par la simple possibilité de la graphie en général : plutôt comme une étape ou une articulation dans l'histoire de la vie - de ce que nous appelons ici la *différance* - comme histoire du grammes. DLG p.125 (But it is not enough to denounce ethnocentrism and to define anthropological unity by the disposition of writing. Leroi-Gourhan no longer describes the unity of man and the human adventure thus by simple possibility of the graphie in general; rather as a stage or an articulation in the history of life - of what I have called *différance* - as the history of the grammè.) OG. p.84.

the generally accepted notion of time. Since history is usually seen as the embodiment of the concept of time that indicates a linear transition from the past to the future, Derrida notes that he is making a different use of the term. For him, it is not only that history is non-linear but that one cannot speak about actions that take place simultaneously within it. This is because the perception of events as occurring simultaneously conserves the linear aspect within it.<sup>18</sup> The temporal order as well as the spatial order that are revealed here are different from the accepted, scientific order. Therefore the basic presupposition of science that one can find a complete and defined system, that one can find an enclosed, true reality, does not apply to this reality, and this presupposition is rejected. Derrida announces the end of the book,<sup>19</sup> the book of science written by God in mathematical symbols. By doing so, Derrida rejects reality as something that is complete, that confronts man. Reality, writing, is the product of the encounter of all the intentions and desires of concrete people.<sup>20</sup> The understanding of reality as this kind of encounter presents a reality in which concrete desire, the voice, by being an indeterminate origin, confronts other desires, other powers that may thwart his reality. Desires and powers are deterministic for the voice if it cannot find some way to harness them for the realization of his own ends. In this sense, one can speak about a reality that rotates upon the axis of ability / inability (deterministic / indeterministic). What allows for the deterministic-indeterministic movement of reality? The answer that Derrida gives is: *différance*. What is *différance*? This will be discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>18</sup> Cette pluri-dimensionnalité ne paralyse pas l'histoire dans la simultanéité, elle correspond à une autre couche de l'expérience historique et l'on peut aussi bien considérer, à l'inverse, la pensée linéaire comme une réduction de l'histoire. Il est vrai qu'il faudrait peut-être alors se servir d'un autre mot : celui d'histoire a sans doute toujours été associé à un schème linéaire du déroulement de la présence, que sa ligne rapporte la présence finale à la présence originnaire selon la droite ou selon le cercle. Pour la même raison, la structure symbolique pluri-dimensionnelle ne se donne pas dans la catégorie du simultané. DLG p. 127 (This pluri-dimensionality does not paralyze history within simultaneity, it corresponds to another level of historical experience, and one may just as well consider, conversely, linear thought as a reduction of history. It is true that another word ought perhaps to be used; the word history has no doubt always been associated with a linear scheme of the unfolding of presence, where the line relates the final presence to the originary presence according to the straight line or the circle. For the same reason, the pluri-dimensional symbolic structure is not given within the category of the simultaneous.) OG. p.85

<sup>19</sup> DLG p. 139, OG p. 86.

<sup>20</sup> DLG pp. 131-142, OG pp. 87-93.

## Chapter 2 – Différance

In the chapter dealing with history, it was made clear that history is possible by virtue of *différance*. In that chapter I showed that when writing serves as the unifier of time and space it is called *différance*.<sup>1</sup> *Différance* itself when it functions as difference, as other than itself, it becomes trace.<sup>2</sup> According to Derrida, trace serves as the point of connection between feeling and understanding.<sup>3</sup> Describing trace in this way resembles the way in which Cassirer analyzes number. From the explanations given by Derrida, and from the way in which he makes use of the concept '*différance*', it seems that *différance* combines within itself the same functions that time, space and number fulfill in traditional thought according to the analysis of Cassirer. For what reason did Derrida find it necessary to unify these functions and to present one concept to fulfill them? Before replying to this question, we shall first deal with the function that *différance* fulfills through an examination of its parts: trace, time and space.

### 2.1 Trace Instead of Number

In objective thought, number serves as the unit that makes it possible to describe change activated according to a standard rule. This standard rule can be described as a fixed, uniform and inclusive measurement that is not affected by differences in quality. As such, number cannot describe changes according to individual will, because as such they lack regulation. We shall see later on how, in Derrida's thought, time and space constitute a system of relationships that is not pre-determined and changes according to will. Therefore number cannot describe this system of relationships in the framework of his thought. On the other hand, one cannot speak about change without some kind of unit to which one can relate and compare. We shall see below that, in Derrida's philosophy, it is trace that fulfills this role.

Cassirer says<sup>4</sup> that in the system of theoretical knowledge, number indicates the connections that include most entities and combine them into one conceptual unity. Through this combination of multiplicity and differences into a unified form of

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<sup>1</sup> See the chapter on history.

<sup>2</sup> See the chapter on historicism.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The discussion here presents the perception of number in objective thought as compared to the mythic perception that is summarized in Cassirer II, pp. 140-151.

knowledge, number appears as the expression of the basic theoretical aim of knowledge itself, as an expression of truth.

The logical force of number is built of connection and division, of the determination and limitation of connections. Through number, the world of feeling, of perceptive material, becomes more and more abstracted from its specific nature, and is cast into an intellectual and universal form. The sensual nature of impressions, sight, hearing or touch, become of secondary value when measured by what is perceived as the true nature of reality. This reality is perceived as one in which the true course of development, its primary basis, must be found in the pure characterization of dimension, that is to say in purely numerical relations.

The development of modern theoretical science upheld the realization of this ideal of knowledge by a reduction of the specific nature of the forms of pure observation, the nature of space and time, and basing it on pure numbers. Just as number serves as a true logical tool for creating the homogeneity in the contents of scientific knowledge, so does number itself develop more and more into a unified and absolutely homogenous entity.

Numbers do not have any other entity, character or nature than those they receive through their relationships within total ideality. Correspondingly, it is possible to create specific numbers that, even if they do not apply to sensuous or perceptive matter, are characterized by their relationship. In contrast to this analysis by Cassirer, Derrida's analysis of scientific thought shows that he does not see any essential difference between numbers and linguistic concepts.<sup>5</sup> Apparently it is for this reason that when he discusses the origin of geometry he speaks about language, and whatever makes geometry possible is what makes thought itself possible. In Derrida's *Introduction to Husserl's Origin of Geometry* there is no name yet for the origin that makes geometry possible. In *Of Grammatology* this origin is called trace.<sup>6</sup> Derrida

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<sup>5</sup> Si nous nous interrogeons sur la façon dont l'évidence subjective du sens géométrique conquiert son objectivité idéale, il nous faut d'abord remarquer que l'objectivité idéale n'est pas seulement le caractère des vérités géométriques ou scientifiques. Elle est l'élément du langage en général, HOG p. 56 (If we ask ourselves about the manner in which the subjective evidence of geometrical sense gains its ideal Objectivity, we must first note that ideal Objectivity not only characterizes geometrical and scientific truths; it is the element of language in general.) O p.66

<sup>6</sup> La trace n'est pas seulement la disparition de l'origine, elle veut dire ici - dans le discours que nous tenons et selon le parcours que nous suivons - que l'origine n'a même pas disparu, qu'elle n'a jamais été constituée qu'en retour par une non-origine, la trace, qui devient ainsi l'origine de l'origine. DLG p.90 ( The trace is not only the disappearance of origin -within the discourse that we sustain and according to the path that we follow it means that the origin did not even disappear, that it was never constituted except reciprocally by nonorigin, the trace, which thus becomes the origin of the origin.) OG. p.61. This description should be compared with Derrida's analysis of Husserl's origin of geometry in which he reveals and characterizes the erasure / exposure movement of the origin as a statement that establishes the origin of geometry.

sees trace as a formative component of human consciousness, yet in spite of being so, it is not possible to characterize its essence as natural or as a human construct, either physical or mental.<sup>7</sup> Similar to number in objective thought, here the reference is to something abstract that is not an entity but that makes speech, or entity, possible.<sup>8</sup>

Cassirer himself does not see number as a concept or object of a single unchanging significant and function. According to him, numbers have a totally different character when they are transferred from modal thinking (the calculation of possibility) and purely theoretical knowledge to other fields of cultural development. For example, in other cultural field of numerical design, every number bears an individual character instead of merely indicating a relationship within a system. This is the stage in which the representation of the number does not have abstract universality but is always embedded within some concrete individual perception from which it cannot be detached. Here the numbers are not universal characterizations that can be applied to any content. Numbers are not simply numbers. The concept and names given to numbers emerged from specific things that were countable and remain associated with those things. Because of the material divergence of countable things, because of the perception of particularity and the sense of particularity adhering to specific qualities, the divergence of number does not seem to be absolutely uniform, but is a representation of different entities, each of which has its own sense of quality. The affective quality of the number is contrary to the pure, fixed concept of number in the abstract, logical sense, and becomes much clearer when applied to the numeration of mythical concepts. In myth, there is nothing that is merely ideal. For one who is mythic-minded, the resemblance between contents is not only their relationship but the real connection that binds them to each other, and this is especially so in numerical imagination. When two qualities seem to be of equal number, when it seems possible to match number with number, the mythic-minded person explains this

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<sup>7</sup> [...] la trace dont nous parlons n'est pas plus naturelle (elle n'est pas la marque, le signe naturel, ou l'indice au sens husserlien) que culturelle, par plus physique que psychique, biologique que spirituelle. Elle est ce à partir de quoi un devenir-immotivé du signe est possible, et avec lui toutes les oppositions ultérieures entre la physis et son autre. DLG p. 69-70 ([...] the trace whereof I speak is not more natural (it is not the mark, the natural sign, or the index in Husserlian sense) than cultural, not more physical than psychic, biological than spiritual. it is that starting from which a becoming-unmotivated of the sign, and with it all the ulterior oppositions between physis and its other, is possible.) OG. p. 47-48

<sup>8</sup> La trace n'est rien, elle n'est pas un étant elle excède la question qu'est-ce que et la rend éventuellement possible. On ne peut même plus faire ici confiance à l'opposition du fait et du droit qui n'a jamais fonctionné que dans le système de la question qu'est-ce que, sous toutes ses formes métaphysiques, ontologiques et transcendantales, DLG p. 110 (The trace is nothing, it is not an entity, it exceeds the question What is? and contingently makes it possible. Here one may no longer trust even the opposition of fact and principle, which, in all its metaphysical, ontological, and transcendental forms, has always functioned within the system of what is.) OG. 75

possibility that seems to be purely ideal relationships by ascribing some common mythical nature to both qualities. Things that bear the same number are from the mythic viewpoint the same thing, regardless of how their sensuous appearance differs. This is a single essence that surrenders itself under different guises. An example of this kind of perception of number can be found in *gematria*<sup>9</sup> that it based the assumption that a number that is common to both words indicates an essential unity between the objects that are represented by those words. The raising on number into an independent entity and a power constitutes merely one example that characterizes the basic assumptions of mythic beliefs. This implies that the mythic perception of number contains at the same time a component of universalism and a definite particularity. Here number is never merely a relative position within a general comparative system, but every number has its own essence, its individual character and power. But this individuality is in itself universal so long as it enables entities, which are empirically heterogeneous, to combine with each other. Thus, in mythic thought, number serves as the primary and basic form of relationship. This relationship is not perceived merely as such, but is revealed as something true and immediate that is laden with qualities and powers of its own. For scientific thought, numbers have general functions and significance, while for mythic thought they are always perceived as original entities that delegate their power and essence to everything placed under them. In a certain sense, trace is closer in its function to this sense of the mythic number. When Derrida explains his choice of the concept trace, he refers to the significance of this concept as having an independent essence that derives from the relationships existing between essence and the circumstances within which the concept functions. The various circumstances seem as though they are "attached" to the concept and alter it, yet the significance of what is already "attached" to it influences whatever enters into their sphere.<sup>10</sup>

The concept of number in mythic thought does not develop in the same direction as scientific thought. Although in both of them, the concept covers a wide sensuous, perceptive and reflective expanse until it includes near the whole range of conscious thought within its purview, yet basically different aims and approaches will be found in each of them. According to the method of scientific thought, the number

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<sup>9</sup> A cabbalistic system of interpretation of the Scriptures by substituting for a particular word another word that has letters which give the same numerical sum. *gematria*. (n.d.). Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1). Retrieved November 9, 2007, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/gematria>

<sup>10</sup> DLG pp. 102-105, OG pp. 69-71.

serves primarily and essentially the purpose of reducing the particular differentiations of the phenomenon into its basic abstract, unified ideal. The sensuous world is unified through number. This unity allows us to assume that there is an intellectual form that contains the entire cosmos as combination of pure logical concepts. The entire phenomenological entity, everything that exists is related to number and is expressed by it, because the reduction to number has been proved to be the only way to establish a thoroughly regulated relationship that ensures that no confusion will be made between the phenomena. As all get out, everything that science includes under the name of nature is constructed of pure and absolute numerical units that serve as the actual means to cast all contingent existence into the form of thought, law and necessity. Similarly, number appears in mythic thought as the means for ideality, but the process leads in different direction. Mythic number is also the product of the struggle to escape from the form and constraint of immediate sensuous matter and the attempt to reach a freer and more general perspective. But while number appears in scientific thought as an excellent tool that makes **explanation** possible, in mythic thought it appears as leading a religious **meaning**. In the first instance it serves to prepare all empirical existence for acceptance into a world of relationships and pure, ideal laws. In the second instance it serves to drag all things that exist, all that is immediately given, everything that is secular, into a mystic, religious process of purification. It is not only number as a whole but every particular number that is surrounded by an aura of magic that associates itself with whatever is associated with it without relating to its relevance. While the scientific number becomes a criterion for truth, the condition and preparation for all rational knowledge, the mythic number impresses itself upon everything that enters its sphere and by doing so transmits to it a mysterious character that is not accessible to the understanding. In any case, the mind cannot grasp this new generalization as an independent creation but sees it as a strange, imaginary power. An analysis of the presentation of a mythic number as Cassirer sees it, shows that the magical aura that surrounds everything associated with that number derives from divine will and this is the source of its sacred quality. As noted above, one can find in the Derridean concept of trace qualities that correspond to those of mythic number. Trace also leads to meaning, but here there is no religious meaning but individual singular concrete meaning. The concrete meaning is the product of voice, of concrete individual will. Like the number that expresses divine

will concerning whatever comes into contact with it, trace also expresses will, but this is singular individual will and not divine will.

It is possible to characterize a few of the ways that determine the sanctification process of the number and the world. In language, all the representations and formations of numerical relationships are referred back to an intuitive-concrete basis of space, time and personal perception (the 'I') that are shown to be the main spheres in which the awareness of number and its significance is developed. The very nature of mythic thought is such that it cannot be satisfied with the realization of relationships and concepts as they are and see them as abstractions, but in order to establish their truth it must focus upon them intuitively and present them in sensuous form. Thus the corroboration of the number four (the four winds) is expressed in the form of a cross, seen as one of the ancient religious symbols. The number is perceived as part of the divine will that organizes the world, and this will is what endows sanctity upon whatever this number comes into contact with. Another aspect of sensuous expression is shown by the fact that one of the deep roots for the formation of the number can be found in the basic distinction that emerges from the existence of personal subjectivity: from the relationship between I – you – him, the numbers 1, 2, 3 are derived.

Cassirer sees these analyses as indicating that number is the adhesive that binds together the various forces of knowledge, sensation, perception and feeling into a unity. In his opinion, number fulfills the function that Pythagoras gave to harmony: it operates as a magical link that instead of binding them together, brings them into a state of harmony within the mind.

Derrida is also in need of an adhesive that will link the various forces, but the forces that Derrida needs to link together are not those of knowledge, sensation, perception and feeling, but those between different individual wills. In the reality to which Derrida refers, there is no difference between knowledge, sensation, perception and feeling. For the voice (the will) reality is now, the present, which is a sensuous wholeness and an intelligible experience.<sup>11</sup> If there is anything that needs explanation in this reality, it is not the way in which the various components are linked, but on the contrary, the way in which they are divided. In the further discussion regarding *différance*, I shall show that the activation of will reveals the other within the totality

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<sup>11</sup> This claim regarding Derrida's position will be proved later on.

of experience. From the gap between the perception of myself and the awareness of perceiving myself, the gap that is called *différance*, we immediately derive a triad.<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the motivation of objective thought that searches for a single origin, for a unification of objects, Derrida stresses the need for separation. For him, origin is always a single point of attribution. As I showed in the First Section, one cannot speak about origin without an awareness of the origin of itself. But the very relationship of origin to itself triplicates the entire system because it reveals the 'I', the other, and the one that perceives the 'I' as separate from the other. In Cassirer's discussion it appears that the number is formed through a basic distinction that emerges from inter-subjective existence, from the 'I' and the 'Not-I'. The same gap that demands bridging and constitutes the basis for consolidation in mythic thought, followed by objective thought, in Derrida's thought it demands a characteristic that will preserve it as a gap, as a delay. Mythic thought cannot satisfy itself merely by recognizing relationships and concepts as they are and seeing them as abstraction, but in order to ensure their truth value it must focus upon them intuitively, and represent them as a sensuous image that is expressed in number. Similarly, Derrida's thought must anchor the abstract relationships it reveals, not in concept or word but in action. Mythic thought, that organizes reality around the poles of sacred and secular, presents number as a point of source that appears as leading a religious significance. Number constitutes the unity that preserves the defined sphere and confers an aura of holiness around it. In spite of the difference between a mythic number and a mathematical number, both of them express a fixed unity (relationship or function). In Derridean thought, the point of origin is revealed as constantly changing. This is not a static point such as a number that expresses a fixed unity. On the contrary, the point of origin is shown to be a gap that makes different kinds of activity possible. This point is *différance* that constitutes a bundle of possibilities.<sup>13</sup>

Like mythic number, loaded with its own qualities and forces, *différance* has its own essential nature that serves as the primary and basic form of relationship. This relationship is not perceived merely as such but is revealed as something immediately

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<sup>12</sup> Car ce qui est reflété se dédouble en soi-même et non seulement comme addition à soi de son image. Le reflet, l'image, le double dédouble ce qu'il redouble. L'origine de la spéculation devient une différence. Ce qui peut se regarder n'est pas un et la loi de l'addition de l'origine à sa représentation, de la chose à son image, c'est que un plus un font au moins trois. DLG p.55 (For what is reflected is split in itself and not only as an addition to itself of its image. The reflection, the image, the double, splits what it doubles. The origin of the speculation becomes a difference. What can look at itself is not one; and the law of addition of the origin to its representation, of the thing to its image, is that one plus one makes at least three.) OG. p. 36 .

<sup>13</sup> MDP p. 3, MoP p. 3.

real. Différance, like mythic number, is also not accessible to the understanding. We shall soon see that in Derridean thought, as in mythic thought, the sense of space is linked inextricably with the sense of time, and in mythic thought both of them create number, while in Derridean thought they create *différance* as the point of origin. However, while mythic number constitutes the adhesive that links together the different forces, *différance* constitutes the separation that allows for the activity of the different forces. The adhesive function that links together the different forces is assigned to trace.<sup>14</sup> I shall show later on that time and space are merely aspects of significant for Derrida. The system of meaning is in need, on one hand, of something that will establish a common and fixed meaning within a framework of changing ends that constantly create alternatives, and on the other hand, does not impose a fixed framework, but allows individual will to pose its ends. This function is assigned to trace.<sup>15</sup> Trace is expressed in writing, and functions between ability and inability because it illuminates some possibilities and conceals others. As such, trace is not a point of stasis but of active operation.<sup>16</sup> In this way, trace fulfills the condition that prevented the possibility of using number as a unifying adhesive force.

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<sup>14</sup> On ne peut penser la trace instituée sans penser la rétention de la différence dans une structure de renvoi où la différence apparaît comme telle et permet ainsi une certaine liberté de variation entre les termes pleins. L'absence d'un autre ici-maintenant, d'un autre présent transcendantal, d'une autre origine du monde apparaissant comme telle, se présentant comme absence irréductible dans la présence de la trace, ce n'est pas une formule métaphysique substituée à un concept scientifique de l'écriture. Cette formule, outre qu'elle est la contestation de la métaphysique elle-même, décrit la structure impliquée par l' "arbitraire du signe ", dès lors qu'on en pense la possibilité en-deçà de l'opposition dérivée entre nature et convention, symbole et signe, etc. Ces oppositions n'ont de sens que depuis la possibilité de la trace. DLG p. 68-69 (The instituted trace cannot be thought without thinking the retention of difference within a structure of reference where difference appears as such and thus permits a certain liberty of variations among the full terms. The absence of another here-and-now, of another transcendental present, of another origin of the world appearing as such, presenting itself as irreducible absence within the presence of the trace, is not a metaphysical formula substituted for scientific concept of writing. This formula, beside the fact that it is the questioning of metaphysics itself, describes the structure implied by the "arbitrariness of the sign," from the moment that one thinks of its possibility short of the derived opposition between nature and convention, symbol and sign, etc. These oppositions have meaning only after the possibility of the trace.) OG. p. 46-47

<sup>15</sup> Il n'y a donc pas de phénoménalité réduisant le signe ou le représentant pour laisser enfin la chose signifiée briller dans l'éclat de sa présence. La dite "chose même" est toujours déjà un *representamen* soustrait à la simplicité de l'évidence intuitive. Le *representamen* ne fonctionne qu'en suscitant un *interpretant* qui devient lui-même signe et ainsi à l'infini. L'identité à soi du signifié se dérobe et se déplace sans cesse. Le propre du *representamen*, c'est d'être soi et un autre, de se produire comme une structure de renvoi, de se distraire de soi. Le propre du *representamen*, c'est de n'être pas *propre*, c'est-à-dire absolument *proche* de soi (*prope, proprius*). Or le *représenté* est toujours déjà un *representamen*. DLG p.72 (There is thus no phenomenality reducing the sign or the representamen so that the thing signified may be allowed to glow finally in the luminosity of its presence. The so-called "thing itself" is always already a *representamen* shielded from the simplicity of intuitive evidence. The *representamen* functions only by giving rise to an *interpretant* that itself becomes a sign and so on to infinity. The self-identity of the signified conceals itself unceasingly and is always on the move. The property of the *representamen* is to be itself and another, to be produced as a structure of reference, to be separated from itself. The property of the *representamen* is to be proper [propre], that is to say absolutely proximate to itself (*prope, proprius*). The represented is always already *representamen*.) OG. p.49-50

<sup>16</sup> L'immotivation de la trace doit être maintenant entendue comme une opération et non comme un état, comme un mouvement actif, une dé-motivations et non comme une structure données DLG p.74 (The immotivation of the trace ought now to be understood as an operation and not as a state, as an active movement, a demotivation, and not as a given structure.) OG. p.51

Trace preserves the meanings that were given to it, while every voice gives these meanings its own particular interpretation and can insert new meanings into it. Every voice that makes use of trace, erases it while impressing into it its own form. As such, trace constitutes a common meaning that is not coerced, a meeting place of different wills and the source of individual will. As an assembly of individual wills and the source of individual will, trace constitutes an active building block, deterministic/indeterministic of history, i.e. of space and time.<sup>17</sup> Like number, that separates a particular form from the whole, allows for the perception of collective multiplicity, presents it as specific presence here and now, and thus expresses particularity and separation,<sup>18</sup> so trace presents the particular singular form of accumulated meanings (a collective multiplicity of meanings) as the immediate present, as the present meanings that the voice inserts into it.<sup>19</sup> In this way, trace fulfills in Derridean thought the roles that number fulfills in mythic thought and in objective thought.

## 2.2 Time

Trace is the primary form that makes it possible to conceptualize a series of differences. This possibility, says Derrida, is essential for time connection just as time

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<sup>17</sup> L'"immotivation" du signe requiert une synthèse dans laquelle le tout autre s'annonce Comme tel - sans aucune simplicité, aucune identité, aucune ressemblance ou continuité - dans ce qui n'est pas lui. S'annonce comme tel : c'est là toute l'histoire, depuis ce que la métaphysique a déterminé comme le "non-vivant" jusqu'à la "conscience"~, en passant par tous les niveaux de l'organisation animale. La trace, où se marque le rapport à l'autre, articule sa possibilité sur tout le champ de l'étant, que la métaphysique a déterminé comme étant-présent à partir du mouvement occulté de la trace. Il faut penser la trace avant l'étant, Mais le mouvement de la trace est nécessairement occulté, il se produit comme occultation de soi. Quand l'autre s'annonce comme tel, il se présente dans la dissimulation de soi. Cette formulation n'est pas théologique, comme on pourrait le croire avec quelque précipitation. Le " théologique" est un moment déterminé dans le mouvement total de la trace. Le champ de l'étant, avant d'être déterminé comme champ de présence, se structure selon les diverses possibilités - génétiques et structurales - de la trace. DLG p. 69 (The "unmotivatedness" of the sign requires a synthesis in which the completely other is announced as such - without any simplicity, any identity, any resemblance or continuity - within what is not it. *Is announced as such*: there we have all *history*, from what metaphysics has defined as "non-living" up to consciousness," passing through all levels of animal organization. The trace must be thought before the entity. But the movement of the trace is necessarily occulted, it produces itself as self-occultation. When the other announces itself as such, it presents itself in the dissimulation of itself. This formulation is not theological, as one might believe somewhat hastily. The "theological" is a determined moment in the total movement of the trace. The field of the entity, before being determined as the field of presence, is structured according to the diverse possibilities - genetic and structural - of the trace. OG. p.47.

<sup>18</sup> Cassirer I, p. 239.

<sup>19</sup> Nous avons déjà fait allusion aux mathématiques théoriques : leur écriture, qu'on l'entende comme graphie sensible (et celle-ci suppose déjà une identité, donc une idéalité de sa forme, ce qui rend au principe absurde la notion si couramment admise de "signifiant sensible"), qu'on l'entende comme synthèse idéale des signifiés ou trace opératoire à un autre niveau [...], DLG p. 20 (I have already alluded to theoretical mathematics; its writing-whether understood as a sensible graphie [manner of writing](and that already presupposes an identity, therefore an ideality, of its form, which in principle renders absurd the so easily admitted notion of "sensible signifier"), or understood as ideal synthesis of signifieds or a trace operative on another level, [...]) OG. p.9-10 2.

connection is essential for the connection of meanings, or conceptualization.<sup>20</sup> A formulation of this kind indicates that for Derrida there is not meaningful difference between time and conceptualization. Time is derived from an accumulation of meanings. The different meanings are different readings of what is written, and therefore it can be said that time is derived from different readings. Cassirer claims that in consciousness there is no clear distinction between time and space. He says that the representation of time is not placed without mediation before the consciousness but is the product of distinction and unification, of analytic and synthetic thought. Since this is so, the different parts of time exist as such only because consciousness passes through them and by doing so it distinguishes one from the other. If we compare Cassirer's description to the perception of time as the accumulation of meanings from various readings, we will find that we have the same thing in different formulations. The accumulated meanings from readings correspond to the parts of time that exist by means of consciousness passing through them. This means that for both philosophers the conception of time arises through reflexive consciousness. In this sense of reflexive consciousness, it may be said that the entity form that we are characterizing here as duration, as time, is at a higher ideal level than that which determines existence. This is because existence is perceived in a non-mediated way while the perception of time requires reflection and abstraction.

Scientific time is not perceived by the senses and cannot be derived by direct perception but is the result of understanding, mainly the understanding of causal relations. According to Cassirer, in the development from feeling to the concept of time, one can identify three levels: 1. Consciousness controlled by the opposites now/not now without any further distinction. 2. Temporary forms take shape: complete and incomplete, continuous action and instant action. 3. The abstract concept of time as a concept of order.<sup>21</sup> That is to say, according to Cassirer's view, the presentation of time as self-presence (now, not now) constitutes only a primary stage and it indicates a low level of reflexivity.

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<sup>20</sup> Sans la différence entre le sensible apparaissant et son apparaître vécu ("empreinte psychique), la synthèse temporalisatrice, permettant aux différences d'apparaître dans une chaîne de significations, ne saurait faire son oeuvre. DLG p. 96-97 (Without the difference between the sensory appearing [apparaissant] and its lived appearing [apparaître] ("mental imprint"), the temporalizing synthesis, which permits differences to appear in a chain of significations, could not operate.) OG. p.66

<sup>21</sup> Cassirer II, p. 218.

Can Derrida's position be seen as a regression to a non-reflexive perception? Derrida himself thinks it is not.<sup>22</sup> When the distinction is only between the now and not-now, activity is broken into its different parts. In every given now there is some concrete activity leads to the next activity. The activity cannot be grasped as a whole but only as a collection of points that do not make it possible to produce a real concept of temporal continuity. Temporal unity is achieved when the subject of the activity and its aim is perceived at one and the same time. That is to say, temporal unity is possible through reflection. These two components, the subject of the activity and its aim are based on totally different systems. However, the unifying force of the concept of time is constructed precisely on its ability to convert oppositions into mutual relations. The process of the activity cannot break up into parts because there is a unifying energy beyond it that combines the subject of the activity on one hand and the unity of aim on the other. When at the moment of activity they are united as a cause-end totality, as a unity of dynamic synthesis and intentional meaning, the unified presentation of time can be made. The Derridean now would have been perceived as a collection of isolated points were it not accompanied by the conscious intention of the activity. Since the activity is the result of concrete will, of employing the means in order to carry out some concrete aim, the perception of time as here-and-now can be seen as the result of consciousness, of a high degree of reflection.<sup>23</sup> This is the main point on which Derrida disagrees with Heidegger. When he deals with Heidegger's perception of time,<sup>24</sup> Derrida claims that the connection between the points of the here-and-now is a metaphysical one.<sup>25</sup> According to Derrida, the very call to return to the question of being, or preferably the very question of being, is in itself metaphysical. Therefore the call of Heidegger to abandon metaphysics and return to the question of being, the demand to subsume all problems under the question of being, does not in itself fulfill the conditions that Heidegger wants to set up.<sup>26</sup> In Derrida's view, being is subsumed under voice and writing, and not as

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<sup>22</sup> L'accès à la pluri-dimensionnalité et à une temporalité délinéarisée n'est pas une simple régression vers le "mythogramme": il fait au contraire apparaître toute la rationalité assujettie au modèle linéaire comme une autre forme et une autre époque de la mythographie. DLG p.130 (The access to pluridimensionality and delinearized temporality is not a simple regression toward the "mythogram"; on the contrary, it makes all the rationality subjected to the linear model appear as another form and another age of mythography. ) OG. p.87

<sup>23</sup> DLG pp. 98-99, OG pp. 67-68.

<sup>24</sup> MDP 'Ousia et Gramme' pp. 31-79, MoP 'Ousia and Gramma', pp. 29-67.

<sup>25</sup> Aussi les déterminations qui nomment la différence sont-elles toujours de l'ordre métaphysique. MDP p.77 (Thereby the determinations which name difference always come from the metaphysical order.) MoP. p. 66

<sup>26</sup> DLG pp. 31-39, OG pp. 19-24.

Heidegger would claim that writing and voice is subsumed under being. This reversal allows Derrida to develop his indeterministic claims as I have already shown.

The perception of this here-and-now of Derrida is opposed to the one that Cassirer presents since the perception of Cassirer is the result of a lack of consciousness. Derridean time, as self-presence, is a consciousness of the changes that occur through the force of the individual will. Although Cassirer thinks that mythic time is also a description of changes that occur through the force of will, the will referred to here in mythic time is divine will. God is established by his history. The history of God separates him from all natural forces. The specific character of the changes, the forces, and the entities that act within them, creates a basis for examination and definition based on a prior mythic-religious assumption regarding the differences between sacred and profane.<sup>27</sup> In the perception of Derridean time, the changes are based on a prior assumption regarding the difference between ability and inability. This assumption presents a historical consciousness that is different from the historical consciousness of time that includes complex objective components. In a certain sense one can speak about the consciousness of time as history, as mythic consciousness, because neither of them are based on a fixed chronology, on a strict distinction between before and after, and do not pay attention to a deterministic order that cannot be confused during the moments of time. In Derridean thought, as in mythic thought, there is not conscious awareness of divisions into time levels, of the arrangements of time within a strict system in which every particular event has only one place.<sup>28</sup> In mythic thought, whenever an event recalls another event or is mentioned in connection with another event, the two events become one. Whenever a relationship is established, it causes its participants to become involved and to merge together, and this aspect is also predominant in Derridean time. The levels of time – past, present, future – are not distinguished. But unlike mythic thought in which the magical now is anchored in the past and foretells the future, and is not merely the

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<sup>27</sup> Cassirer II, p. 104.

<sup>28</sup> Et d'abord de ce que Leroi-Goarhan appelle "mythogramme", écriture qui épelle ses symboles dans la pluri-dimensionnalité : le sens n'y est pas assujéti à la successivité, à l'ordre du temps logique ou à la temporalité irréversible du son. Cette Pluri-dimenslonalité ne paralyse pas l'histoire dans la simultanéité, elle correspond à une autre couche de l'expérience historique et l'on peut aussi bien considérer, à l'inverse, la pensée linéaire comme une réduction de l'histoire. DLG 127 (And first of what Leroi-Gourhan calls the "mythogram", a writing that spells its symbols pluri-dimensionally; there the meaning is not subjected to successively, to the order of logical time, or to the irreversible temporality of sound. This pluri-dimensionality does not paralyze history within simultaneity, it corresponds to another level of historical experience, and one may just as well consider, conversely, linear thought as a reduction of history.) OG. p.85

present, in Derridean thought the now is only the here-and-now.<sup>29</sup> Cassirer sees the mythic consciousness of time as rising to a new level when it ceases to be attached as in magic to the creation of some special outcome. At the new level, mythic consciousness of time directs itself towards being and becoming a whole and is more and more absorbed into the perception of this wholeness. In this way it gradually frees itself from constraint in the sense of impression and momentary emotional feeling. On the contrary, for Derrida, the consciousness of time is attached only to a particular outcome. The wholeness to which it is directed is the particular end posited by the individual will. For this reason there is not eternal recurrence of events and not sense of a general world order. The order is individual order that can change according to the posited end. But since the posited individual aim can be undermined by the individual ends of others that cannot be coerced into any explanatory model in the framework of the particular individual order, obtained a sense of a chaotic fate imposed upon the individual. This sense of fate constitutes the pole of deterministic inability in a world in which the forces that shape it are the forces of ability and inability.

Cassirer says that in mythic time, only one who knows the course of the heavens and of time, and is organized accordingly, only the one who learns how to arrange his activities according to specific days, can successfully fulfill the task of being human. Since Derridean time, like mythic time, is not objective time but a time that is constructed by intentional acts, ethical relationships are involved in it that guide the activities of a person according to a time schedule that arranges these activities. In mythic thought, cosmic order is also an order of justice, but since in Derrida's thought there is no fixed whole from which everything is derived, one cannot refer to cosmic order within the framework of his thought. For Derrida, ethical relationships are expressed by positing a socio-political order as appropriate for the order of justice. Like mythic thought, his order is perceived as being general, universal, that cannot be abrogated, but on the other hand, the law of time to which all

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<sup>29</sup> I thus disagree with Bennington (1999: 69) who thinks that the fleeting instant is trapped between past and future and is nothing in itself. I agree with Bennington that from a discussion of the fleeting instant, the perception of time is different from the usual one accepted. But in my view, this perception is different for not having a past and a future and not for having only a past and future. In my opinion, this position does not correspond to the position and arguments of Derrida. The presentation of time as including only the past and future indicates a perception of abstract time that does not fit in with the concrete discussion conducted by Derrida. When Bennington presents *différance*, this position seems problematic because in this analysis it appears that not only the present, which is merely what stretches between past and future, does not exist, but also the future and the past are not really future and past (p. 72). In this situation it is difficult to understand what Bennington means by presenting time that includes only past and future that are not really past and future.

changes are subjected, appears as a law that is imposed by a force that is half personal and half impersonal. Mathematical and physical-mathematical theoretical thought is characterized by Cassirer by the homogeneity of time. Only through this concept is it possible to obtain the quantification of time. The modern development of physical-mathematical thought and the development of a general theory of relativity express the maceration of time into homogenous units, while all the particular and specific characteristics are pushed aside. Every point in the universe is determined by coordinates of space and time and are characterized by numerical value that does not distinguish one point from another by ascribing special qualities that are subject to alteration. Derrida does not accept this picture of the world. For him, as in the mythic world, time has never turned into uniform quantities of this kind. Without any connection with the degree of generalization this concept has attained, it always remains as a specific quality. According to Cassirer, the shape of time in myth is dependent upon religious mythic characteristics, on the emphasis of the sacred and the profane. From the religious point of view, time is never a homogeneous process of changes but retains its significance only through the divisions among its aspects. The conformation that is laid down by the perception of time as a whole is dependent upon the way in which religious consciousness divides light and shadow, and on whichever aspect it lays emphasis. Past, present and future are the basic components in every picturing of time, but the manner and emphasis of this picture changes according to the energy that consciousness directs to each of its parts. The religious-mythic approach is not engaged by a purely logical synthesis that unites the present with what came before and after in a transcendental unity of evaluation. Here everything is dependent upon the direction that will acquire a hold on temporal consciousness. In the concrete mythic-religious consciousness of time, a specific and dynamic emotion is always alive – a changing sensitivity through which the 'I' commits itself to the present, the past and the future, and thus places them in defined relationships of proximity or dependence upon each other. An example of this kind of situation can be found in the words of Gurevitch who says that time in barbaric society is not perceived as separate from human beings and is not 'indifferent' towards their lives and actions. On the contrary, it is within them, and just because of that it is possible to influence its course and its essential quality.<sup>30</sup> A similar picture can also be found in

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<sup>30</sup> Gurevitch, 1983. p. 105.

Derrida, even if the emphases in question are not those that reflect a distinction between the sacred and the profane, but between ability and inability. Since trace is the primary form of possibilities, the conceptualization of a chain of differences puts into question the degree of active ability that can be attributed to it.<sup>31</sup>

Cassirer points to the division between fate and the perception of time as a new stage in the development of time perception.<sup>32</sup> He claims that, in the history of thought, Parmenides was the first to present Logos as the measure of being, from which the final decision, the crisis [judgment] is derived with regard to being and non-being. For Parmenides, the forces of time and change become an illusion. Only for myth is there a temporal origin, a genesis of Being. For the Logos, the very question of origin loses its meaning. Derrida rejects Logos as the measurement of being, and refers the meaning back to the question of origin. But the origin that he speaks about is not embedded in the past but in the concrete present.<sup>33</sup> In this way, although it is a genesis of being, origin becomes non-temporal together with the perspective of time and changes as non-illusory realities.<sup>34</sup> Cassirer thinks that Parmenides, in his mythic language, links the permanence of being with the control and order of fate and justice. But this fate, which is not the expression of external forces but the necessity of thought itself, becomes non-temporal. By the removal of all temporal permanence, the mythic concept of fate becomes a logical concept of necessity. Derrida does not recognize the necessity of thought or fate as an external force. His position is that every given here-and-now can constitute the origin of indeterministic changes. In this sense, every here-and-now, as the origin of changes, is

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<sup>31</sup> Que l'"empreinte" soit irréductible cela veut dire aussi que la parole est originairement passive, [...] DLG p. 97 (that the "imprint" is irreducible means also that speech is originarily passive, [...])OG. p.66 .

<sup>32</sup> Cassirer II, p. 128.

<sup>33</sup> Cette passivité est aussi le rapport à un passé, à un toujours-déjà-là qu'aucune réactivation de l'origine ne saurait pleinement maîtriser et réveiller à la présence. Cette impossibilité de ranimer absolument l'évidence d'une présence originnaire nous renvoie donc à un passé absolu. C'est ce qui nous a autorisé à appeler trace ce qui ne se laisse pas résumer dans la simplicité d'un présent. DLG p.97 (This passivity is also the relationship to a past, to an always-already-there that no reactivation of the origin could fully master and awaken to presence. This impossibility of reanimating absolutely the manifest evidence of an originary presence refers us therefore to an absolute past. That is what authorized us to call trace that which does not let itself be summed up in the simplicity of present.) OG. p.66.

<sup>34</sup> Il ne s'agit donc pas de compliquer la structure du temps tout en lui conservant son homogénéité et sa successivité fondamentales, en montrant par exemple que le présent passé et le présent futur constituent originairement, en la divisant, la forme du présent vivant, [...] La temporalité à laquelle il se réfère ne peut être celle qui se prête à une phénoménologie de la conscience ou de la présence et sans doute peut-on alors contester le droit d'appeler encore temps, maintenant, présent antérieur, retard, etc., tout ce dont il est ici question. DLG p.97-98 (It is not a matter of complicating the structure of time while conserving its homogeneity and its fundamental successivity, by demonstrating for example that the past present and future present constitute originarily, by dividing it, the form of the living present. [...] The temporality to which he refers cannot be that which lends itself to phenomenology of consciousness or of presence and one may indeed wonder by what right all that is in question here should still be called time, now, anterior present, delay, etc.) OG. p.67.

non-temporal, but by being non-temporal it does not become necessity. Derrida recognizes that the position of objective philosophy exposes the internal contradictions of the concept of time. Such contradictions led to the nullification of the concept of time. But while for objective philosophical thought time is nullified by the contradictions, Derrida sees in these contradictions a proof of the mistaken assumptions regarding time.<sup>35</sup> In his view, the contradictions expose the inability to separate between time and space. The here-and-now, what is present is space/time. Like Parmenidean being, only the present exists. For Parmenides, time and fate are vanquished by pure thought, while Derrida overcomes them through will. In this way he presents a similar line of thought to what Cassirer found in the basic Socratic idea that meaning and the center of human life, man's true goal, is located within him, and therefore the moral responsibility of man applies to his relationship to himself. This idea, in Cassirer's opinion, separates Greek thought from the sphere of myths because it opposes the mythic idea of guilt and fate. But in spite of the similarity, one cannot identify Derrida's position with the Socratic position because in the Socratic idea guilt and fate are overcome by the moral will, while for Derrida there is no ethical mastery over time and fate. Time and fate are created by the will, and ethics is not an implicit necessity but the limitations that will places upon itself.<sup>36</sup>

Cassirer describes the transition from mythic thought to objective thought by saying that, in Greek thought, for the first time thought and feeling become free to perceive the pure and complete consciousness of temporal presence. Only the being of Parmenides can be considered as presence: it never was (past) and never will be (future) because its one and undivided whole exists only in the present. The Platonic idea is present in the pure sense because only as something that is always itself and has never been created, can it satisfy thought with the assumption of identity, with something determined that can never change. For Plato, the philosopher is a person who by force of logic is always directed towards being.<sup>37</sup> Cassirer includes even Heraclitus in this position. It is true that he speaks about the river of time – a river that cannot be resisted, that carries with it all that exists, and in which a person cannot

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<sup>35</sup> MDP p. 63, MoP p. 55.

<sup>36</sup> This is the point of disagreement between Derrida and Levinas. A discussion on the issue of the relationship between will and ethics, that will refer also to the relationship between Levinas and Derrida, will be presented in the next chapter. On the other hand, one can see a resemblance between this position to that of Kant. The difference between them is that Kant derives from it the categorical imperative while Derrida does not think that it is possible to derive the categorical imperative from his own position.

<sup>37</sup> Heidegger makes this point the central one in his philosophy. The difference between the perception of Heidegger and that of Derrida will be discussed in the next chapter.

enter twice. But his attention is not directed only to the fact of the stream and transition but is directed at the eternal measurements that he finds in it. These measurements are the true and eternal Logos of the world. This world order, which is the same for everyone, was not created by any god or man but always was and always would be. The certain and necessary rhythmic measurement that holds sway through all changes ensures the certainty of a hidden harmony. Cassirer thinks that it is only to ensure this hidden harmony that Heraclitus deals with change. What fascinates him is not the bare fact of change but its significance. This two-sided approach, keeping true to the perception of temporality and the struggle to grasp it through the conception of a unifying law is typical of Heraclitus as a Greek philosopher. According to Cassirer, there is no one who emphasizes more sharply than Heraclitus the changing nature of what is usually called the form of things. Heraclitus repeatedly emphasizes the perception of the Great One that must split into two in order to find himself anew. The oppositions, even those between life and death, become relative. The idea of variety and uniformity are merged together, and from this amalgamation a new sense arises that can be called the sense of pure speculation of time and presence. Thus Cassirer sees the Greeks as establishing a purely internal balance between permanence and change. There is no temporal return to the beginning of things as in myth or projection towards a final goal that Cassirer finds in the religious ethics of the prophets. Here thought deals with a basic, eternal law and unchanging law of the universe. In this sense of the present, the 'I' gives itself to the moment but is not sealed up within it but seems to freely hover over the moment. In this speculative now, the distinction of the form of empirical time disappears. Cassirer shows how this concept of mythic time changes in Plato's dialogue of Timaeus. In this dialogue, the demiurge tries to create a sensuous world that will resemble as far as possible the world of ideas. But since it is not possible to copy the nature of eternity in the fullest sense within the world that is being created, the demiurge creates a moveable image of eternity. This moveable image of eternity with its eternal unity is called time. Here appear the days, nights, months, and years that are linked to a structure of wholeness by the will of the demiurge. Time, since it moves in circles according to number, is the first and most perfect imitation of eternity. Thus, as Cassirer claims, time changes from being the expression which constitutes the basic subject of thinking, the expression of that which always becomes and never remains itself, into a basic concept for knowing the cosmos. In spite of the mythic description, the demiurge

serves to establish the modern scientific perception of the world. The ideas in the *Timaeus* guided Kepler in formulating a new conception of time – the concept of time of a mathematical science of nature. In the formulation of Kepler, there appears a uniform magnitude of change to which are related all changes and non-uniform movement, and by which they are measured. From here onwards this magnitude is the ideal, with purely logical significance. The conception of time is absorbed into the concept of function, and appears as one of the more important applications and expressions of functional thought. The Platonic concept of time received confirmation. Only by the ordering and continuity of time, only by relating it to the moveable image of eternity, has this phenomenon become productive for thought and has acquired its part in the world of ideas.<sup>38</sup>

Through Cassirer's analysis of the transition from mythic thought to objective thought, it is possible to bring into sharper relief the special position of Derrida, a position that is neither mythic nor objective, even though it has something of both. The Derridean present, the here-and-now, exists only in the present, just as the Parmenidean being in its perfect wholeness exists in the present. Like the Heraclitean river, Derrida also speaks about the inability to read the same text twice. But Heraclitus sees the Logos as a single cosmic order that is imposed upon the changes, while Derrida thinks that the Logos (in the logical sense) imposes one order among many, and this is not the only possible order. Therefore, it is impossible to speak about an order that always was and always will be. Although he does not return to the mythic position that sees order as the creation of God, one can see in his position, which is the view of order as a consensus of a collection of individual wills, as an echo of the mythic position in which order is the result of will (divine will). Between the mythic position that relates to the past and the mythic position that is directed towards a final goal, and the objective position that deals with a basic, eternal and unchanging law, one can place Derrida as one who is directed to the future, to an end. But this end, as said before, is not the end posited by the will of God, but an end that is posited by the individual will and can change whether realized or not. The perception of events as directed towards an end is not unique for Derrida. Cassirer mentions the prophets who present events as directed towards an end, but with regard to their directional activity, it seems that the direction to which the prophets refer are

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<sup>38</sup> Cassirer II, pp. 133-138.

totally different from the one to which Derrida refers. For the prophets, the entire gaze is directed towards the future, to the end. Derrida, on the other hand, puts the emphasis on the immediate present and takes temporality out of the picture. The emphasis on the here-and-now makes it possible to describe time as a uniform magnitude of change in objective thought. But for Derrida the emphasis on the immediate present is just what obviates the possibility to quantify the change and to describe time in terms of number. Although Derrida, as in objective thought, sees time as the expression of change, this change is not a description of the changes of physical events but an accumulation of changes in meanings. These accumulated meanings are history, the political-social-cultural sphere. When we say "sphere", the accumulated meaning becomes space, and therefore one cannot separate time from space.<sup>39</sup>

### 2.3 Space

The organization of space, says Derrida, begins from the center, from the voice, from which actions emerge and on which actions are passively applied.<sup>40</sup> This means that the origin of space is the voice. The space that originates in the voice is not an abstract space. The quality that is strikingly absent from it is that of unity that characterizes geometrical space. At the homogenous basis of geometric space lies the assumption that all the parts, the points that are attached in this space are the determinations of states that have no other content except for being states in relation to each other. Their reality is expressed in their mutual relationships. This is a functional rather than a substantial reality. Since these points have no content and are simply the expression of abstract relations, their homogeneity does not express a given space, but one that is created by construction. Homogenous space can be expressed by the assumption that from every point in space it is possible to sketch correlated shapes in all directions and in all sizes. This homogeneity demand cannot be fulfilled in any space that is grasped by the senses. In the space that is grasped by the senses there are no standpoints and homogenous directions. Every place has its own form and value. Both visible space and felt space have different and non-homogenous qualities. In contrast with geometric space, Cassirer posits sensed space, visual or tactile.<sup>41</sup> Mythic space,

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<sup>39</sup> L'espacement (on remarquera que ce mot dit l'articulation de l'espace et du temps, le devenir-espace du temps et le devenir- temps de l'espace)DLG p.99 (Spacing (notice that this word speaks the articulation of space and time, the becoming-space of time and the becoming-time of space) [...] OG. 68

<sup>40</sup> DLG p. 19, OG p.9.

<sup>41</sup> Cassirer II, pp. 84-85.

posited in opposition to abstract space, originates in sight or touch. The space that Derrida presents originates in the voice. The voice origin, like that of sight and touch, indicates a space that originates in the senses and therefore is not homogenous. In positing the voice as the origin of space, Derrida distances himself from objective-scientific thought, which he calls logocentric, as well as from mythic thought as presented by Cassirer. However, Derrida's position corresponds to that of Cassirer in relation to the way in which the concept of space has developed in language. Cassirer says that the distinction place in space begins from the location of the speaker and spreads out in a circle until it reaches total objectivity, until the whole system of localized characteristics has been conceptualized.<sup>42</sup> Since Cassirer deals with the development of language, it is not surprising that he refers to the speaker, to the voice owner. Derrida also refers to the voice, but for a different reason. Derrida, as we have seen, rejects sight and places the voice in the central position that sight has always filled in philosophical tradition. Derrida chooses the voice because of two main qualities that can be attributed to it: immediate proximity to the speaking subject and activity.

It is commonly accepted that sight is immediately proximate. This attribution comes from presenting intuition as immediate perception. But as we have seen, Derrida places intuitive perception in the voice. This act of Derrida preserves, on one hand, the aspect of senseability, and on the other hand, stresses an aspect that until now had no place in thought: the aspect of will in the construction of space. The organization of space is not totally derived from conventions and is not an indifferent act.<sup>43</sup>

Cassirer indicates that the development of the mythic sense of space always begins with the contrast between day and night, light and darkness. He claims that the separation of spatial areas, which means any kind of expression within mythic space as a whole, is association with this dichotomy. In geometric space, norms are posited for apprehending and interpreting empirical things in space by means of a collection of geometrical relationships and laws. The theoretical apprehension of physical space shows that it is controlled by the same intellectual motive. Yet here too, sensuous

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<sup>42</sup> Cassirer I, p. 206.

<sup>43</sup> Déterminer un X comme sujet n'est jamais une opération de pure convention, ce n'est jamais quant à l'écriture un geste indifférent.

Or l'espace comme écriture est le devenir-absent et le devenir-inconscient du sujet. DLG p. 100 (To determine an X as a subject is never an operation of a pure convention, it is never an indifferent gesture in relation to writing. Spacing as writing is the becoming-absent and the becoming-unconscious of the subject) OG. 69

perception has a role to play. A certain area and direction in space seem to be distinguished only by their relationship by means of the material distinctions of our bodily organization. But even if the physical apprehension of space cannot relinquish this support, it struggles to free itself from it more and more. All advancement is aimed precisely to reduce the human components of the physical picture of the world. Thus the sensuous opposition of above and under loses its particularity in cosmic space. Above and under are not absolute oppositions. They have value only in relation to the empirical phenomenon of gravity and to the empirical order of this phenomenon. Physical space is characterized as space so long as it is relevant to forces. But in the purely mathematical formulation the concept of force becomes a concept of law, i.e. of relationship (function). In the structured space of myth, Cassirer sees a totally difference line of thought. Here the general is not distinguished from the particular and the random, and what is permanent is not distinct from the transient. These distinctions are the basic concepts of law. Here a single mythic value is stressed as an expression of opposition between the sacred and the profane.<sup>44</sup> Here there is no pure geometry or geography, no ideality, and not even empirical distinctions. All the thoughts and all the sensuous perceptions are based on construction of the original feeling. Mythic space as a whole remains immersed in these sensuous perceptions. What makes distinction possible within the mass of sensuous experience in all the areas and directions of space is by the different emphases of meaning that are connected to them, that allow for loading them with different and opposing meanings. The characterization of the mythic emphasis on the sacred and the profane is divided in different ways between the directions and areas, and impresses each of them with mythic-religious significance.<sup>45</sup> Light, as the expression of divine will (in Genesis, for example, light is presented as the first realization of God's will) shows that space is created through the application of divine will to reality, and by its means one can distinguish between the different areas, between the sacred and the profane. The borderlines that are posited in space by mythic thought have become ethical and social borderlines. Cassirer discovers that these relationships can also be found in the beginnings of scientific thought. For Plato and the Pythagoreans, the limited and the unlimited are posited against each other as permanent and transitory, form and lack of

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<sup>44</sup> The mythic perception of the world as distinguished by the criterion of sacred and the profane also appears in Mircea Eliade. On this see M. Eliade.

<sup>45</sup> Cassirer II, pp. 95-100.

form, good and bad. The purely intellectual relationship to the cosmos emerged from this orientation of mythic beginnings.<sup>46</sup> In the perception of light as the expression of divine will that makes the creation of space possible, and constitutes the point of contact between mythic and scientific thought, Derrida creates a break by presenting the individual and concrete voice as that which produces organized space.

Cassirer indicates that light expresses the realization of divine will. This will is imposed upon man and places him in a passive position in the creation of space. In mythic thought man finds the sacred places but does not create them, and in scientific thought he finds the point, the line, and the shapes but does not create them. In placing the voice as expressing the will of the individual person, Derrida all at once changes the organization of space. Voice creates the language from which space is constructed. Space is the product of will. Desire<sup>47</sup> that leads to subjective awareness divides reality both inwardly and outwardly. As in mythic-religious thought, the division here is also of an ethical nature. Since desire is the force that raises into awareness the distinction between inward and outward, this distinction is linked with the sense of sin.<sup>48</sup> The distinction of space is not objective or indifferent, but is anchored within an ethical standpoint regarding what is proper or improper. Derrida thinks that this state of affairs in which distinction is not indifferent, leads to the placement of relations between the inward and the outward upon a system of laws that will arrange this relationship as a natural order, as a science.<sup>49</sup> This means that Derrida explains scientific thought not as the development of objectification or as a greater abstraction as in Cassirer's explanation, but also places it as the result of aspiration. According to this explanation, the source of objective scientific thought is an ethical standpoint that orders the relationship between desire (inward) and guilt (outward).

Through the emphasis on voice, Derrida exposes the axis that had lain hidden throughout the generations: the axis of ability (indeterministic activity) that stands in opposition to inability (determinism). In the analysis of space as the product of voice, Derrida's position corresponds to that of Cassirer which is presented in the analysis of

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<sup>46</sup> Cassirer II, pp. 100-102,

<sup>47</sup> Desire is the will to make reality different from what it is. Later on I shall deal with desire in greater detail.

<sup>48</sup> DLG pp. 52-57; OG pp 34-38.

<sup>49</sup> In Derrida's view, this task is assigned to the science of language.: *Donc une science du langage devrait retrouver des rapports naturels, ce qui veut dire simples et originels, entre la parole et l'écriture, ce qui veut dire entre un dedans et un dehors.* DLG p.53 (Thus science of language must recover the natural - that is, the simple and original - relationships between speech and writing, that is, between an inside and an outside.) OG. p.35

the development of space perception through language. But it is precisely in this correspondence that one can see the differences in the standpoints of Cassirer and Derrida. Cassirer sees in myth and in science the symbolic forms that stand parallel to language as a symbolic form. As separate symbolic forms he can analyze the development of space perception from different perspectives. In myth, space develops from the relationship between darkness and light, between the sacred and the profane. In language, space develops from the speaker as the center. When Derrida negates light as the source, the divine will that is expressed in mythical light is united with human will that is expressed in voice. For Derrida, man is not a passive being standing submissively before an active divinity. There is not division into symbolic forms that stand independently of each other, but there is only a concrete person with a voice, with a will, for whom space is the result of his developing awareness, i.e. of the development of his awareness of his will and of the possibilities that lie before him to realize this will. There is no opposition here between Derrida and Cassirer. Even Cassirer thinks that the divine will revealed to man is merely the projection of human will upon the world and its manifestations in magnificent manner. But Cassirer wants to prove that the world is the product of the projection of subjective will and its manifestations as objective reality, while Derrida presupposes this world and does not try to prove it. Space in the writings of Derrida is organized through distinctions between what is subject to the individual will and what is not subject to it. On one hand this is not abstract geometric space and on the other hand it is not different areas that are distinguished from each other by the criterion of sacred and profane.

The space that is constructed from the voice has been shown in the previous chapter as a historical expanse – as writing. Historical expanse is constructed from the tension between the dimension that is imposed upon the will, the deterministic dimension, and the creative dimension, the indeterministic dimension of the will. The unit through which this space is constructed is *différance*, and the concept of trace is the actual expression of this unit. Derrida assumes a space that is built of non-quantified concepts – trace. In the use of *différance* as the smallest unit of space, Derrida distances himself both from objective thought and from scientific thought. Cassirer presents the whole in objective space as something that is not separated from its parts but is constructed by them as a constitutive condition. The line emerges from the point, the area from the line, and the bodily shape from the area. This is a genetic emergence of the whole, and therefore the understanding of the whole demands a

return to the parts that created it – the point and the line. He claims that in mythic thought, the whole is not created by a genetic growth from its parts according to general rule, but maintains with them a static system of relationships. It does not matter into how many parts we divide space, in every part we will find the form, the structure of the whole. This form is not broken down into homogenous and formless parts, The whole of space seems as though it were constructed according to a closed model that can be expressed for us in a large or limited size, but will always remain the same thing. The whole system of relationships in mythic space is based on this original identity. All mythic relationships are dependent upon this original identity. The forms of existence and life are not created from disparate parts, from the interweaving of various causal conditions. From the very start life is given as a whole, in a completed form that only needs to be explained, and to us it seems as though it is revealed in time.<sup>50</sup> In Derridean thought, the whole seems to be the whole of objective space in that it emerges from *différance*, and differs from it in that this is not emergence according to a general rule. The attempt to understand the whole by a return to the parts that constructed it will show that these parts are not homogenous. In this sense there is a great resemblance to mythic thought. But even here this is a limited resemblance because in mythic thought life is given in its entirety, as a completed form, while for Derrida the whole is something that develops and changes all the time according to the various wills that make use of it as focal points of emergence. The whole is shaped by compensation and balance between the various wills. The different wills give emphasis to different areas, with the guiding criterion not being that of the sacred and the profane, but of indeterministic activity (desire) and determinism (guilt), i.e. of ability and inability.

An examination of the criterion of ability and inability will show that on one hand this criterion does not differ from that of the sacred and the profane that shapes mythic space, but on the other hand the difference between them is critical. The criterion of the sacred and the profane expresses the distinction between the places that are elevated by divine or demonic will and the places that a higher will ignores. This means that the distinction between holy places and places that are not holy is based on the distinction between places that are important to a higher will and those to which the higher will is indifferent. Since higher will is that which elevates them

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<sup>50</sup> Cassirer II, pp. 86-94.

above other places, there is no point in asking what is the reason that just these places were selected and not others. The only acceptable answer is that they are part of a superior plan, that they correspond to the aims of a higher will.

The distinction between places of preference and those that are considered as indifferent according to the criterion of ability/inability is made from the perspective of the individual will. The value attributed to the different areas originates in the ends that the will of the concrete individual has posited and in the degree of their correspondence (or non-correspondence) to the realization of these ends. In both cases, that of the sacred and of ability, the distinction is made from subjective point of view of will, and the criterion that serves as correspondence is arbitrary and is not subject to inference. However, while the sacred originates in a higher comprehensive will that unifies the entire system into a whole, the origin of ability is in the concrete individual will that only has a partial point of view of the world. The change of end can change the focus on this or that place. The individual whole that is derived from the individual purpose does not converge with any kind of universal wholeness but merely constitutes a part of it. Universal wholeness does not express structural wholeness but merely a sensitive balance between the parts that are in constant flux. Since this is so, the whole is a random aggregate that is also in state of constant flux. Thus a similarity can actually be found with objective space that exists as a balance and compensation between the forces that act within it. But the forces in objective space can be subjected to mathematical reduction, which means that they can have a common factor, while the forces (the different wills) in Derridean space are subjective, concrete, and are not subjected to conversion into uniform units.

Derridean space, which has been shown to be different from both objective space and mythic space, in spite of certain points common to it and to all other forms of space, can be called history or more precisely *différance*, i.e. writing.

In mythic thought, sacred days and places occupy space and time. Space opens up from the sacred place in four or six directions and falls back into it. Time also opens up and falls back according to days and sacred occasions. In objective thought, space and time open as abstract, relative systems that are expressed in mathematical formulation. For Derrida, space and time open up from the will of the individual that creates abstract systems of relationship with the wills of other individuals. The system of relationships maintained by the individual voice with the wills of others is expressed in writing. The analysis of writing that was made in the previous chapter

showed the special quality of writing as the realization of the individual voice as woven into the cultural, historical, political, social and scientific loom. This voice becomes one of the components of reality when the system of possibilities that it reveals receives social confirmation and becomes a convention.<sup>51</sup> Thus writing, besides being the expression of the individual, also appears as concrete human reality.

From the analysis given above it seems that Derrida refers to a different reality from that referred to in mythic thought and in objective scientific thought. The reality to which Derrida refers cannot be conceptualized by means of space, number and time in their traditional forms, because in his view they cannot be separated. For this reason Derrida unites time, space and number in one concept – *différance*. What is this reality to which Derrida refers? What kind of reality is that in which time, space and number cannot be separated? In the next chapter we shall follow the way in which Derrida applies the categories that he posits in the reality revealed through the writings of Rousseau, and see what kind of reality this is.

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<sup>51</sup> This interpretation also reflects the position of Gaché who claims that the difference to which Derrida refers is that which serves as a condition of possibility. See: Gaché, p. 88. Later on we shall see that one can speak about possibility only within a framework of relationship. *Différance* as time, space and number, constitutes a framework of relationship that serves as a basis for any possible possibility.

## Part II - The Reality in Derridean Philosophy

In this section I shall show that the subjective categories of space, time and number that have been characterized in the first part of the *Of Grammatology* (presented in the previous part), conceptualize a different kind of reality from the one referred to in objective scientific thought. In the second part of the *Of Grammatology*, Derrida presents the reality to which his categories refer. Those categories that Derrida uses are neither mythic nor objective, but they conceptualize teleological and emotional qualities.

Cassirer assumes that mythic reality is constituted by the perception of emotional qualities.<sup>1</sup> It seems that Derrida himself sees a resemblance (even if he does not identify them) between the reality that he presents and mythic reality.<sup>2</sup> Graver notes that Rousseau, unlike most philosophers, sees the origin of language in emotional rhythms and intentions rather than in the field of logic or practical events.<sup>3</sup> Since this is so, I have decided to call the reality of which Derrida speaks emotional reality. In the first chapter of this section I shall clarify what are the qualities of emotional reality and in the second chapter I shall show that this is the reality to which Derrida refers.

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<sup>1</sup> Cassirer, (1944: 97-141

<sup>2</sup> Et d'abord de ce que Leroi-Goarhan appelle "mythogramme", écriture qui épelle ses symboles dans la pluri-dimensionnalité :[...]DLG p. 127 (And first of what Leroi-Gourhan calls the "mythogram", a writing that spells its symbols pluri-dimensionally;[...] ) OG. p.85

L'accès à la pluri-dimensionnalité et à une temporalité délinéarisée n'est pas une simple régression vers le "mythogramme" :[...] DLG p. 130 (The access to pluridimensionality and delinearized temporality is not a simple regression toward the "mythogram";[...] ) OG. p.87

<sup>3</sup> N. Graver, p. xii.

## Chapter 1 – Desire Creates Reality

Derrida chooses a text of Rousseau in order to exemplify his claim regarding reality. The function of the analysis is to demonstrate the distinctions that were presented in the first part, and not to presume to say anything about the period or the specific text of Rousseau.<sup>1</sup> The declaration that the text is an exemplification shows that, for Derrida, one can find those things he says about the reality created by Rousseau in other expressions of reality as well.

Derrida thinks that an examination of the history of metaphysics reveals a process that begins with the consolidation of objects (objectification) that does not refer to the subjective aspect participating in the equation. His claim is that a person who conceptualizes the world revealed to him assumes that the objects he names exist in themselves, and are not dependent upon the concept with which he perceives them. For example, in the example of the tree mentioned earlier, the purposive aspect common to all objects that are included under the concept 'tree' is stressed. But when we discuss the question as to what a tree is, we assume that the tree stands in the world independently of us or of the concept 'tree' in which it is included. Descartes makes a radical change the moment he places the self within the equation,<sup>2</sup> because he transfers the emphasis from the object to the person who refers to it. But the step taken by Descartes is still imprisoned by the objectification that characterizes metaphysics, and therefore he makes the possibility of self-presence dependent upon God. God is nothing but another name for logic, and logic can be present and have influence only if there is someone who will give it presence and accept what is derived from it. Derrida thinks that this someone is the voice. Voice, as we have already seen, is the concrete individual will.<sup>3</sup> In presenting voice as that which makes

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<sup>1</sup> DLG p. 7, 145 OG p.lxxxix , 97

<sup>2</sup> [...] le motif de la présence s'est articulé d'une manière décisive. Il a subi une modification intérieure dont l'index le plus voyant serait le moment de la certitude dans le cogito cartésien. L'identité de la présence offerte à la maîtrise de la répétition s'était auparavant constituée sous la forme "objective" de l'idéalité de l'eidos ou de la substantialité de l'ousia. Cette objectivité prend désormais la forme de la représentation, de l'idée comme modification d'une substance présente à soi, consciente et certaine de soi dans l'instant de son rapport à soi. DLG p. 146 ([...] the motif of presence was decisively articulated. It underwent an internal modification whose most conspicuous index was the moment of certitude in Cartesian cogito. Before that, the identity of presence offered to mastery of repetition was constituted under the "objective" form of the ideality of the eidos or substantiality of ousia. Thereafter, this objectivity takes the form of representation, of the idea as the modification of self-present substance, conscious and certain of itself at the moment of its relationship to itself.) OG, p.97

<sup>3</sup> Dieu est le nom et l'élément de ce qui rend possible un savoir de soi absolument pur et absolument présent à soi. L'entendement infini de Dieu est l'autre nom du logos comme présence à soi, de Descartes à Hegel et malgré toutes les différences qui séparent les différents lieux et moments dans la structure de cette époque. Or le logos ne peut être infini et présent à soi, il ne peut se produire comme auto--affection, qu'à travers la voix: ordre de signifiant par lequel le sujet sort de soi en soi, n'emprunte pas hors de lui le signifiant qu'il émet et qui l'affecte en même temps.

metaphysics possible, Derrida transfers the emphasis from the objective standpoint (whether in the form given in Descartes or the concrete form it assumes in Hegel) to a subjective, individual and concrete standpoint. According to Derrida, Rousseau was the first (or the only) person who began to philosophise from a perception of a self-presence that is not as cogito, 'I think', but as 'I am aware, I feel'.<sup>4</sup> Derrida does not think that Rousseau functions within a different conceptual framework from that referred to by Descartes, Leibniz, Hegel and other philosophers, but it is just because Rousseau does function within that conceptual framework which Derrida questions and yet stresses the emotional aspect, that Rousseau's philosophy is suitable for exemplifying Derrida's concepts. In my opinion, Derrida's emphasis on the aspect of awareness and emotion indicates the quality of the reality to which he refers. This reality is an experienced-emotional-insightful reality in which the laws and procedures differ from the laws and procedures of rational reality. Derrida believes that the reality in which we live and that we experience is not the reality of which Galileo says was written in mathematical language. The world in which we live is a world of experience and not of intellect, of feeling and not of rational considerations. This world resembles the mythic world that Cassirer analyzes in his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. In this chapter I shall follow Derrida in his examination of the way that the reality in which we live takes shape, with the assistance of the distinctions offered by Cassirer in analyzing mythic thought.

The presentation of the interrelations between the individual and phenomenon (reality) shows that they are mutually dependent on each other. In the book *Of Grammatology*, the chapter on Lévi-Strauss deals with the claim that consciousness needs reality (writing) in order to become consciousness, and at the same time one cannot speak about reality that exists without consciousness. Derrida thinks that the position of Lévi-Strauss is disproved regarding the possibility that the tribe among

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Telle est du moins l'expérience - ou conscience - de la voix:[...]DLG p. 146 (God is the name and the element of that which makes possible an absolutely pure and absolutely self-present self-knowledge. From Descartes to Hegel and in spite of all the differences that separate the different places and moments in the structure of that epoch, God's infinite understanding is the other name for logos as self-presence. The logos can be infinite and self-present, it can be produced as auto-affection, only through the voice: an order of signifier by which the subject takes from itself into itself, does not borrow outside of itself the signifier that it emits and that affects it at same time. Such is at least the experience -or consciousness - of the voice: [...]) OG. p. 98

<sup>4</sup> [...] Rousseau est sans doute le seul ou le premier à faire un thème et un système de la réduction de l'écriture, telle quelle était profondément impliquée Par toute l'époque. Il répète le mouvement inaugural du Phèdre et du De interpretatione mais cette fois à partir d'un nouveau modèle de la présence : la présence à soi du sujet dans la conscience ou dans le sentiment. DLG p. 147 ([...] Rousseau is undoubtedly the only one or the first one to make a theme or a system of the reduction of writing profoundly implied by the entire age. He repeats the inaugural movement of the Phaedrus and of De interpretatione but starts from a new model of presence: the subject's self-presence within consciousness or feeling.) OG. p.98

which he lives lacks writing. The fact that the tribes lack the technique of writing does not mean that writing is absent from their lives.<sup>5</sup> Derrida finds proof that writing is part of the life of the tribe in the story told by Lévi-Strauss about the way in which the leader of the tribe assimilated the technical phenomenon of writing for himself, because only someone for whom the essence of writing is clear to him can make use of the technical aspect.

On the basis of mutual dependence that Derrida finds between the individual and society, he rejects the claim that it is possible to separate nature and culture.<sup>6</sup> The separation of nature and culture is based on the assumption that reality is independent of consciousness. From the moment that this separation is rejected, one can assume that there are several possible realities because different individuals create different realities.<sup>7</sup> Derrida himself does not deal theoretically with the possibilities of other realities, but indicates a reality that is prior to objective reality. He claims that this prior reality is visible in the words of Rousseau and Lévi-Strauss in the form of pity, desire and violence, which constitute formative components in their theories. Pity, desire and violence are subjective activities. Reference to a similar reality can be found in Cassirer who claims that mythic-religious knowledge, the one that expresses the emotional human world, originates from a subjective source. Cassirer says that mythic-religious knowledge does not construct self-consciousness based on the opposition of subjective/objective, but on a more fundamental opposition: the opposition between subjectivity and 'you' or 'he'. In his view, the 'you' and 'he' form the true antithesis that the 'I' requires in order to distinguish and define itself. Derrida discerns an even more basic consciousness. In his view, the consciousness that the 'I' needs as antithesis is the consciousness of the 'not-I'. But for him, unlike mythic thought in which the sense of the individual self and self-consciousness is not

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<sup>5</sup> A l'expression de "société sans écriture" ne répondrait donc aucune réalité ni aucun concept, DLG p.161 (No reality or concept would therefore correspond to the expression "society without writing.") OG. p.109 .

<sup>6</sup> DLG pp. 151-153, OG pp. 103-104.

<sup>7</sup> Proof of different realities created by different individuals can be seen in the medical treatment given in different tribes in Africa and in South Africa. In Africa, the medical services discovered that one could not treat mental disorders with western medicines because they did not provide the proper solution for the patients. If there were only one objective reality, the psychotic drugs affecting physiological aspects should have provided a solution for humans without any relation to the culture in which they live. The fact that these drugs were not suitable and that the patients had to be treated with traditional medicines of that locality demonstrates the complex relationship between the way in which a person perceives reality and the reality in which he lives. See Aina O.F. and Famuyiwa O.O (2007)

evidenced at the beginning of the development but only at the end, the distinction between the 'I' and the 'not-I' begins from a sense of the individual self.

Cassirer sees mythic consciousness<sup>8</sup> in the perception of the 'I', which is not material and cannot be characterized with the help of an analogy to other things. The 'I' for him exists in the world merely as a phenomenon. This 'I' is not connected to expanse or to temporal laws, to birth and death, to activity or passivity. It includes everything and controls everything since it alone observes everything that happens, an observer that is not involved with what he sees. In this act of pure contemplation it is separate from everything that has objective form, from everything that has a form and a name. It can only be given the determination of 'this' without any closer characterization. This is a self that is opposed to everything that is intelligible and at the same time it is the center of the intelligible world. Only one who does not know this – knows, and one who knows does not know. In a way it is the situation that was describe by the dichotomy between origin and source. Since the origin cannot grasp itself as origin, it remains in the position where, although it knows itself to be an origin, it grasps itself only as an I, which means that it does not really know itself as an origin. The purpose of knowledge is not expressed in things. A person needs to see the self, to listen to it, to understand, and whoever succeeds in doing so, knows the entire world. But at the same time, this very all-knowing being is itself unknown. According to Cassirer, a new principle of knowledge is presented here that has no correspondence to any object or representation of knowledge and respectively remains un-accessible to these forms of knowledge that correspond to the objects created by them. This is the sense of an intelligible self that is not conceptualized. For Derrida, the variation of this being appears in the perception of the voice as origin. For him, the voice as origin is the very heart of the rational world. It is not accessible to the forms of knowledge that correspond to the conceptualization of objects although it understands itself without any conceptualizations. Origin, as we recall, is not conscious of itself as origin. Bringing it into consciousness and turning it into the 'I' was described by Derrida, who claims to follow Lévi-Strauss and Rousseau, as violence.

Cassirer says that at the earliest stage of mythic thought we find that the sense of the self is merged within a religious-mythic sense of communality. The 'I' feels and

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<sup>8</sup> All references to mythic thought is based on Cassirer II, pp. 155-231.

knows itself to the extent that he perceives himself as a member of a community, as far as he is included with others within the unity of a family, tribal or social organization. The violence of which Derrida speaks is in bringing a certain 'I' to the awareness of being separate from the community. This isolation is demonstrated as taking place as a result of the foreign researcher (Lévi-Strauss) joining the tribe.<sup>9</sup> In the situation described, the selfhood of each individual comprising the tribe is defined and characterized by a personal name. But the use of this name is prohibited. The self does not stand by itself, and the community regards the outward protrusion of the personal self as a sin. The person who broke the taboo was the stranger, the non-I (in the sense of not being a member of the tribe).<sup>10</sup> The entry of the foreigner created divisions within the experienced wholeness, creates *différance*. The intrusion of the researcher into the life of the tribe does not only cause the breakdown of the taboo, but changes the space. The whole reality changes. This is not a total reality that is constructed of objective components. The individual change takes place together with the change in space.

Derrida's thinking, like the mythic thinking described by Cassirer, does not begin with the complete concept 'I' or 'mind', or with a complete picture of objective reality, but conceptualizes them by shaping them within itself. Cassirer shows that in mythology, the concept of the mind is not a stereotype that subordinates everything that comes within its purview, but is a liquid, plastic component that changes whatever comes into contact with it. While metaphysics and rational psychology treats the concept of the mind as a given, as a substance that has unchanging qualities, mythical thought behaves in a totally opposite manner. For mythic thought, none of the qualities that are attributed to the mind by metaphysics, such as the analytic quality of the concept mind, are connected to the concept at all. The mind in rational thought constitutes a unity, is invisible, lacks materiality and is eternal. In mythic thought, none of these qualities can be found as an inseparable part of the mind. Myth does not make any substantial difference between body and mind. As in myth, Derrida also does not divide body and mind. The unity, which in objective-scientific

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<sup>9</sup> La violence n'apparaît qu'au moment où l'on peut ouvrir à l'effraction l'intimité des noms propres. Et on ne le peut qu'au moment où l'espace est travaillé, réorienté par le regard de l'étranger. L'œil de l'autre appelle les noms propres, les épelle, fait tomber l'interdiction qui les habillait. DLG p.166-167 (Violence appears only at the moment when the intimacy of proper names can be opened to force entry. And that is possible only at the moment when the space is shaped and reoriented by the glance of the foreigner. The eye of the other calls out the proper names, spells them out, and removes the prohibition that covered them.) OG. p.113.

<sup>10</sup> DLG pp. 164-168, OG pp. 112-114.

thought characterizes the mind, characterizes for Derrida the whole of reality. For him, as in myth, the point of origin is the unity from which begins the separation between the objective and the subjective, between the world of the 'I' and the world of things. In both forms of thought the process, in the framework of which the categories of the mind are formed, is not only reflexive or the result of contemplation, but is an activity that establishes the center from which a person derives the spiritual organization of reality.

The borders of the inner world can be determined if the expanse of being is limited by activity. The more the circle filled by the self expands through activity, so can the objective character of reality express the significance and the role of the 'I' between desire and fulfilment, and together with it the consciousness of the necessary means to realize the outcome is awakened. The more that consciousness of activity advances, so the borders between the 'I' and the 'not-I' are made clearer and are expressed with greater precision. The Derridean world of ideas, as the mythic one, appears as though connected with the world of utility or ability. But while this world is expressed in mythic thought through the kernel of the world of magic, which is merely the translation and transference of the world of subjective feelings into concrete objective existence, for Derrida the world of ideas appears simply as it is, as a world of ability and utility.<sup>11</sup>

In the course of expounding the reality to which he refers, Derrida analyzes the society presented by Lévi-Strauss, and adapts it to the pre-cultural world to which Rousseau refers. In this society, subjective feelings are immediately self-present and activity is ethical from the very start.<sup>12</sup> According to Cassirer, consciousness first sees reality as an expanse that can be harnessed for the use of man, to the perception of the 'I' as unity. The formation of the unity of the 'I' as opposed to reality takes place when a person begins to see life as an arena of ethical activity instead of as an expanse of biological activity.

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<sup>11</sup> DLG pp. 189-190, OG p. 130.

<sup>12</sup> L'idéal qui sous-tend en profondeur cette philosophie de l'écriture, c'est donc l'image d'une communauté immédiatement présente à elle-même, sans différence, [...] DLG p.197 (The ideal profoundly underlying this philosophy of writing is therefore the image of community immediately present to itself, without difference, [...]) OG. p.136

Dès lors, la mission de l'ethnologue comporte une signification éthique: [...] DLG p. 198 (From then on, the anthropologist's mission carries an ethical significance: [...]) OG. p. 137

Ce modèle de petite communauté à structure "cristalline", tout entière présente à soi, rassemblée dans son propre voisinage est sans doute rousseauiste. DLG p.199 (This model of small community with a "crystalline" structure, completely self-present, assembled in its own neighborhood, is undoubtedly Rousseauitic.) OG. p.137

In every form of thought, whether mythic, objective-scientific, or Derridean, it is activity that is the most important component in the growth of a person's self-consciousness. Cassirer says that the effect of human activity upon the external world cannot be described as that in which a complete 'I' introduces objects that are external to the 'I' into their place and controls them. In his view, every real action is formed in two senses: in the sense of the formation of the object by the 'I' and the formation of the 'I' itself through the object. The 'I' does not simply impress its form upon the object, but obtains this form only in the totality of the action he performs on the objects and that he receives in response from them. Derrida, like Cassirer, thinks that this kind of activity is primarily a linguistic activity,<sup>13</sup> and is possible only if there is a gap between the 'I' and the objects. Derrida calls this gap *différance*. But the objects that Derrida refers to are not the objects that fill reality independently of the 'I'. The *différance* is created when the voice desires something that does not exist. This desire for what is non-existent forms, through language, the in-existent as the end that makes action possible. Activity is concerned with realizing what does not exist, in the realization of the end. The *différance* allows for desire without which one cannot speak about activity.<sup>14</sup> The linguistic activity referred to is the combination of experience and the theory of writing. Experience is the knowledge of the possibilities inherent in what is given, and the theory of writing is the knowledge of how to combine these possibilities in order that the end can be realized. The knowledge of possibilities means knowing the nature of the given, and the knowledge of the combination of possibilities means the ways that a given culture has found to combine possibilities. Therefore experience and the knowledge of writing are synonyms for nature and culture,<sup>15</sup> and linguistic activity is the tool that creates the world.

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<sup>13</sup> Jean-Jacques n'y est pas seulement livré dans le jeu de l'image spéculaire qui "capture son reflet et dénonce sa présence" (p. 109). Elle nous guette dès le premier mot. Le dessaisissement spéculaire qui à la fois m'institue et me déconstitue est aussi une loi du langage, DLG p. 204 (Jean Jacques is subjected not only in the play of the mirror image which "captures his reflection and exposes his presence" (p. 109) It lies in wait for us from the first word. The specular dispossession which at the same time institutes and deconstitutes me is also a law of language.) OG. p. 141

<sup>14</sup> C'est dire que la *différance* rend possible l'opposition de la présence et de l'absence. Sans la possibilité de la *différance*, Le désir de la présence comme telle ne trouverait pas sa respiration. Cela veut dire du même coup que ce désir porte en lui le destin de son inassouvissement. La *différance* produit ce qu'elle interdit, rend possible cela même qu'elle rend impossible, DLG p. 206 (This means that *différance* makes the opposition of presence and absence possible. Without the possibility of *différance*, the desire of presence as such would not find its breathing-space. That means by the same token that this desire carries in itself the destiny of its non-satisfaction. *Différance* produces what it forbids, makes possible the very thing that it makes impossible.) OG. p. 143 206, OG p. 143.

<sup>15</sup> Du côté de l'expérience, un recours à la littérature comme réappropriation de la présence, c'est-à-dire, nous le verrons, de la nature ; du côté de la théorie, un réquisitoire contre la négativité de la lettre, en laquelle il faut lire la dégénérescence de la culture et la disruption de la communauté. DLG p. 207 (On the side of experience, a recourse to literature as reappropriation of presence, that is to say, as we shall see, of Nature; on the side of theory, an

Cassirer thinks that the moment language and words are perceived to be the tools of creating the world, a break is formed between the world as a collection of material and physical things, on one hand, and the divine power contained in the word, on the other hand, and the transference between them is no longer possible because each of them belongs in two different realms of being. The physical existence of things must place at its foundation a new ideal form of being. In Cassirer's view, it is in the religious framework that man finds his self-consciousness through the images of his gods. By his perception of a god, he manages to separate himself as an active subject from the indefinite content and the material products of activity. The idea of creation *ex nihilo* that monotheism has posited, and in which the idea of creation received its basic form, can present a paradox from a theoretical scientific-objective viewpoint, but from a religious viewpoint this is a high achievement because in it pure will and pure activity reaches full and unlimited expression. In a certain sense, one can see Derridean thought as an expression of this idea but without the aspect of divinity. Language and words that are perceived as the tools of creating the world do not present the will of a god as in religious perception, but the concrete individual will, and writing is the way in which this concrete individual will is transmuted into actual formation. In the discussion about the way in which phenomenon is created, I showed that writing that determines and realizes the concrete individual will constitutes physical existence and negates the need to explain how the transference is carried out between the will that is contained in the word and the physical materials. Through writing, the individual manages to separate himself as an active subject and to discover his self-awareness.<sup>16</sup>

The reflexive ability of subjectivity of which Derrida speaks, the supplément, always refers to the whole of experience that is present and now.<sup>17</sup> Derrida claims that for Rousseau this here-and-now is embodied in maternal love. This is a state of grace that is self-sufficient<sup>18</sup> and as long as it exists there is no need for anything. The need

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indictment against the negativity of the letter, in which must be read the degeneracy of culture and the disruption of the community.) OG. p.144

<sup>16</sup> La guerre est ici en moi, par laquelle je veux m'élever au-dessus de ma vie tout en la gardant, pour jouir de la reconnaissance, et l'écriture est bien le phénomène de cette guerre. DLG p. 205 (The battle by which I wish to rise myself above my life even while I retain it, in order to enjoy recognition, is in this case within myself, and writing is indeed the phenomenon of this battle.) OG. p. 142

<sup>17</sup> Ainsi, la présence, ... devrait se suffire à elle-même. DLG p. 209 (Thus presence, ... ,ought to be self-sufficient.) OG. p.145.

<sup>18</sup> Ainsi, la présence, qui est toujours naturelle c'est-à-dire, chez Rousseau plus que chez un autre, maternelle, devrait se suffire à elle-même. Son essence, autre nom de la présence, se donne à lire à travers la grille de ce conditionnel. Comme celle de la nature, "la sollicitude maternelle ne se supplée point", dit l'Emile. Elle ne se supplée point, cela veut dire qu'elle n'a pas à être suppléée: elle suffit et se suffit ; mais cela veut dire aussi qu'elle

to add something else to this state shows that the whole of experience is flawed, the wholeness is deficient, the gap of *différance* is created that demands self-reflection. Since the wholeness is deficient, it is bad. This shows that the *supplément*, that indicates the deficiency in the wholeness, is bad. But this same *supplément* is that which replaces what is missing and restores the wholeness, and as such it is good.<sup>19</sup> The *supplément* that is revealed as a result of *différance*, that same gaping difference that is a deficiency in wholeness, is the very movement that comes to replace the deficiency. This movement is reality.<sup>20</sup>

If we examine the concepts of good and bad that are used here for evaluation, we shall immediately find that they are not used in the sense of moral evaluation. The evaluation is one of emotion that indicates the pleasure or pain involved in the state of the wholeness of experience, whether it is full or deficient.<sup>21</sup> Although it is usual to see moral good and bad as objective concepts that differ from emotional good and bad, Derrida does not make a distinction between the emotional and the moral good and bad. He does not offer an explanation for the transference between moral and emotional evaluation, which shows that for him this is actually the same kind of evaluation. The distinction between moral values and emotional values are based on the assumption of the separation of objective thought (that can appear in the form of the god) and subjective thought. Cassirer says that Spinoza shows that happiness is based on the new form of knowledge that can be obtained when the soul ceases to be merely a natural potentiality, and perceives itself as an ethical subject. Man is free of the fear of the unknown, of the fear of demons, when his essential self is not controlled by mythic powers, when he recognizes himself as having the power to

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est irremplaçable : ce que l'on voudrait y substituer ne l'égalerait pas, ne serait qu'un médiocre pis-aller. DLG p.209 (Thus presence, always natural, which for Rousseau more than for others means maternal ,ought to be self-sufficient. Its essence, another name for presence, may be read through the grid of this ought to be [ce conditionnel]. Like Nature's love, "there is no substitute for mother's love", says Emile. It is no way supplemented, that is to say it does not have to be supplemented, it suffices and is self-sufficient; but that also means that it is irreplaceable; what one would substitute for it would not equal it, would be only a mediocre makeshift.) OG. p.145

<sup>19</sup> Or le *supplément* est ici à la fois la chance de l'humanité et l'origine de sa perversion. DLG p. 211 (The supplement is here both humanity's good fortune and the origin of its perversion.) OG. p. 147

<sup>20</sup> Le *supplément*, ce sera toujours remuer la langue ou agir par les mains d'autrui. Tout est ici rassemblé: le progrès comme possibilité de perversion, la régression vers un mal qui n'est pas naturel et qui tient au pouvoir de suppléance qui nous permet de nous absenter et d'agir par procuration, par représentation, par les mains d'autrui par écrit. Cette suppléance a toujours la forme du signe. Que le signe, l'image ou le représentant deviennent forces et fassent "mouvoir l'univers", tel est le scandale. DLG p. 211 (The supplement will always be the moving of the tongue or acting through the hands of others. In it everything is brought together: progress as the possibility of perversion, regression toward an evil that is not natural and that adheres to the power of substitution that permits us to absent ourselves and act by proxy, through representation, through the hands of others. Through the written [par écrit]. This substitution always has the form of the sign. The scandal is that the sign, the image, or the representer, become forces and make "the world move".) OG. 147

<sup>21</sup> Strauss, pp. 123-133

create himself through self-knowledge by means of the principles of knowledge and will. This produces a new awareness of inner freedom. Mythic necessity is exchanged for ethic necessity with laws that correspond to the highest ethical standards of freedom. Man obtains his real 'I' through self-responsibility. Derrida also thinks that a moral way of life shows that a person perceives himself separate from the other and as a result he has the ability to act,<sup>22</sup> but unlike Spinoza, Derrida does not think that this knowledge is objective knowledge. For him, it is subjective knowledge that refers to an intelligible experienced reality. In this reality, space and time do not exist independently but are created as a result of activity. As we have seen, this activity is linguistic activity. Since this is a subjective system, even linguistic activity is not neutral and objective, but is an act of positing an end and of carrying it out, and as such it is the product of individual will. In a reality that is entirely a system of related forces, since the carrying out of the will means a violation of the existing balance of forces by using an even greater force to obtain the desired end. The use of a greater force means subjecting other forces to it and harnessing them for its own purposes. As such, this is a violent force. Space and time are seen to be the result of intentional action, and violence as a necessary element.<sup>23</sup>

As we have seen, in the system that Derrida presents, deficiency is followed by the rousing of the will to act. Cassirer claims that it is desire that is the primary force that establishes man as an independent being facing the world. Through desire, man does not accept the reality of things and the world, but constructs them for himself. This is the most primitive form of awareness of the ability to give form to reality. In this state of awareness, no entity or event exists that can escape being subject to the mighty force of thought and desire. As said earlier, Derrida also indicates that desire is the force that creates the distinction between the inner and the outer, between the desiring body (outer) and the mind (inner) upon which it imposes sin.<sup>24</sup> This means that desire is the force that raises self-awareness together with moral

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<sup>22</sup> Reconnaître l'écriture dans la parole, c'est-à-dire la différance et l'absence de parole, c'est commencer à penser le leurre. Il n'y a pas d'éthique sans présence de l'autre mais aussi et par conséquent sans absence, dissimulation, détours différance, écriture, DLG p. 202 (To recognize writing in speech, that is to say différance and the absence of speech, is to begin to think the lure. There is no ethics without the presence of the other but also, and consequently, without absence, dissimulation, detour, différance, writing. ) OG. p.139-140 202, OG pp. 139-140.

<sup>23</sup> Et n'oublions pas que la violence qui nous porte vers les entrailles de la terre, le moment de l'aveuglement minier, c'est-à-dire de la métallurgie, est l'origine de la société. DLG p. 213 (And let us not forget that the violence that takes us toward the entrails of the earth, the moment of mine-blindness, that is, of metallurgy, is the origin of society.) OG. p. 149.

<sup>24</sup> OG pp. 34-38.

consciousness.<sup>25</sup> In the mythic-religious world that Cassirer analyzes, desire is projected onto the god, and it is the will of the creator of the world that draws the borderlines between the sacred and the profane. In the world of Derrida, desire is individual desire.

The will to carry out something is *supplément* that arises through *différance*, that gap in the wholeness of experience, in sense. But the gap itself is opened as a result of desire, of wanting what is not there. *Supplément* and *différance* seem to be different names for the very same thing.<sup>26</sup> This is the individual will of the concrete person<sup>27</sup> that is expressed through action.

Cassirer claims that an analysis of the awareness of action that arises through desire will show that this awareness contains only the product of action, the thing which is desired. But this product retreats to a distance and loses more and more its sensual immediacy. At the beginning there is hardly any tension between simple desire and the object towards which the desire is aimed. Derrida exemplifies this in the relation between the child and its mother.<sup>28</sup> At the beginning the mother is always at the disposal of her child, but as it grows up, the distance between them grows larger, and the baby learns that his mother does not always appear whenever he desires her to do so. Cassirer thinks that mythic awareness ascribes immediate power to desire itself, a force that is sufficient to empower expression in such a way as to lead to an outcome that can fulfil all the desired ends. All magic is suffused with this belief in the active power possessed by human aspirations, the belief in the unlimited power of thought. This belief is strengthened by the human experience of the influence that a man has upon his own body, on the movement of his limbs. For analytical theory concerning the concept of causation, this influence that is experienced immediately is in itself a problem. The fact that my will moves my hand is not better explained and understood than had I been able by the force of my will to stop the moon in its orbit. But, as Cassirer claims, the magical viewpoint reverses the relationship. Because my will moves my arm, there is a definite, equal and

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<sup>25</sup> L'expérience de l'auto-érotisme est vécue dans l'angoisse. La masturbation ne rassure ("bientôt rassuré") qu'à travers cette culpabilité que la tradition attache à cette pratique, [...] DLG p. 216 (The experience of auto-eroticism is lived in anguish. Masturbation reassures ("soon reassured") only through that culpability traditionally attached to the practice, [...]) OG. p. 150.

<sup>26</sup> [...] le même texte, [...] Le même ici s'appelle *supplément*, autre nom de la *différance*. DLG p.215 ([...] ,the same text. The same is here called *supplement*, another name for *différance*.) OG. p. 150

<sup>27</sup> C'est moi-même qui m'emploie à me départir de la force que la nature m'a confiée: [...] DLG p. 216 (It is myself who exerts myself to separate myself from the force that Nature has entrusted to me:[...]) OG. p. 151

<sup>28</sup> DLG pp. 219-220, OG pp. 152-153.

comprehensible connection between this and all the occurrences of nature. For the mythic viewpoint, which is characterized precisely by the fact that it makes no sharp distinction between the spheres of objectivity and subjectivity, and does not resort to a causal analysis of the elements of reality, the intervention of the will has a decisive force. In mythic thought there is no need for intermediary connections that lead from the beginning of causal events to the end by an ordering of the events. At the first stage of desire, consciousness immediately grasps the object of desire by an act of will, the outcome and the product of will, and connects them. Only when the two components move separately the means of separation enter and intervene. The moment that man tries to influence things not by magical but by instrumental means, this implies that he has undergone an internal change. The sense of unlimited ability in the form of desire is ended. Derrida sees this moment as the one in which the mother ceases to be at the disposal of her baby whenever it wants her, and it then develops the need to find a substitute for her.<sup>29</sup> Cassirer analyzes the separation of subject/object in objective language. Action is subject to the objective conditions from which one cannot deviate. In the framework of these separate conditions the external world is perceived as conceptualized and deterministic form of existence. From the very start, the world contains for man only what concerns his desires and activities. But the moment that something enters that prevents a direct transference from feeling to realization, the moment in which a person recognizes that there are more and more steps to be taken between the motivation and the end, a real distance develops between subject and object. The person distinguishes objects that are characterized precisely by the fact that they have a content of their own, a content that is opposed to the immediate desire of the person. The realization of means that are inseparable from the achievement of the end is that which first teaches a person to perceive the inner and outer as linked by a causal chain, and to assign each to its own place. From the standpoint of Cassirer, this realization produces a concrete empirical perception of a material world with objective status and components. Only intermediary actions produce the conceptualization of being that thanks to it being is separated into components, connected and dependent. In accordance with the mechanical function of instruments it is possible to find a purely spiritual role that does not only develop from it but conditions it from the very start. Instruments were never only made in

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<sup>29</sup> DLG p. 221, OG p. 153.

order to control the external world that can be treated as a given and complete material. On the contrary, through the use of instruments an image is created for man, an idea of the external world. The formation of this image and the conception of its components is not dependent upon passive sensuous impression or on simple perception. It derives from the form and tendency of the result that a person imposes on the objects. Derrida does not offer an abstract and fundamental analysis like that of Cassirer, but uses Rousseau's world of experience in order to exemplify the way in which reality and the individual person develop against each other.<sup>30</sup>

Cassirer sees in the mechanism he presents a confirmation, constantly repeated, that man can grasp and know his essential being only when he can make it visible in the form of the external objects facing him. For example, we understand the activity of the eye through its resemblance to the camera, and we analyze the activity of thinking through technical terms that belong to the computer. Just as a person learns to understand the structure of his limbs through making it the creator of tools and products, so he finds in his spiritual creations, such as language, myth and art, the objective standards through which he measures himself. Through spiritual creation he comes to understand himself as an independent cosmos that has a unique structure of laws that he has legislated for himself.

This process that allows for the creation of self with inner freedom, and places a person in front of a reality that can be activated for the good of mankind, eventually leads scientific thought to separate the self, the mind as a unit, from the body, and to see life as technological activity.<sup>31</sup> In scientific thought, reality is perceived as objective, and the subjective realm is not accessible to intelligible explanation. Any intelligible explanation subordinates the subjective to the objective, and as such imposes upon it the laws appropriate for objectivity. The subordination of subjectivity to objectivity forms a deterministic subjective expanse in which there is no place for self-responsibility. In any case, consciousness has lost its inner freedom. In the world picture presented by scientific thought, freedom of action is lost and the reason for

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<sup>30</sup> A travers cette séquence de suppléments s'annonce une nécessité: celle d'un enchaînement infini, multipliant inéluctablement les médiations supplémentaires qui produisent le sens de cela même qu'elles diffèrent: le mirage de la chose même, de la présence immédiate, de la perception originnaire. L'immédiatement est dérivée. Tout commence par l'intermédiaire, voilà ce qui est "inconcevable à la raison". DLG p. 226 (Through this sequence of supplements a necessity is announced: that of an infinite chain, ineluctably multiplying the supplementary mediations that produce the sense of the very thing they defer: the mirage of the thing itself, of immediate presence, of originary perception. Immediacy is derived. That all begins through the intermediary is what is indeed "inconceivable [to reason].") OG. p. 157

<sup>31</sup> Cassirer, (1961): 16-19.

technological activity is also lost.<sup>32</sup> The consolidation of the mind as a unit separate from the body, and the creation of a subject made up of two components that cannot be linked together, seems to be a dead end from the ethical viewpoint. The subjectivity that mythic thought struggles to form is perceived by objective thought as self-understood. Derridean thought, which emerges from the basis of objective thought, is not in need of subjective, individualistic consolidation, but only for rescuing the freedom of this subjectivity. For this reason Derrida stresses not only freedom, the individualism of Rousseau that appears in spite of being held in the entanglement of pre-determined conditions, but his own freedom.<sup>33</sup>

In Derrida's position with regard to voice (the subjective will), the voice constitutes a point of origin that does not need to be explained. Voice as subjectivity is revealed to itself when its desire is frustrated or delayed, suspended. But even then it is blind in regard to itself. Différance is seen as the activity that allows the 'I' to be revealed. The revelation of the 'I' means the ability to delay the action and to choose an alternative one that will make it possible to realize the aim of the 'I'. Subjectivity is revealed in face of delayed reaction, which makes it possible to posit several other reactions,<sup>34</sup> that is to say, it allows for an action that is not decreed but is enforced, and makes the concrete individual an origin and not only a source. Différance raises anew the consciousness of inner freedom that a person loses in scientific thought. This freedom can be assumed only if we understand reality as intelligible, but not as a conceptualized intelligibility.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> This is the problem that Husserl tries to solve in the crisis of the sciences.

<sup>33</sup> La manière dont il le détermine et, le faisant, se laisse déterminer par cela même qu'il en exclut, le sens dans lequel il l'infléchit, ici comme addition là comme substitut, tantôt comme positivité et extériorité du mal, tantôt comme heureux auxiliaire, tout cela ne traduit ni une passivité ni une activité, ni une inconscience ni une lucidité de l'auteur. La lecture doit non seulement abandonner ces catégories - qui sont aussi, rappelons-le au passage, des catégories fondatrices de la métaphysique - mais produire la loi de ce rapport au concept de supplément. Il s'agit bien d'une production car on ne redouble pas simplement ce que Rousseau pensait de ce rapport. DLG p.234 (The way in which he determines the concept and, in so doing, lets himself be determined by that very thing that he excludes from it, the direction in which he bends it, here as addition, there as substitute, now as positivity and exteriority of evil, now as a happy auxiliary, all this conveys neither a passivity nor an activity, neither an unconsciousness nor a lucidity on the part of the author. Reading should not only abandon these categories - which are also, let us recall in passing, the founding categories of metaphysics - but should produce the law of this relationship to the concept of the supplement. It is certainly a production, because I do not simply duplicate what Rousseau thought of this relationship.) OG. p.163

<sup>34</sup> LV p. 99, S p. 89.

<sup>35</sup> Le concept de supplément est une sorte de tache aveugle dans le texte de Rousseau, le non-vu qui ouvre et limite la visibilité. Mais la production, si elle tente de donner à voir la non-vu, ne sort pas ici du texte. Elle n'a d'ailleurs jamais cru le faire que par illusion. Elle est contenue dans la transformation de la langue qu'elle désigne, dans les échanges réglés entre Rousseau et l'histoire. Or nous savons que ces échanges ne passent que par la langue et par le texte, au sens infrastructurel que nous reconnaissons maintenant à ce mot. Et ce que nous appelons la production est nécessairement un texte, le système d'une écriture et d'une lecture dont nous savons a priori, mais seulement maintenant, et d'un savoir qui n'en est pas un, qu'elles s'ordonnent autour de leur propre tache aveugle. DLG p.234 (The concept of the supplement is a sort of blind spot in Rousseau's text, the not-seen that opens and limits visibility. But the production, if it attempts to make the not-seen accessible to sight, does not leave the text. It has

In a certain sense this way of thinking can be seen as a return to that of Socrates. In Cassirer's view, the mythic necessity that Socrates contended with is exchanged for objective necessity. This exchange released man from fate and allowed him to formulate laws through which technical human abilities could be increased, and lessened man's dependence upon external forces. However, in my view, Derrida thinks that objective necessity subjugates the consciousness of freedom and the demand for responsibility, for ethics, and therefore he exchanges the principles of objective knowledge that Socrates proposes for the principles of subjective knowledge. These subjective principles are different from the undefined principles of mythic knowledge. These are consciously held subjective principles that allow a person to create his 'I' through self-responsibility. Here too, as in Socrates, the necessity is an ethical one with laws that correspond to the highest standard of ethical freedom. Ethical activity is concerned with the concrete individual's consciousness of himself in an indeterministic way. But while Socrates formulates a reality that will allow for the consolidation of subjectivity, Derrida formulates a reality that releases indeterministic action from a consolidated subjectivity. The difference is expressed by the emphasis on subjectivity and on the consciousness of the concrete individual as the center of himself, experiencing the world and acting within it. In Derrida's writings, it is voice that constitutes that subjectivity, that blind spot.<sup>36</sup> The voice's experience of itself, the desire that is embodied, in Derrida's words, in the act of masturbation or what he calls "self-influence", creates the consciousness of space.<sup>37</sup> Self-influence constitutes the most basic structure of life,<sup>38</sup> and can exist only as *différance*, i.e. as time and space.<sup>39</sup>

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moreover only believed it was doing so by illusion. It is contained in the transformation of language it designates, in the regulated exchanges between Rousseau and history. We know that these exchanges only take place by way of language and the text, in infrastructural sense that we now give that word. And what we call production is necessarily a text, the system of writing and of a reading which we know is ordered around its own blind spot. We know this a priori, but only now and with a knowledge that is not a knowledge at all.) OG. p. 163-164

<sup>36</sup> The analysis of the voice in Derrida's writings was presented in the first section.

<sup>37</sup> Dans la structure générale de l'auto-affection, dans le se-donner-une- présence ou une jouissance, l'opération du touchant-touché accueille l'autre dans la mince différence qui sépare l'agir du pâtir. Et le dehors, la surface exposée du corps, signifie, marque à jamais la division qui travaille l'auto-affection. DLG p. 235 (Within the general structure of auto-affection, within the giving-oneself-a-presence or a pleasure, the operation of touching-touched receives the other within the narrow gulf that separates doing from suffering. And the outside, the exposed surface of the body, signifies and marks forever the division that shapes auto-affection.) OG. p.165

<sup>38</sup> L'auto-affection est la condition d'une expérience en général. Cette possibilité - autre nom de la "vie" - est une structure générale articulée par l'histoire de la vie et donnant lieu à des opérations complexes et hiérarchisées. DLG p. 236 (Auto-affection is the condition of an experience in general. This possibility - another name for "life" - is general structure articulated by the history of life, and leading to complex and hierarchical operations.) OG. p.165.

<sup>39</sup> La voix et la conscience de voix - c'est-à-dire la conscience tout court comme présence à soi - sont le phénomène d'une auto-affection vécu comme suppression de la différence. Ce phénomène, cette suppression présumée de la différence, cette réduction vécue de l'opacité du signifiant sont l'origine de ce qu'on appelle la présence. DLG p. 236 (Speech [voix] and the consciousness of speech [voix] - that is to say consciousness simply as self-presence-

In the first part of his book *Of Grammatology*, Derrida exposes the individual concrete will as a force that creates reality, which in the course of forming its own unique reality, encounters the realities of other concrete wills.<sup>40</sup> Time and space are separated as a result of the tension in the encounter between concrete individual desire and the series of forces that limit the possibility of carrying out this desire. Reality, which is the sum of all the successes and failures in realizing desire, is not homogenous. Adhering to the desires that were realized or were frustrated are the emotions that accompanied the act. Reality is the consolidated phenomenon of the success and failure to realize desire, and preserves the sense of frustration or success. As such, reality is not homogenous, and the time and space in which desire was frustrated are experienced as having a different dimension from the place and time in which desire was realized.<sup>41</sup>

Like mythic-religious thought, in which the relationship between various events is not an objective one of cause and effect and the outcome is determined, but is the product of a divine will whose logic is obscure, here too the relationship of events is the product of will, but unlike mythic thought this is individual will. As long as this is the will that motivates me to act it has no need of a reason. The need for reasoning will arise when its execution clashes with the wills of others, and the possibility of its execution will involve the frustration of the wills of others. Therefore, besides the need for reasoning there will be need of a criterion to decide between the different reasonings. If the criterion for decision does not approve the end that desire wishes to realize, the realization of desire will be accompanied by feelings of guilt that will adhere to the results of the action that realized the desire. In this as well there is a resemblance to mythic thought. The clash with the criterion that is posited by the god is that which shapes moral life. The criterion that Derrida posits is not the product of divine will but the product of the balance of forces between the different wills within a given period of time. This position echoes that of Karl Marx

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are the phenomenon of an auto-affection lived as suppression of différance. That phenomenon, that presumed suppression of différance, that lived reduction of the opacity of the signifier, are the origin of what is called presence.) OG. p.166.

<sup>40</sup> The subject is discussed in detail by Derrida in his book *La Voix et le phénomène*, and is analyzed in the first section of this study.

<sup>41</sup> *Le désir désire l'extériorité de la présence et de la non-présence. Cette extériorité est une matrice. Parmi tous ses représentants (extériorise de la nature et de ses autres, du bien et du mal, de l'innocence et de la perversité, de la conscience et de la non-conscience, de la vie et de la mort, etc.), [...] DLG p. 238 (Desire desires the exteriority of presence and nonpresence. This exteriority is a matrix. Among all its representations (exteriority of nature and its others, of good and evil, of innocence and perversity, of consciousness and nonconsciousness, of life and death, etc.) [...]) OG. p.167-168*

who sees in morality the way in which the upper classes maintains its superiority, or that of MacIntyre who sees morality as the expression of the values of the ruling elite in a given period of time.<sup>42</sup> Whether the reference is to the will of the god or the social norm, all the actions are judged in the light of the moral criterion, and as such they are all subject to moral decision. But in order for a criterion to be called a moral criterion, it has to be the objective criterion of the group, standing alone and independent of the individual will. In the reality presented by Derrida, which is entirely constructed from the personal, individual viewpoint, one cannot speak about an objective criterion, and the only criterion is that which realizes desire, the subjective, teleological criterion. But since the realization of desire encounters in the process of its realization the forces of others that are liable to frustrate it, the individual must weigh his actions. This consideration with regard to the expected profit and loss is an economic one. This economic consideration is not an objective, intellectual one of profit and loss, but one in which empathy and compassion play a central role.<sup>43</sup> Derrida calls this the consideration of the supplément.<sup>44</sup> The supplément, as said before, is the movement that fills the deficiency revealed through différance. Différance is space/time without which the wholeness of experience will not be a perceived reality, a human reality. It therefore appears that the reality to which Rousseau refers, according to Derrida's interpretation, is not intelligible reality.<sup>45</sup> Reality is not present in itself but is the product of imagination and desire, and the primary aspect that is formed in establishing this reality is the system of human relationships.<sup>46</sup> From this point onward Derrida describes in *Of Grammatology* the development of reality through the confrontation between poetry (the emotional expression of desire) and speech (the intelligible presentation of what exists), between the language of the north (that expresses need and necessity) and the language of the south (that expresses desire and

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<sup>42</sup> MacIntyre, 1989 .

<sup>43</sup> Rousseau y affirmée sans ambiguïté que la pitié est plus vieille que le travail de la raison et de la réflexion. C'est là une condition de son universalité. DLG p. 246. Or l'ordre de la pitié "tient lieu de loi", il supplée la loi, entendons la loi instituée. DLG p. 247 (Rousseau affirms there unambiguously that pity is more primitive than the work of reason and reflection. That is a condition of its universality. [...] The order of pity "takes the place of law" it supplements law, that is to say instituted law.) OG. p.173

<sup>44</sup> La logique du supplément - qui n'est Pas la logique de l'identité [...] DLG p. 254 (The logic of the supplement - which is not the logic of identity [...]) . OG. p.179

<sup>45</sup> Bien que les choses soient fort complexes quand il s'agit de la raison selon Rousseau, on peut dire que, à certains égards, la raison, en tant qu'entendement et faculté de formes des idées, est moins propre à l'homme que ne le sont l'imagination et la perfectibilité. DLG p. 259 (Although the concept of reason is very complex in Rousseau, it may be said that, in certain regards, reason, in as much as it is the understanding and the faculty of forming ideas, is less proper to humanity than imagination and perfectibility.) OG. p. 182

<sup>46</sup> DLG pp. 260-264, OG pp. 183-186.

possibility), between imitation (deterministic) and creation (indeterministic).<sup>47</sup> Reality develops around the axis of ability (indeterminism) and inability (determinism), around the indeterministic voice and the deterministic objects that limit it.

It is the accepted view that language represents reality and it is not reality in itself. Nevertheless, as can be seen from the formulation above, Derrida presents reality as a synonym of language, of writing. The last chapter in *Of Grammatology* deals with the possibility of separating reality from language, and seeing language as the representation of reality. For our purposes here, it is important to see on what Derrida places the emphasis when he summarizes the subject. Derrida claims that the expression he finds in language, in writing, is the expression of emotion, of desire. Writing, which is reality, is the realization of emotion.<sup>48</sup> In my view, Intelligible reality, which is not knowledge, is emotional reality. What, then, is this emotional reality?

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<sup>47</sup> DLG pp. 262-378, OG. Pp. 185-268.

<sup>48</sup> DLG pp. 442-445, OG pp. 314-316.

## Chapter 2 – Emotional Reality

The previous chapter dealt with the relationship between the individual and the phenomenon as a dynamic one that is mutually productive. At the same time it was shown that in spite of the dependency of the individual on the phenomenon, and his inability to be formed as an individual without phenomena, it is the individual voice that constitutes the origin of the phenomenon. The presentation of the sensuous and demanding voice as the origin of the phenomenon portrays it as the product of subjective will. This means that the phenomenon, the reality that Derrida refers to, is subjective, complex and many-sided. In this chapter I shall show that this reality is similar to the reality that we experience through emotion. Both of them are partial, always derived from the individual viewpoint, subordinate to ends, and not given to generalizations. Reality is always a whole of the present experience, and is subject to constant and unpredictable change. In a certain sense, this reality resembles that of the mythic world described by Cassirer. The mythic world is a dramatic one, a world in which actions and forces collide. Every natural phenomenon is the product of a clash between the wills and emotions of superior powers. Mythic perception is always suffused with emotional qualities. Everything that is seen and sensed is surrounded by a special atmosphere, an atmosphere of joy or sorrow, of suffering, of enthusiasm, of pleasure or sadness. All the objects of the world are beneficial or detrimental, friendly or hostile, known or mysterious, attractive and enchanting or repulsive and threatening. A similar situation to that described in the mythic world can also be found in our daily experiences, when we feel that the car that has broken down has upset an important plan, spoiled with deliberate intention, or when the weather is good and suits our plans we feel that it is cooperating with us, and so on. When we are in a state of high tension, we have a dramatic perception of things in general. Ordinary things are no longer what they had been before, but change their appearance and take on the special color of our impressions with love or hate, fear or hope.<sup>1</sup> The world to which Derrida refers is not a layer of experience that serves as a basis for rational analysis. There is no perception of reality as pure experience but only as an intelligible experience.<sup>2</sup> In presenting reality itself as intelligible, there is no

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<sup>1</sup> Cassirer, (1953): 102

<sup>2</sup> [...] on doit reconnaître que c'est dans la zone spécifique de cette empreinte et de cette trace, dans la temporalisation d'un vécu qui n'est ni dans le monde ni dans un "autre monde", qui n'est pas plus sonore que

separation between sense, reason and evaluation. Therefore it may be expected that an analysis of this reality will be different from the analysis of a reality that is perceived as being without meaning in itself. On one hand reality is always meaningful and never indefinite, and on the other hand we cannot speak about abstract meaning, a meaning that is not felt. In this sense, not only is the sensuous intelligible, but even intelligibility is sensuous. Because Derrida does not make the reduction of built sense to knowledge, one should not see his position as being an intellectual one as, for instance, the position of Hegel. The similarity between the reality that Derrida relates to and the mythic reality described by Cassirer teaches us that the reality Derrida is talking about is an emotional reality. What does it mean?

At the beginning of the discussion on the theory of emotion, Calhoun and Solomon present five models of emotion, each of which emphasizes one component of emotion: (1) A model that refers to sense experience; (2) A model that refers to physiological experience – both placing the emphasis on the actual feeling of emotion but differing in the motivation of this emotion, the first giving priority to psychological emotion which the second indicates the physiological changes that cause the arousal of emotion; (3) A behavioristic model that places emphasis on the unique aggregate of behavior relating to various emotional states. The emotion can be analyzed as deriving from this behavior aggregate or as motivating them; (4) An evaluative model that compares emotional positions for or against something, and the positive or negative evaluation of an object; (5) A cognitive model that focuses on the links between emotions and beliefs.<sup>3</sup>

Ben Ze'ev combines the five models into one theory in which four basic components are presented: The sense experience model (1); and the physiological

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lumineux, pas plus dans le temps que dans l'espace, que les différences apparaissent entre les éléments ou plutôt les produisent, les font surgir comme tels et constituent des textes, des chaînes et des systèmes de traces. Ces chaînes et ces systèmes ne peuvent se dessiner que dans le tissu de cette trace ou empreinte. La différence inouïe entre l'apparaissant et l'apparaître (entre le "monde" et le "vécu") est la condition de toutes les autres différences, de toutes les autres traces, et elle est déjà une trace. Aussi ce dernier concept est-il absolument et en droit "antérieur" à toute problématique physiologique sur la nature de l'engramme, ou métaphysique sur le sens de la présence absolue dont la trace se donne ainsi à déchiffrer. La trace est un effet l'origine absolue du sens en général. DLG p.95 [...] it should be recognized that it is in the specific zone of this imprint and this trace, in the temporalization of lived experience which is neither in the world nor in "another world", which is not more sonorous than luminous, not more in time than in space, that differences appear among the elements or rather produce them, make them emerge as such and constitute the texts, the chains, and the systems of traces. These chains and systems cannot be outlined except in the fabric of this trace or imprint. The unheard difference between the appearing and the appearance [l'apparaissant et l'apparaître] (between the "world" and "lived experience") is condition of all other differences, of all other traces, and it is already a trace. This last concept is thus absolutely and by rights "anterior" to all physiological problematics concerning the nature of the engramme [the unit of engraving], or metaphysical problematics concerning the meaning of absolute presence whose trace is thus opened to deciphering. The trace is in fact the absolute origin of sense in general.) OG. p. 65

<sup>3</sup> C.Calhoun, R.C. Solomon, p. 8.

model (2) are presented as one component – feeling; The behavioristic model (3), which is presented as motivation; The evaluation model (4) becomes an evaluation component; And the cognitive model (5), which is the reason component.<sup>4</sup> The perception of these four components (feeling, motivation, evaluation and reason<sup>5</sup>) as being fundamental shows that Ben-Ze'ev assumes there can be no feeling and motivation without reason and evaluation. Strauss on the other hand indicates the possibility of taking a "pre-evaluative" position in which feeling and motivation function while reason and evaluation are not activated, but in his approach even this position is evaluative because he sees values as a single kingdom in which its unity is seen not only in mutual complementarity but even in contradictions. He thinks that "the value of reason would not actually be opposed to a feeling-value, if they did not reside in the same arena".<sup>6</sup>

The distinction between emotion and feeling is expressed through reason and evaluation. While feeling is not (in principle) dependent upon the ends of the person who feels, reason and evaluation are dependent upon the end, on intention, on the motivation of the person in question. The end is that which focuses the person on this or than aspect of feeling and disregards the other aspects of that same feeling. It is the end that determines the degree of correspondence between a given situation and the desired situation, the end. In this sense it may be claimed together with Strauss that "... reason cannot dissociate itself from emotions, nor can it attend to its concerns without their participation in tracking its courses. The form of reason includes feelings as well as emotions".<sup>7</sup> The analysis of the intellect as dependent upon feelings gives prominence to the relative character of intellect and the centrality of will in its formation.

Neither Ben-Ze'ev nor Strauss claim that the distinctions they make actually exist in the sense that the distinctive components act separately. Both stress the unifying character of the sphere of emotions and the analysis they present are intellectual-theoretical analyses of emotions. Actually one can speak about reality as intelligible experience in which sense experience is not divorced from reason, and the latter is not distinct from evaluation. This means that in experience the four components are united into two distinct components – feeling/reason/evaluation on

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<sup>4</sup> Ben-Ze'ev (1996): 510

<sup>5</sup> Ben-Ze'ev calls the component of reason 'cognition'

<sup>6</sup> M Strauss, p.56

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 66

one hand and motivation on the other. This division that does not distinguish between feeling, reason and evaluation combines feeling and emotion into a single unit. The subordination of the system to the ends makes a reduction of feeling to emotion and does not allow for a distinction between the sensed element and the organization of those elements and their meaning. The lack of distinction between feeling, reason and evaluation, between feeling and emotion, perceives the given as an essence that cannot be quantified.<sup>8</sup> Experience preserves each event as a separate one that cannot be brought into a unified framework. On the other hand, we experience every event as a whole without parts, as a wholeness of experience. Derrida perceives reality as a wholeness of experience without parts. As long as one finds himself in this reality without paying attention to it, he is subject to the control of events. In this reality Derrida needs *différance*. *Différance* allows for the alienation required by the subject in order to be able to reflect on his actions and to decide what he wants to do in order to realize his aims. In the next section I shall examine in greater detail the function of *différance*.

In a certain sense, this reality resembles the one that is revealed in mythic thought. According to Cassirer, the gap between the senses and the conceptualization that characterises empirical and conceptual perception, and constitutes the basis for trying to find a correspondence between the world of sense perception and the world as it really is, is missing in mythic thought.<sup>9</sup> Mythic thought lacks the means for prolonging the moment beyond itself, for contemplation before or after the present moment, or for treating part of reality as the whole of reality. Instead of submitting to a general law, there is submission to the impression of its immediate phenomenon. Another description of a reality of this kind can be found in the article in which Ferrari,<sup>10</sup> in the name of Aristotle, presents pleasure as a reality that is the wholeness of experience without time. We experience this reality as a whole without parts. Ferrari uses the existence of this reality in order to prove that this is the present that exists for Husserl. I do not intend to deal with the question whether this reality can be attributed to Husserl,<sup>11</sup> but I wish to assert that this is precisely the reality of which Derrida speaks and refers to: an emotional reality that is experienced intelligibly as

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<sup>8</sup> De toute façon, on ne fera jamais tenir des propositions d'essence sur une échelle. DLG p.189 (In any case, propositions of essence can never be made to fit a scale.) OG. p. 129.

<sup>9</sup> Cassirer, II, p. 35.

<sup>10</sup> D. Ferrari, pp. 249-250

<sup>11</sup> A discussion of this question can be found in the responding article by Bourgeois in the same journal, pp. 253-256.

the whole of experience, as a whole without parts. This intelligible experience is called in this study emotional reality.

In the next chapter I shall show what is the significance of emotional reality as a presupposition.

### Chapter 3 - Desire and Emotional Reality

The analysis of the process described in Section I led us to the conclusion that Derrida offers us an intellectual synthesis that subordinates particular differences to basic assumptions. He presents the particular within a logical structure but the logic that Derrida uses is not the logic of generalization, of the relationship of the general to the particular.

Cassirer claims that it is the function of cognition to subordinate the various aspects of a phenomenon to a general unity of basic assumptions. The particular must take part within a context in which it is posited as section of a logical structure, whether this structure is teleological or causal. Intellectual synthesis is concerned with the conceptualizing of the particular within a universal order or law.<sup>1</sup> It can therefore be said that there is no denial of the cognitive function as defined by Cassirer. When Cassirer focuses on the philosophy of symbolic forms according to the orders of intellectual synthesis, he presents two possible orders: scientific and mythic. The difference between these two orders is derived from the different formative principle in each of them. This different principle leads to a different connection of the relationships that construct the categories of thought. According to Cassirer, these two forms of thought make use of the same categories – in both of them one finds the perception of space, time, number and subjectivity. But the formative principles of these categories are different in each form of thought. The formative principle of mythic thought is derived from the tension between the sacred and the profane, while in scientific thought it is the principle of objectivity that is activated. This means that the logic used for each of these forms of thought (the way in which each of the categories are constructed) is different, and leads eventually to a different description of reality for each of these forms. In my view, Derrida makes use of a different formative principle from those of mythic and scientific thought. For Derrida, the formative principle is derived from the tension between ability and inability.

The source of this tension between ability and inability is desire that things should be different from what they are, and it derived from the way in which the will experiences reality. Reality is perceived on one hand as allowing will to fulfil all its desires and on the other hand as limiting and subjecting it. An examination of reality

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<sup>1</sup> Cassirer I, p. 77

that is conceptualized by means of categories that were formed on the basis of the tension between ability and inability, reveals a reality that is emotional reality.

The perception of reality as emotional reality could have led to a perception of a relative and emotive morality. Many critics actually see Derrida's position, especially in deconstruction, a relativistic position that lacks objective criteria. But Derrida himself is aware of the problematics that arise from a position that lacks objective criteria,<sup>2</sup> and deals with this trenchantly. In the next section I shall go back and analyze Derrida's position as it was presented in the first section through the understanding of reality as emotional reality. From this analysis it will appear that the assumption regarding desire as a force that creates reality, exposes the risk that the empowerment of the individual will may eventually endanger social existence. In face of this danger, Derrida in his early writings points out the need for an objective moral criterion, and therefore we cannot regard his position as being relativistic. On the other hand, the way in which Derrida gives shape to reality as a subjective emotional reality leaves no place for an objective moral criterion. Indeed, in that stage of Derrida's philosophy dealt with in this book, Derrida does not indicate any objective criterion by which moral questions can be resolved.

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<sup>2</sup> LD, p. 80; D p.64.

### **Third Section - Interpretation and Derridean Philosophy**

The retrieval of the categories of thought and reality that Derrida uses makes it possible to resolve the interpretation problems that arise from the text. By the end of this section I will have shown that Derrida presents an alternative concept of knowledge that differs from scientific knowledge. My claim is that Derrida's concept of knowledge is concerned with the setting up of concrete aims and the laying out the possibilities of action that the concrete individual finds in a given set of circumstances in order to realize these aims. Since the setting up of aims is done within the framework and by means of language and the rules of a given society, the aims and the method for their realization can be shown as representing a deterministic world picture. This view is strengthened if we accept the claim of MacIntyre that a person must exist within a social framework in order to set up aims. Derrida accepts the assumption that aims cannot be set up, and desires cannot be aspired to, without a conceptual system, but he believes that the concrete individual voice is not chained to the range of possibilities within a given society. In his view, concrete individuals can set up aims that are not recognized in the social framework they live in, or can find solutions that were not previously raised. This means that the concrete individual can see possibilities that had not been raised hitherto, and that in any given situation he can act in more than one way. In this sense one can speak about an indeterministic system. The dependency that Derrida finds between the individual and society is the basis for the claim that freedom does not mean the ability to act in whatever way we may conceive but the ability to conceive of possibilities of action that were not known or were not previously available to a given group of people. The freedom referred to here is the freedom of desire, the freedom to set up aims. In order to realize them, this freedom needs a social system in the framework of which it will be possible to have aspirations and at the same time raise an ethical commitment to preserve the social fabric. I believe that this commitment supports the claim of Derrida that the position he presents is not a relativistic position. This position indicates the importance of the freedom of desire for human existence but also the equal importance of the ability to limit freedom and desire.

Knowledge, for Derrida, appears to carry within it a tension between the desire to fulfil concrete individual aims and the need to preserve the social fabric so that it

will be possible to set up the aims. In the analysis that is presented in the concluding chapter we will see that the early stages of Derrida's work do not indicate the way in which it will be possible to maintain the freedom of desire and at the same time to limit it. Therefore I propose to examine whether and how Derrida copes with this problem in his later writings.

## **Part I – Politics (the Phenomenon) as the Product of Desire**

Derrida tries to preserve individual experience so that it will not be lost in abstract description. This is an attempt to describe in a linguistic and abstract way, by means of concepts that are generalizations, concrete and unmediated experience. The world that Derrida presents is singular, concrete, actual, and lacks abstract concepts. In place of abstract concepts such as idea (determination), transcendence (separation), will (motivating force), he substitutes with concepts that preserved the sense of sensibility and are presented as concrete because of that: writing (determination), *différance* (separation), voice (motivating force). Time and space are not abstractions that can stand independently by themselves, but are always the result of concrete and singular experience. The consideration is always teleological and never abstract and theoretical, and therefore is always an economic consideration dealing with profit and loss. Understanding something is deciding which way to act, which means that understanding is always judgment. Discussion is always about something concrete, in the sense that it always copes with a specific text. The individual concrete singular aspect of a discussion is also given expression by dealing with literary texts that by their very nature deal with particular cases and not with general ones. There is no general statement. A general statement is constituted by the combined impressions of specific discussions, just as the perception of the world is a combination of experiences but is not formulated in a way that fixes it within defined conformations. Since we are talking here about intelligible experience in which there is no gap between understanding and judgment, we arrive at a reality that can be perceived as imposed. Despite this, in the world that Derrida establishes, human activity is active and creative and not deterministic. How does Derrida preserve this singular, concrete individuality? How is indeterministic activity made possible in the framework of his philosophy? What are the implications of the reality that is derived from Derrida's considerations? These are the questions we shall be dealing with below.

## Chapter 1 - Presence / Truth

What is the relationship between knowledge and reality? In what way can we be certain that the real world will follow the laws that we impose upon it? Ever since Descartes, who separated knowledge from reality, various answers have been given to this question.

Questions regarding the sign and the signified, what is their relationship, whether the sign represents the signified, what is meant by representations, are the ways in which we try to cope with the question of truth.<sup>1</sup> The underlying implication of these questions is the division between the conceptualized object and the conceiving subject. The conceptualized object in itself does not depend on the conceiving subject, and the conceptualization of the object is merely an imitation.<sup>2</sup> This division is an objectivistic assumption that objects and subjects are defined and determined entities that stand opposite to each other. On the basis of this assumption, there is reason in asking about truth. Derrida presents two basic positions with regard to the question of truth. Either we perceive the imitation as the reality of the thing in itself,<sup>3</sup> or we search for a correspondence between the imitator and the imitated (to which the questions above are related).<sup>4</sup> He then proposes a third alternative: that truth is not the product of the actualization of the thing in itself, or a correspondence

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<sup>1</sup> I do not intend in this study to discuss the question of truth. The question of truth is mentioned here in the simplest manner to allow for reference to Derrida's position, and should not be considered as a position or statement in its own right. The truth to which Derrida refers is tested by means of the clarity criterion, although it is not as clear and distinct as that required by Descartes, and it is not a correspondence relation.

<sup>2</sup> Il y a d'abord ce qui est, la "réalité", la chose même, en chair et en os, comme disent les phénoménologues, puis, l'imitant, [...]LD p. 236 (First there is what is, "reality," the thing itself, in flesh and blood as the phenomenologists say; then there is, imitating these, [...]) D p.191

<sup>3</sup> La mimesis est alors le mouvement de la physis, mouvement en quelque sorte naturel (au sens non dérivé de ce mot) par lequel la physis, n'ayant ni autre ni dehors, doit se dédoubler pour apparaître, (s') apparaître, (se) produire(se)dévoiler, pour sortir de la crypte où elle se préfère, pour briller dans son aletheia. En ce sens, mnémè et mimesis vont de pair, puis mnémè est aussi dévoilement (non-oubli), aletheia. Mimesis is then the movement of the physis, a movement that is somehow natural (in the nonderivative sense of this word), through which the physis, having no outside, no other, must be doubled in order to make its appearance, to appear (to itself), to produce (itself), to unveil (itself); in order to emerge from the crypt where it prefers itself; in order to shine in its aletheia. In this sense, mneme and mimesis are on apar, since mneme too is an unveiling (an un-forgetting), aletheia. LD p.237-238, D p. 193

<sup>4</sup> La bonne imitation sera l'imitation vrai, fidèle, ressemblante ou vraisemblable, conforme, adéquate à la physis (essence ou vie) de l'imité ; elle s'efface d'elle-même en restituant librement, et donc de manière vivante, la liberté de la présence vraie. (A good imitation will be one that is true, faithful, like or likely, adequate, in conformity with the physis (essence or life) of what is imitated; it effaces itself of its own accord in the process of restoring freely, and hence in a living manner, the freedom of true presence.) LD p.237-238, D p. 193.

between the imitator and the imitated (sign/signified),<sup>5</sup> but creation itself is truth, what is presence, what it actually is, and not a representation or actualization of something.<sup>6</sup>

Norris, who sees that Derrida rejects two traditional possibilities of truth, believes that Derrida is suggesting an ideal imitation, beyond the signs that represent it. This means that Norris suggests truth as the system of an infinite ideal relationship. I must admit that I find it difficult to understand the meaning of this possibility, and in any case the sentence that he quotes from Derrida has no reference to an ideal system.

Any attempt to reverse mimetologism or escape it in one fell swoop by leaping out of it *with both feet* [Derrida's italics] would only amount to an inevitable and immediate fall back into its system: in suppressing the double or making it dialectical, one is back in the perception of the thing itself, the production of its presence, its truth, as idea, form, or matter (Dissemination p. 207)<sup>7</sup>

In my opinion, Derrida states explicitly in this sentence that any attempt to transcendence will end by falling back into the system, which is the thing itself. The truth, according to Derrida, is the thing itself, the infinite activity of creating presence, ideas, forms and material. Truth is what is present here and now, and if we refer to the text of Mallarmé (which Derrida specifically mentions in this connection), this text is the truth. The infinite activity that Norris speaks of is the activity of reading this text. This reading, together with other specific readings, creates through the accepted conventions the historical-cultural and political space (as shown in the chapter on the genesis of the phenomenon), and it may be that this is what Norris had intended.

The presentation of the experience of presence as truth shows that, for Derrida, presence is not a matter to be questioned. The fact of my presence is total experience, an established fact.<sup>8</sup> Any reference to it is a secondary reference, which is implied by

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<sup>5</sup>Il n'y a pas d'imitation. Le Mime n'imité rien, et d'abord il n'imité pas. Il n'y a rien avant l'écriture de ses gestes. LD p.239 (There is no imitation. The Mime imitates nothing. And to begin with, he doesn't imitate. There is nothing prior to the writing of his gestures.) D p. 194

<sup>6</sup> [...]: puisqu'il n'imité rien, ne reproduit rien, puisqu'il entame en son origine cela même qu'il trace, présent ou produit, il est le mouvement même de la vérité. LD p.254 ([...] since the mime imitates nothing, reproduces nothing, opens up in its origin the very thing he is tracing out, presenting, or producing, he must be the very movement of truth.) D p. 205

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Norris, p. 56.

<sup>8</sup> It appears that Marion reads Derrida in the same way when he says that Derrida emphasizes to the extreme the primacy of intuition. "[...] the completion of the primacy of intuition as universal personification, a primacy that [...] a primacy that we have underscored even more clearly (if that is possible) than Derrida, [...]" See Marion, p. 19. Nevertheless we disagree as to the interpretation of this intuition. Marion takes this intuition to be generalisation in the most abstract degree and I agree with him as far as he relates this intuition to Husserl. But I claim that

the very assertion. Reference means casting a backward glance, reflection. Reflection<sup>9</sup> is an act that necessitates separation and objectivization, and the only possibility to account for it is through speech. This is the point at which Derrida differs from Husserl. Derrida's criticism of Husserl is that he is searching for a way to perceive the immediacy of contents that are the product of a mediating perception. Derrida's criticism is usually seen as a rejection of direct and immediate perception, and the presentation of a world that is constantly mediated.<sup>10</sup>

It may therefore be said that Derrida rejects the metaphysics of what is present, if this means the metaphysics of presence as presented by Jameson who claims that there is one absolute and pure essence that has one meaning only, of which absolute knowledge can be obtained (at least in principle if not in practice).

Metaphysics of presence

implies an illusion that univocal substances exist, that a pure present exists, in which we come face to face once and for all with objects; that meanings exist, such that it ought to be possible to "decide" whether they are initially verbal or not; that there is such a thing as knowledge which one can acquire in some tangible or permanent way. All of these concepts are basically hypostases of initial metaphysics of absolute presence which encourages the subject in belief that, no matter what his own fragmentary experience, somewhere absolute plenitude exist.

In this sense, the myth of presence is at one with the myth of pure speech, or of the priority of the spoken over the written.<sup>11</sup>

Bennington indicates a binary position based on the metaphysics of presence, and the hierarchical division derived from it.<sup>12</sup> Derrida's opposition to the metaphysics of presence derives primarily from his rejection of the binary-hierarchical division, claiming that this division, which reflects prior deterministic assumptions that

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Derrida does not see intuition as an abstract instance. For him intuition is the most concrete individual and singular form, and he express his position by presenting intuition as a voice.

<sup>9</sup> This is also noted by Gasché who says: "Undoubtedly, presence (Gegenwart) ; presentation (Gegenwartigung, or presentation); representation in the general sense of Vorstellung, that is as the locus of ideality in general; ... But rather than being lumped together, or rendered identical, all these different senses of the term "representation" are shown to be distinct elements of what Derrida refers to as a "representative structure" (SP50/56) which itself has a repeatable formal identity". (1993): p.13

<sup>10</sup> For example, J. M. Tito, pp. 154-167; M. Schwab, pp. 163-175.

<sup>11</sup> F. Jameson, *The Prison House of Language*, pp. 173, 175 cited in M. Frankel, see p. 54.

<sup>12</sup> Bennington, (2000): 8.

precludes possibilities, is itself part of the system being criticised by Saussure.<sup>13</sup> Norris claims that Derrida negates the possibility of using binary logic.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, his attempt to explain Derrida's philosophical method by comparing it to that of Kant,<sup>15</sup> which is fundamentally binary, is problematic because by doing so Norris is in danger of ascribing the binary view (even if it is not necessarily hierarchic) to Derrida.<sup>16</sup> According to this reading, it appears that the criticism of Marion against Derrida is like bursting through an open door. Derrida does not uphold the Heideggerian thesis (the metaphysics of the present) on one hand, and categorical intuition on the other,<sup>17</sup> as Marion claims. In an analysis in which he traces the discussion that Derrida holds with Husserl, it appears that Derrida rejects the perception of the idea as a direct perception (and also rejects sight as direct perception). But in summing up the position of Derrida as the rejection of presence devalues the question of presence and ignores the difference between presence as direct perception and presence as immediate experience. The rejection of direct perception does not mean the negation of immediate experience, the experience of presence. Presence, the voice, is not perception. It is the thing in itself. Just as the pleasure that Ferrari<sup>18</sup> presents in the name of Aristotle is not a process and not a perception, whether direct or indirect, but the wholeness of experience, the thing itself. The very reference to presence is a reflection on presence. The reflection on presence shows that there is a gap between my being present and between the awareness of my being present. It may be this is what Marion intended when he claimed that Derrida must assume that intuition is what governs the metaphysics of presence, and therefore there is no presence without intuition, and it is intuition alone that completes the presence. But from what has been said so far, it is clear that Marion and Derrida do not understand intuition and Husserlian presence in the same way. Marion distinguishes between intuition and the experience of presence, while Derrida

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<sup>13</sup> Po pp. 29-30, P pp. 19-20.

<sup>14</sup> Norris, pp. 37, 39.

<sup>15</sup> Norris, p. 147.

<sup>16</sup> Norris is aware of the possibility that his comparison with Kant can be understood as if Kant and Derrida share a common basis, but in his reservations about this he presents other reasons for distinguishing between them and does not close off this possibility. See Norris p. 148. On the other hand, Weissman does not see any difference in principle between Kant and Derrida, and believes that Derrida's position can derive its justification from Kant. See D. Weissman, p. 75.

<sup>17</sup> This double and strongly contrasted usage of Heideggerian theses is surprising; it can without any doubt be justified, but it is also no doubt does not receive an explicit legitimation in *Speech and Phenomena*. [...] We will not claim to resolve this paradox[...] Marion, pp. 19-20.

<sup>18</sup> Ferrari, D. p.249-250

makes no such distinction. Marion, in the name of Husserl, thinks that intuition is categorical, i.e. that it constitutes the means to organize and perceive the given, while Derrida does not think this is the case. For him, there is not distinction between the experience of presence and perception, and therefore in a certain sense it may be said that there is nothing to perceive. The very fact of being is the thing itself. In Marion's opinion this is precisely the problem in Derrida's interpretation of Husserl. Marion does not understand what is the significance of no distinction between intuition and presence, which is the problem that he claims arises from a reading of Derrida.<sup>19</sup> In Marion's view, the separation between significance and presence negates significance, but Derrida thinks that significance depends on the intention of the signifying voice and not on presence,<sup>20</sup> and therefore from his viewpoint there is no aporia here as Marion believes. In my view, the dispute between Marion and Derrida is in the different understanding of intuition. Marion thinks that intuition is generalization,<sup>21</sup> while Derrida thinks that intuition is the voice, which means that it is not generalization at all. For Derrida, intuition is singular, individual, concrete, felt and intelligible. Marion shows that for Husserl one can speak either about intuition as sense perception or on intuition as ideal, intelligible, but that intuition cannot be both intelligible and sensed at the same time. This kind of possibility is not even raised. A sensed-intelligible intuition is possible in the framework of emotional reality but not in the framework of scientific-objective reality. When one tries to apply the assumption of a scientific-objective reality to the Derridean interpretation one arrives at aporia.

In order to find the root causes for the dispute, we may consult Schutz and Luckmann. In their book that analyzes the structure of daily life, the authors claim that in our daily lives we accept certain situations as self-evident, but which philosophy considers puzzling and finds them difficult to resolve. For example, Schutz and Luckmann believe that we accept the perceived world or our ability to understand other people as being self-evident. When we try to understand the way in which we perceive and organize this self-evident system of belief, we find that

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<sup>19</sup> "In short, since signification dispenses with presence, and therefore with Being, signification could do without intuition only in doing without itself. This is a aporia. Derrida leads us to it, and Derrida alone". See Marion p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> In the continuation to one of the quotations that Marion uses to present the problematics in Derrida's position, Derrida says "L'eidos est déterminé en profondeur par le telos (LV p. 109). (The eidos is determined in depth by the telos) (S p. 97). I agreed with Marion that Husserl apparently did not intend this, but this does not create aporia within the discussions of Derrida himself as Marion claims.

<sup>21</sup> Marion, p. 22.

extensive areas of meaning (of the world of life, of dreams, the scientific world, the world of religious experience) are organized according to some internal unifying principle that is peculiar to the special experience of that area. There is no way in which we can reconcile the differences between the various areas of meaning. What seems to be right for one area and is compatible with other meanings of that area, which is therefore perceived as true, is not the case in another area in which this would seem fictive and contrived.<sup>22</sup> The source of the dispute between Derrida and Marion (and other philosophers) lies in the attempt to impose the principles that apply to one area of meaning upon another area of meaning. In the discussion to be presented below, I shall detail some additional examples that emphasize the disparity between Derrida's position and the positions of those who analyzed his position.

Radloff, in an analysis that presents the sign as presence, makes it seem as though for Derrida there is no presence at all.<sup>23</sup> Yet this criticism shows no awareness that even in an analysis of this kind there is presence: the presence of the sign. The claim that only the sign is present can perhaps be interpreted as though there is nothing signified, i.e. no presence. But if there is no presence and there is merely sign, the sign does not signify anything, and does not present what does not exist. But the sign itself is present and therefore the claim that only the sign is present also means that there is no sign, because the sign is something in itself, presence. In the discussion that Lawlor conducts with Kates, he stresses this point precisely. Kates claimed that Derrida assumed the act of reading is possible just when he raised the question about the possibility of reading. In his reaction to Kates, Lawlor says that this is just the point to which Derrida refers:

[...], this seems to be Derrida's exact point in all of his writings. The transcendental question of conditions for possibility must presuppose the existence of the object under investigation and transcendental philosophy seeks its, so to speak, essence; but the discovered basic conditions of possibility are, as Derrida shows over and over again, at once the conditions for the object's impossibility.<sup>24</sup>

The question that Kates expected would be raised, in this case the question about reading, or the question of presence, reality, in other cases, is not a question at all as

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<sup>22</sup> Schutze & Luckmann, p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> Radloff, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Lawlor, (1998):162.

Norris says.<sup>25</sup> As long as the reference is to intelligible experience, there is no question here. The experience is a sensed/intelligible one that needs not explanation. The moment it is questioned, the moment it needs to be explained, the moment that it is looked at and reflected upon, it no longer seems possible. As soon as experience undergoes objectivization, the sensation disappears and can no longer exist as an experience. The situation to which Derrida alludes is one in which an angry person is asked to describe his anger. The moment the angry person is asked to thinking about his being angry, a gap is created between the person and his anger, and the sense of anger disappears, leaving only the knowledge about the anger. In the very first stages of experiencing anger, the sensation of it was completely understood by the person (even if he did not give it a name), and he knew that he was angry. But the moment he had to describe his anger, the moment that the anger became an object in itself, the sensation disappeared. The anger changed from the contents of an emotion into a form, the experience took on a metaphoric form. In this sense experience constitutes the border limits of philosophy,<sup>26</sup> and philosophy can be perceived as a theory of metaphor.<sup>27</sup>

At first, Norris regards the discussion on metaphor as part of the general criticism that Derrida makes of philosophy. In his view, the discussion on metaphor presents important central issues and supplementary ones that support the central issue but that are in themselves of no importance, and the discussion regarding metaphor belongs to the latter. In the framework of this criticism, metaphor is listed together with footnotes, transitional phrases, etc.<sup>28</sup> Yet further on in the discussion Norris deals with metaphor in itself and with the problems that derive from it, and claims that the very engagement in examining metaphor is philosophical.<sup>29</sup> It seems to me that an understanding of the discussion on metaphor is central to an understanding of Derrida's starting point – that the philosophical enterprise is a reflexive one that makes use of language as if it fills the place of things themselves. In this sense it may

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<sup>25</sup> "There is no excuse for the sloppy misreading of Derrida that represents him as some kind of transcendental solipsist who believes that nothing 'real' exists outside the written text". Norris, p.142.

<sup>26</sup> Norris, p. 79.

<sup>27</sup> La philosophie, comme théorie de la métaphore, aura d'abord été une métaphore de la théorie. Cette circulation n'a pas exclu, a permis et provoqué au contraire la transformation de la présence en présence à soi, en proximité ou propriété de la subjectivité à elle-même. MDP p.303 (Philosophy, as a theory of metaphor, first will have been a metaphor of theory. This circulation has not excluded but, on the contrary, has permitted and provoked the transformation of presence into self-presence, into proximity or properness of subjectivity to and for itself.), MoP p.254

<sup>28</sup> Norris, p. 80.

<sup>29</sup> Norris, p.170.

be said that language as representative is by nature metaphorical. Therefore, in a certain sense, for Derrida there is only metaphor, which means that metaphor does not exist.<sup>30</sup> Similar to the discussion on metaphor, it appears that the very attempt to make philosophical discussion pointless leads to philosophical discussion.<sup>31</sup>

The awareness of being present is contemplation, perception. Every perception is already mediated, and therefore it is not possible to talk about direct perception. On the other hand, it is not possible to forgo perception, sight. "Voyons, puisqu'il faut voir, ... (Let us see, since we must see, ...)"<sup>32</sup>

This situation in which the instance that is considered as direct perception, sight, is presented as impossible, opens the way to the supposed claim that Derrida thinks direct perception is not possible because there is nothing to perceive, that there is no presence. The way in which Schwab, Tito, and other such critics understand Derrida comes from not distinguishing between intuition as sight and intuition as the wholeness of intelligible experience, as voice. This lack of distinction leads to the non-distinction between perception of presence and the experience of presence, which also implies presenting Derrida's position as an outright rejection of presence.

An additional point in straightened out the complexity found in presence comes from non-distinction between speech and voice. Derrida rejects phonocentrism just as he rejects logocentrism, because phonocentrism gives priority to speech.

Mansbach, who does not distinguish between the rejection of speech and the rejection

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<sup>30</sup> La métaphore est donc déterminée par la philosophie comme perte provisoire du sens, économie sans dommage irréparable de propriété, détour certes inévitable mais histoire en vue et dans l'horizon de la réappropriation circulaire du sens propre. C'est pourquoi l'évaluation philosophique en a toujours été ambiguë: la métaphore est menaçante et étrangère au regard de l'intuition (vision ou contact), du concept (saisie ou présence propre du signifié), de la conscience (proximité de la présence à soi); mais elle est complice de ce qu'elle menace, elle lui est nécessaire dans la mesure où le dé-tour est un re-tour guidé par la fonction de ressemblance (mimesis et homoiosis), sous la loi du même. L'opposition de l'intuition, du concept et de la conscience n'a plus, à ce point, aucune pertinence. Ces trois valeurs appartiennent à l'ordre et au mouvement du sens. Comme la métaphore. MDP p.323 (Metaphor, therefore, is determined by philosophy as provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular reappropriation of literal, proper meaning. This is why the philosophical evaluation of metaphor always has been ambiguous: metaphor is dangerous and foreign as concerns intuition (vision or contact), concept (the grasping or proper presence of signified), and consciousness (proximity or self presence); but it is in complicity with what it endangers, is necessary to it in the extent to which the de-tour is re-turn guided by function of resemblance (mimesis or homoiosis), under the law of the same. The opposition of intuition, the concept, and consciousness at this point no longer has any pertinence. These three values belong to the order and movement of meaning. Like metaphor.) MoP p. 270. This claim is not an attempt to deny the role that metaphor fills. Derrida explains that he distinguishes between the metaphorical function and what is not metaphorical. In his view, a word functions as a metaphor as long as there is no convention regarding any special use that an individual makes of it. When a word is accepted as representing an object to which it refers it ceases to be a metaphor. A metaphor can then be claimed to have three values: the value of metaphor in the conventional sense, the value of a word that is still recognized as metaphorical but functions as a convention, and the value of a conventional word in which its status as a metaphor has been forgotten.

<sup>31</sup> Possibly it is for this reason that Derrida says one cannot avoid metaphysics. P p.17, Po p. 27.

<sup>32</sup> LD p. 245, D p.198.

of voice, sees this rejection as Derrida's negation of the possibility of presence, and sees in the assumption of presence in general the reason for giving priority to the spoken language over the written one.<sup>33</sup> But Derrida himself distinguishes between voice without sound (non-phonetic) and speech. Voice is the immediate experience, a presence that does not need sound, the phoneme, in order to be present. Sound is the mediator just as sight is a mediator. From the moment that sound is needed, we are in a mediating space in which the experience of immediate presence is lost.

When we examine the argument being constructed by Schwab in the process of undermining Derrida's position, we see that Schwab assumes an objective reality as the basis of his argument. By doing so he can give a more "systematic account".<sup>34</sup> From Derrida's viewpoint, the entire discussion is conducted on the level of reflection upon a reflection, in which presence appears as reflection from the very awareness of it as presence, and does not stand in its own right. The distinctions made by Schwab confirm this by claiming that among other things Derrida divides presence into spatial presence and temporal presence. This division is possible with regard to the awareness of presence. But presence as the wholeness of unaware experience is revealed in the first reflection as *différance*. In *différance* there is no distinction between spatiality and temporality. Only an analysis of *différance* can allow for a distinction between spatial and temporal presence. The distinction made by Schwab is the result of an analysis of the reflection and not of the primary essence.

The presentation of Derrida's position as rejecting presence brings into question the aspect of singularity and concreteness in his philosophy. Many interpreters have agreed that Derrida's concern is with singularity and concreteness.<sup>35</sup> If Derrida does indeed reject presence, what is the concrete in his thought? Is not concreteness the immediate experience, the wholeness of present experience?

My claim is that in Derrida's thought, truth is present experience and present experience is truth. In a certain sense, one can characterize the apprehension of Derridean truth in Cartesian terms and say that the truth of which Derrida speaks is clear and distinct by the very fact that the wholeness of present experience is explicit but not clear and distinct. Turn the explicit experience into clear and distinct is an act of awareness that loses the explicitness of which Derrida is talking.

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<sup>33</sup> Mansbach, p. 70, n. 43.

<sup>34</sup> "I will try to give a more systematic account of this crucial notion [...]". Schwab, p. 164.

<sup>35</sup> For example, as Bennington says: "...the point is not [...] to celebrate self-conscious intertextuality in general, but to stress the singularity [...]". Bennington, p. 50.

Since there is no gap between truth and presence, Derrida can claim that he is not a relativist. Within the historicist system it is possible to find absolute standards and to act accordingly. The political-historical conventions that are embodied in writing determine within a given culture what is possible or not possible, what is permitted and what is prohibited.<sup>36</sup>

Norris sharpens this point when he says that in Derrida's position there is no simple way to deconstruct language. Since language is a given system of relationships within a specific time and place, one can speak about the ideology of representation and that this ideology should be examined. In this sense Derrida refers to deconstruction as not being neutral. Contrary to what Harvey says, Derrida is not giving negative determination to deconstructing and the offered explanation hits the wrong bush. Derrida says exactly what he means i.e. that deconstruction is always subjective; it is always depends on place and time and because of that deconstruction can never be neutral.<sup>37</sup> However, this does not mean that everything can be deconstructed. Deconstruction that does not take into account the entire structure from which the text is derived is merely an inefficient gesture made towards deconstruction.<sup>38</sup> Here the perception of intelligible experience as the basis of philosophical thought is expressed once again. Reflection, that assumes an objective reality as the basis for philosophical thought, separates between sensibility and the experience of presence. In objective reality, sensibility is not intelligible and is not perceived in itself. Its very perception shows that it has undergone objectification, the processing of the intellect. Intellectual processing imposes modifications on the materials being perceived and therefore an attempt may be made to find what is actually true. From the very start, reflection finds a gap between the material being perceived and the way in which it is perceived. Talking about presence, the very awareness of presence, is evidence of an objectification that separates subject and object. In comparison with reflection that finds processed materials as the basis of

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<sup>36</sup> Dès lors que la phénoménologie s'est affranchie du platonisme conventionnel aussi bien que de l'empirisme historiciste, le mouvement de la vérité qu'elle veut décrire est bien celui d'une histoire concrète et spécifique, dont les fondements sont les actes d'une subjectivité temporelle et créatrice fondés sur le monde sensible et le monde de la vie comme monde de culture. HOG p.48 (As soon as phenomenology breaks from both conventional Platonism and historicism, the movement of truth that it wishes to describe is really that of a concrete and specific history – the foundation of which are temporal and creative subjectivity's acts based on sensible world and the life-world as cultural world.), O p.59-60. Wheeler III analyzes Derrida's position and shows that his philosophical thought necessarily contains the condition of truth, which negates the possibility of regarding his position as relativistic. See Wheeler III, pp. 19-20.

<sup>37</sup> Harvey, p.29

<sup>38</sup> Norris, p. 54.

philosophical thought, the type of reflection that assumes an emotional reality discovers primary materials that are meaningful. In this reality there is no division between meaning and sense data. There is no additional stratum beneath the perceived stratum. The perceived stratum is self-sufficient, and does not need confirmation or negation by a third party.

Caputo describes this situation as a continuous wholeness that is partly illuminated and partly obscured. Retention is not conservation but is the illumination of the margins and he emphasizes the difference between the position of Derrida and that of Husserl in the fact that he indicates the "re" in retention not as repetition but as backward / reverse contemplation.<sup>39</sup> But there is a catch in this. In present reality, which is the self-sufficient wholeness of experience, there is not movement, no time or space. At any given moment I can turn back reflectively and find out that I was present. This means that the expression 'at any given moment' is meaningless. The absolute wholeness of the experience of presence does not allow for separation between one moment and the next, between one thing and the one following it. There is no meaning in talking about what happened before because this talk is taking place now, is present here and now, and as such is truth. Since it is true, no attempt should be made to examine its correspondence because there is nothing to correspond. The reference here is not to a present presentation as compared with something else. This also applies to spatial movement that necessitates separation between one thing and another. If things are judged by being experienced, what is not experienced does not exist – 'nothingness is non-existent'. This is also claimed by Bourgeois who complains that Derrida's presentation of presence as free of conservation as long as it is not part of an experienced presence, reduces presence to the presentation of discrete points.<sup>40</sup> The presentation of presence in this way prevents continuity or movement, and the world that emerges from this description is a Parmenidean one that is full and motionless.<sup>41</sup> It seems that Parmenides became entrapped in this mesh of considerations without realizing that description in itself is a reflection on given experience. In the next chapter I shall elaborate on this issue.

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<sup>39</sup> Caputo, pp. 173-174.

<sup>40</sup> Bourgeois, (1993A): 32-33.

<sup>41</sup> "For, if Derrida's discrete view of this living present, myopic as it is, be allowed, it precludes any crossing from one time to another or the possibility of something (trace or phenomena) to exist in two times". Bourgeois, (1993B): p. 254.

For our purposes here, it is sufficient to note that Derrida does not fall into this trap. Derrida is aware that all description is reflexive about presence, and is not the experience of presence itself. In *Of Grammatology* he speaks about the structure of trace as the wholeness of experience that cannot be separated except through abstraction, relationship to the other, language, and temporality.<sup>42</sup> Hobson, who does not give attention to the contents of Derrida's philosophical thought and is not aware of the problems that the wholeness of experience poses for him, is surprised at the concepts that are presented. While ignoring the abstraction that is mentioned in the Derrida's sentence, she sees the other components (the relationship to the other, language, and temporality) as lacking intuition because they refer to infinity.<sup>43</sup> But the section in which the sentence she quotes appears, does not deal with matters concerning intuition or infinity but only motion. The problem that faces Derrida is the problem of perceiving motion in the emotional reality that reflection reveals as the wholeness of experience, and the components that are mentioned: abstraction, relationship to the other, language, and temporality, are the solution, the means by which the intellect perceives motion.

For this reason, we cannot accept Bourgeois' reading of Derrida as presenting a discrete world that has no temporal movement. At the level of experience one may speak about a discrete world were it not for the fact that the experience of motion constitutes part of the same wholeness of experience that lacks parts. The problem to which Bourgeois refers comes from the attempt to describe experience. The description that determines experience in words, separates it into parts. But the description itself is already a reflection of the experience and not the experience itself, and makes use of concepts that are discrete and non-temporal in character. The very reflection indicates immanent separation within presence itself. Reflection reveals a dual presence. Gasché calls this revelation of dual presence 'zigzag motion', an infinite motion of the reference of a term to its 'other' aspect.<sup>44</sup> In Section I I called one aspect of dual presence 'origin' and the other aspect 'source'. These terms are in themselves the product of reflective abstraction. In terms that are closer to experience, one may speak about 'wholeness of experience' and 'the other'. The wholeness of

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<sup>42</sup> OG, p. 41.

<sup>43</sup> "In this collocation, rather sudden in the argument of ...". Hobson, p. 28.

<sup>44</sup> Gasché, (1993): 16.

experience is the experience of presence, the truth. We shall see below what is this 'other' according to Derrida's perception.

## Chapter 2 - The Other

Derrida, like Parmenides, who places sensibility<sup>1</sup> as the basis of his philosophy, and discovers, as Parmenides does, a unified wholeness of experience without parts, cannot accept the solution of Parmenides because of the conclusion that results from it – a compact world without motion. This world is in opposition to the experience of motion as conceived by Heraclitus. But this solution also does not satisfy Derrida because Heraclitus assumes a Logos (speech, the organized logic in language) as the connecting and unifying factor of motion into a single phenomenon. For Derrida, the origin of the Logos is in social consensus, and its assumption as the origin of motion indicates the perception of the individual as a self-evident part of the social fabric. In the philosophy of Heraclitus there is no individual. There is a society that precedes the individuals that compose it. Derrida, who was raised in the framework of post-Cartesian traditions in philosophy, traditions that are centered upon the 'I' (whether it is the Cartesian 'I' that thinks or whether it is the Heideggerian 'I' as ego) proceeds from an assumption of individuality. For Derrida, it is the personal, individual experience that precedes the society that it constructs. Within the compact individual experience, the conscious mind discovers the separation between the present experience and what stands at the borderlines of experience – the other.

The wholeness of experience in presence is self-sufficient, but it is comprises nothing because as long as it is present it is not known, it is not the 'I', language, culture, society or history. In the first section I showed that conscious awareness can transmit meaning through language. Meaning is an occurrence between two things, and requires a polar opposition to the sensed wholeness of experience. This pole is the 'other'. Contrary to the wholeness of sensed experience, the other that stands opposite is never perceived. This is not an objective world picture in which objectification creates the alienation of all that is given, and allows for their perception in an equal manner when they are related to each other. In the emotional world picture, intelligible experience constitutes a participating factor and not a contemplative one. As a participant, the system of relationships with the world emerges from and returns to it, but reflection reveals a separate reality from it, a reality that is not the

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<sup>1</sup> Cassirer says that the Being of Parmenides can be considered as present. It never was and never will exist because it is a complete and indivisible whole that exists only in the present. Cassirer II, p. 133. As I have shown, this is the description of sensed experience.

participant, and every attempt to internalize this reality finds an aspect of it to be sealed and not given to internalization, an aspect that remains the other – not 'I'.<sup>2</sup>

One may think that in face of the other that is revealed, the question of truth will once again recur: What is the essential nature of this other, and to what extent does the other that is revealed to me correspond to its essential nature? But a question of this kind arises in the framework of assumptions other than those of Derrida. This kind of question can arise in the framework that assumes differences in essence and phenomena, in reality and appearance. Derrida, as I have already shown, does not accept differences of this kind. In the framework of his presuppositions one can speak only about the dual complexity that is not based on hidden essence and revealed aspect, or on what represents and what is represented but only about a discursive duality that maintains a mutual interrelationship.<sup>3</sup> There is nothing that exists beyond what is sensed. In order to clarify this, Derrida presents the mimic whose sole activity is the act itself which does not hint at anything beyond. However, since the connection between us is that of sight, the link of presence standing opposite ... the reference here is from the very start one of duplication. Since the other stands opposite, he always leaves some aspect unperceived. The other (which can also be the 'I' when it serves as the pole of reflection) is the limit of sensibility. In this sense, as is also seen in considerations that arise in the framework of other philosophical traditions, there is no unmediated perception. Waldenfels is aware of the necessary duplication in the perception of Derrida, and presents it through the discussion on echo.<sup>4</sup> In the framework of this analysis, he compares the "hearing of oneself" to seeing oneself in the mirror, and thus cancels out the difference that I have already made between voice and sight. The analysis presented by Waldenfels keeps faith with the traditional schools that abstract and focus the concept in one function only. He regards voice (as in writing, to which he rightly compares the voice) only in its aspect as source, and loses the aspect of origin, which is essential in Derrida's philosophical

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<sup>2</sup> In this system, the other is formed through writing that makes alienation possible, as we have seen in the discussion on writing as origin, and not existing in itself. Therefore it is possible to indicate here the kind of chicken-and-egg circularity. In order that there is an other, I must write. Writing necessitates language, and language necessitates the other. Later on I shall show what this state of affairs means for Derrida.

<sup>3</sup> Nous sommes devant une mimique qui n'imité rien, devant, si l'on peut dire, un double qui ne redouble aucun simple, que rien ne prévient, rien qui ne soit en tous cas déjà un double. Aucune référence simple. C'est pourquoi l'opération du mime fait allusion, mais allusion à rien, allusion sans briser la glace, sans au-delà du miroir. LD p.254 (We are faced then with mimicry imitating nothing; faced, so to speak, with a double that doubles no simple, a double that nothing anticipates, nothing at least that is not itself already double. There is no simple reference. It is in this that the mime's operation does allude, but alludes to nothing, alludes without breaking the mirror, without reaching beyond the looking-glass.)D p. 206 206.

<sup>4</sup> Waldenfels, pp. 71-73.

thought. In the framework of emotional reality, voice can serve both as origin and source because it is clear that the different aspects of voice are revealed through reflection, and are the result of intellectual discussion. Waldenfels reading of Derrida assumes the other as self-understood while this is not so for Derrida's position. In the emotional compression which lies at the basis of Derrida's position, it is the possibility of the other that needs explanation. So, instead of the Parmenidean reflection that finds a compact wholeness of experience, Derrida's reflection finds *différance*.

### Chapter 3 - Différance as a Sensed Gap

The wholeness of experience of presence can be perceived in reflection as preventing any kind of motion, whether temporal or spatial. A situation of this kind was expressed very explicitly in the philosophy of Parmenides. The sense of continuity has no apertures and the attempt to break up sensibility shows that it does not cease even between the breaks. In reflection one finds a compressed world in which there is no place for motion. Parmenides involves sensibility and objectified facts processed by the intellect as his point of departure. The intellect creates fixed and distinct objects within the continuity of experience. Parmenides formulates the entire experience of sense into a fixed object, but because the basic experience in sensibility is the experience of continuity, he does not present distinctive objects but a single, whole and compressed object. Parmenides does not separate experience and the report on experience. Derrida, as I have already shown, is aware of the distinction between experience and the report on it. This awareness, and the consciousness of this awareness reveal the split, the separation, which is also experienced in sensibility.

Caputo claims that *différance* is the grammatological wholeness that precedes Being.<sup>1</sup> In my view, grammatological wholeness is emotional reality, and it testifies to the instantaneity of emotional experience. The instantaneity of emotional experience that is present together with the encounter with the other indicates a complex world that is both continuous and discrete at one and the same time. The other is not accessible to me even if he is part of my experience. My experience is continuous in such a way that there is no place for the other. The encounter with the other who is inaccessible creates a gap between us, but this is not a gap that is found by the intellect: a separation between two things in which each has a borderline limit makes them separate quantitative units. The gap is a qualitative one, sensed and continuous. Although the reference here is to a gap, it is not an empty space but a gap that is also sensible wholeness, wholeness of experience. This sensed gap between me and the other is a new revelation that should be anchored in writing by a neologism - "*différance*".

*Différance*, as a sensed gap, is created as a result of action and not of thought. This is the gap of separation and pause, of deferring and differing. A pause, even if it implies the cessation of an action, is in itself another kind of action – a suspension

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<sup>1</sup> Caputo, (1989): 26.

either in time or space. Reflection on the gap between me and the other reveals this pause, the distinction that separates between my experience of myself as presence and my experience of the presence of the other. This revelation is a revelation of time and space (or expanse) as a single unit without distinguishing between time and space. Time and space are *différance* – separation, suspension, pause. The use of the word that combines separation, suspension in the time and suspension in space emphasizes *différance* as an action and not as a relationship.

Relationship is the result of thought that is derived from the setting up of two poles, an examination of their mutual influence (or lack of influence), and the formulation of this influence in an abstract manner that will make it possible to quantify it. In post-Kantian philosophy, space and time are commonly perceived as a relation. Space is the relation between 'this next to that' and time is the relation between 'this after that'. In experience there is no necessary difference between time and space. Suspension in one place can be experienced as if time has stopped moving. Space and time are qualitative actions that cannot be quantified, and as such they are not homogeneous.<sup>2</sup>

Derrida does not negate the scientific quantification of time and space, but he sees both the separation of time and space, and the act of quantification as setting apart one aspect of space and time. The setting apart of this aspect in particular is carried out with a specific aim through the jettison of other aspects that do not correspond to the selected aim. As long as we understand space and time in this way, he is not opposed to their objective description. The problem for him begins when this one-sided description is perceived as the total one.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis on the qualitative aspect common to space and time is an indication of Derrida's position. Time and space are not objective facts but are a matter of position. From the assumption of

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<sup>2</sup> Cet Intervalle se constituant, se divisant dynamiquement, c'est ce qu'on peut appeler espacement, devenir-espace du temps ou devenir-temps de l'espace (temporisation). Et c'est cette constitution du présent, comme synthèse "originaire" et irréductiblement non-simple, donc, stricto sensu, non-originaire, de marques, de traces de rétentions et de protentions [...] que je propose d'appeler *archi-écriture*, *archi-trace* ou *différance*. Celle-ci (est) (à la fois) espacement (et) temporisation. MDP p.13-14 (In constituting itself, in dividing itself dynamically, this interval is what might be called spacing, the becoming-space of time or becoming-time of space (temporization). And it is this constitution of the present, as an "originary" and irreducibly nonsimple (and therefore, stricto sensu nonoriginary) synthesis of marks, or traces of retentions and protentions [...], that I propose to call *archi-writing*, *archi-trace*, or *differance*, which (is) (simultaneously) spacing (and) temporization). MoP p.13

<sup>3</sup> Une fois constitué, le mathématique pur ne serait ainsi accessible qu'à un "entendement" dont la notion n'a pas de sens technique précis chez Husserl; à une activité concevable, en tout cas, dans le sens de l'intellectualisme cartésien, puisqu'elle se libère à la fois, comme de deux facultés homogènes, de l'imagination et de la sensibilité. HOG p.133 (Once constituted, pure mathematics will thus be accessible only to "understanding" (whose notion has no precise technical sense in Husserl); in any case, to an activity conceivable in the sense of Cartesian intellectualism, since this activity is at once freed from two homogeneous faculties, from imagination and sensibility.) O p. 124.

presence as the wholeness of experience, reflection on the present *différance* is shown to be temporal and spatial organization.

For Kant, who separates sensibility and intelligibility, time and space are a primary sensible and intelligible organization to which the intellect can relate. Bergson, distinguishes continuous time from discrete time and space, and sees discrete time as spatial, and its continuity as duration. In this way he posits space as the product of the intellect and duration as intelligible experience. Derrida does not consider time or space as sensed materials. For him, time and space are intellectual structures that organize sensed presence (*différance*), which is in itself intelligible experience. The organization of space as space is possible through the fact that *différance* is a non-spatial nucleus which does not exist in space,<sup>4</sup> precisely because space is an organizing intellectual structure. This organized space is not necessarily the same space that is described by geometry as objective, but it is basically a qualitative space in which 'being present' constitutes its central characteristic. As qualitative space, this is a perspective space in which the distances and forms are not fixed mathematically but teleologically. The end can require the mathematical organization of space, but this is not the only organization possible.<sup>5</sup> The same applies to the organization of time, which is possible through the fact that *différance* is a non-temporal nucleus since time is an intellectual structure. For this reason, it is not inconceivable to talk about space that is not geometrical space and about time that is organized differently from the acceptable way. The perception of time, which is based on the assumption of emotional reality, reveals the presence that is defined as time only when it is 'no longer' (i.e. past) and is 'not yet' (i.e. future), which means that it is present. The awareness of presence takes on the shape of time that is present. From this analysis it becomes clear that time as awareness has only one dimension – present. The past and the future are not time because of their special position in relation to presence. The past and future are also participants in presence and serve as the construction stones of the present. From this it appears that time is a special

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<sup>4</sup> Il y a donc une science de l'espace dans la mesure où le point de départ de cette science n'est pas dans l'espace. HOG p. 81 (There is then a science of space, insofar as its starting point is not in space.) O p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> In an analysis of the medieval world, Gurevitch shows that the medieval measurements of space was based on the human body and its movements: "The measurements of the earth and its areas were not determined on the basis of any absolute standards or laws, but were abstract and did not relate to any concrete situation. Road distances were calculated according to the number of steps (which gives us the word 'foot' as a measurement). [...] These area measurements did not only differ in different regions, but that no one thought it was possible to make a more exact measurement (from our perspective today) of the land that he owned. This method of measuring land which was then widely accepted everywhere – seemed sufficient to all, and medieval people considered it as the only possible method". (My translation) Gurevitch, pp. 60

situation – it is a state of awareness that is present to consciousness as the formation of the events that have occurred in the past. This formulation is made with the help of an idea of the future. The idea of the future is that which gives it shape, and that transforms the continuity of past events into reality.<sup>6</sup> This picture of time can be understood through the use some psychologists make of it. In some psychological methods therapy is achieved by changing the focus of the event and changing the experience of past events through it. The focus through which the patient experiences his past corresponds to the end, to the idea of the future that gives it shape, and that transforms the continuity of past events into reality.

The combination between the assumption of emotional reality and the position of Husserl exposes an absurd aspect. This absurd aspect appears when we regard the analysis of Husserl as a literal description and not as a conceptual analysis that is made possible in the framework of assuming objective data as the basis of philosophical thought. Tito presents the position of Husserl in an analysis that is identical to the one presented above, and creates a discrete presence that is constructed of the immediate present, the recent past that is no longer present and the near future which is not yet present.<sup>7</sup> The understanding of this distinction in the literal sense as a real-sensed distinction, leads to the questions of Derrida: What is the continuity of this present point? A fleeting instant? How can we measure this fleeting instant? Such questions recall to a great extent Zeno's paradox of the flying arrow that cannot advance in its flight because it cannot bridge the gap between two discrete points or instants. Here, too, it is not clear when the point of the present is present and when it is already past (when did the arrow leave one point and advance to the next point). Ricoeur says that Derrida is not in error when he sees in trace the possibility of establishing actuality through the movement of the differences that it presents. He continues by quoting Derrida who says that this trace, if such talk does not create a contradiction, is more primary than its phenomenological primacy. But, says Ricoeur, trace can oppose only a phenomenology that confuses the immediate presence with a

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<sup>6</sup> On s'aperçoit alors très vite que la présence du présent perçu ne peut apparaître comme telle que dans la mesure où elle compose continûment avec une non-présence et une non-perception, à savoir le souvenir et l'attente primaires (rétention et protention). Ces non-perceptions ne s'ajoutent pas, n'accompagnent pas éventuellement le maintenant actuellement perçu, elles participent indispensablement et essentiellement à sa possibilité. LV p.72 (One then sees quickly that the presence of perceived present can appear as such only inasmuch as it is continuously compounded with a nonpresence and nonperception, with primary memory and expectation (retention and protention). These nonperceptions are neither added to, nor do they occasionally accompany, the actually perceived now; they are essentially and indispensably involved in its possibility.) S p. 64

<sup>7</sup> Tito, pp. 155-156.

point-like instant.<sup>8</sup> This means that Ricoeur also thinks like Tito that Derrida transforms the immediate present into a discrete point. Ricoeur and Tito accept the starting point of Husserl who distinguishes between intelligible and non-intelligible sensibility. Because of this distinction they need a mechanism that will link perception to understanding. Derrida assumes that intelligible sensibility needs no explanation as to how the wholeness of a perceived presence becomes intelligible.<sup>9</sup> Acceptance of the assumption of Husserl regarding the distinction between sensibility and intelligibility leads to the claim made by Tito against Derrida that the assumption of trace destroys the layered structure created by Husserl and negates the possibility to expose previous meanings, destroying meaning itself.<sup>10</sup>

The difference between the presuppositions is sharpened if we accept the distinction that Tito makes in the name of Husserl between presence without intentionality that is consciously unaware, and presence that is intentional and therefore consciously aware. An examination of Derrida's position will show that one can find in it a distinction between conscious and unconscious presence. But this distinction is not based on a transitive intentionality that is directed outwards, from the subject to its surrounding environment, but on a reflective basis, on an inward intentionality, from the subject towards himself. For Derrida, the presence that is not consciously aware of itself as being presence is entirely transitive intentionality but it lacks reflexivity. Conscious awareness means reflection, paying attention to the wholeness of present experience. If we were to consider awareness as intelligible, it would be possible to claim that there is no situation of unawareness in Derrida. But Derrida distinguishes between awareness and intelligibility. This shows (once again) that the wholeness of present experience, even if it is unaware of its presence, is intelligible. The lack of this distinction between conscious awareness and intelligibility leads Tito to claim that Derrida is wrong when he says: "the presentation that allows us to see [objectivities] gives a nonpresent, a past" (SP 64).<sup>11</sup> According to his method, Derrida is not wrong. Conscious awareness creates alienation, an otherness, and loses the unmediated wholeness of present experience. So that even if

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<sup>8</sup> Ricoeur, p. 283, n. 12.

<sup>9</sup> This can be seen in the criticism that Derrida makes against Heidegger on this matter precisely. MoP, 'Ousia and Gramma', pp. 29-67, MDP 'Ousia et Grammé' pp. 31-79.

<sup>10</sup> "In other words, sense requires a distinction of levels, it requires that the integrity of the earlier levels be maintained, for without these levels there can be no reference back. To destroy the levels is to destroy sense itself". Tito, p. 158.

<sup>11</sup> Tito, pp. 165-166.

it does not negate the wholeness of present experience the alienation, which makes it possible to see the unmediated wholeness of present experience, transforms it into the past. According to this position, space and time are generated by the consciousness of presence and permeate it. For Derrida, there is no abstract space that is not related to presence just as there is no time (past, present and future) without presence. The distinction between the wholeness of present experience and the awareness of time and space indicates an emotional reality that is neither temporal nor spatial but is also not transcendental (beyond the real world). In the framework of emotional reality there is no meaning to transcendence,<sup>12</sup> because transcendence does not allow for experience. Reflection on presence reveals the *différance*. In this sense it may be said that *différance* is revealed through conscious awareness. What, therefore, is conscious awareness?

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<sup>12</sup> Mais - et c'est là le fond des choses - toute cette extériorité par rapport au livre, toute cette négativité du livre se produit dans le livre. [...] Être, c'est être-dans-le-livre, même si l'être n'est pas cette nature créée que le Moyen Age appelait souvent le Livre de Dieu. L'E p.113 (But – and this is the heart of the matter – everything that is exterior in relation to the book, everything that is negative as concerns the book, is produced within the book. [...] To be is to-be-in-the-book even if Being is not created nature often called The Book of God during the Middle Ages.), W p. 76.

## Chapter 4 - Conscious Awareness

The awareness of suspension, of *différance*, explains the possibility of action, the possibility of creating what was not part of me until the moment it was created within the wholeness of experience, which is entirely my presence. In this sense, everything begins with *différance*, and as such one can identify the voice in it.

As will be recalled, there is no awareness without voice, and voice is realized through writing. For this reason, the exposure of *différance* should be anchored in writing. But *différance* is not a concept (because it does not generalize through abstraction) and is also not a word because it is not a sign that indicates to what it is not in itself. *Différance* is always the present experience of the here and now.

The presentation of *différance* as voice also turns out to be only partial. The activity involved in *différance* is delay, which may sound like a passive act – something that happens to me against my will. I would like to be somewhere else, at another time, but something prevents me from doing so and therefore I am delayed. If *différance* is the forestalling of the will, something that is imposed upon the will, it is different from will, an other. The other that is revealed through *différance* is not conclusion but an experience, something that stops me from realizing my aim. On the other hand, by being delayed implies that in the end I might realize my aim and therefore there is nothing here that is totally enforced upon me.<sup>1</sup>

We are at once faced with a multi-layered system in which *différance* serves as an axis that is both active and passive, both will and the blocking of the will, both origin and what is not origin. As that which is both active and passive, *différance* seems to be something that cannot be described as two-dimensional. In the primary reality that is revealed in this description, everything is possible or impossible. This is an experience of will, the way in which will experiences reality.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Et nous verrons pourquoi ce qui se laisse désigner par "différance" n'est ni simplement actif ni simplement passif, annonçant ou rappelant plutôt quelque chose comme la voix moyenne, disant une opération qui n'est pas une opération, qui ne se laisse penser ni comme passion ni comme action d'un sujet sur un objet, ni à partir d'un agent ni à partir d'un patient, ni à partir ni en vue d'aucun de ces termes. MDP p.9 (And we will see why that which lets itself be designated *différance* is neither simply active nor simply passive, announcing or rather recalling something like the middle voice, saying an operation that is not an operation, an operation that cannot be conceived either as passion or as the action of a subject on an object, or on the basis of the categories of agent or patient, neither on the basis of nor moving toward any terms.) MoP p. 9

<sup>2</sup> La différence entre la rétention et la reproduction, entre le souvenir primaire et le souvenir secondaire, n'est pas la différence, que Husserl voudrait radicale, entre la perception et la non-perception, mais entre deux modifications de la non-perception. Quelle que soit la différence phénoménologique entre ces deux modifications, malgré les immenses problèmes qu'elle pose et la nécessité d'en tenir compte, elle ne sépare que deux manières de se rapporter à la non-présence irréductible d'un autre maintenant. Ce rapport à la non-présence, encore une fois, ne vient pas surprendre, entourer, voire dissimuler la présence de l'impression originare, il en permet le surgissement et la virginité toujours renaissante. LV p.73 (The difference between retention and reproduction, between primary and

Just as the occurrence of an experience does not resemble its description so *différance*, which constitutes an economical indicator of actual-individual occurrences, is not an expression of them and is not a concept that exhausts all the occurrences.<sup>3</sup>

In the introduction that Leavey wrote to Derrida's translation of *Husserl's Origin of Geometry* he says that, based on the fifth chapter in *La voix et la phénomène*, Derrida's *différance* is awareness/ knowledge.<sup>4</sup> From the analysis I have given so far it is clear that, by presenting it as awareness/knowledge, *différance* is placed in the framework of a discussion that does not belong to it. Awareness and knowledge is about something, and is therefore only partial. A reflection that reveals the awareness is the product of a distinction between the intelligible aspect and the experienced aspect of presence. This is a reflection on contents that have received an objective form, and as such it not a wholeness of experience of individual and actual presence. *Différance* on the other hand is itself primary individual and actual presence that is revealed through awareness. Any attempt to identify *différance* with a concept that is created within the framework of objective thought that bases itself on a separation between experience and intelligibility is destined to fail. Any identification of this kind will emphasize one aspect of *différance* and lead it towards a generalization that is formulated, according to Derrida, as logocentrism, to which he is opposed. The same applies to any attempt to characterize *différance* as a partial characterization by placing the emphasis on one aspect of it and ignoring the other aspects. This is because characterization is an act of objectification that requires detachment from the object that is being characterized and non-participating contemplation. In Derrida' discussions one can speak about non-spatial and a-

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secondary memory, is not the radical difference Husserl wanted between perception and nonperception; it is rather a difference between two modifications of nonperception. Whatever the phenomenological difference between these two modifications may be, and despite the immense problems it poses and the necessity of taking them into account, it only serves to separate two ways of relating to the irreducible nonpresence of another now. Once again, this relation to nonpresence neither befalls, surrounds, nor conceals the presence of primordial impression; rather it makes possible its ever renewed upsurge and virginity). S p.65-66

<sup>3</sup> Ce qui s'écrit *différance*, ce sera donc le mouvement de jeu qui "produit", par ce qui n'est pas simplement une activité, ces différences, ces effets de différence. Cela ne veut pas dire que la *différance* qui produit les différences soit avant elles, dans un présent simple et en soi immo-difié, in-différent. La *différance* est l'"origine" non-pleine, non-simple, l'origine structurée et diffé-rante des différences. Le nom d' "Origine" ne lui convient donc plus. MDP p.12 (What is written as *différance*, then, will be the playing movement that "produces" – by means of something that is not simply an activity- these differences, these effects of differences. This does not mean that the *différance* that produces differences is somehow before them, in a simple and unmodified –in different- present. *Différance* is the non-full, non-simple, structured and differentiating origin of differences. Thus, the name "origin" no longer suits it.) MoP p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Leavey, p. 19.

temporal reality because space and time are the products of intellectual abstraction.<sup>5</sup> This means that Derrida recognizes the possibility of intellectual abstraction. In my claim regarding emotional reality, I do not intend to say that Derrida denies the distinction between the intellect and the senses. In his discussion he makes the distinction between intellectual analysis and sense perception, a distinction that is expressed in the way he makes use of the distinction between body and mind. There is no place in the assumption of emotional reality for abstract concepts such as intellect, will, senses, therefore they are replaced by mind, voice, and body that refer to the concrete, singular individual. In experience there is a difference between the physical and the mental even if both are sensed. Scientific-objective thought that assumes objective facts as its basis, dismantles that which is sensed into sensibility and intellect, and explains the difference between them by ascribing sensibility to the body and the intellect to the mind. Derrida does not find any difference between what is sensed and the intellect, in spite of the difference between body and mind, and therefore one cannot say that he separates intellect from sensibility, but only body and mind, both of which are sensed.<sup>6</sup> For this reason, whenever the discussion refers to the activity of the intellect as opposed to sensibility, Derrida speaks about body and mind.

Différance is the product of reflection that assumes the wholeness of emotional experience as its basis, and therefore it does not find primary instances created by a separation between the intelligible and the experienced. As a product of the wholeness of emotional experience, différance is not an abstract concept but concrete individual reality that is revealed through reflection. Reflection is possible through speech. In Derrida's philosophy, speech is possible through writing.<sup>7</sup>

Here, too, there is no reference to abstract concepts but only to concrete ones. Writing is text[ile] in which the scattered experiences and individual associations are woven into a political (social-historical) textile.

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<sup>5</sup> Une fois constitué, le mathématique pur ne serait ainsi accessible qu'à un "entendement" dont la notion n'a pas de sens technique précis chez Husserl; à une activité concevable, en tout cas, dans le sens de l'intellectualisme Cartésien, puisqu'elle se libère à la fois, comme de deux facultés homogènes, de l'imagination et de la sensibilité. (Once constituted, pure mathematics will thus be accessible only to "understanding" HOG p.133 (whose notion has no precise technical sense in Husserl); in any case, to an activity conceivable in the sense of Cartesian intellectualism, since this activity is at once freed from two homogeneous faculties, from imagination and sensibility.) O p. 124

<sup>6</sup> It should be noted that although the reference here is to the sensed body and mind, this is not an empiricist position or one that is close to the philosophy of mind school of thought.

<sup>7</sup> [...] parce que la langage est d'abord, en un sens qui se dévoilera progressivement, écriture. DLG p.55 ([...] because language is first, in a sense I shall gradually reveal, writing<sup>7</sup>) OG. p. 37.

The experiences and associations are not abstract concepts but have a real presence. From the moment they arise within the individual consciousness they are real and cannot be annihilated. But in order that they can become activated they must become accessible to the consciousness of other individuals. Writing is the way to make these experiences and associations accessible to the conscious awareness of other individuals. The use of writing embeds these experiences and associations within a conventional framework that does not necessarily conform to what is desired by the individual, and therefore in spite of being embedded within writing, it is not certain that the individual can activate or execute the experiences and associations that he desires to realize. This description reveals reality as an area that prevents the individual from realizing his will. On the other hand, I have shown that all reality emerges and takes form through the execution of the individual will, which is by definition free. How then can the freedom of the activity of the will made possible in a reality that is imposed upon the individual? I shall discuss this issue in the following chapters.

## Chapter 5 - Desire and Need

The individual in Derrida's writings is one who acts upon his surroundings with the strength of his desire to realize his will. As such, he perceives the reality in which he lives as friendly or hostile according to the degree in which it caters to his will. Thus, he may experience his surroundings as having its own will, a will that responds to or opposes his own. This is the mythic world picture according to Cassirer's analysis. For Derrida, the opposition or response of the surroundings is the result of the balance of forces among many individuals. This means that Derrida does not perceive the surroundings as having a will of its own. When the surroundings are the product of human wills it is possible on principle to harness it for the aims of a single will, and therefore there is no limitation to that will. From this description, freedom means the ability to act in any conceivable way without anything to restrict it. Is it this kind of unrestricted activity that Derrida has in mind? We shall see below that Derrida does not mean this kind of freedom but sets up criteria for the possibility of such activity. The freedom of which Derrida speaks does not concern the ability to act in whatever way desired, or in the ability to realize whatever aim is posited by the will. The freedom on which Derrida speaks is the lack of possibility to foretell what aims the concrete individual will set up for himself, how other concrete individuals will react to these aims, and which reality will be woven from the sum total of their activities. Freedom is therefore not the freedom to carry out aims but the freedom to set up the aims, the freedom to desire. What is this freedom of desire?

The perception of reality as the realization of actions and as a basis for further activity exposes the assumption regarding the issues under discussion. The discussion is always teleological, seeking for operative and practical solutions, and the way to solve them leads to the search for the means that will make it possible to realize the solution. In a discussion of this kind, the study is always of ways and means and is subordinate to the aim that is to be realized.<sup>1</sup> The discussion is not in principle an abstract one, but a discussion that always develops against the background of a

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<sup>1</sup> Dès lors toute la téléologie du sens, qui construit le concept philosophique de métaphore, l'ordonne à la manifestation de la vérité, à sa production comme présence sans voile, à la réappropriation d'un langage plein et sans syntaxe, à la vocation d'une pure nomination : sans différentielle syntaxique ou en tout cas sans articulation proprement innommable, irréductible à la relève sémantique ou à l'intériorisation dialectique. MDP p. 323 (Henceforth the entire teleology of meaning, which constructs the philosophical concept of metaphor, coordinates metaphor with the manifestation of truth, with the production of truth as presence without veil, with the reappropriation of a full language without syntax, without the vocation of pure nomination: without differential syntax, or in any case without a properly unnamable articulation that is irreducible to the semantic releve or to dialectical interiorization.) MoP p. 270.

concrete problem that has to be solved. The need restricts attention and focuses it only on what can be relevant to that need. There is no study for the sake of study that is not subordinate to a specific solution. Such a study is not committed to having results or outcome of a specific kind. On the other hand, when the results of a study are subordinated to an aim, the contents are judged according to the degree in which they correspond to the aim without regard for their intrinsic quality. I have already shown in the discussion regarding will that without a distinction between understanding and judgment can lead to deterministic considerations, a consideration that will be enforced upon a person's mind and cannot be rejected. A situation of this kind occurs to a person who is in a tumult of emotions and is incapable of examining calmly what is before him. In a state of tumultuous emotion, certain elements are given a preferential status to others, and some elements are not perceived at all. This is a state that is not normally considered as being a rational one. As mentioned in the chapter on emotional reality, Derrida presents a situation in which there is no other way to act except in the way usually called a tumult of emotions. In a situation like this no components are of equal value. The components are always important or unimportant according to the aim that is to be realized. For him, only a machine can work indifferently without according significance to certain parts (but a machine by definition lacks judgment).<sup>2</sup>

How can we rescue ourselves in an emotional system from the danger of being caught in an automatic response to a system of provocations? To what extent can we talk about freedom of action in the framework of emotional reality?

In the first section I showed that Derrida presents madness as the possibility of free activity without the need for abstract or transcendental concepts. Madness is a state in which the aim is presented as independent of existing laws. This is madness because the individual who is focused upon his desire does not take into consideration the constraints that can interfere with its realization as he would normally do. Madness breaks out of the existing order without our being able to see the order he

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<sup>2</sup> [...] au moment où le sens se perd, où la pensée s'oppose son autre, où l'esprit s'absente de lui-même, le rendement de l'opération est-il sûr? [...] [...]et qui, en somme, en tant que négatif, mais sans apparaître comme tel, sans se présenter, c'est-à-dire sans travailler au service du sens, réussirait? [...] Tout simplement une machine, peut-être, et qui fonctionnerait. Une machine définie dans son pur fonctionnement et non dans son utilité finale, son sens, son rendement, son travail. MDP p125-126 ([...] at the moment when meaning is lost, when thought is opposed to its other, when spirit is absent from itself, is the result of operation certain? [...] [...] And which, in sum, as negative, but without working in the service of meaning, would work? [...] Quite simply, a machine, perhaps, and one which would function. A machine defined in its pure functioning, and not in its final utility, its meaning, its result, its work.), MoP p. 107

uses. In this sense, madness eliminates automatic response, even if madness makes use of speech, of a certain order.<sup>3</sup> Hobson formulates this situation as a dialogue between excess or hyperbole and historical determination that constitutes philosophical historicism without becoming historicist itself. Even if she does not examine the mechanism that makes the situation she describes possible, she sees madness as an activity that allows at every stage a final, closed thought and therefore she thinks madness to be that which makes history itself possible,<sup>4</sup> a history that as we recall, is a certain conventional order.

So long as the order used by madness is incomprehensible and has no meaning, this is a state in which there is no work being done. Meaning, making sense, is work, because it is a process that expresses desire.<sup>5</sup> Working is an activity that does not have activity as its aim. The will determines the end and the work is the means to realize this end. Since the desired end is not the work itself, the worker is interested in reducing the work needed to achieve this end. Were it possible to realize the end without need for the intermediary means, this would be the preferred situation from the viewpoint of the worker. In this sense it may be said that the worker is searching for an economical way to realize his will. The decisive principle is that of efficiency. The worker himself would like to invest a minimum of means to realize his will. The reduction of means is not the result of a lack of means or of need, but from the desire that the end will be realized. In the framework of emotional reality, freedom is a concrete issue which means the realization of the individual voice or the carrying out of the arbitrary will. The positing of an end by the voice is desire. The realization of desire can restrict need. Need entails work. From the viewpoint of the individual freedom means the realization of desire. In the framework of economic considerations as presented above, the smaller the gap between the positing of the object of desire and its realization, the greater the freedom. Therefore the more the means necessary to obtain the desired object are reduced, the greater the freedom. The reduction of means is an aspect of freedom. In his fixation upon the object of his desire, the individual is

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<sup>3</sup> Mais d'abord, le silence lui-même a-t-il une histoire? Ensuite, l'archéologie, fût-elle du silence, n'est-elle pas une logique, c'est-à-dire un langage organisé, un projet, un ordre, une phrase, une syntaxe, une "oeuvre"? L'E p.57 (But, first of all, is there a history of silence? Further, is not an archaeology, even of silence, a logic, that is, an organized language, a project, an order, a sentence, a syntax, a word?) W p.35

<sup>4</sup> Hobson, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Or l'œuvre commence avec le discours le plus élémentaire, avec la première articulation d'un sens, avec la phrase, avec la première amorce syntaxique d'un "comme tel", puisque faire une phrase, c'est manifester un sens possible. L'E p.83 (Now, the work starts with the most elementary discourse, with the first articulation of a meaning, with the first syntactical usage of an "as such", for to make a sentence is to manifest a possible meaning.) W p.54

unaware of the fact that the ability to desire an end depends on the social framework in which he lives.

Derrida thinks that the reality in which the individual functions appears as a polarization between need and desire. The relationship of need and desire can change according to the society in which the individual functions. The need may arise from desire and desire may arise from need. Since the discussion is not in principle an abstract one, Derrida locates each of these possibilities within the framework of a localized society. In a society that lives in the north, desire arises out of need, while in a society that lives in the south, need arises out of desire.<sup>6</sup> In the north, in which the ability of a person to maintain himself depends on his ability to manipulate and develop his environment, it is need, i.e work that precedes desire. As a result of work that changes the environment, the desire rises for additional change, for an environment that will be different from what it is. In the south, in which the environment is more favorable and supplies the needs for human existence, a person need not work in order to maintain himself. Only the desire that the environment should be different creates need.

The conflict between desire and need demands a method that will organize the balance of forces between them.<sup>7</sup> When need is dominant, work can fill the place of desire, which means that the means become the end. The realization of need, the work, preserves existence, but it is enslaved by the end, and as such it lacks the dimension of innovation. Being deprived of innovation, he becomes rigid, inflexible and atrophies till death. In the north the conditions demand the development of the environment in order not to starve. The realization of desire alone means death, but also the realization of need alone leads to rigidity that means death.<sup>8</sup> This position stands in contradiction to the position that Hegel presents according to Kojève.<sup>9</sup> Hegel sees work as the intermediary between self awareness and being, an intermediary that

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<sup>6</sup> DLG p. 319, OG p. 224.

<sup>7</sup> La force du besoin, son économie propre, celle qui rend le travail nécessaire, travaille. précisément, contre la force du désir et la réprime, [...] (The force of need, its own economy, that which makes work necessary, works precisely against the force of desire and represses it, [...].)

Ce conflit de forces répond à une économie qui n'est plus simplement celle du besoin, mais le système des rapports de Force entre le désir et le besoin. DLG p. 321 (This conflict of forces responds to an economy that is no longer simply that of need, but the system of the relations of force between desire and need.) OG. p. 225

<sup>8</sup> En répondant à l'urgence du besoin, l'homme du nord sauve sa vie non seulement contre la pénurie mais contre la mort qui suivrait la libération effrénée du désir méridional. [...] Mais inversement, il lutte contre cette force de mort par une autre force de mort. DLG p. 321 (Responding to the urgency of need, the man of the north protects his life not only against penury but against the death that would follow the unrestrained liberation of southern desire. [...]. But conversely, he fights against this force of death with another force of death.),OG. p.225

<sup>9</sup> Kojève, A. p. 21- 28

does not efface being and is not subjugated to being. Work shapes being and gives it a form. The act of shaping frees the subjection of the slave to being because by shaping, the conscious mind is detached from being and ceases to be subjected to it. Work is the mediation between self awareness to itself and thus allows work to recognize the independence of being, and as a result it gains freedom.

Derrida, on the other hand, thinks that work, which unites differences is the origin of slavery and not of freedom.<sup>10</sup> In his opinion, the unity of differences conceals the possibilities that were inherent in the differences and presents a picture of the world that has no place for judgment or considerations. Since there is no judgment, the unity of differences necessitates the single form of action. In this situation a person is not the initiator of his activities but only carries them out, and in this sense he can be seen as a slave that carries out actions that he did not initiate. Since work does not constitute an origin of freedom, the question is what is the economic consideration to which Derrida refers in his writings.

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<sup>10</sup> L'indépendance de la conscience de soi devient risible au moment où elle se libère en s'asservissant, où elle entre en travail, c'est-à-dire en dialectique. L'E p.376 (The independence of self-consciousness becomes laughable at the moment when it liberates itself by enslaving itself, when it starts to work, that is, when it enters into dialectics. W p.256

## Chapter 6 - The Economic Consideration

MacIntyre<sup>1</sup> examines the widespread position regarding the link between freedom, realization of the desired object, and social life in the discussion on the Platonic dialogue 'Gorgias'. In his view, Gorgias represents the position in which the ethical concepts, the system of social rules, form the constraints that limit freedom, while desires are a part of nature and independent of society. The realization of freedom is possible if we can ignore the rules that hinder us from realizing our desires and do 'whatever we like'. According to MacIntyre, Socrates presents the opposite position to that of Gorgias in which desires can be created only in a given social framework and through dependence upon that society. The expression 'whatever you like' is meaningful only within a clear selection of possibilities. 'Be free' cannot be a moral advice in response to the question how one should live, because this is an advice that is empty of content and therefore meaningless. MacIntyre claims that it is a popular error to assume that my wishes are given to me and are closed and absolute, while the system of possible choices is free. This is because even my own wishes are shaped on the basis of the possibilities that the society in which I live makes available to me. In MacIntyre's view, Socrates makes it clear that if something is good and constitutes a possible object of desire, it must be defined in terms of some system of rules that controls behavior. MacIntyre believes that Socrates regards the tendency of Callicles, Gorgias student, to break all the rules as an illogical tendency, because a person whose behavior is not controlled by a system of rules cannot participate in human society, which means that he cannot realize his freedom. In MacIntyre's opinion, this can be deduced not only from the contents of the dialogue but also by the way in which it is constructed. During the entire dialogue, the participants must share the same concepts and the form of conversation so that the dialogue can be conducted. To share the same concepts means to share the same form of life in a certain sense. MacIntyre does indeed present Socrates very clearly as saying that a person who lacks the ability to share a common life with others is evil. Therefore the right way to characterize the good is to characterize the shared form of life that will make it possible for good to be realized. A shared form of life means political life. It seems that Derrida shares this position. In his view, to exceed the totality, is aimed towards

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<sup>1</sup> MacIntyre, (1998) pp. 26-32.

the good,<sup>2</sup> but this is not a deviation towards an ideal world.<sup>3</sup> Deviation from the totality can be realized only in the framework of emotional reality, and the good that is referred to here is not an idea but the produce of profit-and-loss considerations that can be maintained only within a linguistic system.

What are the profit-and-loss considerations to which Derrida refers? In the framework of emotional reality, good is whatever advances our aims and bad is what hinders us from realizing our aims. This kind of system does not constitute a basis for an ethical theory because there is nothing that restricts individual behavior. This is a situation in which everyone can do what his heart desires, if he has the power to impose his will. Society cannot be maintained in this kind of situation. As I have shown, MacIntyre indicates in his analysis the need for society in order to posit ends. Derrida also presents this very position, as we have seen in the chapters dealing with the relationship between voice or the concrete individual, and phenomenon or politics. MacIntyre shows that Socrates criticizes the situation in which everyone can do as he pleases because this undermines social life and will eventually frustrate the very possibility of positing ends. But in his analysis of the discussion between Callicles and Socrates, it seems that the moment the end is posited, society can be an obstacle in realizing the end. A situation is created in which a balance must be made between the will to realize the aim that I have posited and the need to preserve the social network so that I can continue to posit aims in the future. The need to preserve the social network does not allow me to make use of all the means at my disposal. There are means that may indeed realize my desire in a more efficient manner, but at the same time destroy the social network. This is also an economic system that precludes considerations of profit and loss. But this is not the same economic system that was presented earlier. Although the present considerations can lead to a demand to restrict the means, but here the restriction of means does not constitute an aspect of freedom but of enforcement. This is because the restriction does not lead to the realization of desire but defers it. Is Derrida directed towards this different aspect of the economic

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<sup>2</sup> Ce projet d'excéder la totalité du monde, comme totalité de ce que je puis penser en général, n'est pas plus rassurant que la dialectique de Socrate quand elle déborde aussi la totalité de l'étantité en nous plantant dans la lumière d'un soleil caché qui est *epekeina tes ousias*. LE p.87 (The project of exceeding the totality of the world, as the totality of what I can think in general, is no more reassuring than the dialectic of Socrates when it, too, overflows the totality of being, planting us in the light of hidden sun which is *epekeina tes ousias*.), W p.56-57  
<sup>3</sup> [...], je n'en appelle pas à un autre monde, à quelque alibi ou transcendance évasive. L'E p.88 ([...], I am not invoking an other world, an alibi or an evasive transcendence.), W p.57

system<sup>4</sup>? Does he suggest a new version of Plato's theory of measurement as presented by Balaban? In an analysis of the discussion between another Sophist (Protagoras) and Socrates, Balaban refers to another aspect from the one presented by MacIntyre. Balaban rescues Plato's theory of measurement<sup>5</sup> that perceives the position of Plato in terms of profit and loss. Since Protagoras presents a position that is similar to that of Callicles with regard to the good, we shall examine through analysis whether and to what extent Derrida's economic considerations are similar to Plato's theory of measurement.

For Protagoras, the experience of eating, drinking and sex can be considered as good things so long as they are being experienced. The experience can be considered as bad because of its outcome, something that is not intrinsic to the experience. Censure does not negate the pleasure of the experience but only the disease that might result from this experience. Protagoras does not regard an act and its consequence as a single unit. There are acts that are in themselves pleasurable but their outcome is not pleasant (drunkenness is enjoyable but the headache that comes afterwards is unpleasant), and there are acts that are in themselves unpleasant, but their outcome is pleasurable (hard work is not pleasant but the vacation that this work provides is very pleasurable). The fact that the outcome is pleasurable does not make the act pleasant, and vice versa, the fact that the outcome is not pleasurable does not make the act unpleasant.

Balaban claims that Plato neutralizes the difference between the act and its outcome and tries to persuade us that if the outcome is pleasurable that the act itself is pleasant. Plato is making a generalization and confuses the good (morality) with pleasure (enjoyment), and negates the qualitative difference between the present and the future. Greater pleasure in the future is better than a little pleasure now. This reduction allows for the quantification of various pleasures from different sources, and their comparison by measurement, which enables us to calculate according to profit and loss. On the face of it one might think that Derrida and Plato intend the same thing, but Derrida does not think that generalizations can be made for a quantitative reduction of sensibility, or of pleasure. Quality cannot be quantified,

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<sup>4</sup> I accept Johnson interpretation that "Derrida's 'economy' is a way of conceiving the more general, abstract notion of dynamic interplay, or exchanges, between the elements of any system or complex." and I deal with it through this understanding. Johnson, p.20

<sup>5</sup> Balaban.

which means that what is sensed, presence,<sup>6</sup> cannot be quantified.<sup>7</sup> If this is so, then what is the significance of economic considerations that measure profit and loss in the framework of an emotional reality in which there is no common basis? We shall now rescue the economic considerations that are posited by Derrida.

From what has been said so far, it appears that the consideration intended by Derrida is a concrete one that tries to balance two contradictory tendencies – need versus desire. There is no attempt here to find a common basis because the only common basis possible is the negation of the individual (death). The profit-and-loss considerations do not refer to future profits and losses but to the present, immediate profit and loss, the degree of my ability to realize my desire now without any present threat to my existence: "c'est l'équilibre entre la réserve et le désir (it is the equilibrium between reserve and desire)."<sup>8</sup>

Plato presents the theory of measurement as the basis for the position that sees society as having priority over the individual. The criterion that he presents is based on the generalization that unifies all the variables and allows for objective considerations. Derrida also recognizes the importance of the existence of society and does not focus upon the individual as detached from society. Society and culture are the basis for providing the opportunities for activities that are different from the ones that are known.<sup>9</sup> In spite of what Derrida and Plato have in common (through Socrates) it is clear that the considerations so far are those of the individual. As an individual consideration, Derrida is nearer to the position of Calicles and therefore the criticism of Plato (through Socrates) against Calicles is also valid for Derrida. How can we preserve the individual consideration without destroying the social structure that ensures the possibility of the individual consideration?

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<sup>6</sup> L'essence est la présence. DLG p. 437 (Essence is presence.) OG p. 310.

<sup>7</sup> De toute façon, on ne fera jamais tenir des propositions d'essence sur une échelle. DLG p. 189 (As for the notion of fluctuation, it presents itself as perfectly empirical. In any case, propositions of essence can never be made to fit a scale.) OG. p.129

<sup>8</sup> DLG p. 263, OG p. 185.

<sup>9</sup> Il apparaît ici que l'homme, en tant qu'il dépend d'un sol et d'un climat, se cultive : il pousse, il forme une société et "le pays n'est pas indifférent à la culture des hommes ". Mais cette culture est aussi le pouvoir de changer de terrain, de s'ouvrir à une culture :[...] DLG p. 317 (It appears here that man, in as much as he depends upon a soil and climate, is cultivated: he spouts, he forms a society and "The birthplace is not a matter of indifference in the education [culture] of man." But this culture is also the power of changing terrain, of opening oneself to another culture:[...]), OG. p.222

The answer to this given by Derrida is 'through ethics'.<sup>10</sup> What kind of ethics is this?

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<sup>10</sup> Les concepts fondateurs de substance et de cause, avec tout leur système de concepts connexes, suffisent, quelle qu'ait pu être leur différenciation et leur problématique interne, à (nous) assurer le relai et à nous assurer de la continuité ininterrompue, quoique fort différenciée, de tous les moments de la Métaphysique, de la Physique, de la Logique, en passant par l'Éthique. Faute de reconnaître cette puissante vérité systématique, on ne sait plus de quoi l'on parle quand on prétend interrompre, transgresser, excéder, etc. [...] MDP p. 42 (The founding concepts of substance and cause, along with their entire system of connected concepts, suffice by themselves – whatever their differentiation and their internal problematic – to ensure (us of) the transmission and uninterrupted continuity – however highly differentiated – of all the moments of Metaphysics, Physics, and Logic, passing through Ethics. If one does not acknowledge this powerful, systematic truth, one no longer knows what one is talking about in allegedly interrupting, transgressing exceeding, etc. [...] MoP p. 39

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## **Part II – The Ethics of Politics**

### **Chapter 1 - Ethics and Desire**

In the course of the discussion, I showed that Derrida, like MacIntyre, regards shared life as political life, and accepts that dependence that exists between the individual and the society in which he lives. In the chapter that deals with responsibility I showed that this was the basis for Derrida's demand for individual responsibility in choosing the meanings and possibilities that shape his life. The demand for responsibility is also voiced by Levinas. In my view, the responsibility that Derrida refers to is different from the one that is posited by Levinas because of the assumptions that underlie each of these demands. What does all this concern?

Even if we can point to a correspondence between the position of Derrida and that which MacIntyre derives from the Platonic text, Derrida refers to a different kind of knowledge from the one that Plato intends. Plato is searching for the knowledge of the ideal good. Derrida on the other hand is searching for the knowledge of the concrete good. The generalization that Plato refers to is possible by virtue of the relationship of objective facts in which the aspect of experience has already been lost and the comparison between them is made on the basis of a common factor. For Derrida, the aspect of experience stands at the center of reflection and therefore the Platonic measurements are not possible. The non-distinction between the various points of departure for Derrida and Plato leads Rinon to attack Derrida by noting that for Plato it is possible to talk about objective knowledge which is in itself neither good nor bad. What makes it good or bad is the way it is used.<sup>1</sup> Derrida is totally opposed to this position which was and still is the legacy of the scientific community, and can find defenders such as Yeshayahu Leibowitz. For Derrida, knowledge is in itself non-objective, and is derived from the aims of the person acquiring knowledge. Thus there is no situation in which one can speak about independent objective knowledge. The perception of knowledge as dependent upon the aims of the person acquiring knowledge stress the need to set up ethical principles to determine judgment concerning knowledge. Norris shows the way in which Derrida proves that one cannot speak about a system of objective claims, in an attempt to place Derrida within the framework of the Kantian tradition. By doing so, he does not notice the difference

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<sup>1</sup> Rinon, pp. 554-558.

between the position of Kant, who assumes the existence of an objective reality and sees knowledge as an objective system, and the position of Derrida, who assumes the existence of an emotional reality, and thinks that there is no objective knowledge. When Norris reaches the stage at which his entire argument is directed, he says that Derrida puts pressure on the traditional framework and breaks out of it.<sup>2</sup> I believe that Derrida goes beyond that tradition in which Norris wants to place him. Derrida does indeed hold a philosophical discussion as Norris claims, and the subjects to which he refers are those that are discussed in traditional Western philosophy. Even the link that Derrida makes between knowledge and ethics cannot be seen as a deviation, since Plato (Socrates) is also in search of the good, which means that he is searching for a moral criterion for knowledge. In my view, the deviation that Norris points to without explaining it, concerns the system of considerations that Derrida activates. This system, and also the framework of discussion that Norris presents in the name of Kant are not appropriate for Derrida and therefore he deviates from them. The attempt of Norris to place Derrida in the framework of a Kantian discussion does not succeed because of the different presuppositions held by each of these thinkers. The objective presupposition assumes homogeneous values that are abstract and based on principles that can serve as a criterion for objective determination. This is the starting point of both Kant and Plato. On the other hand, in the presupposition of emotional and concrete experience, the values are concrete, not homogeneous and are evaluated through referring to the question: does it advance my aim or does it distances me from it? This means that the values are estimated on an economic basis that concerns profit and loss. This is Derrida's starting point. We shall now trace the way in which Derrida weighs and posits the system of values that measure profit and loss.

The concept of value, as Derrida quotes from Saussure, can be characterized with the help of the two orders mentioned below before they are combined as an economic or linguistic value:

1. par une chose *dissemblable* susceptible d'être *échangée* contre celle dont la valeur est à déterminer ; 2. par des choses *similaires* qu'on peut *comparer* avec celle dont la valeur est en cause.

Ces deux facteurs sont nécessaires pour l'existence d'un valeur.

- 1) ( of a *dissimilar* thing that can be *exchanged* for the thing of

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<sup>2</sup> Norris, p. 169.

which the value is to be determined; and

- 2) of *similar* things that can be *compared* with the thing of which the value is to be determined.

Both factors are necessary for the existence of a value.)<sup>3</sup>

Since value, according to the quotation is based on a comparison between things that are dissimilar, in order to exchange them for something of which the value is to be determined, and is based on a comparison between things that are similar, in order that they can be exchanged on the basis of their value, then value is a matter of comparison and exchange between things. What, then, is the case for a comparison between qualities that cannot be set against each other and cannot therefore be exchanged? Balaban claims that in the argument between Protagoras and Plato, this is the heart of the matter under dispute. Since Derrida accepts the position of Protagoras, it seems that value for him will not be determined on the basis of comparison and exchange. Thus, in the discussion on metaphor that was supposed to make a comparison and serve as a basis for exchange, it appears that metaphor is not possible.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, one can make use of the concept as a shortcut, as a saving of time and instead of an explanation. In this sense the concept presents the idea in a sentence and its value derives from its ability to indicate an entire configuration economically.<sup>5</sup>

Even if it is not possible to compare qualities among themselves and to exchange them, it is possible to examine the degree of utility that can be derived from them within a given time, to accept or reject them on the basis of utility. Their value is not absolute but relative to the end that is to be realized. For this reason, the concrete situation can be exchanged for an economic concept that does not replace the situation and does not include it. Derrida says about this:

Rapport entre une différance qui retrouve son compte et une  
différance qui manque à retrouver son compte, la mise de la présence

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<sup>3</sup> MDP pp. 259-260, MoP p. 218. The English translation posits the two values as needing to be determined, but it seems to me that in the French quotation it says that the value is determined by a comparison between things, i.e. exchange.

<sup>4</sup> Au lieu de risquer ici des prolégomènes à quelque métaphorique future, essayons plutôt de reconnaître en son principe la condition d'impossibilité d'un tel projet. MDP p.261 (Here, instead of venturing into the prolegomena to some future metaphors, let us rather attempt to recognize in principle the condition for the impossibility of such a project.) MoP p. 219

<sup>5</sup> C'est cette déperdition de sens que devrait compenser -économiquement - le mot différance (avec un a). Celui-ci peut renvoyer à la fois à toute la configuration de ses signification,[...] MDP p.8 (Thus the word difference (with an a) is to compensate - economically - this loss of meaning, for difference can refer simultaneously to the entire configuration of its meaning.) MoP p. 8

pure et sans perte se confondant avec celle de la perte absolue, de la mort (I am speaking of relationship between a *differance* that can make a profit on its investment and *differance* that misses its profit, the *investiture* of a presence that is pure and without loss here being confused with absolute loss, with death.)<sup>6</sup>

Since the discussion is being held around the degree of the utility that is derived, an examination should be made of profit and loss.

What can be gained and what can be lost? In the framework of the discussion conducted on the basis of objective facts, a discussion in which emotional experience has long been lost, it is possible to post death as an additional situation among various other situations. But in the framework of emotional thought, death is total loss in which I do not share, because in experiencing it, I no longer experience anything else.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, within the emotional considerations of profit and loss, death cannot be another factor in the system of considerations,<sup>8</sup> and the weighing of considerations is conducted in the framework of desire that gives form to the end posited by the voice.

The individual who desires to realize his aim meets other individuals who desire to realize aims that might interfere with the realization of his own aim. The system appears as a history of clashing forces – so that history is violence and metaphysics is economy.<sup>9</sup>

As for any economic consideration, the reference here is to an investment that one may either profit or lose by it. Since it is not possible to exchange one quality for another (the investment of a lesser quality to receive a higher quality) the question is

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<sup>6</sup> MDP p. 20-21, MoP p.19

<sup>7</sup> Si la possibilité de ma disparition en général doit être d'une certaine manière vécue pour qu'un rapport à la présence en général puisse s'instituer, on ne peut plus dire que l'expérience de la possibilité de ma disparition absolue (de ma mort) vient m'affecter, survient à un je suis et modifie un sujet. LV p.60 (If the possibility of my disappearance in general must somehow be experienced in order for relationship with presence in general to be instituted, we can no longer say that the experience of the possibility of my absolute disappearance (my death) affects me, occurs to an I am, and modifies a subject.) S p.54

<sup>8</sup> Car le caractère économique de la différence n'implique nullement que la présence différée puisse toujours se retrouver, qu'il n'y ait là qu'un investissement retardant provisoirement et sans perte la présentation de la présence, la perception du bénéfice ou le bénéfice de la perception. MDP p. 21 (For the economic character of difference in no way implies that the deferred presence can always be found again, that we have here only an investment that provisionally and calculatedly delays the perception of its profit or the profit of its perception.) MoP p. 20 Heidegger presents *Dasein* as a sensed presupposition. This is also a point of dispute between Derrida and Heidegger. According to Derrida, this presupposition obviates the possibility of taking death into account. Heidegger, on the other hand, presents death as one of the most significant factors in the development of his theory.

<sup>9</sup> [...], l'histoire est violence. La métaphysique est économie:[...] L'E p.173 ([...] - history is violence. Metaphysics is economy.) W p.117 I am not the only one to understand the term 'economy' in its literal sense. For example, in an article by Caputo, "The Economy of Signs in Husserl and Derrida" , the author presents Derrida's position regarding the sign in terms of work, creation, occupation. Although he does not discuss this, it is clear that economy here is not a metaphoric expression but a concrete one. See Caputo, (1987): 109.

how to calculate profit or loss. Intellect that sterilizes sensibility is not acceptable for purposes of comparison. On the other hand, complete sensibility prevents any kind of comparison from the outset. Only the awareness of the other, of *différance*, allows for comparison, and the instance that makes comparison possible is imagination.<sup>10</sup> It is imagination that makes it possible to feel pity, which is the first diversion of self-love, and the root of the love of others.<sup>11</sup> Imagination allows us to experience the self as being in the same situation as the other seems to be in. The identification with the other makes it possible to overcome the fact that the other is 'not-I' but internalizing the other as 'I'. But identification that arouses pity is not yet moral, because morality is concerned with generalization.<sup>12</sup> Generalization assumes that objects exist in themselves, and to which one can relate and select the qualities that are common to them while ignoring their differences. This assumption, as we have already seen, is not possible in the framework of emotional reality. Derrida does not speak about generalization of this kind, but of a different kind altogether. What Derrida refers to (through the writings of Rousseau) is a kind of artistic representation.<sup>13</sup> This is not an objective generalization but an emotional one, which is the ability to act, to influence. If this is so, then the morality to which Derrida refers concerns influence in the relationship between individuals.

This is not a definition of morality as an abstractly posited value, but a morality that concerns what is concrete in a given situation. Being engaged in activity, it does not set up a criterion for preferring one end rather than another. But by positing it as an artistic representation, the cultural aspect of morality is emphasized.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> L'imagination ne doit que elle-même de pouvoir se donner le jour. Elle ne crée rien puisqu'elle est imagination. Mais elle ne reçoit rien qui lui soit étranger ou antérieur. Elle n'est pas affectée par le "réel". Elle est pure auto-affectation. Elle est l'autre nom de la *différance* comme auto-affectation. DLG p. 265 (Imagination alone has the power of giving birth to itself. It creates nothing because it is imagination. But it receives nothing that is alien or anterior to it. It is not affected by the "real". It is pure auto-affectation. It is other name of *différance* as auto-affectation.) OG. p. 186-187 .

<sup>11</sup> Ce qui nous importe ici, quant au statut de la pitié, racine de l'amour d'autrui, [...] Elle est la première dérivation de l'amour de soi. DLG 248 (What concerns us here about the status of pity, the root of the love of others, [...] . It is the first diversion of the love of self.) OG. p.174.

<sup>12</sup> La condition de la moralité, c'est qu'à travers la souffrance unique d'un être unique, à travers sa présence et son existence empiriques, l'humanité se donne à plaindre. Tant que cette condition n'est pas remplie. la pitié risque de devenir injuste. DLG p. 271 (The condition of morality is that through the unique suffering of a unique being, through his presence and his empirical existence, humanity gives itself up to pity. As long as this condition is not fulfilled, pity risks becoming unjust.) OG. p.191.

<sup>13</sup> Si l'opération de l'art passe par le signe et son efficace par l'imitation, il ne peut agir que dans le système d'une culture et la théorie de l'art est une mœure. Une impression "morale", par opposition à une "impression 'sensible' ", se reconnaît à ce qu'elle confie sa force à un signe. DLG p. 294 (If art operates through the sign and is effective through imitation, it can only take place within the system of culture, and the theory of art is a theory of mores. A "moral" impression, contrary to a " 'sensible' impression", is recognized through the fact that it places its force in a sign.) OG. p. 206 .

<sup>14</sup> Les effets des signes esthétiques ne sont déterminés qu'à l'intérieur d'un système culturel. DLG p. 294 (The effects of aesthetic signs are only determined within a cultural system.), OG. p. 206

Unlike abstract morality that pretends to set up valid criteria for all society at all times, the morality of which Derrida speaks is dependent upon time and place. As long as we are talking about individuals, there is no cause and effect here, because this is not an objective physical-mathematical system. As soon as morality is dependent upon a concrete time and place, responsibility for society is placed upon each of the participants in that society.<sup>15</sup> This is because one cannot depend on morality retaining its form without any connection with what the members of a group will do. The responsibility here is a specific, concrete one that concerns the concrete activities of the members of a group.

In the second part of the first section, responsibility was presented as the revelation of the free aspect of the voice. This is also the conclusion of Bernasconi from his analysis of the relationship between deconstruction and the possibility of ethics. He shows that ethics, in its traditional sense as the ethics of rules and laws is not possible according to Derrida's reading of Levinas, just as it is impossible for Heidegger.<sup>16</sup> The responsible decision in choosing between different possible acts must therefore preserve the freedom of the voice together with consideration for the social system in which the decision is made. The concept of responsibility includes the ability to decide on performing an act in such a way that it cannot be detached from that concept. Without the ability to decide on performing an act there is no meaning to the concept of responsibility. The ability to decide includes the possibility of choosing between two acts at least. If we say that in a certain situation there was no choice and the act was imposed upon us, it can be said that since there was no ability to decide, responsibility cannot be demanded. From this it can be understood that responsibility cannot be demanded for an act that is derived necessarily from a previous act, even if it is not experience as imposed. Perhaps it is because of this that Bennington distinguishes in Derrida's writings between political activity and political responsibility. Political activity is passive so long as it is unaware of its own basic assumptions. On the other hand, political responsibility is active, criticizes the traditional assumptions, and decides whether to accept them.<sup>17</sup> Derrida accepts the full significance of responsibility and says, as Bennington shows,<sup>18</sup> that a decision is

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<sup>15</sup> La responsabilité de la réactivation est une co-responsabilité. Elle engage celui qui reçoit, mais aussi et d'abord celui qui crée, puis exprime le sens. HOG p.101 (Responsibility for reactivation is a co-responsibility. It engages the one who receives, but also and first of all the one who creates and then expresses the sense.) O p. 100

<sup>16</sup> Bernasconi, p. 136.

<sup>17</sup> Bennington, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> Bennington, p. 25.

defined as such to the extent that its nature cannot be determined in advance. If the decision was determined in advance by some theory or other causes, there is no decision here but only the execution of a plan. Only in a non-deterministic system, in a situation in which the decision is not pre-programmed but must be made, can we talk about making a decision. Bennington says that this perception of Derrida is the core of his political thought. Responsibility, therefore, is linked to decisive determination. Even what may seem as a given fact derives from a decision as to what should be left and what should be discarded, and therefore the knowledge that is received at the end of the process is the result of decisiveness and is not presaged. The demand for responsibility means the awareness that knowledge is not a given fact.

Responsibility is the responsibility of someone for something\someone, which means that the concept of responsibility assumes a split, implying that there is more than one component in the system. The necessity for more than one component entails the fact that there will be no unification between the components of personality or society because in a unity there is no one who will be responsible and no one towards whom what has to be responsible. This means that the demand for responsibility necessitates the 'other'. The presentation of knowledge as the outcome of a non-enforced decision presumes that there is freedom to decide, but the responsibility towards the other limits the freedom of decision. The need to relate to the other is a restricting condition. Therefore even if responsibility necessitates freedom of decision, this freedom is found to be limited. On the face of it, this limitation may be seen as contradicting the demand for unlimited freedom, but this is not so. The taking of responsibility is in itself a free decision. Only after the individual has accepted upon himself the demand for responsibility, does the question of the other arises, and freedom become limited. Zaborowski<sup>19</sup> thinks that Levinas and Derrida see the other, in the very encounter with the face of the other person, as imposing responsibility. This is as though Levinas and Derrida perceive responsibility as a primary essence that cannot be subject to considerations, and that freedom is restricted from the start. But Levinas and Derrida do not accept the restriction of freedom as a concomitant of responsibility. This means that they do not accept responsibility as a primary fact that imposes itself but leave the decision to take responsibility open to individual decision. It is only in this way that we can talk about morality. According to the position of

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<sup>19</sup> Zaborowski, p. 50.

Levinas, if it were possible to coerce free will it would not be possible to talk about the decision of the will or about morality.<sup>20</sup> But the position of Levinas exposes a problem in the reading of Derrida. Levinas sees the other as a necessary pole in the system that he sets up, which is a systematic organization of the products of objective, reflexive thought that break up the wholeness of experience into its components. As the necessary polar opposition, we are bound by duty to uphold the otherness of the other. The presentation of the face of the other as the obligatory factor cancels the dependence of the individual upon society, a dependence that is one of the basic foundation stones in the position of Derrida,<sup>21</sup> and establishes the responsibility towards the other as an inclusive categorical imperative. This is a fundamental ethical demand, and even if it concerns individual relationship, this is a generalization that does not observe the rules of generalization and presents only the conclusion. As such, it loses the link with the concrete.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand, in Derrida's philosophy, the other who is revealed by *différance* is an immanent component that cannot be reduced. It is not possible in emotional reality to arrive at a unity of all the factors and to negate the otherness of the other. For this reason, we do not have the responsibility to preserve the otherness of the other. The responsibility of which Derrida speaks is a concrete responsibility towards writing that activates the voice, and is expressed in deconstruction.

Since the act of deconstruction is concerned with exposing conventions that have been concealed, as well as the revelation of possibilities that had not yet arisen

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<sup>20</sup> To approach the Other is to put into question my freedom, my spontaneity as living being, my emprise over the things. This freedom of a "moving force" this impetuosity of current to which everything is permitted, even murder. The "You shall not commit murder" which delineates the face in which the Other is produced submits my freedom to judgment. Then the free adherence to truth, an activity of knowledge, the free will which, according to Descartes, in certitude adheres to a clear idea, seeks a reason which does not coincide with the radiance of this clear and distinct idea itself. A clear idea which imposes itself by its clarity calls for strictly personal work of freedom, a solitary freedom that does not put itself in question, but can at most suffer a failure. In morality alone it is put in question. Morality thus presides over the work of truth Levinas, pp. 303-304.

<sup>21</sup> Compris en ce sens, le rapport intentionnel de "ego à mon monde" ne peut pas être ouvert à partir d'un infini-autre radicalement étranger à "mon monde",[...] L'E p. 193 (Understanding in this sense, the intentional relationship of "ego to my world" cannot be opened on an infinite-other radically foreign to "my world" [...]) W p. 132.

<sup>22</sup> Ainsi, dans sa plus haute exigence non-violente, dénonçant le passage par l'être et le moment du concept, la pensée de Levinas ne nous proposerait pas seulement, comme nous le disions plus haut, une éthique sans loi mais aussi un langage sans phrase. Ce qui serait tout à fait cohérent si le visage n'était que regard, mais il est aussi parole; et dans la parole, c'est la phrase qui fait accéder le cri du besoin à l'expression du désir. L'E p.219 (Thus, in its most elevated nonviolent urgency, denouncing the passage through Being and the moment of the concept, Levinas's thought would not only propose an ethics without law, as we said above, but also a language without phrase. Which would be entirely coherent if the face was only glance, but it is also speech; and in speech it is the phrase which makes the cry of need become the expression of desire.) W p. 147. Bernasconi, in the article mentioned above, reads the discussion of Derrida in a different way. He claims that Derrida reads Levinas through the spectacles of Heidegger, a reading that negates the need for an ethical discussion because in any case everything is ethics. It may be seen that this reading does not contradict my own reading, except that it does not put the emphasis on the concrete, which I think is central to the discussion of Derrida.

until the concrete moment in which the act was carried out, deconstruction is a mechanism to ensure that the free aspect of writing will always remain open. Bennington emphasizes the open horizon of deconstruction and confronts deconstruction with hermeneutics. According to him, hermeneutics tries to arrive at a single unified meaning while deconstruction tries to leave the horizon open forever. Deconstruction begins with the assumption that there is no meaning to be arrived at. Meaning, that had been created at a specific time, place and by a particular voice, did not exist from the very start, and therefore cannot be reached, but can only be created. In hermeneutics, that assumes in principle the possibility that a unified meaning can be found, includes the assumption that meaning exists independently (meaning being like the word of the god).<sup>23</sup>

In a certain sense, the act of deconstruction can be seen as parallel to the demand for criticism. Both of them lay emphasis on not accepting the self-understood meaning, and demand an analysis of what can be understood from something before accepting the meaning. But the points of departure for both of these activities leads them in different directions altogether. The demand for criticism assumes as its basis an organized and methodical system. Criticism is concerned with exposing the method that organizes the system. On the other hand, the act of deconstruction assumes a system that is gradually being built while it is being dismantled through the act of deconstruction. The act of deconstruction (dismantling) is an essential aspect in reconstructing this system. The way in which this activity is supposed to work is also created in the course of the work of deconstruction according to developing conditions, in contrast to criticism that can present clear rules of its method of action.<sup>24</sup> The assumptions regarding reality that underlie each of these activities are exposed when examining the differences between them. Since his basic assumption is that of emotional reality, the mechanism that Derrida presents is a concrete one that is sensitive to the conditions in which it works and alters in accordance with them. Therefore it is not possible to formulate the rules of procedure but only to show them in action. The way in which an act of deconstruction is supposed to work is presented in detail (for example in 'Plato's Pharmacy', although the entire corpus of Derrida's writings can serve as an example), and the criteria for decision are also clear even though they are not imposed beforehand. There is no definition of deconstruction;

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<sup>23</sup> Bennington, p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> Harvey, p.3-6

there are only examples. On the other hand, objective reality, which underlies the demand for criticism, is revealed through the methodical world picture towards which critical activity is directed.

Bennington distinguishes between the position of criticism and deconstruction by characterizing the position of criticism as teleological.<sup>25</sup> Even if the reason for this appellation is quite clear and in principle makes the same distinction that was presented above, which is that criticism exposes a given system what deconstruction creates a system in the process of its activity, I find that this distinction between deconstruction and criticism on the basis of being teleological of non-teleological to be problematic. This is because Derrida himself often declares that discussion is always teleological. However, the end to which Derrida refers is the personal, individual end of a specific person, and it totally different from the universal end to which Bennington refers. Yet the very use of the concept 'end' is liable to create confusion if we are not aware that it is not the same perception of an end that is meant. I would therefore prefer to base the difference between them on the essential nature of the activity in question. Criticism exposes a given system while deconstruction creates a new system during the act of deconstruction. This difference becomes even clearer when we consider the reality referred to by each of these approaches. Objective reality to which criticism refers is the reality that has already undergone methodical organization and has been inserted into a framework of defined concepts that provides it with a given system. Emotional reality to which deconstruction refers is intelligible but not methodically organized by concepts. The process of organizing it by concepts defines and recreates it according to its ends. Thus, deconstruction finds an intelligible system that can be organized in different ways, i.e. it can be recreated by intentional organization directed towards the end chosen by the organizer.

In an emotional wholeness of experience there is no prior categorical imperative. The moral act is entirely a matter of the decision of the will and is concerned with history, with preserving the conditions that will allow for the decision of the will. What these conditions are can be known only within a given historicist framework. Since there is no a-priori system that regulates the way in which a considered judgment is made, the moral consideration is an economic one that is

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<sup>25</sup> Bennington, p. 146.

aimed at the end set up by the desiring voice, a desire that is an additional revelation of *différance*, i.e. of a balanced and economic freedom. The presentation of a moral act as a matter of a willed decision presents Derrida's position within a deontological moral framework. But Derrida does not set up underlying categorical imperatives that constitute the moral content to which his philosophy refers, but recognizes only the end for the sake of which the will must impose a duty upon itself, and does not say anything about the way in which this duty will be accomplished.

The ethics of Derrida (if his position can be named by this general term) appears to be the presentation of a concrete historical-political field of activity as a free field.<sup>26</sup> This is not ethics in the accepted sense of the word – the ethics of imperatives, generalizations or indications of what is appropriate. This is an ethics that is concerned with the relationships between individuals and exists so long as such relationships exist. This kind of formulation may be regarded as an indication of what is appropriate, but Derrida himself (at least in his earlier writings)<sup>27</sup> does not say this, and he confines himself to the deconstruction of the system and the indication of the non-deterministic voice that reconstructs it, a voice that allows for setting up ethical demands.

Here, too, Derrida's position with regard to practical knowledge as the only possible kind of knowledge is exposed. Rotenstreich points out the distinction between the knowledge of a general principle of morality that does not relate to special conditions in which they can be applied, and practical knowledge that is inextricably bound up with changing circumstances.<sup>28</sup> Derrida, who assumes that there is only teleological knowledge, leaves no place for neutral distinctions. On the basis of an ethics that does not indicate what is appropriate, but is a system of interrelationships in which the appropriate is determined so long as these interrelationships are possible, the knowledge that is required is the knowledge of a concrete state of affairs that examines at any given moment the degree in which such interrelationships are possible.<sup>29</sup> As I have already shown, deconstruction is the kind

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<sup>26</sup> At the conference in which Derrida presented his article 'Différance', he responded to one of the participants by saying that: "I would never dare to speak of 'precursors' for all sorts of reasons". I regard this statement as indicating his refusal to accept any possibility of prediction that would show that something was decreed in advance and limited freedom. See Wood, Bernasconi, p. 136.

<sup>27</sup> An examination of his writings will show that he gradually presents discussions regarding mutual interrelationships and expresses explicit positions on ethical-political subjects. Since this study is restricted to the first two collections of his writings, this cannot be presented here.

<sup>28</sup> Rotenstreich, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> To some extent, this may recall the position of Habermas. See Norris, p. 169. However, Habermas assumes the possibility of generalization and thus leads away from a system of considerations to other conclusions altogether

of activity that allows for a clarification such as this because in the course of deconstruction the possibilities that are included or discovered from the viewpoint of the concrete individual become clear. The knowledge that Derrida refers to is concrete individual knowledge of a present state of affairs that intends to bring into awareness the full range of possibilities for action, including those that are perceived as not possible within the given system. This means that knowledge in an emotional reality is the knowledge of the field of activity, i.e. raising the largest number of possibilities that are at the disposal of the concrete person who acts in order to realize his aims. The possibilities referred to here are supposed to balance the employment of means that signify freedom, against the means that signify coercion. A formulation of this kind sharpens the problem of resolving the tension between the realization of concrete individual aims with the preservation of the social network in which it is possible to set up these aims and to realize them. In the framework of the early writings of Derrida, it is not possible to resolve this problem.

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that Derrida cannot accept. Since the argument between them belongs to a later period from that dealt with in this study, this matter will not be discussed.

## Chapter 2 - Freedom of Desire and its Margins

Derrida presents the individual and Western society by means of economic concepts that are motivated by what may be formulated as terms of profit and loss. The presentation of a human system as an economic one is based on the perception of reality as an intellectual system that is constructed of quantitative units that can be exchanged. Considerations of profit and loss are made from an individualistic viewpoint through reference to those components that can be quantified and exchanged. But although Derrida accepts the assumption of a human system as an economic one motivated by considerations of profit and loss, he does not accept the intellectual assumption that underlies the economic system. This is because in his view, the force that motivates the system is not an intellectual force but human will that cannot be quantified. Human will concerns the setting up of aims and as such it constitutes the origin of activity that is not necessarily predictable. As the origin of activity, as that from which activity emerges, it always stands outside the field of conceptualizing perception, in spite of being a wholeness of presence that experiences itself in an intelligible way. Reflection, as an activity, is divided into the active subject and the object acted upon. Therefore, even when the subject is contemplating himself, the origin of the act remains outside the field of intellectual perception. And even if Derrida does present the concrete individual as inaccessible to the unmediated perception just as the individual in mythic thought is perceived, this is a completely different kind of individual from the one that appears in mythic thought. In mythic thought there is no clear separation between subject and object, and the individual is not accessible because he is not aware of his existence. In Derridean thought, the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity is clear and sharp, and the awareness of the individual is that of a concrete singular person who constitutes the origin of activity. For Derrida, it is just this awareness of the existence of the concrete singular individual as the origin of activity that places him outside the field of the intellect. As that which posits an origin that cannot be conceptualized by the intellect, Derridean philosophy can be accused of mysticism. On the other hand, the identification of the voice or will as the origin of activity, and the presenting of a model that explains the interrelationship between voice and reality, removes Derridean philosophy from the field of mysticism. The explanatory model provides the concrete individual with

another perspective on reality, a perspective that increases his ability to act and does not restrict it, and in this sense it is not mysticism.

Derrida exposes a reality that is based on an emotional system that cannot be quantified and exchanged. This creates a tension between the way in which a person thinks about his life and the way he experiences it. Since Derrida is aware of the gap between experience and thought, and does not attempt to present a way to impose thought upon experience, I do not think that Derrida is presenting an ethical theory in spite of dealing with ethics.

In the first section I showed how writing functions as the means of empowering voice as the origin of positing an aim and of action. In a certain sense we can see in the system that Derrida constructs a reflection of the same position that Cassirer presents, according to which the subject discovers himself only when projecting himself upon an object allows him to contemplate himself without being aware that he is doing so. As may be recalled, writing appears as a given objective system that imposes its meaning on the subject without the subject being aware that the meaning he experiences as being imposed is merely his own creation. The interrelationships between object and subject are the same relations in both Cassirer's and Derrida's analysis. For both of them, these interrelationships allow for more delicate distinctions that enrich the system of possibilities that stands before the subject and thus increase his freedom of activity. The difference between considerations depends on the characterization of the origin that motivates the entire system. While Cassirer speaks about the abstract emancipation of man for which it is not clear who or what is the power that motivates it, Derrida speaks about the will of the concrete individual who searches for a way to realize his concrete aims. For Derrida there is no assumption of a spirit / Geist that searches for self-realization as in Hegel, or of the Bergsonian *élan vital*, or a kind of tendency towards some nameless emancipation as in Cassirer. The Derridean voice is free from the very start to posit its aims. This is not a freedom in the sense of creating something *ex nihilo*, but the freedom to perceive in whatever exists something that has not yet been realized. But this ability depends on the social framework in which the individual functions. So that even if neither Cassirer nor Derrida present total reality on one hand, and a complete subject on the other, and even if for both of them the interrelationships between subject and object create and define both the subject and the object, Cassirer presents an abstract model in which the motivating force is not clear, while Derrida presents a

concrete model and focuses attention on the concrete voice, the individual will as the motivating force. The active, non-deterministic force is not some vague force but human concrete will. This will does not try to carry out an abstract comprehensive plan but seeks to realize its singular concrete individual aims.

In the early writings that I have analyzed in the course of this discussion, Derrida exposes the components of the clash between the needs of the individual and the needs of society and presents them as resulting from the tension between the need to preserve the individual's freedom of desire and the need to limit this freedom. The clash is created through the recognition of the need to preserve both the individual and society. In the philosophical thought of Derrida, the individual and society are inextricably linked and cannot be separated. The individual and society are perceived as two sides that sustain each other. The reduction of one aspect will necessarily reduce the other, and therefore one cannot give attention to only one of them. This reading indicates the problematic state of Western society that stresses the individual and empowers it without paying attention to the society that is created as a result of this emphasis. Nevertheless, Derrida presents the uniqueness of every individual voice and the importance of preserving this uniqueness in the social system. Derrida mentions the responsible stand that the individual should adopt in order to protect the social system from degeneration. Responsibility is the force that restricts and restrains the individual from realizing his desires. Since it is the individual who chooses to limit himself out of a sense of responsibility towards himself and society in general, his freedom is preserved.

From this point onwards, Derrida continues to examine in his writing the forces that can support the ability of the concrete individual to maintain such a system of responsible life, in confrontation with the forces that are liable to undermine it. The description and examination of these forces is a subject for a separate discussion.

## Appendix - Parole and Discours in Derrida's *La voix et le phénomène*

Derrida's *La voix et le phénomène* is not a commentary to Husserl, and does not deal with philosophy of language as many philosophers believe it to be.<sup>1</sup> The claim that a text that its focus is only an analysis of someone's writings is not a commentary needs explanations: why to present your own philosophy through reading someone else writings, and why Husserl?

To go to the heart of the first question it is a matter for separate article. However, my claim, in a nutshell, is that Derrida's philosophy is a concrete philosophy which deals and develops only with and through singular and concrete writings, and Husserl's writing provides him the right starting point to deal with. This leads us to the second question – why Husserl? I believe we can find the answer by combining two arguments made by Marrati-Guénoun. From one hand Marrati-Guénoun sees Derrida as puzzled by the tension between genesis and origin, and in the other hand she analyzes the philosophy of Husserl as a philosophy of the consciousness<sup>2</sup>. As far as I understand it Derrida is not puzzled by the question if we can think about genesis and about origin together as acting in same system. For him not only that genesis and origin are parts of the same system but you can also identify them. The origin is the voice and the genesis is the phenomena and he tries to understand the way these connections works<sup>3</sup>. Husserl's philosophy of the consciousness is just the right writing to start revealing the way these connections works because they holds all the components Derrida needs to his inquiry: consciousness that can be seen as representing the voice and considerations about origin and genesis. So, in this text Derrida presents the philosophical problem that will mainly concern him thereafter, namely the connection between will (the voice) and the social reality (the phenomena): its nature, and its implications. However, the purpose of this paper is not to enlarge on this connection, but to show how Derrida, through the analysis of

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<sup>1</sup> Garver, p. ix; Evans, 1991; Mulligan, Mooney, Kates, (2005):115; to take just few examples.

<sup>2</sup> Marrati-Guénoun, P. p.69

<sup>3</sup>In *Of Grammatology* Derrida tells us that the system of "hearing (understanding) –oneself-speaking" through the phonetic substance – which presents itself as a nonexterior, nonmundane, therefore a nonempirical or noncontingent signifier –produced the idea of the world. In a note he tells us that he is going to deal with this problem more directly in *La voix et le phénomène*. There we find the system he is talking about to be the voice that produced the world, namely the phenomena. Therefore, not in vain did Derrida entitle his book *La voix et le phénomène*, although its meaning is lost in its translation as Speech and Phenomena. The voice (voix) is the concrete individual will of every human being.

Husserl's writings, reveals his own unique philosophical standpoint<sup>4</sup> as to the place that an individual concrete voice takes in the creation of sense. This will be accomplished through analyzing the way Derrida uses the words *parole* and *discours*. In that I believe I am following Kates intention to "approach to Derrida's aims and Husserl's claims together"<sup>5</sup>. By approaching Derrida through Husserl's writing it becomes clear, as I intend to prove, that Derrida has his own philosophical stand point which he wants to realize. These philosophical stand points although we can trace their roots in Husserl and Heidegger's thought, are unique and steams from different suppositions, the supposition of the voice as the origin of phenomena.

As a way into this question, it is helpful to consider the way Derrida understands Husserl's presuppositions about language<sup>6</sup>. Derrida deals with Husserl's trying to reveal the determinate essence, the independent meaning that stands for itself, the Idea that gives things their permanency. Although essence or ideas for Husserl never exist in a second world and Husserl himself attempts to show how essences or ideal meanings are constituted in relation to conscious experience (*Erlebnis*), accepting the supposition that we can approach the idea that gives things their permanency demonstrates a metaphysical standpoint on the world, in which things exist independently from human will. Derrida thinks that accepting this supposition demonstrates a metaphysical standpoint on the world, in which ideal meaning exist independently from human will.<sup>7</sup> Derrida himself does not accept this supposition. For him, language is the way people pose their will and communicate it to each other. Therefore, he cannot see independent meaning standing for itself, and the assumption about a determinate essence cannot hold. To reveal all this more clearly, one should see how Derrida analyses Husserl's arguments.

Derrida finds Husserl's distinction in *Logical Investigations* between sign as expression and sign as indication problematic and not clear<sup>8</sup>. What is the problem? When we talk about expressive sign, we refer to a sign that delivers meaning. This

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<sup>4</sup> Kates, rightly, mention that "Derrida himself thus stipulates at the outset of *Speech* that he intends to bring forward a set of considerations that play no obvious role in Husserl's own work..." although he takes completely other way of interpretation from the one I suggest here. Kates, (2005): 35

<sup>5</sup> Kates, (2003):105

<sup>6</sup> Here I am just sketching very roughly the differences between Derrida's standing point and Husserl's. for a very detailed and good analysis of those differences see Marrati-Guénoun, p. 57-98

<sup>7</sup> Bernet, (1995): 3, 6, 9, 16, 19., Koukal, p. 42-43 n.57

<sup>8</sup> LV p.2 In terms of what question are we to accept and read this apparently so portentous distinction? SP p.4

meaning is like an entity that stands for itself independent of the way it is delivered. Derrida emphasizes that for Husserl sense is an object that one can pass to another<sup>9</sup>. As note, this position of Husserl's does not match Derrida's own standpoint, namely that meaning cannot stand by itself and always depends on the one who delivers it and the one who receives it, e.g. on relationship. Still, there is no sense without meaning. The distinction between expressive and indicative signs stems from the effort to isolate meaning, releasing it from the contingent connections that bind it, thereby discovering the pure meaning.

Derrida translates, *Bedeutung* (meaning) as *vouloir-dire* - "want-to-say". From Derrida's point of view, meaning is something that somebody wants to say, intends to say. It is something that somebody wants to pass to someone else, but not an independent object. From Derrida's translation we understand meaning as arising through a relationship and always mediate. Hence, talking about intuitive meaning, non-mediate meaning is meaningless. Looking at meaning as the creation of an individual, as something that somebody wants to say, eliminates the possibility of meaning as pure essence that stands for itself. From this point of view, Husserl's project is doomed to fail.

In the *Guide for Translating Husserl* the translation of *Bedeutung* as "want-to-say" is not an option. Therefore, we may suspect that Derrida does not give us literal translation, and he establishes his conception and his philosophy through the translation.<sup>10</sup> This suspicion is corroborated by the way Derrida uses the words *parole* and *discours*. To present my point I will examine the way Derrida uses those words.

What is the difference between *parole* and *discours*, and how do they function in Derrida's arguments? In *La voix et le phénomène*, the word *parole* rarely appears until chapter 6: "La voix qui garde le silence" (The Voice That Keeps Silence). But, in that chapter, when the discussion on the voice begins, the word *parole* alone appears. In the final chapter, again the word *discours* is exclusively used. Why does Derrida need another word in chapter 6? What is the difference between *parole* and

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<sup>9</sup> HOG p.54, 93, O p. 64, 94

<sup>10</sup>In several articles in *The southern Journal of Philosophy* vol. xxxII, Supplement,1993 can be found reference to this issue, although they don't elaborate it.

*discours*, and how do they function in Derrida's arguments? I now attempt to illuminate the difference between *parole* and *discours* and define them through this illumination, then I will probe how they function in Derrida's arguments; finally, I will explain Derrida's purpose in using *parole* in chapter 6 of *La voix et le phénomène*.

What is the difference between *parole* and *discours*?

In English, as in German, a parallel word to the French *discours* is offered ("discourse" and Diskurs), just as in French *parole* is the parallel to "speech" and *Rede*. The *Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch* gives *discours* as equivalent to *Diskurs*. The dictionary also note that *diskursiv* is the opposite of "intuitive", which is not the case for *Rede*. This exposition accords with the *le Robert quotidien* and *Hachette* dictionaries, which present *discours* as opposite to "intuition" in philosophical debates, a notion that is not linked to *parole*.

Semantically, "discourse", *discours* and *Diskurs* are the focus in systematic talk, namely a discussion that requires a verbal relationship between two interlocutors. "Speech", *parole* and *Rede* have wider definitions and do not need the relationship between one to another. In modern linguistics, following De-Saussure, there is sharp distinction between *parole* and *discours*. *Discours* is connected sentences that focus in one issue. *Parole* is the language as actually use by the speaker. Waldenfels mentions that although tradition emphasizes the spoken language as the paradigm of language pronunciation, Husserl and Heidegger use the word *Rede* as general language and not necessarily as spoken language. From this he deems Derrida's translation of *Rede* as *discours oral* as incorrect.<sup>11</sup> In this, we shall see, Waldenfels counters Inwood, Macquarrie, Robinson, and Stambaugh.

Taminiaux says that the French word *discours* corresponds to the German word *Rede*. However, in his discussion he shows that Heidegger imparts to *Rede* a meaning from Husserl. Taminiaux says that the Husserlian *Rede* is an organized expression, so we have to examine the logic that organizes it. Heidegger, says Taminiaux, thinks of the

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<sup>11</sup> Waldenfels, p.72 note 2

*Rede* as commentary discourse, which has no organized form.<sup>12</sup> The discourse arrangement stems from the way the commentary is formulated: we do not express what we see but we change what we see according to what is said. Taminiaux analyzes Heidegger's *Rede* and argues that establishing the *Rede* in this way compels the *Dasein* to see its essence as its own purpose, and thus it isolates itself as authentic essence. Taminiaux argues that Levinas renders *Rede* as *discours* as an act of disagreement with Heidegger, and as an attempt to establish an alternative philosophy.<sup>13</sup> For Levinas the *discours* always separates selfhood in face of the other; therefore, the *discours* includes the meeting with the other. Later we shall see that Derrida accepts both Heidegger's and Levinas' point of view in taking *discours* as commentary in its nature, and as embodying difference in itself, when he translate Husserl's *Rede* as *discours*.

When Derrida quotes Husserl he translates *Rede* as *discours*.<sup>14</sup> However, this translation is not as obvious as it might appear: Findlay chooses the word *speech* (and not "discourse") as the English translation, and so does Alison when he translates Derrida's quotation.<sup>15</sup> In the *Guide for Translating Husserl* Cairns includes *discours* as a possibility, and Suzanne Bachelard uses *discours* in her translation of *Logique formelle et logique transcendentale*.<sup>16</sup> We already noted that Taminiaux takes *discours* as a legitimate translation of *Rede*. Inwood thinks that *Rede*, which can be translated as talk, speech, words, conversation and discourse, is informal speech in a specific connection, and gives the word "fire!" as an example for such an informal speech in a specific connection.<sup>17</sup> Macquarrie and Robinson state in their translators' notes to *Sein und Zeit* that they usually translate *Rede* as discourse or talk,<sup>18</sup> and in a new translation of *Sein und Zeit* we find "discourse" with no further explanation.<sup>19</sup> What are the philosophical consequences from all of this? To this point we can have none. The real philosophical consequences arise when we understand the way Derrida uses those words. In what follow I will reveal the conclusion we can make from Derrida's usage.

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<sup>12</sup> Taminiaux, p.263-265

<sup>13</sup> Taminiaux p.263-265

<sup>14</sup> LV p.36

<sup>15</sup> S p.34 , Husserl, (2001):187

<sup>16</sup> Cairns, p. 93

<sup>17</sup> Inwood, p. 208

<sup>18</sup> Heidegger (1962) p. 47 n.3

<sup>19</sup> Heidegger (1996)

Derrida's sensitivity to language<sup>20</sup> and the above discussion illuminating the variety of possible translations allow us to suppose that the *Rede* was not rendered as *discours* by mistake, out of ignorance, or unthinkingly. True, it might have been for the sake of euphony, but understandable as that may be, and if Derrida was only playing on the words, he would have used the words *parole* and *discours* interchangeably so as not to weary the reader. In fact he uses *discours* overwhelmingly throughout the book; for instance, on page 36 *discours* appears eight times and *parole* only once. Three times we find *discours* in a place where *parole* might serve because it translates *Rede*. When considering fluency as a reason, this does not make sense either because in the chapter 6 *discours* rarely appears. Even the possibility that Derrida is talking about conversation cannot hold because the verb he uses in relation to *discours* is *parler* (to talk) and not *discoursiviser* (to converse).

Following Derrida, who says that you can manage Kant's phrases only within the framework of his whole philosophy<sup>21</sup>, I shall check when and in what connection we find each of Derrida's two words. Rarely do we find both together: "Meaning doubtless comes to the sign and transforms it into expression only by means of speech [*discours*], oral discourse [*parole*]"<sup>22</sup>

Derrida seemingly understands *discours* as verbal talk, while *parole* functions as indefinite talk. This combination is found again elsewhere:

It does not suffice, in short, to recognize oral discourse as the medium of expressivity. Once we have excluded all the nondiscursive signs immediately given as extrinsic to speech [*parole*] (gestures, facial expressions, etc.), there still remains a considerable sphere of nonexpressive within speech [*parole*] itself.<sup>23</sup>

What can be the difference between verbal and indefinite talk? What is the meaning of indefinite talk? In a footnote on the translation of *Rede* Llewelyn argues that

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<sup>20</sup> We learn about his sensitivity from a discussion like this one: In German one may, with Husserl, say without absurdity that a sign is ... as in English one may say that a sign ... but in French one cannot say without contradiction that un sign [...] S pp. 17-18 ( LV p. 17 )

<sup>21</sup> O p.40 n.26

<sup>22</sup> LV p.34, S p.32

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p. 37, pp.39-40

Husserl talks about monological *Rede* which is not communicative, so *Rede* is not a talk. Llewelyn thinks that if a so-called spoken discourse is possible in which one can imagine oneself in solitude talking to oneself or to another, that is, imagining oneself communicating without actually doing so<sup>24</sup>. If we replace the "talking" with "communication", we speak of verbal communication and communication that is not verbal.

Analysis of the semantic field could enhance this hypothesis by distinguishing a concept that rests on a verbal relationship and one in which the relationship is not centered on the act of talking. We might say that *discours* is more systematic and focuses on a relationship with verbal communication, while *parole*, which does not refer to a system, does not indicate a verbal communication relationship, but communication of gesture.

Does Derrida connect verbal communication with a relationship between subjects? Is that why for most of the essay he uses a word that includes a verbal relationship in its semantic field?

The distinction based on verbalism seems compelling for a number of reasons:

1. What is the point of accepting only verbal communication as a relationship?
2. By talking about non-verbal communication we think of gestures and eye contact, which is based on sight. From the cited passage this is obviously not the case here. There it is stated clearly that gestures are the non-discursive part of speech. From this we learn that the issue here concerns verbal communication only.
3. The third word Derrida uses in this connection is the voice (*le voix*), which has a major function in verbal communication. From the title of the book we understand that the voice has a crucial function in the argument. Verbalism could be the emphasized side if chapter 6, which deals with voice, did not use the word *parole*, which according to the analysis I have made so far, indicates non-verbal communication, communication that makes no use of the voice.
4. We question the verbal criterion even more when we read a note in *Form and Meaning* where Derrida says that in discourse itself the meaning is not verbal but the

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<sup>24</sup> Llewelyn, p.50 note 7

revival of meaning that can keep silent<sup>25</sup>. Even the dictionary, and the way those words function in the linguistic frame, do not have a strict distinction based on verbalism, so the distinction between *parole* and *discours* based on verbalism does not pass the test. The way Derrida criticizes Austin for identifying acts of discourse (*actes de discours*) exclusively with communication<sup>26</sup> eliminates the possibility of this comment.

The main distinction between *parole* and *discours* can be based on nomothetic, systematic forms and relationships between two subjects<sup>27</sup> that are components emphasized more in *discours* than in *parole*. This analysis leads to the conclusion that Derrida assumes speech as relationship between two subjects in essence, and because of that he chooses a word whose semantic field includes speech as relationship.

Observing the way these words function in Derrida's arguments confirms this analysis; in *Of Grammatology* we find Derrida's explanation for *discours* which confirms relationship and systematic form:

If in a rather conventional way I call by the name of discourse the present, living, conscious representation of a text within the experience of the person who writes or read it, and if the text constantly goes beyond this representation by the entire system of its resources and its own laws, ...<sup>28</sup>

If speech is relationship, without relationship there is no speech. The effort to find speech without relationship is meaningless. Without relationship, there is no meaning. The way Derrida uses *discours* in most of his text expresses his standpoint on the issue of meaning; meaning has sense only as relationship, only when it is related to another:

It is through this relationship to the other as an other self that meaning reassures itself against madness and nonmeaning<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> It goes without saying that by "discourse itself" we do not mean a discourse actually, physically, proffered, but, following Husserl's indications, the animation of verbal meaning, by an "intention" that can remain silent without being essentially affected. MoP p. 162 § 9, MDP p.194 § 7

<sup>26</sup> See 'Signature Event Context' in MoP pp. 307-330

<sup>27</sup> Even if those two subjects are me and myself.

<sup>28</sup> DLG p. 149, OG p.101

<sup>29</sup> L'E p. 92, W p. 59

There is no pure essence. There is no original meaning that stands by itself independently:

And contrary to what phenomenology - which is always phenomenology of perception – has tried to make us believe, contrary to what our desire cannot fail to be tempted into believing, the thing itself always escapes.<sup>30</sup>

In *La forme et le vouloir-dire (Form and Meaning)* we find him saying:

We know already- and Husserl acknowledges this- that in fact, at least, the secondary threads are going to act on primary threads; in what is spun (*ourdir*) in this way, it is precisely the operation of the beginning (*ordiri*) which can no longer be grasped;...<sup>31</sup>

And further on

This thematic is simultaneously, and quite precisely, the one which we are following at the moment and that of sedimented history of *bedeuten*. And even if one considers only egological history, how is the perpetual restoration of meaning in its virginity to be thought?<sup>32</sup>

However, this is not the entire problem. Derrida claims that even if we could conceive pure essence, we could not accept it as a foundation for phenomenology, according to Husserl's own condition. This becomes clear when we turn to the only chapter where Derrida uses the word *parole*: chapter 6. It begins with *discours* like all the rest of the book, but from page 82 onward, that word disappears and we find *parole* instead. In chapter 7 *discours* reappears. What is the subject in chapter 6?

Considering Husserl's motivation to separate expression from indication by characterizing expression as free from any empirical realization, it is necessary to examine the status of the internal speech as a release from any indicative character. Derrida discloses that to be able to abide by this condition, to be able to separate expression from indication and leave meaning in its purity, Husserl must talk about meaning that does not deliver any information, that is, incommunicative meaning. Therefore it is necessary to make sure that the internal-speech will fulfill this term:

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<sup>30</sup> LV p. 117, S p. 104,

<sup>31</sup> MDP p.191, MoP p. 160

<sup>32</sup> MDP p.197, MoP p.165

The "talking to oneself" that Husserl wants to re-establish here is not a "talking to oneself about oneself" unless this can take the form of "talking to oneself that S is P"<sup>33</sup>

The internal-speech can appear only in the form "S is P" as long as "is" means united identities and does not add any new content. Derrida emphasizes that in this point the act we are talking about is *parler* and not *discoursiviser*: "It is here that speech is necessary"<sup>34</sup>.

Why it is so important? Benveniste says that

Discourse must be understood in its widest sense: every utterance assuming a speaker and hearer, and in the speaker, the intention of influencing the other in some way.<sup>35</sup>

From this we conclude that *discours* is relationship between two subjects.

Emphasizing its relationship nature indicate to Levinas' point of view in taking *discours* as embodying difference in itself. The relationship is founded on influence, on the intention to make some change, to add new content, and is commentary in its nature as Heidegger understands it. When no new content is introduced it is not communication or relationship but speech. What is this speech?

The speech, the *legein*, is the fusion of thought and voice in logos (in a system):

...the unity of thought and voice in logos)<sup>36</sup>

The reference to the *legein* stems from Heidegger's commentary to Parmenides, as Derrida reminds us parenthetically. However, in Heidegger's commentary, as in Parmenides' writing, the *legein* appears with *noein*, which means intuitive-mind or intuition. Derrida changes this and puts voice in place of intuition.

Derrida claims that Husserl takes the ideal object (the pure essence) as that which can return infinitely and is unchanging, and establish its unchanging meaning in the present

because it is independent of here-and-now acts. Its being is ideal with no material incarnation forces it to be founded by instance that will actualize it. This instance

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<sup>33</sup> LV p.82, S p. 74

<sup>34</sup> LV p. 82, S p. 74

<sup>35</sup> Benveniste, pp.208-209. As Derrida himself deals with another chapter from this book, there is no doubt about Derrida's knowledge of this distinction. Although Bennington mentions that Derrida criticizes Benveniste (Jacques Derrida p. 61-62) We can see that his criticism does not touch the discourse concept.

<sup>36</sup> LV p. 83, S p. 74

must have no empirical form that can distort the ideal object. If the ideatic perception depends on the possibility of direct perception, of intuitive perception, we have to find out what the instance is that allows us to perceive directly. In chapter 6 Derrida argues that the internal voice is this instance. This chapter deals with the internal voice as the instance which makes the direct perception possible. The word *discours* disappears after presenting the voice as incorporeal (which appropriates it to be the instance that perceives the pure essence):

The ideal object is the most objective of objects; independent of here-and-now acts and events of the empirical subjectivity which intends it, it can be repeated infinitely while remaining the same. Since its presence to intuition, its being-before the gaze, has no essential dependence on any worldly or empirical synthesis, the re-establishment of its sense in the form of presence becomes a universal and unlimited possibility. But, being nothing outside the world, this ideal being must be constituted, repeated, and express in a medium that does not impair the presence and self-presence of the acts that aim at it, a medium which both preserves the presence of the object before intuition and self-presence, the absolute proximity of acts to themselves. The ideality of the object, which is only its being-for a nonempirical consciousness, can only be expressed in an element whose phenomenality does not have worldly form. The name of this element is the voice. The voice is heard<sup>37</sup>

The direct proximity of the voice that makes it appropriate to be the right instance for intuitive perception, is a sensual irrational proximity. The connection Derrida makes between the voice and the direct perception excludes the possibility of using the word *discours* in regard to the voice because in French philosophical terminology *discours* is used as rational, systematic speech, as mediator, and the opposite to intuition. The perception described by the voice stands in contrast to rational systematic perception, and it seems that the word *parole* is intended to emphasize it.

Since Husserl's project depends on rational perception, Derrida finds it crucial to emphasize the irrational dimension in the intuitive perception offered by Husserl. This

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<sup>37</sup> LV p. 84-85, S p. 75-6

assumption is confirmed when Derrida says explicitly that if intuition cannot find discursive (systematic) pronunciation, the whole phenomenological principal is in doubt:

If the description does not bring to light an absolutely and simply founding ground of signification, if an intuitive and perceptive ground, a pedestal of silence, does not found discourse in the originally given presence of the thing itself,... not only will the phenomenological description have failed but the descriptive "principle" itself will have been put into question.<sup>38</sup>

Can we conclude from Derrida's use of the word *discours* that he takes language as systematic and rational? In a way we can:

The science of linguistics determines language – its field of objectivity- in the last instance and in the irreducible simplicity of its essence, as the unity of the phone, the glossa, and the logos<sup>39</sup>.

As much as it is objective, the language is systematic, but this is not the point in question. We can learn more from the fact that Derrida does not use the word *discours* in this particular chapter than we can learn about his attitude toward a system from the usage of *discours* through the whole text. The impossibility of treating the act of the voice as *discours* makes it clear that the voice as intuitive instance is in itself not systematic and not logical, and cannot conceive the pure essence that will be the foundation of science that Husserl wants.

The implicit argument in Derrida's analysis is that Husserl's application to intuition as the instance that will ensure certainty is problematic; intuition deals with sensual non-conceptual perception, an issue Derrida emphasizes by introducing the voice as intuitive instance. Derrida points out the closeness between sensuousness and sense by using the voice - *La voix s'entend* (the voice is heard by itself, the voice is understood by itself). We experience the sensual face of the voice more clearly than that of vision, and we can accept it more as part of our flesh than we accept vision. So, although intuition stems from vision, Derrida chooses the voice and not sight as the intuitive instance. Here Derrida stands against Fink's position, which tries to reject a sensual -subjective commentary to Husserl's philosophy. Derrida's stance

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<sup>38</sup>MDP p.192, MoP p.161

<sup>39</sup>DLG p. 45, OG p.29

against the Husserl's authorized commentator without mentioning it, and without trying to justify it, although we know Derrida was familiar with it - proves the whole discussion is not a commentary on Husserl but an exposition of Derrida's philosophy. My opposes will rightly claim that Derrida devoted few works dealing with Husserl and the common idea about those works is that there was no different engagements with Husserl over time<sup>40</sup>, and they takes *the genesis* together with all his other writings. Nevertheless Derrida himself choose not to publish this work till very late in his career, and when asked about *La voix* and his position through his early work he said that for him it can be seen as a part of *Grammatology* and *Writing*<sup>41</sup>.

Derrida conceives the phenomenology project as possible through self-conciseness. This is revealed in relation to an object whose presence can be preserved or can be reconstructed. This presence, which is ideal presence, is possible through language. Language forms retain the object that will be presented time after time<sup>42</sup>. That is why self-conciseness is not foreign and is not prior to the possibility of language, and it is not surprising that phenomenology keeps the spoken word and confirms the essential connection between the logos and the voice (phone).<sup>43</sup> Derrida clarifies that conciseness can be established only through the voice. This truth, he claims, never interested

phenomenology, although it rose through phenomenology. As Derrida himself indicates, the text *La voix et le phénomène* aims to reveal the central place the voice has in phenomenology.<sup>44</sup>

Making the voice central to phenomenology is Derrida's own position, not Husserl's; therefore I conclude that in *La voix et le phénomène* Derrida is not trying to offer

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<sup>40</sup> Kats (2003): 105

<sup>41</sup> P p. 4-5

<sup>42</sup>In *Of Grammatology* it is possible to find an illustration to this:

Auto-affection, the as-for-itself – subjectivity- gains in power and in its mastery of the other to the extent that its power of repetition idealizes itself. Here idealization is the movement by which sensory exteriority, that which affects me or serves me as signifier, submits itself to my power of repetition, to what thenceforward appears to me as my spontaneity and escapes me less and less. One must understand speech [voix] in terms of this diagram. p. 165-166 (DLG p. 236)

<sup>43</sup>This is the meaning of the subtitle introduction au problème du signe dans la phénoménologie du Husserl, that Lawlor rightly emphasize. Lawlor, (2002): 166

<sup>44</sup> LV p. 1- 16, S pp. 3-16

direct commentary on Husserl. Following the way Derrida develops his arguments makes it clear that he is not wondering on what is the origin of meaning.

From the analysis I have just made its clear that Derrida has no doubt that the origin of meaning is the voice, the concrete will. The dialogue with Husserl helps him to reveal this point and sharps the argument about the connections between the voice and phenomena.

## Abbreviations

- LV La voix et le phénomène Quadrige/puf; 1967  
S Speech and Phenomena trans. D.B.Allison , Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1973
- DLG De la grammatologie, Les éditions de minuit, Paris, 1967  
OG Of Grammatology trans. G. Chakravorty Spivak, London; The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997
- HOG Edmund Husserl L'origine de La Géométrie Traduction et Introduction par Jacques Derrida, Presses Universitaires de France; Paris, 1962  
O Derrida, J. Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction trans. J.P. Leavey, Jr. University of Nebraska Press. 1989
- L'E L'écriture et la différence , éditions du seuil, Paris, 1967  
W Writing and Difference trans. Bass, A. The University of Chicago Press, 1978
- MdP Marges de la philosophie Les Editions de Minuit, Paris 1972  
MoP Margins of philosophy trans. Bass, A. The University of Chicago Press, 1986
- Pos Positions, Les Editions de Minuit, Paris 1972  
P Positions, trans. A. Bass, The University of Chicago Press, 1981
- LD La Dissémination, Les Editions de Minuit, Paris 1972  
D Dissemination trans. Johnson, B. The University of Chicago Press, 1981

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