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Perspectives on Postmodernity

Pregnancy Pastiche:

Ultrasound Imagery as Postmodern Phenomenon

by Susan L. Erikson

Beyond Alphabets:

An Interview with Stephen A. Tyler

by Scott A. Lukas

**The Eternal Recurrence of the Same as the Gift of Difference: Naming
the Enigma, the Enigma of Names**

by John Krummel

Foucault on Freedom and the Space of Transgression

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The Velvet Cage:

Michel Foucault and the Myth of Gay Liberation

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Pregnancy Pastiche: Ultrasound Imagery as Postmodern Phenomenon

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Beyond Alphabets: An Interview with Stephen A. Tyler

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The Eternal Recurrence of the Same as the Gift of Difference: Naming the Enigma, the Enigma of Names

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Foucault on Freedom and the Space of Transgression

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The Velvet Cage: Michel Foucault and the Myth of Gay Liberation

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Foucault and Postcolonialism: An Investigation

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Introduction

With the publication of this third issue, *PoMo* has once again expanded—this time into the electronic arena. Our new website (<http://www.pomomag.com/pomomag>) contains the current issue, both back issues, and information about some of the bookstores that carry the magazine. We invite you to browse through it and send us your comments.

As in previous issues, the articles in this volume are diverse representations of current thinking about postmodernity. Susan Erikson's article on ultrasound imagery reflects on the ramifications of prenatal ultrasound on the subjectivity of both mother and fetus. While the procedure has legitimate medical value, she argues, it also has the effect of "scattering" the pregnant woman's subjectivity, and of creating misleading impressions of fetal subjectivity. Ultrasound, Erikson writes, "is...a creative endeavor: visually inventing the fetus and transforming a pregnant woman's subjectivity before our eyes." Erikson is a graduate student at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Department of Anthropology. This article was originally presented at a meeting of the American Anthropological Association in 1994.

Scott Lukas is on the Editorial Board of *PoMo Magazine*, and has contributed substantially to each issue. In this issue he interviews Stephen A. Tyler, Professor of Anthropology and Linguistics at Rice University. Through their dialog the reader is drawn into a narrative of the development of postmodern thought in anthropology. Many others exist, no doubt—Tyler's, as animated by Lukas, is frank, humorous, at times controversial, and enjoyable to read. Lukas is currently teaching in the Sociology Department at Valparaiso University, and working on an article on machines and everyday fear in American theme parks for a Late Editions series book, *Conspiracy/Theory*, edited by George Marcus.

John Krummel, a graduate student in the Philosophy Department at the New School for Social Research in New York City, contributes a significant piece of scholarship revolving around what many have called Nietzsche's most puzzling notion, the "eternal recurrence of the same." Krummel examines Nietzsche's presentation of the eternal recurrence, then discusses several of its representations, including those of Martin Heidegger, Georges Bataille, Jacques Derrida, Pierre Klossowski, Joan Stambaugh, and Gianni Vattimo. This is Krummel's second contribution to *PoMo Magazine*.

The last three articles are all inspired by the work of the French philosopher Michel Foucault. We were impressed by the number of such submissions we received for this issue, although we are not quite ready to claim that this reflects a renewed interest in Foucault's work. We publish them together here for two reasons. First, as these kinds of investigations, to quote from David Buuck's beautifully-expressed conclusion, "continue to 'reconstruct' Foucault to an ever-changing world, perhaps we might shed greater light (or darkness, or madness...) on Foucault's legacy, thus bringing him out of European history and back into the world." Second, we wanted this issue of *PoMo* to be an accurate representation of the submissions we received. This, indeed, is our goal for every issue, as it is our goal for the publication to reflect the contradictions, ambiguities, diversities, tendencies and dynamisms of the ongoing debates that constitute postmodern thought today.

Though differing in their approaches to Foucault, and in their fields of inquiry, these three articles all share a common concern with power and governmentality in this late- or postmodern world, and they each attempt to create a space for re-thinking notions of subjectivity, freedom and action. Stuart Dalton begins with an analysis of Foucault's notion of

The Eternal Recurrence of the Same as the Gift of Difference: Naming the Enigma, the Enigma of Names

John Krummel

What does Nietzsche mean by "eternal recurrence of the same"? Appearing in a few scattered passages in his published works and more extensively in his notes compiled as *The Will to Power*, it is probably the most enigmatic of his concepts. Insofar as it makes explicit its own enigma, perhaps it is not even a concept in a determinate sense, but a thought which points to and faces its own enigma concerning what it is thinking—its enigma as thought. Along with Nietzsche's other major themes, this thought has been taken up and tackled by successors including Heidegger, and more recently the French, many of whom have attempted to make connections between their thoughts on difference and Nietzsche's thought on the recurrence of the same. Can we relate Nietzsche's thought of "eternal recurrence" to Heidegger's thinking of being as time or the enigmatic "it" (of *es gibt*) that releases being and time? And can we relate it to what Derrida calls the impossibility of the gift? Could it be the recurrence of difference deferring itself to release a simulacrum re-presenting its absence as a presence pointing to its trace? In this paper I will explore such possibilities by looking at the various interpretations of Nietzsche's thought in relation to Heidegger's and Derrida's attempts to overcome metaphysics. I will begin by reconstructing various interpretations of the "eternal recurrence." Then I will look at elements within Heidegger's and Derrida's thinking which may have relevance for "eternal recurrence." I will also look at Derrida's critique of Heidegger's phenomenology and interpretation of Nietzsche as well as Vattimo's critique of Derrida, in an attempt to come up with a more comprehensive understanding of the thought of "eternal recurrence" by listening to what each of these thinkers has to offer. My guiding hypothesis is that this thought involves the undeterminable enigma of our own finitude in our attempts to think and name—a finitude to which each of these thinkers, including Nietzsche himself, is bound.

Nietzsche's "Eternal Recurrence of the Same"

For Nietzsche, the "eternal recurrence" of the same can be said to have two main aspects. On the one hand, it is a "physical-cosmological" doctrine concerning the way everything exists. From this perspective, it tells us that without meaning or aim, existence eternally recurs, and that the world of being is a world of endless becoming: "Everything becomes and recurs eternally." (Nietzsche, 1967: #1058). And this "truth" is an abyss deeper than that which any word can name—and here is the enigma—even the name "eternal recurrence of the same": the "world is deep—and deeper than day had ever been aware. Not everything may be put into words in the presence of the day" (Nietzsche, 1885/1954: 166). But despite its namelessness, it is manifest in each moment as the sameness that recurs eternally in their difference, reached by "many ways, in many ways" (ibid: 195). On the other hand, the second thrust of this thought is as a kind of an "ethical" or "practical" test concerning whether one can think this "high point of meditation" (Nietzsche, 1967: #617). In this sense, it is a principle (ibid: #1058) for selecting those strong enough to face the facticity of the "eternal recurrence" as their own condition of existence: the "*übermensch*" manifesting the healthiest overflow of an active will to power.

Heidegger's Interpretation of Nietzsche's Thought as the Culmination of Metaphysics

One of the most important interpreters of Nietzsche—a violent one—is Heidegger. In his 1937 lecture course on Nietzsche, Heidegger acknowledges that the “eternal recurrence” as a thought expresses the highest manifestation of the will to power in its affirmation of itself *qua* will to power—its very recurrence in the flux of becoming (see Heidegger, 1954/1984: 155). Heidegger considers the movement of willing to be what metaphysics is all about: the willful positing of names in an attempt to hold the flux of *phusis* (“emergence” or “arising,” re-named by Heidegger himself as “being”) with a name, by which the fluctuating “it” becomes an entity, *a* being. Through this process of naming, the will posits conditions for the preservation and enhancement of power—a process culminating in the thinking of the “eternal recurrence.” The “eternal recurrence” is taken as the culminating thought of metaphysics: a thought by which the will to power, previously defining various positions within the flux of becoming, now faces its *own* movement to fix it with a name. By giving itself a name, willing legitimates itself as the grounding being of all beings, and thus stamps its own becoming with the “character of being,” stabilizing itself as the permanence of the flux.¹ The will to power is here the principle which establishes this self-stabilization of its own process, through the very thought of its recurrence. While Nietzsche names the grounding process of beings as the “will to power,” this identification of being with willing for Heidegger is still a metaphysical error imposing the posited values of “power” (preservation and enhancement) upon the process of *phusis*. David Krell supports Heidegger’s thesis concerning this metaphysical aspect of Nietzsche, but from an angle that Heidegger himself ignores (see Krell in Heidegger, 1954/1984: 271). This angle concerns Nietzsche’s own desire to redeem the world from resentment—a desire manifesting the will to power, a metaphysical imposition of values posited for the very overcoming of values. For Krell, in this respect Nietzsche failed—for the difficulty is to say “yes” *without* seeking redemption, an accomplishment which lies on the “other” side of the will to power. Later, we will find this “other” as a clue in unraveling the non-metaphysical potential of the thought of “eternal recurrence.” But for Heidegger, what lies behind this thought is the will to power as its principle,² its metaphysical drive culminating in the exhaustion of metaphysics. Thus Nietzsche, who expresses this culminating thought, is taken to be the last metaphysician.

Nietzsche appears especially metaphysical when Heidegger reduces his thinking to schemes inherited from the Scholastic tradition. Heidegger reduces “will to power” as the *constitution* of being to the medieval notion of *essentia*, and “eternal recurrence” as the *mode* of being to *existentia*.³ While the will, in willing more of itself, asserts power in its extension,

¹ *Will to Power*, #617 on the “character of being.” This permanence of the flux is the *permanent* becoming through an economy of force. See Heidegger’s *Nietzsche II*, p. 109-10, and also see p. 147, where he speaks of becoming *as* being. In fact, this line of thought can be said to continue in some French Heideggerians like Michel Haar who interprets the “circle” of “eternal recurrence” as the stabilizing law necessary for the unstable becoming, a thought which gathers up chaos into the “highest stabilization possible for this instability” in the summit of contemplation. See Haar’s “Nietzsche And Metaphysical Language” in *The New Nietzsche*, p. 33. Even Deleuze makes the will to power the principle of the eternal recurrence. See Deleuze’s “Active And Reactive” in *The New Nietzsche*, p. 87.

² Heidegger says that the will to power is the ground for insight into the eternal recurrence. But if it is only the ground for the eternal recurrence *as an insight*, then perhaps it points towards something which may even lie behind the will to power itself. But we will explore this later.

³ On this see Heidegger’s *Nietzsche II*, p. 199-202 & his additional essay “Who is Nietzsche’s Zarathustra?” in *Nietzsche II*, p. 228. Stambaugh tells us in her *Nietzsche’s Thought of Eternal Return*, p. 14 & 94, that while for Heidegger, the will is the *what* of the world (its constitutive essence), the eternal recurrence bringing back the same

it continually comes upon itself as this self-same process. And this way or "modality" is its "eternal recurrence" (Heidegger, 1952/1977: 81). In other words, Heidegger reads Nietzsche according to metaphysical notions which Nietzsche himself never employs.

Moreover, Heidegger violently appropriates Nietzsche's supposed culmination of metaphysics, to correspond with the will's culmination in the totalization of technological enframing. Heidegger identifies the movement of the will's perpetual turning back to underlie (name) its own extension, with the mode of "subjectness" by which the subject re-presents objects while establishing itself through self-objectification to establish firm footing for further enhancement. This movement for Heidegger culminates in the *bermensch* who brings to appearance the essence of being as will, making it explicit by thinking its "eternal recurrence." What results for Heidegger is the initiation of the "ultimate epoch of metaphysics" in which the overman's subjectness objectifies everything—including itself—with the will to power. This objectification is manifest in the spread of global technology whereby the metaphysical positing of being, expressing a hitherto hidden will to power, becomes affirmed as a value in itself. Here, the will's continuous positing of goals in the midst of disparate elements to overcome and incorporate for its enhancement and preservation of power, finally becomes stabilized in the permanent standstill of a network of processes aiming to control for the very sake of control with greater efficiency and speed. Exhausting any possibility for metaphysical excuses, this economy of power is the culmination of metaphysics by which the will comes to terms with its own facticity and stamps it as a "fact." Nietzsche is taken by Heidegger to express this culmination in which value-thinking as power-willing becomes a principal value (see Heidegger, 1952/1977: 104).

Despite this culmination, Nietzsche's thought according to Heidegger continues the metaphysical oblivion of being as the difference between entities and their ground. The "recurrence of the same" is interpreted by Heidegger to continue this forgetting of difference. But if "eternal recurrence" is simply taken as the will's ultimate conceptual means to incorporate the "other" for its culminating enhancement, the notion of "eternal recurrence" becomes subdued to that of the will to power which names while forgetting difference. According to Vattimo, Heidegger's Nietzsche is thus not a thinker of difference but rather someone who accomplishes the metaphysical forgetting of difference (see Vattimo, 1993: 65). In contrast, Rapaport points out that the being of beings which "eternal recurrence" names, would be equivalent in Derrida's terms to the difference of difference.

Stambaugh's Interpretation of Nietzsche's Thought as the Recurring Moment of Time

Contrary to what may appear as Heidegger's claims, Stambaugh has pointed out that, for Nietzsche, there is no "being" in the sense of a spatially one and eternally unchanging "unity" exalted above "becoming" (see Stambaugh, 1987: 57-8). The "eternal" in Nietzsche does not have to be metaphysical, above the becoming of phusis. Rather, Stambaugh relates "eternal recurrence" to time as the will's affirmation of and reconciliation with its own temporality (ibid: 164). We may remember that for Heidegger, time *is* the being of beings. He himself has mentioned at times that "eternal recurrence" expresses time as the temporality of the moment.

is the *how* and *that* of the world (its existence remaining through its constitutive processes). And Derrida points out that Heidegger thus conjoins the will to power and the eternal recurrence together in a metaphysical pair - the framework of essence-existence - naming the totality of beings as a whole. See Derrida's "Interpreting Signatures (Nietzsche/Heidegger): Two Questions" in *Looking After Nietzsche*, p. 15.

Stambaugh centers on this aspect, while also pointing out—against Heidegger—that it is *not* a theory of being, but rather concerns the groundless “innocence of becoming” whose interplay makes possible any notion of being. As a thought, it points to that which is prior to any thought: time in its priority even to the will.

Rather than being a metaphysics of the eternity of a transcendent thing, for Stambaugh this thought points to the very movement of “*trans-cendence*” into “eternity” as the ending of an occurrence making way for the different, an “absolving” into difference at each moment, enabling the constitution of each thing’s “sameness” as released through this recurring temporal differ-ing.⁴ Stambaugh may be implicitly making connections between Nietzsche’s “eternal recurrence” and the early Heidegger’s “ecstatic temporality” and “transcendence,” the movement into the clearing of being as the occurrence of our ek-sistence. In fact, this notion of time as recurring in each moment to absolve into eternity is a notion of the releasing of identity through difference, a differing-presencing of the present (the “same”) constituted through the withdrawal of the “other” (difference). As this movement which in itself can be named “difference” or “the same,” one can thus relate it also to the later Heidegger’s notion of *Gelassenheit* (“releasement,” “letting-be”). However, in her books on Nietzsche, Stambaugh does not make such connections with Heidegger explicit. She certainly does not wish to repeat Heidegger’s over-emphasis on “being” as the primary word that names the facticity of what “is.”

Interpretations by the French: Ecstasis and Alterity, Anamnesis and Difference, Play of Simulacra

Contrary to Heidegger’s assessment of Nietzsche as the thinker of the “same,” Vattimo believes that Nietzsche had started a new way of thinking, an “adventure of difference” to overcome hierarchizing metaphysical reductions with a perpetual ungrounding (see Vattimo, 1993: 2,4). Vattimo views this as the main impetus for what he calls the “philosophy of difference” undertaken by contemporary French philosophers who take Nietzsche’s thought to be more than a mere culmination of metaphysics. For Rapaport in his book on Heidegger and Derrida, what is marked by Nietzsche, rather than the culmination of sameness, is the persistence of repetition as the “difference of difference”: “eternal recurrence” as the repetition of difference (Rapaport, 1989: 43,67). Among the French thinkers who have explored this theme, one can mention among others, Baraille, Klossowski, and more recently Derrida.

Klossowski’s interpretation makes explicit the ec-static character of “eternal recurrence” pointed out by Stambaugh. According to him, the experience of eternal recurrence—characterized as an unveiling-disclosure with an ecstatic character (see Klossowski, 1985: 108)—is the learning or remembering that at every moment my identity differs and that I forget this otherness which constituted my identity at the previous moment. The moment of this revelation unveils the truth of the necessity of the loss of a given identity, a revelation which constitutes one anew to forget again the necessity of this truth in an ec-static return to difference. The very remembrance that I will again forget is thus a revelation bringing on “successive realizations of all possible identities” (ibid). In willing this necessity, “I de-actualize my present self to will myself in *all the other selves*, whose entire series must be gone

⁴See Stambaugh, *Nietzsche’s Thought of Eternal Return*, p. 113–4 and 125. Although Stambaugh does not mention this, this is very similar to the sense of “transcendence” that Heidegger uses in the term “ek-static transcendence.” Later we will see the various ways in which this notion of “ec-sistence/ek-sistence,” “existence,” “ecstasis,” occur in the interweavings of time, difference, and eternal recurrence.

through so that... I can again become *what I am at the moment in which I discover* the law of the eternal return" (ibid: 108-9). My "identity" as such is a sign tracing the absence of a presence that was and will be. "Eternal recurrence" for Klossowski is an affirmation of this very process of forgetting and remembrance in a perpetual re-constitution of identity, to face the prospect of forgetting again in the immediate future, not only my present identity but also the necessity of this process. In this sense, his interpretation makes explicit the enigmatic character of this thought in our unidentifiable alterity and unceasing metamorphosis, a "fact" without meaning.

According to an early predecessor of contemporary French thought, this factual meaninglessness would be the "non-logical difference," never exhausting itself as universal matter, a gift of free expenditure for the universe's economy (see Bataille, 1985: 129). For Bataille, "eternal recurrence" is an ecstatic vision of time as this difference exceeding all categories, its absurdity dissolving its uniformity to bare the abysmal depth of all things constituted. This abyss is the unspeakable, veiling itself while revealing the spoken identities from which it differs. As such it is immediately forgotten without effort. This effortless forgetting reminds one of Heidegger's notion of the will-less letting of being. Thus in contrast to Heidegger's own interpretation of Nietzsche as a metaphysician, "eternal recurrence" may in fact co-respond to a "Heideggerian" non-metaphysical understanding of being. Furthermore, the notion of an ecstatic forgetting—as seen in Klossowski and Bataille—could be compared with Heidegger's notion of our "ex-sistence" as "ecstatic temporality" in *Being And Time*. According to this early notion of Heidegger, our "being-there" is constituted through a horizon of time providing for us the openness of possibilities into which we ec-statically transcend. Out of our momentary presence, we "go-out" into further modes continuously unfolding and showing themselves through time as *given* to us. In this sense, the early Heidegger's "authentic resoluteness" of facing the clearing would still be a kind of "letting" in its co-respondence with what the later Heidegger calls "releasement" and which Nietzsche names "eternal recurrence."

The Retrieval of a Non-Metaphysical Element From Out of Heidegger's Interpretation of Nietzsche

Despite Heidegger's thesis on Nietzsche as the last metaphysician, it may be possible to retrieve from it a "non-metaphysical" understanding of the "eternal recurrence." Stambaugh has pointed out that at times Heidegger shows a hesitancy to place this Nietzschean notion within metaphysical frameworks, to instead emphasize its enigmatic character as a thought irreducible to any metaphysic (see Stambaugh, 1972: 97). Fifteen years after his initial lecture course on the topic, "eternal recurrence" for Heidegger becomes this abysmal thought which "conceals something unthought, something which at the same time remains a sealed door to metaphysical thinking" (Heidegger, 1954/1984: 233). In his 1953 lecture, "Who is Nietzsche's Zarathustra?" Heidegger describes the figure of Zarathustra as teaching a thinking that is free from the ill will of "revenge." This freeing supposedly releases one towards time in a thinking that responsively responds to being (see ibid: 218-21). What is thus concealed under the stamping of a name that culminates all willing, is the creative releasement of being, recurring with "the lack of an ultimate goal, to eternity" (ibid: 174). And in his "Anaximander Fragment," Heidegger describes eternal recurrence as what disconfirms identity to introduce

difference.⁵ If releasement as letting is prior to willing in Heidegger, the eternal recurrence in its correspondence with releasement would thus be prior to the will to power.

In Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche, one can hear the sounds of a groundless abyss echoing beneath the will to power, as the "eternal recurrence of the same." What resonates through this notion is thus not will but the a-principial and a-rational recurrence of time as it "releases" through difference. While usually the will is considered by Heidegger to be the ground of recurrence, in certain passages he renders priority to the eternal recurrence as the a-principial principle (an-archic arche) allowing the will to operate as a principle: "the doctrine of return...constitutes *its* (will to power's) *sole and proper ground*..."⁶ Insofar as "eternal recurrence" is a *thought* which culminates the will to power in an affirmative (willful) "yes" to the will's own recurrence, it is metaphysically grounded upon the will to power. But as the very recurrence of the will's fact, *named* by the will, it is the will's ground.⁷ The most compelling passage which would release Heidegger himself from a merely metaphysical interpretation of "eternal recurrence" would be the following: "Because in terms of the matter itself eternal return of the same constitutes the ground and the essence of will to power, the latter can be *posited* as the ground and point of departure for insight into the essence of eternal return of the same" (Heidegger, 1954/1984: 165). In other words, the metaphysical insight of "eternal recurrence" grounded upon the will, finds its further grounding upon the *matter* of eternal recurrence. Taking this into account, one could come up with an understanding wherein ecstatic time as eternal recurrence would be the *source* of the will to power, the necessity of a groundless becoming, allowing for the constitution of entities through the postulation of names. And the eternal recurrence as time releasing names and entities named, enables the very culmination of the process that names, to finally name this very recurrence itself. While Heidegger himself did not explicitly formulate it in such terms, the eternal recurrence in this sense would be what *allows* the culmination of metaphysics to *name* it as "eternal recurrence." But while allowing itself to be named, in being the very condition of naming, the matter exhausts any name: "eternal recurrence" names the unnamable. While the will to power is the ground of insight into the eternal recurrence as a *thought* that *names*, the eternal recurrence in itself is the groundless grounding of any will—the namelessness of its process of naming. If the will to power is the metaphysical process of naming becoming as a being, "eternal recurrence" is the culminating name naming becoming as being *qua* becoming. But precisely in this sense, it points to that which is prior to the positing of names, an a priori leaving its trace of absence on the basis of which we name and speak. Thus prior to the metaphysical thought of "eternal recurrence" which Heidegger saw in Nietzsche, there lies the eternal recurring of the "same" it names.

⁵Here we see affinities with Heidegger's own notion of "ecstatic temporality" as mentioned above. In fact, David Krell relates Heidegger's account of the inscription of "Moment" (*Augenblick*) above the gateway where two paths meet in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* - "the most compelling image of eternal return"—with the notion of "ecstatic temporality." See David Krell's footnote to Heidegger's *Nietzsche II*, p. 41.

⁶Heidegger, *Nietzsche II*, p. 153. And also: "...the doctrine of will to power springs from nowhere else than eternal return, carrying the mark of its origin always with it, as the stream its *source*." (Heidegger, *Nietzsche II*, p. 81)

⁷One may see a similar duplicity in Krell's analysis of Heidegger's Nietzsche. Krell on the one hand criticizes Heidegger's reduction of "eternal recurrence" to a "decision" which culminates the will to power and metaphysics in an "authentic appropriation" of being, and here suspects Heidegger of "possessiveness." Instead, Klossowski's interpretation of it as *anamnesis*, remembering and forgetting, would dispossess and dispose of such "possessions." But on the other hand, Krell suggests—and I agree here—that Zarathustra's abysmal thought finds affinity with the later Heidegger's notion of the abyss (*Ab-grund*). On this, see Krell's "Analysis" at the end of Heidegger's *Nietzsche II*.

Heidegger spoke of the "same" as the event of being in its appropriate self-showing within a horizon of time—a movement of difference between the horizon and what appears, concealment and unconcealedness. The "same" here is a reciprocal relating of phenomena through difference. As this factual movement, being for Heidegger is not reducible to metaphysically posited rules which constitute an identity, but is in itself unnamable difference. Nonetheless, Heidegger's emphasis on the word "being" as the word that names the primordial fact, has allowed for both metaphysical misinterpretations and criticisms of Heidegger as a metaphysician (as he himself criticized Nietzsche). But as any dividing line between metaphysics and non-metaphysics is blurred to reveal an essential complexity of a myriad of divisions—not just one—the pejorative name-calling of a philosopher as a metaphysician is irrelevant. In this sense, both Nietzsche and Heidegger occupy a transitional phase or place of complex interweavings between older metaphysical assumptions and newer alternative possibilities. Instead, it may be more illuminating as well as liberating to concentrate on listening to the matter showing themselves through these thinkers in their movement of showing-forth. The thinking and naming of "eternal recurrence" on Nietzsche's part belong to this movement which opens itself up to a multitude of possibilities. As a phenomenon which makes possible transmutations and a multiplicity of names, it is the rhythms which Heidegger himself lent his ear to and which he named with "being," "time," "releasement," "difference," etc.—names which acknowledge the finitude of our language, to prepare the way for a non-metaphysical way of thinking.

The Non-Metaphysical Element Within Heidegger's Own Thinking: Giving And Releasing

When Heidegger speaks of the "same," he means the historical and temporal process that destines being—an ontological "giving" without "why." As such, this gift of being exhausts any economy analyzable by human standards with reasons, principles, purposes. Instead, Heidegger chooses to listen to the giving which is a-rational, an-archic, and a-teleological. In the *Principle of Reason*, Heidegger relates the thought that the principle which declares to us that everything necessarily must have a reason, either falls outside of its own jurisdiction or else is prey to an infinite regress (see Heidegger, 1957/1991: III-13). Either way, the principle falls into its groundlessness: the ground that grounds is groundless. As the movement that provides grounds, being *has* no ground. Not belonging within what it makes conceivable and thinkable, being is forgotten through the history of metaphysics, hiding while letting entities be present and rendering us to provide reasons for their presence. This process of unconcealedness-concealment gives the unconcealed in the very withdrawal of its giving, a giving concealed by its mysterious "play" as it makes possible any metaphysic or legislation of reasons and principles over beings.

In terms of the German phrase "*es gibt*" analyzed by Heidegger in "Time And Being," the play is the giving that marks all beings as their presencing.⁸ And here the phrase points to the "it" (*es*) beyond the propositional structure of Greco-Latin grammar which gives being-present as a present-being within a subject-predicate relation, as Derrida so well puts it (1991/1992: 20). This "it" is what "speaks" in its giving while withdrawing in favor of the given gift conceptualized as a mode of being in regards to beings as their principle (see Heidegger, 1969/1972: 8-9; Vattimo, 1993: II3). Thus in its releasement of beings, the "it"

⁸*Es gibt* is literally "it gives" and means "there is...." The play here is the releasement of the presence of beings, the letting-presence of the present that presences, the letting-be-present that opens their space through time. See Heidegger's "Time And Being" in *On Time And Being*, p. 5, 10, & 14-5.

is also a differ-ing of itself from what is revealed as well as the releasement of difference among the entities: in order for each entity to be released as such, it must be differentiated from its others as well as from its presencing. In this sense, releasement is difference. As the differential collecting of phenomena gathered together, this is the originary meaning of *legein*, the verb-form of logos. As the giving of presence, logos is the "it" that gives—the presencing, grounding, and emerging (*phusis*) of what is present and grounded as a given entity. Differ-ing from the present, this "it" is the difference that pervades being's destiny as the "same."

This sameness becomes forgotten as it is delimited historically in a variety of ways (see Heidegger, 1957/1991: 95, 108-9). For Heidegger, this is the oblivion of the distinction between being as presencing (*Anwesen*) and beings as what are present (*Anwesende*). What he attempts is thus a "recollection" (*Andenken*) of being as this difference. It is interesting to note Derrida's reading of Heidegger in this context, which pushes Heidegger further so that being itself becomes submitted to the enigma of difference; for, as an abyss deferred in its very movement of determining entities, the "it" itself is undetermined. As Heidegger himself says, being itself is not a being, and time itself is nothing temporal. Being as time in its temporalizing is not a "thing" but is unconcealed only within the delimitations of a temporal entity "it gives." As Derrida points out, we cannot say that "time is" or "being is," but only "there is/it gives" being and time (see Derrida, 1991/1992: 20, 27). For Derrida, Heidegger's being and time thus hold the structure of the impossible gift that gives itself to thought only on the condition of being "nothing"—not present and not a being.

"Giving" as this deliverance is the sending of "presence in its epochal transmutations," by which the gift becomes immediately appropriated (*eignet*) as property present for our thinking in relation to the dis-propriation (*Enteignis*) of its giving-presencing (Heidegger, 1969/1972: 16-17, 19-20; also see Rapaport, 1989: 135, and Derrida, 1991/1992: 19). As Derrida says, the history of "truth" thus for Heidegger would be a process of appropriation, organizing the totality of linguistic processes and symbolic exchange (see Derrida, 1978: III-13, 119). But this giving (*Geben*) of the gift (*Gabe*) is enigmatic insofar as it is appropriation escaping the bounds of property. In itself, the "it" that gives is an unappropriable (inappropriate?) and ungiven *apeiron*. While stressing it as ontological, Heidegger explicitly problematizes difference as *such* in that "it" differs and cannot be disclosed. "It" is not any "thing" but the transgressive undertow to any order, pulling towards dispersal to *repeatedly* irrupt without declaration. Is this what eternally recurs? Rather than willing the structure of a "sameness" to further ground this process of coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be, Heidegger chooses to listen to the rhythms upon which the emergence of such a will is contingent. A radical phenomenology reveals these rhythms as the tune to which the fluctuating "grounds," "reasons" and "principles" dance over an abysmal underground. The *Andenken* itself of such a phenomenology that thinks difference, also "always differs as that which is other, that which in its reducibility to open disclosure defers that disclosure insofar as it dis-locates and suspends it...in its peremptory quality of presence" (Vattimo, 1993: 125). The *Andenken* of eternal recurrence: the enigmatic thought that thinks the enigma of its thinking.

Derrida's Notion of the Giving of the Gift

After Nietzsche and Heidegger, Derrida continues the thinking of enigma in his writings on the "gift" as a figure of impossibility—a figure whose identification destroys its "essence," while giving itself to be thought as *such* (see Derrida, 1991/1992: 7, 14). This unidentifiable essence ("event" is a better word) of the gift *qua* gift is its giving. Transcending its "idiomatic

difference" through which it gives itself, it cannot be identified. Since the conscious reception of it reduces it into the economy of obligatory exchange, the "gift" cannot appear or be even received as such (see *ibid*: 16, 54). Rather, its giving must not have any purpose or aim, as a "principle without principles" (see *ibid*: 122-23) whose occurrence is an indeterminate determining. But its presentation must yield to an absolute forgetting of its an-archic a-teleological a-rational event—a forgetting that makes possible its reduction to an economy of meanings as a "present" determined by calculation and measured for the memory of debts. Reduced to presence, its space and time becomes fixed as object. But the event itself as time's temporalization over-runs the borders of any present thing without measure. This over-flow is what gives time and limit as the temporality and boundary marking the margins of a thing bound to its presentation in language (see *ibid*: 40, 91-92). As such the gift's secret irrupts into a surprise, only to be immediately forgotten in favor of the memory of a present. The gift-event thus even entails a forgetting of its forgetting, where the figure of forgetting itself is not "present, presentable, determinable, sensible, meaningful."⁹ This is the gap between the forgotten gift and the economy of memories announcing it "where it resembles an empty word" (*ibid*: 29). I would add that if the giving thus announced is the "emergence" (*phusis*) of entities, the economy announcing it would be "meta-physics," the violence of empty words. Does the *Andenken* of the gift's recurrence obstruct its enigma to reduce it to metaphysical memories of owed debts? Or does it let it be forgotten and forgiven?

Derrida's Notion of *Differance*

The topic of the gift brings us to the key word coined by Derrida, "*la differance*." According to Rapaport, Derrida recognized the interplay of Heideggerian differences which excessively ruptures any economy of terms through which the gift is "dis-located" (see Rapaport, 1989: 25-26). But while Heidegger de-limited this differing as specifically ontological and thus essential to everything that "is," Derrida points out that the claim to a phenomenological ontology, even when it overcomes the traditional metaphysical boundaries, is nonetheless metaphysical and contingent upon the fact of its naming. But exceeding any term naming it, the webbing of difference is in itself nameless. Despite this, Derrida named this "moving discord" between forces "*differance*" (Derrida, 1972/1982a: 18). It names the unrepresentable play of signifiers producing effects which make sense only in their relative differences. It points to the lack of a semantic center (see Derrida, 1991/1992: 48), which perpetually opens an economy to incalculable plays of difference, allowing for countless gifts of momentary surprise to be given and buried under the semblance of a system. Insofar as *differance* is a "temporizing mediation" presenting something as present but only for the time-being, it is temporization, setting the measure of a thing within temporal limits. And *differance* also points to the spatial distance between elements in their "dissimilar otherness," as the constitution of their identity through differentiation. Unsignified in itself, its silence enables every sign to function in its temporal and spatial presentation of a thing. In presenting something, *differance* itself is "exposed" only as disappearing into indeterminable borders (see Derrida, 1972/1982a: 5-6).

⁹Derrida, *Given Time*, p. 17. The gift's presentation as a forgetting of forgetting makes it no longer present, thus absent in favor of the "present." See also *Given Time*, p. 15. In fact, this reminds one of Klossowski's interpretation of "eternal recurrence" as *an-amnesis* as well as Heidegger's notion of the forgetting of being which conceals it as such for its on-going unconcealedness.

Derrida admits contingency upon this absencing. Due to our finitude, even the naming of it as "*differance*" is trapped within language which can only present it in a re-presentation over its absence. He is aware that his own term, like Heidegger's "being," is conditioned by this play of absence (see *ibid*: 26). Since all names attributed to the enigmatic absence are "metaphysical" —a willful determining as present—even the name "*differance*" thus "remains a metaphysical name" (Derrida, 1972/1982b: 59). In this sense, Derrida makes explicit, more than Heidegger, the limits of human thought as bound to language. And yet in enigmatically naming the enigma which cannot be named, "*differance*" simultaneously "shows" without "saying"—to borrow Wittgenstein's terminology—the other side of metaphysics, in the same way that Nietzsche's "eternal recurrence" does: "...on the basis of this unfolding of the same as *differance*, we see announced the sameness of *differance* and repetition in the eternal return" (Derrida, 1972/1982a: 17). As a play of names making up chains of substitutions even carries "*differance*," the naming of this unnamable with a quasi-transcendental can thus be indefinitely deferred; the search for better names to overcome the limits of metaphysics can go on for ever. As a name, "*differance*" allows this. Such is the enigma of "*differance*" which names its enigma to perpetually open up possibilities of further names by affirming the fact that there is no ultimate name (see *ibid*: 26-27).

Derrida's Critique of Heidegger

In his attempts to overcome the hierarchizing tendencies of Heidegger's ontology, Derrida seeks to make the enigma more explicit than Heidegger did. In the use of "*differance*," Derrida attempts to overcome the tendency within Heidegger's thinking to hierarchize the difference between the originary and the derivative—a difference ontologized under "being" as the ultimate name. But for Derrida, "the play of a trace...no longer belongs to the horizon of being" (*ibid*: 22). His criticism of Heidegger is that while attempting to remember the oblivion of being in the difference between presencing and the present, Heidegger makes presencing appear present by naming it with a name claimed to be ultimate when "there has never been and never will be a single word, a *master-name*" (*ibid*: 27). With the naming which presents presencing from absence to presence, *differance* as the other of mere presence or absence is forgotten (see *ibid*: 23-24). On the other hand, Heidegger does seem to be aware at least in his last writings, of the unnamability of the "it" named "being." Nonetheless, one cannot blame Derrida for smelling in Heidegger's ontologizing, a perhaps unintentional metaphysical nostalgia for hierarchies. For Derrida, every determination of difference, even as one of being and beings, names in accordance with a metaphysical order (see Derrida, 1972/1982b: 66-67). And Derrida rightfully does not claim for himself any exemption from this condition—for even "*differance*" as a name, is metaphysical. But for Derrida the gift's impossibility still needs to break from Heidegger's language of "being," "authenticity," "origin," "nature," etc.¹⁰ Derrida warns against an essentializing tendency implicitly hidden within such Heideggerian notions, with an awareness that the gift would also perpetually break from any name he gives it.

¹⁰(T)he gift, if there is any must go against nature or occur without nature; it must break off at the same blow, at the same instant with all originary, with all originary authenticity....we would have a few reservations to indicate regarding the most essential Heideggerian motifs, whether it is a matter there of determining what is originarily proper to being, time, the gift, or of acceding to the most 'originary' gift." (Derrida, *Given Time*, p. 162) Even the notion of physis is under attack as a super-natural "nature" despite Heidegger's emphasis that it is an emerging without "why" which can be heard phenomenologically rather than seen meta-physically according to categories. A self-claimed Heideggerian, Vattimo also warns us of the dangers of the notion of unconcealment taking on a structural consistency eluding the a-structurality Heidegger himself seeks, to allow for neo-Platonizing and theologizing interpretations of Heidegger. See Vattimo, p. 77.

In its very constitutiveness, Heideggerian difference when emphasized as the "self-same" rendering possible the "essencing" event of being, holds the tendency of becoming a metaphysical concept. Wishing to radicalize difference away from an interpretation which looks to any fulfillment of being as "self-same," Derrida goes as far as to surmise that perhaps before the Greek "forgetting" of being which initiated the history of metaphysics, there really was no being, but instead *differance*. As the nameless play which defers itself to make nominal effects like "being" possible for thought, *differance* would thus be older than being (Derrida, 1972/1982: 26). Nonetheless, if Derrida is privileging "*differance*" as that which overcomes the history of metaphysics, he becomes guilty of the same thing he accuses Heidegger for. This concern over which is "older" is in itself meaningless and metaphysical. But in certain passages, Derrida seems to be aware that whether signified under the name of "being" or of "*differance*," the unsigned gift would break free from any notion of an "authentic origin." This brings us to his critique of Heidegger's stress on "originative authenticity" and the resulting valuation with hierarchizing tendencies, of "appropriate, proper, authentic, own-most" (*eigentlich*) over "inappropriate, improper, inauthentic, dis-owned" (*uneigentlich*). This distinguishes for Heidegger, between the event of appropriation for one's responsive thought releasing being, and the metaphysical ignoring of being. But Derrida's point would be that this privileging of "authenticity" as what is "proper" would entail a debt owed for it as "property." Wondering whether such distinctions are metaphysical, Derrida warns that a history of truth as a process of appropriative events cannot be reduced to any "property" derived from "an ontological or semantico-hermeneutic interrogation" (Derrida, 1978: 111-13). This is because the question of *Eigentlichkeit* ("property," "authenticity"), is always saturated by the undecidability exceeding it. Thus he asks whether Heidegger's accusation of Nietzsche as metaphysical rather than non-metaphysical—a distinction derived from the valuation of proper-improper—may in itself be metaphysical (see *ibid*: 117). In this sense, Derrida is right to criticize Heidegger as violently converting Nietzsche in accordance with an ontologizing "*internal necessity*" when Nietzsche may not have been a thinker of being as a whole (*ibid*: 115).

Instead of "being," Derrida suggests that Nietzsche may have been a thinker of "life" as the space within which forces play (see Derrida, 1990: 16). The mortality of life thwarts any project of ontological reduction. Yet, one may find similarities here between this notion of "life" and Heidegger's own notion of the human "being-there" as the finite clearing within which phenomena can appear. In this sense there still is a non-metaphysical pull within Heidegger, disorienting any movement of metaphysical nostalgia "which *inscribes* truth in the *process* of propriation" (Derrida, 1978: 117), to lead it instead towards the property's "unappropriated" structure(lessness). For us mortals faced with our own temporality, the erection of any metaphysical system as an absolute remains an impossibility. Heidegger was not unaware of this finitude temporalized by the play of difference and attempted to point it out. Nonetheless, in his reading of Heidegger, Derrida attempts to go beyond any history of being, since the unlimitable excessiveness of giving cannot be determined within the boundaries of an ontology. Despite Heidegger's over-emphasis on "being" allowing for metaphysical misinterpretations, we are encouraged to be open to the possibility that even the "is" is *not* guaranteed but depends upon a play of an-archy-phusis unimposed upon by metaphysical principles except in being named. Perhaps phusis as "life" is this process of naming, recurring perpetually to name its own structurless process of structuring.

The Eternal Recurrence of the Same in Terms of Difference: Time And Language

Reading Heidegger and Derrida and other French thinkers in the above manner, one is tempted to interpret "eternal recurrence of the same" in terms of difference, presencing and naming. But the very enigmatic character of this abysmal thought makes way for the divergence in paths leading to its enigma—whether in a phenomenology of the temporal horizon of "being-there" or in the deconstruction of texts. While Heidegger "listens" to the temporal difference between the event of being and entities that are temporal—showing itself within a finite horizon of time—Derrida deconstructs texts to see the trace of the trace of *differance* left within the broken boundaries of language. Whether in the horizon of time or within the limits of signification, difference recurs to perpetually break self-closure under the semblance of eternity or of universality, allowing for the emergence of new "eternities" and "universalities." Our metaphysical dreams are thus always contingent upon time and language, both finitized by the recurrence of difference in their respective limits. Since Heidegger emphasized time as the being of beings, while Derrida emphasized the trace of *differance* binding us to the chessboard of textualities, one may ask which is prior: time or text, being or language? Insofar as language is contingent upon its temporality, time is prior. Textuality is always bound to its history of changing meanings, grammatical revisions, translations, etc. But insofar as time can only be thought and spoken in accordance with a given text, the play of signs is prior. As this play of signs, the eternal recurrence for the French is the infinite play of simulacra making possible the constitution and appropriation of being for thinking.

But Vattimo—an Italian player in this debate on Nietzsche between Heidegger and the French—opposes any simple reduction of "eternal recurrence" to the glorification of simulacra undertaken by the "philosophy of difference" (see Vattimo, 1993: 64). Instead he sees it expressed more fully in Heidegger's notion of difference as the spacing in time forgotten while reduced to a figure in metaphysics. For Heidegger the figure of being necessarily involves history and the event as temporal arch-structures of difference, and Vattimo would like to take this eventhood seriously. In his radicalization of Heidegger, Vattimo proposes that if Heidegger's thought as a recollection of temporal difference is to be an overcoming of metaphysics, and metaphysics is "the history of being," it should also relinquish any claim to being, to let it be as a figure given *only* in metaphysics: an end to both being and ontological difference (see *ibid*: 76-77). In fact this is similar to Derrida's reading to go beyond any ontological emphasis. But for Vattimo, the overcoming of metaphysics would be a remembrance of difference as the conditional *event* of being as time, *prior* to the sign. The event as such is the giving of difference in its temporal deferring (see *ibid*: 78-79, 175): the presencing of presence and the interruption of this presencing by the present allowing for the passing-over (forgetting) of presencing. Claiming a-temporality, meta-physical grounds, reasons, and principles, while valid within an epoch, are nonetheless temporal. In this sense, the true grounding ground, in itself groundless, is time. The thinking of difference thus is a recollection of deferring as the "very temporal articulation of experience which is essentially connected with the fact of our mortality" (*ibid*: 175). In Heidegger's analytic of our facticity, when we face our immanent death (being-towards-death), time is what is made explicit as the play that engages us mortals. The play (an-arche) constitutive of any principle (arche), makes itself explicit only when we face death. Vattimo points out that the historical-epochal destining of being in the later Heidegger is the re-emergence of this central position of *Being*

And Time concerning our experience as mortals in our being-towards-death. Implicitly pointing at Derrida, Vattimo goes on to say that any relating to difference as such, including the very attitude of deconstruction, would thus be contingent upon the various constitutive levels of difference event-ing within a temporalizing-spatial horizon of our human "being-there," finitized by our mortality.¹¹

On the other hand, we must not forget that while focusing on the play of signs, Derrida does *not* ignore the importance of time—for he says that *differance* as a temporizing mediation *is* temporal (see Derrida, 1972/1982a: 8). Nor should we accuse Derrida of ignoring a non-linguistic play of difference, as he later comes to substitute "signifier" for "traces." Through temporization, *differance* releases the presence of its trace in a calculable representation while withholding itself in an incalculable absence. Nor does Heidegger ignore the importance of language, signs, and names. While stressing the quasi-structure of difference in its eventing, Heidegger sees language as the discursive gathering of the temporizing process which "lets-lie-together" phenomena and words prior to any grammatical systematicity (see Heidegger, 1963/1975: 108). While the early Heidegger analyzed this linguistic gathering of phenomena in terms of "discourse" (*Rede*) within the horizon of mortality, the later Heidegger studied the gathering in terms of the historical process called the "saying" (*Sage, Sprache*) of being.¹² Rapaport even suggests that Derrida's notion of *differance* is an extension of Heidegger's thoughts on language as a phenomenon of division where language and time relate (see Rapaport, 1989: 185). Thus a disagreement between Heidegger and Derrida would not consist merely in the priority of language or time in the constitution of meaning and being. The real disagreement would rather concern the "matter" of what "difference" is—the deep abyss of an ontological essence or the superficial abyss of layers of simulacra: difference as ontological or textual, essential or superficial. Is meaning constituted by the essence of being or superficially by layers of traces? But even this disagreement is ultimately unresolvable and meaningless—for an abyss is abysmal. Sacred or joking, we can only let it play.

In this sense, despite Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche as the last metaphysician, we could interpret the Heideggerian "same" as a name for the eternally recurring play: the difference which defers itself constantly in favor of a metaphysic. If the thought of "eternal recurrence" tests one's ability to overcome not only metaphysics but the perspectival horizon of being-human which constitutes us as we are, one may wonder, as Vattimo does (1993: 79), if the *bermensch* would be the one to achieve the explicit problematization of difference head-on, to face difference and death without blinking an eye. Who has the explosive guts to play this play? But this is a meaningless question when we face the fact that we're *already* in the play, whether we play to escape it (finitude, through metaphysics) or play to escape escaping it (metaphysics, through phenomenology or deconstruction).

¹¹See Vattimo, p. 181 & 148. Moreover the "same" for Heidegger *is* difference, concerning us as our "historical/destinal finitude of existence in relation to death." (Vattimo, p. 182) Defending Heidegger from the same accusation which Heidegger conferred upon Nietzsche, Vattimo reminds us that this "same" is thus definitely *not* any universal structure of a unifying telos—the "equal" which "supersedes" or "sublates" difference. Rather, it is the horizontal releasement of differences between the multiplicity of finite perspectives, each de-limited in time: "the finite destinality of every historical/epochal situation." (Vattimo, p. 181) See also p. 168.

¹²This "saying" constitutes a "network of correspondences," a "relation of all relations" by which being shows itself for our thinking. See Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism" in *Basic Writings*; also see Heidegger, "The Nature of Language" in *On the Way to Language*, p. 107. This "saying" is the linguistic articulation of space-time, opening a playing field of differences constituting identities, structuring the "world" disclosed as such.

The Recurrence of the Same as a Web of Difference: the Play of Names Through Time And Language

This play into which we find ourselves thrown when we look at the given phenomena or deconstruct texts, is the play of names, engaging the Germans, the French, the Italians, and anyone else who speaks, reads, and writes. Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the post-structuralists, as well as "we," are all caught up in the game of re-presenting the absence left by a fluctuating specter. But what separates these figures from the metaphysical thinkers of modernity "before" them is their awareness—each in their own limited way—of this fluctuating limit providing a finite horizon for naming the unnamable. Their questioning opens up a clearing for the perpetual unfolding of alternatives to absolutes, each finite in its own way. Here, even the pure and profound are caught in play. Insofar as it claims and overwhelms "us" the play is profound. But insofar as it can provide no discernible meaning as an absolute, its "claim" is endlessly superficial. The call for metaphysical certainty beyond playful uncertainty may still linger in these thinkers, each in their own limited way, and probably will continue to linger as a fact to be reckoned with in our attempts to think ever more carefully "the most profound essence of language, which has its origin in silence" (Heidegger, 1954/1984: 208). But superficial or essential, the play gives itself (*es gibt Spiel*) as enigma, without "why," without ground.

The "eternal recurrence" names this enigma as our inability to name while being caught up in the game of insufficiently naming the unsignifiable "it." What eternally recurs is this play of names dancing with pretensions to metaphysical certainty: figures playing the part of "eternities" while they dance into being and fleet away to nothingness, and figures playing the part of "universals" while they dance in place to the rhythms of a local drum. Eternalizing names are given only within the finite temporality of mortal existence and the history of languages and texts, while their temporal difference remains deferred. And universalizing names are given only within the play of signifiers and the eventhood of singularities without any guarantee for their representations, while their *difference* remains deferred. Even in the ontological analytic of finite temporality and the phenomenology of the history of being, "time" can only be thought and said in language as a play of finite uncertainty. But when we attempt to analyze the structure of language, we find language to be bound to its time, its history. The giving of being in correspondence with an identifying name thus occurs through a temporal differentiation shifting through openings. But the difference itself cannot correspond to any representational idea (see Heidegger, 1957/1969: 62). The play of difference, enabling the presencing of the present for an economy of presence, as such is time to which we are perpetually bound as mortals. And the play of difference, enabling the presentation of an absence in its re-presentation for an economy of grammar, as such is the trace of simulacra to which we are bound as linguistic beings. This play as the giving of the gift, releasing the present, is the unutterable absencing confining us to the "here and now" while perpetually breaking any finality to reveal fissures of escape into the multiplicity of "theres." Such openings enable us to forgive and forget, releasing us beyond any economy of a debt-structure. Thus as names, "being," "gift," "eternal recurrence of the same," "difference," while limited to language, are all floating milestones that mark a silent explosion of a storm exceeding and exhausting any name. This silent excess makes possible the interwovenness of time and language in a webbing of difference deferring itself multi-dimensionally to constitute spatial-temporal-signifiable identities as present-entities—a web of synchronic and diachronic conditions making possible the disclosure of a world-structure. The recurring sameness is this webbing of deferring differences—a gift that escapes and slips behind each given present. Despite our attempts to name this "it" that gives, its multi-

dimensionality and differential recurrence overflows beyond the grasp of us as linguistic and temporal beings constituted within its web.¹³

Resentful of this endless complexity, the will to power posits names representing firmer certainties. But insofar as they are representations, names conceal an abyss which cannot be filled other than with endless referrals. Culminating this will to bring fact under control, we arrive at the "eternal recurrence of the same," and then, "letting-presencing," "time," "*es gibt*," "differance," "gift," etc.—names which name the impossibility of naming, an impossibility which allows for the possibility of an over-coming. An over-coming of what? The forgetting of forgetting, with pretensions to eternal-universal certainties. In a transgressive-transcendence through borders of self-closure, this enigmatic thinking of the enigma of thought, in the naming of this enigma *as* enigma, releases us from the willed constraints of a metaphysic while reminding us of the dangers of our forgetfulness which may close in upon us. Released from the forgetting of forgetting, we are permitted to *embrace* forgetting, allowing names to dance in the theater of facts, in the play of simulacra, to the rhythms of time. Facing the problematic of difference as such, and affirming it in its recurrence, we allow for the ec-static crossing and re-crossing of borders through multiple dimensions, as "we" ourselves ec-sist through the fluctuating webbing of horizontal possibilities opening and closing, allowing for the constitution, destruction, and re-constitution of the present with the presencing and absencing of names. This piece of writing is but a localized moment within this dancing excess of recurring difference—an excess withholding its fact anonymously in an abyss of unending layers of signs signifying other signs, without leaving any signature. Mesmerized by this dance, exhausted by the excess, Zarathustra says to his animals:

Are not words and sounds rainbows and illusive bridges between things which are eternally apart?...Have not names and sounds been given to things that man might find things refreshing? Speaking is a beautiful folly: with that man dances over all things. How lovely is all talking, and all the deception of sounds! With sounds our love dances on many-hued rainbows.

And his animals reply:

...all things themselves are dancing: they come and offer their hands and laugh and flee—and come back. Everything goes, everything comes back; eternally rolls the wheel of being. Everything dies, everything blossoms again; eternally runs the year of being. Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally the same house of being is built. Everything parts, everything greets every other thing again; eternally the ring of being remains faithful to itself. In every Now, being begins; round every Here rolls the sphere of There. The center is everywhere. Bent is the path of eternity. [1885/1954: 217]

While names themselves are caught up in this exhausting but ecstatic dance, "eternal recurrence of the same" names it as the "unnamable" and "most secret of thoughts" (ibid: 252-53).

¹³For the "same" is that which cannot be "said"—in accordance with given contextual-discursive-epochal rules—but precisely that which is "shown" or "shows itself" (phenomenologically) as differ-ing, on the very rift between epochs and discursivities, as underlying from the margins, the centrality of what is and can be said.

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