

According to John Caputo, to radicalize the thinking of experience is to avoid the temptation to preempt the play of history by reifying it into formalisms. He cites many ways in which philosophy has attempted to force experience into such ungroundable universals, such as the Cartesian idea of truth as correspondence with an independent reality, with language acting as the pure vehicle of communication or mediation between an autonomous subject and an environment. Even as the more recent efforts of semiological structuralists (Saussure, Lacan, Chomsky, Levi-Strauss) broke away from this atomistic tradition by positing language as a system of signs regulated by the unity of a schematic center, Caputo recognizes that these writers failed to address the historical genesis of such structures. He re-iterates the poststructuralist realization that larger structures and conventions of language are as ungroundable and contingent as the particulars which they presumably regulate.

Against these tendencies, Caputo argues there would be no infinite which steers or commands all things, no center or origin which is the key to a system of signs. Instead, there would be a differential system of signifiers without signified. Caputo says "Repetition and representation cut into the very essence of signs, and it is never possible to separate out an original and a representative element within them" (RH133). Caputo affirms that language transforms what it embraces; in representing thought it always represents differently-disruptively. There would be no metavocabulary to arrive at, only a continual recontextualization of language conventions and practices.

If we create the world through speech rather than approximate it, this is not a unidirectional endeavor. We don't invent words for our purposes, we are invented and reinvented, along with our purposes, by the contingent vocabularies that we participate in as cultural beings, and these vocabularies are transient. Not the autonomous self-conscious subject intimate with her goals, but the heteronymous subject always at a distance from herself, losing and gaining her identity differently through history. Caputo refers to this repetition of becoming as flux, and also as an ethics of dissemination, borrowing the term from Derrida. For Caputo, the conventions of language and culture which lay claim to us as individuals are utterly without permanence. The very basis of experience in its radical contingency guarantees the inevitable dispersal of all power structures (RH288) which would try to persist in their self-sameness; to understand this is to actively and endlessly participate in a critical emancipation from certainties. Caputo says that the instability in personal experience that this implies requires a jettisoning of a notion of 'self' in favor of a site of 'non-identity, difference' (RH289), flux, a place of "disruption, irruption, solicitation" (RH289).

We want now to concentrate on the supposed mechanics of this flux or play of differences as the moment of the contingent sign and its dislocation. We might be tempted to assume that, by making non-dialectical movement and becoming the central ethic of experience, the hold of foundational metaphysics has been broken. But there is still so much that can be said concerning the relative substantiveness and power of the in-between of relational experience, in its guise as content as well as its function as separation. This book is dedicated to investigating a range of implications, from the interpretive to the aesthetic, the religious to the ethico-political, arising from the precise sorts of commitments that are made with regard to the internal structuring of the

being-with of contingent experience.

On the Architecture of Event as Contextual Pattern:

At issue in this conversation concerning the in-between of meaning's exposition is precisely what is meant by an event not being 'present to itself'. Caputo may believe an event is not present to itself by virtue of its absolute dependence on other events for its very determination. And this would seem to be a reasonable (if at this point still unspecific) argument to make about the ungroundability of conventions of meaning, an argument which puts Caputo in the company of writers like Glendinning and Wittgenstein. For instance, Glendinning offers up a contrast between "a supposedly essential (and thus indefinitely repeatable-as-the-same) identity or content"(OBWO79) and a content which depends for its very essence on the effacing substitution by another content. According to this account, to be self-present is to have a fixed meaning that transcends immediate context, justified traditionally by what Glendinning calls the 'thesis of ideal conceptual exactness'. Contrary to this, he insists that "we cannot independently identify a determinate 'something' which might be set up as an 'in which' that determines and contains the play of concepts. If a meaning only exists as itself for the instant of its appearance, "each 'singular event' of 'writing' is not what it is except in view of another such 'singular event', an event that is not what it is except in view of another such 'singular event', an event...And so on"(OBWO122). What appears and passes away as a signifier, then, is not an independently existing perceptual datum received by a consciousness, not a phenomenal entity imposing its structures on a passive subject. There is no private realm of ownness or otherness; the subject or self is not protected from, and is in fact nothing but, the contingency and plurality of eventness itself.

The sign has no intrinsic content. It is only itself as a new use, a new application, a new game. A 'string' of such signs need not be thought as being separated by displacements, when the displacing is co-extensive with the novelty of the use. No cleansing moment is needed to absolve us of the sin of redundancy when the self is itself NOW in self-effacing motion. To think 'this thing' or 'this same thing' or 'this is this same thing' or 'this new thing' ; all three examples involve both effacement and presence together in the gesture of new application. If a pointing is an altering, not a return but an affirmation-in transformation, then how do we ever know that there is an original, even as the temporary, fleeting event-in-context? The answer is that we don't. There is no center, no transcendental or privileged signified, only endless substitutions. The contingent original as momentary sign is undecidable; it is being-in-transit. Thus, in the sense that the context instantiated by any particular sign does not repeat itself identically into the next moment, it is true that a sign thought this way is not purely present to itself.

However, let us make our questioning of the transitive dynamic of signification more specific. We must ask, in the play of moments, what is the status or justification of the 'this' and the 'that' supposedly giving sense to the spacing between this and that sign? In Caputo's work, for instance, how does the singular function in the instant of its being-with-an-other? Even after the transcendently enduring self-presence of an event has been placed in doubt, we might locate a different and more radical sort of self-presencing of meaning, a self-presencing which thinks itself only as the very instant of the quasi-transcendental. The issue amounts to what it is that is

left of the structurality of the sign BEFORE (not temporally but meaningfully) it is affected, disrupted and effaced by another meaning.

Even if we do not know HOW an event of meaning functions except by our repeating and therefore transforming that meaning, there is something we can say 'in general' which holds from event to event as the very condition of eventness. This would be the quasi-transcendental (a term popularized by Gasche in 'Tain of the Mirror'), functioning in Derrida as differance, which effects as a self-reflexive trope the necessary possibility of impossibility of an event, the nature of eventness as simultaneously formal and contingent.

In this light, let us examine more closely Caputo's delineation of the quasi-transcendental infrastructure or architecture of the eventness of meaning. The flux, play or dissemination which he attributes to Derrida is articulated as a fold between signifiers. Marks or traces make: ...nominal unities called 'words' or concepts or meaning...not merely and not primarily in virtue of the intrinsic "substance" of the "signifier" but in terms of the "differential" relationship-the "space"- between the signifiers(WTD157).

If it is not merely and primarily the 'intrinsic substance' of a sign which effects meaning, is there not still something of the intrinsic, immanent, interiorized, implied in this discourse of referential movement? Caputo says that "the things we do with words will come UNDONE"(WTD157), implying a temporary duration to the doing before an undoing intervenes. Caputo says, "I take it from Derrida that there is a kind of unresolved dialectic, a rhythmic alternation, between tentative schemes and their disruption"(RH196), "structures which evolve, linger for a while and pass"(RH198). These structures would be "contingent arrangements of signs"(RH220), figures which must "eventually turn to ash"(DN34). Notice here that a vocabulary is chosen consisting of structures, arrangements, schemes that linger, that EVENTUALLY turn to ash. And:

The easy rhythms and rote rotations of the circle, the gramophone effect of the program, must be regularly interrupted and disrupted by unprogrammable ("grammatological") irruptions, originary events of various scale(DN199).

Irruptions are those events which interrupt a program, a circle. But what might be implied by a notion of configuration, scheme, pattern, program as the irreducible basis of being-between programs? It is possible to think the formal aspect or element of the quasi-transcendental condition of an event in terms of the contingent regulating or idealizing function of a scheme or configuration and still justifiably claim to be preventing the self-presencing of the sign. But in its iterative transformation from one passing formation to another, such an attempt may be considered to escape one kind of self-presencing (repeatable identity) only to succumb to a more fundamental self-presencing. This is because the infra-structural basis of eventness evinces itself as foundational, not just when a meaning is presumed to repeat itself identically 'over time', but when the many is supposed to be thinkable as one 'contingent' synthetic figure in differential relation to other synthetic figures. To claim that the syntactical-contextual finitude of a meaning destroys its attempted ideality is in no way to unravel the presumed structural integrity of experience if experience originates in the play between structuralisms or gestalts. This is the case EVEN WHEN, instead of lingering in its selfsameness from one repetition of experience to the

next, a paradigmatic structure only exists for a contextual moment as synthetic constellation or configuration of elements, never to be recovered or asymptotically approached as itself. Writers endorsing a general account of meaning as non-recuperable or non-coincidental from one instantiation to the next may nonetheless treat the heterogeneous contacts between instants of experience as transformations of fleeting forms, states, logics, outlines, surfaces, patterns, procedures.

When thought as pattern, the structural-transcendental moment of eventness upholds a certain logic of internal relation; the elements of the configuration mutually signify each other and the structure presents itself as a fleeting identity, a gathered field or relational procedure determined by its differential and contextual relation to other such fields, procedures or patterns. The particularity of eventness is not allowed to split the presumed (temporary) identity of the internal configuration that frames the event; its framing is altered AS A WHOLE moment to moment. The radical inseparability of an event from what is other than it is thus expressed as the endless reframing of a frame, the infinite shifting from paradigm to paradigm.

For instance, let us say that the transit from event to event is like the shifting texture of a fabric blown by the breeze (without the implied phenomenality of a `natural' origin). Let us then imagine a singular instance of this self-transforming process as a momentary textural configuration of the cloth, never to repeat itself identically. We can say that this momentary texture only determines its sense, and in fact only has its existence in its differential relation to a prior and subsequent configuration of the fabric. But what is it we are experiencing as this or that instant? Is a singularity-in-relation experienced all at once as a network of folds and lines, a pattern or procedure? We want to suggest that Caputo's temporary patterns, configurations, arrangements, schemes may assume themselves this way as a simultaneous plurality in differential relation to other internally gathered pluralities, procedures, programs. It is this presumed schematic internality of eventness, the power of abstractive multiplicity given to the sign for the fleeting moment of its actuality, which causes experience to be treated as resistant to its dislocation, as a lingering or resistant form, pattern, configuration, infrastructure. A hermeneutic of interpretation, radical or not, depends on the idea of such an infrastructure.

The Ambivalence of Desire:

Caputo's articulation of experience as signs in motion can be seen on the plane of motive. In his analysis of Derrida's discourse on the gift, he opposes desire as `economy', intention, reappropriation on the one hand, and on the other hand a desire beyond desire as the gift, a giving without intention or expectation of reward or reciprocity, beyond motive of malevolence or benevolence. He notes that it is never a question of choosing between inhabiting the circle of exchange and reciprocation, and transcending it. Instead one must interrupt subjective intention, "if only for the "moment", "in an instant of madness in which we know all along that the circle will close over soon enough"(DN146). And:

The gift is our passion and our longing, what we desire, what drives us mad with desire, and what drives us on. That means that we must keep watch over our gifts, which should be ways of exceeding and surpassing ourselves, emptying and divesting ourselves, lest they turn into something less than they (already) are, bits of self-aggrandizing selfishness meant to show the

other what we can do, self-serving "presents" belonging to the sensible, rational circle of time in which we are not giving to the other but making an exhibit of ourselves(DN147).

If for Caputo the universality of desire as self-appropriation and the singularity of the gift as desire-beyond-desire depend on and interweave with each other, they nevertheless do so as the communication between discrete and separable moments, that of the `sensible, rational circle of time' and the `exceeding and surpassing of ourselves'. The subject for Caputo seems to function as the temporary self-identity of construct. It is the "desire for restitution, fulfillment, reappropriation, well being"(DN143). This agent-subject "always intends to act for its own good" (DN143). He says without this willing well-being "the subject/agent would never do a thing, nothing would happen or eventuate"(DN144). Caputo's equating of the subject with a moment of re-appropriation (he says `making an exhibit of ourselves', but can we make an exhibit of ourselves without unintentionally exiting from ourselves?) exemplifies the attempt to retain a remnant of a structuralist center as only the instant of contingency itself.

Desire is only a willing of what it wills if thought of as a being-for-itself, auto-affection, the contingent self-identity of the moment of a program. Only when thought in this way does the problem arise of extricating ourselves from the temporary solipsism of the event (We MUST keep reason in play).

Preference does not choose or will an outcome in the sense of getting us schematically closer and closer to what we want. We are always back to where we started in desire, always desiring what we think we desire via a subtly different sense. We don't have to decide to choose or not to choose. We ARE in-transit before we choose. What we desire is not what we choose, desire precedes choice, decision, volition (which never actually arrive). Every moment is a different-and-related repetition of differance.

Caputo reads Derrida's oeuvre as `negative' dialectics(RH190), as `disruptive', `emancipatory', `liberational':

“Now, if I have felt the effect of this textual operation, the thrust of this stylus tip, I would say that the whole thing is a work of emancipation, a strategy or praxis of liberation”(RH193).

Caputo has argued that Derrida's stance amounts to no more than a negative dialectics, a suspicion toward “every attempt, such as ours, to take stock of where all this is getting us...We cannot get him drunk and then wring from him just what he thinks justice really is. In vino veritas remains within the metaphysics of truth. So we must take the risk of saying it for him-and then commend our sayings to the flux”(RH190)

Perhaps we misunderstand differance when we read it as an avoidance, a negative (or liberational, emancipatory) gesture which sidesteps what it presupposes: "one master name after another" that "flies up like sparks and then dissipates"(RH191).

It is precisely this pre-supposition of the signifier as temporary convention that our reading of Derrida puts into question.

The thinking of desire as a momentary stasis, construct or force justifies the belief that desire can want singularly to oppress or control in the name of a complacency and a status quo. Caputo speaks of a need for vigilance against, intervention and interruption of the technological "desire for control and mastery"(RH233). "We are in danger of being swept up in an enormous totalitarian and totalizing movement which aims to bring every individual, every institution, every human practice under its sway"(RH233).

"In response , we must exercise a critique from within institutions of power, ..in order to expose it to its other, to the abyss, to keep its standards and its preconceived notions of rationality in play, to keep reason in play and to keep the play in reason"(RH235).

If Caputo does not mean to suggest here that an individual actually can preserve a way of thinking in some pure form for any period of time, there arises the question of what the effect, the danger, the damage is, of someone BELIEVING that it is possible to protect a concept from its disruption. When desire manifests itself as a way of thinking, as a vector of power, as procedure, frame, scheme, configuration, it is particularly resistant to its effacement, and that effacement deserves to be characterized as violent, wrenching, surprising. But can desire ever be a discrete instant of wanting well-being, a pure sameness of a way or trajectory, the self simply wanting what it wants , wanting itself, turning to itself, enjoyingly filling up on itself? Is there ever such a thing as a singular subject/agent? We have seen Caputo deem a subject/agent a `meaning-to-say', and gift as the expenditure without return that forgets itself.

But Derrida speaks of a madness or monstrosity that threatens the semantic unity of any determined meaning of a word like `gift', which threatens "a priori the closed circle of exchange rationality as well as the frantic expenditure, without return, of a gift that forgets itself". This division within language "ruins everything that claims to know what gift and non-gift MEAN to SAY"(GT47). What and how does desire want? Can desire ever simply want what it wants, can it want itself, self-fulfillment and aggrandizement, repressive control, mastery, power, temporary self-identity, or is what we would be tempted to call authoritarian oppression just an unjustifiably abstracted effect of something more arche-dynamic in desire? If desire is another name for differance, this implies the dissymmetry of a presence and disconnection, novelty and past, mastery-in-subjection. We are always desire, preference, which means always a determining-effacing play. To concur with Kierkegaard(FT131) that the past, as that which is no longer, is unhappy, and the present happy, is just to express each double moment of experience as Desire. Not a being-with and being-between the two, not a successive-simultaneous this and that, either/or, but a bifurcation within the `who' of the subject. There is not an `I' which chooses but an interval which does not know who it is (and in fact, as not yet the subject implied by the question of `who', does not know what it is). The single instant of the sign implies the choice (either/or) of a unitary way, a subject's intending of what it wills, but the double instant is already other than its intention in the same instant that it chooses. We find (and lose) ourselves preferring, choosing. We find ourselves in interacting, in a new place, dis-placement, in-motion in-as a singular moment. What we are is at the same time other than what we are. What we desire is more-other than what we desire, not an intentional auto-affection that must be later interrupted. Desire does not affirm a subject and then await the injunction-interruption of the gift, it already subjects the subject to what it is not.

A Hospitality Before Self-Interest

What would it mean, then, to attempt to circumvent the structure of preference by a sacrifice of intention? What would we be effecting in 'choosing' to welcome without knowing what or whom we welcome; in acting so that our left hand does not know what the right hand is doing? As long as we speak of a volunteeristic 'choice' or 'act' of sacrifice of desire, of generosity, selflessness, or even of choosing not to intend at all, neither as benevolence or malevolence, we are still thinking of motive as a univocal entity, a semantic unity, still unknowingly privileging subject-as-presence. Caputo wants us to 'try to do the im-possible' in a 'moment of madness', "to do something for once without or beyond reason, in a time without time, to give without return"(DN144). To attempt to do what we don't want to do, or to act before we understand why we are acting, is still a calculation, a reciprocity declaring its faith in a reason that it would be necessary to exceed. He says, "If the agent expends all its energies on the other without return, that is after all what the agent WANTS, and that is how the agent gets her kicks. If the agent stopped loving its own good, it would stop loving the good of the other, since the good of the other is the good for which the agent acts and by seeking the good of the other the agent is doing what it loves to do"(DN148).

Caputo affirms here that an intending of giving without return is still an intention. We can only intend to welcome the Other who saves us from chaos; we intend to reject the Other who offers the oppression of incommensurability. Freedom from incoherence implies a sense of liberation, freedom from the order of intelligibility and intimacy a sense of subjection. It is a certain calculated coherence, a wanting what we want, which is the basis of the kind of freedom that we speak of in terms of liberation, emancipation. We always have intended to welcome, give ourselves to, sacrifice ourselves for the intimate Other, and always disliked, 'chose against' the incommensurate Other. We only 'want' to escape from that which is indoctrinating, repressive, and we only know such conventions in these terms to the extent that we are alienated from them, disconnected, impoverished, deprived. What is repressive to us is what we cannot establish connection, intimacy of relation with. What is stagnant and redundant in what we label as totalitarianisms is what refuses us, keeps us at a distance, leaves us in banishment. To choose to love the impossible, the unforeseen and unpredictable is to prefer that aspect within unforeseen experience which is foreseeable, which offers us the hope of avoidance of the abyss of violation and disconnection. To the extent that we can say that we look forward to the unknown, it is only to that degree that we ANTICIPATE the unanticipatable that there is the hope of Godliness, love, intimacy in that otherwise meaningless unknowable. We cannot get beyond this link between the lovable and the recognizable without losing the basis of any ethics, which is the ability to distinguish between, even if without yet defining, what is preferred and what is not.

Caputo's rhetoric depends on what it affirms: to believe in intention is to believe in liberation and transcendence as the 'privileging' of affirmation-presence over loss-absence. Our protests against suffering, whether in our own name or in the name of the other, are always an embrace of the same; consequently the emancipation of those we embrace is the repression of another one. It is not a question of transcending this rhythm but of seeing both its poles (liberation, subjection) play themselves out at once in each moment, before there is the need or justification of reifying experience as an opposition between temporary patterns of meaning. It is not necessary to assign

a positive valuation on otherness in order to locate the basis of religiosity. The basis of a sense of religio-ethical transcendence is always with us, event to event, as a presencing-affirming pole of differance alongside its abyssal other.

Justice as Deconstructing God

Is there any sort of ethical imperative, prayer or call that arises from this continuing differently? Yes, but no SINGLE imperative, ever, even for a moment. To wish, hope, pray and dream of what should be, what could be, is to speak from desire. This brings us back to where we started (differently); we (enlightened philosophers as well as despots) are always in desire, desire is the 'preferring', that is, the wanting-ourselves-otherwise.

We might instead think dissemination not simply as the sequential flux between emancipation and subjection, but more originally both a freeing and a binding as the same ambivalent, equivocal, paradoxical instant. Whereas Caputo posits a distance between the actual and the possible, for a Derrida read otherwise this distance must first be located WITHIN a name like the 'actual', or WITHIN a name like the 'possible', preventing anything from being simply actual or simply possible. What is actual doesn't pass over into what is possible, they are co-extensive as desire, preference. No distance or 'to-come' BETWEEN now and future, but both now and future in a singular instant. Temporality not as a counting of separated, spaced moments of contingent self-presence and otherness, but as text, as equivocity, both here and gone. The to-come is always here 'NOW' as both itself and unequal to itself. We are always in desire; the instant of desire as a 'preferring' or 'privileging' is the having both of presence and dislocation, and attempting to re-affirm a goal reinstates subtly differently the sense of both these two poles. Freedom, as another name for desire or preference, is not a singular valuative notion but implies both a dimension of liberation and of imprisonment. Whether supposedly in pain and suffering or in joy, all experience, as desire, differance, is the incipience of both banishment-loss and affirmation before it can be any singular trajectory.

Being informed that 'presencing' is that pole we prefer over the 'having been' does not secure into the next moment a vector of want since preference, moment to moment, recrosses the dual poles affirmation-negation otherwise. Whereas Caputo takes the topic of gift as an opportunity to ascribe an ethical imperative to a 'mad, impossible' giving without return, for our Derrida, gift is a trope revealing, or 'circumfessing', the problematic associated with believing that one ever, even provisionally, determines univocal meaning in general. Whereas Caputo reads an ethical significance of 'gift' as the opening of otherness in opposition to closure of exchange, Derrida's analyses of gift, as synonymous with his analyses of differance and justice, reiterate the undecidability of language (and more generally, of experience). Giving could not be fixed as any definable sense, and could not be opposed to a status quo; whatever its sense (which we could never univocally locate) at-as any 'particular' moment, this margin of sense would operate as both alterity and re-appropriation together, before there could ever be such a thing as a subject/agent and its interruption.

Meaning depicted as transit between configurations of signs at the local level of inter-individual relations manifests itself on the scale of cultural economy as a consigning of the power of

conditioning, influence and control. Caputo talks of cowardly politicians appealing to the worst and lowest instincts of the populace(DN43), and of corruption, demagogues, greedy industrialists, hypocrisy, xenophobia, self-aggrandizement and hatred. At the root of these ethically negative terms is a notion of selfish power as the "prevention of the other, forces that forestall in advance anything different or radically new"(DN44). Accusations of greed, hypocrisy, selfishness follow from faith in the lingering space or in-itself thickness of the moment of desire. Concerning subjectivity, Derrida argues

"The "logic" of the trace or of differance determines this re-appropriation as an exappropriation. Re-appropriation necessarily produces the opposite of what it apparently aims for"(PT269).

We suggest the importance of this comment is that the moment of re-appropriation and ex-propritation ARE THE SAME MOMENT as ex-appropriation. In our reading, Derrida's point (hinge) is precisely that the gift as hospitality is not simply a good or affirmation, not a simple intention but a double structure-genesis which includes that which intervenes DESPITE and WITHIN our intention; our own emancipation is at the same time, but in an exquisitely insubstantial and gentle sense, our own repression. The gift as differance expresses a bifurcation forged into the very articulation of an intending, regardless of the generosity or narrowness of our 'motive'. To believe that there could be such a thing as single choice, praxis, is to hold onto faith in self-interest of desire (even as self-less affirmation of flux). It is the faith in a self that briefly resides in itself before it is subjected to an Other. Derrida's notion of the gift, welcome of the Other, of hospitality, is not a positive function of any choosing or doing (selfish, selfless or 'mad'), but of the double structure of desire as both an affirmation-presencing-calculation (what we want) and a disintegration-effacing (what we don't want). Hospitality as the welcoming of what we wish not to, are afraid to, don't know how to welcome, is the reiteration of desire as this double BEFORE there could be an imperative, a 'thou shalt', a simple praxis. This twinned notion of the welcoming of the other is already effected in the 'instant' of a sign as in-transit, of finding itself elsewhere than it planned. It is not ahead of us as a hope but marks itself in the simultaneously here and selfexceeding 'now'. It is not an ethic to be used against those we claim fail to embrace it. There could BE no one who fails to manifest it, not the so-called selfish, self-aggrandizing or despotic. Rather than an intervention in stratifications of power for the sake of a restarting of a completely abandoned play, the call to hospitality and justice as Desire is a being-otherwise with the play that is already happening within "well-entrenched systems of power"(WTD166).

Caputo invokes deconstruction as a prayer. In his words (rereading Derrida's words), deconstruction is justice, love, "the love of something unforeseeable, unidealizable, unforgegraspable and impossible, something to come"(DN173). God is the name of the Other, "keeping itself free of all prevailing idols"(DN174), the 'powers that preside'. Differance for him is a messianism, a hope and faith in an order that allows disorder. From a deconstructive vantage, Caputo's 'to-come' would seem to be a faith in the ability to simply choose sides. What would be the meaning of characterizing 'a keeping free of all prevailing idols' as a good, a hope, a faith, without a foil, an example of a thinking which is inadequate in this regard? Without such a foil, a counter, a source of contrast, it would be meaningless to speak of a being-with-the-flux in any valuative sense. There would simply always have been the sign and its dissemination. Would radical hermeneutics think itself as a 'better' being-with-the-flux than authoritarianisms, the

`prevailing idols'? Would this faith not have to be constantly looking over its shoulder at this or that system of power that disappoints it, that does NOT welcome the flux, does NOT `keep itself free'? Isn't this looking over its shoulder at such discourses, as the gesture of escape from the alienation and incommensurability of the SAME (the prevailing idols), a privileging of a moment of affirmation over its other?

But wait, hasn't Caputo argued that there in fact always WAS nothing but the march of signs without signifiers? Then would radical hermeneutics not be able to incorporate into its own play the thinking of authoritarian totalities? Would not those strata of culture that require intervention belong to the repetition of a dynamic already in process, the being-with the same and its subversion, the finding of ourselves always between the economy of the same and its interruption? Yes, but to maintain a faith in experience as a fluctuation between moments of agential intending is to believe that one is `justified' in locating discrete moments nameable abstractively as God, faith, justice, transcendence opposing themselves to discrete moments identifiable as injustice, evil, nihilism. Caputo wants to argue that the `trace' does not knock out the name of God, but Derrida's trace does knock it out, or rather, splits it in two by preventing there simply being such a thing as a temporary (even if just for an instant) semantic unity nameable as God, love, transcendence, justice, liberation. Can we say that Derrida's notion of justice names half of the double gesture of differance?

Is the Messianic equivocal with the Demonic in the `same' instant, which is to say every instant of experience as a genesis-structure both religious and tragic? Even within this radical play, I don't read Derrida as placing justice, trace, the messianic, hospitality, the gift, as one pole or the other of the bifurcation within the sign. I think he means these names for differance to be both poles. Derrida says "...justice is always unequal to itself. It is non-coincident with itself"(DN17). If deconstruction is undertaken in the name of something undeconstructable, which is justice, and if justice is desire, then this undeconstructable `TO COME', this singular name would already be two effects simultaneously. To-come, justice, messianism, desire, deconstruction, differance would be both the basis of intervention and establishment(DN22) without yet being either of these two. Messianism, as another name for deconstruction, is both the universal as promise, truth, testimony, faith, credit; and the singular as immanence, the absolute other. I think it is at the end of Radical Hermeneutics that Caputo comes closest to the double impetus of deconstruction as justice, when he asserts the inability to choose between a religious and a tragic view of life(RH287-288). But then, in thinking along with the gesture of differance, we would suggest that this inability to simply choose, this undecidability, is not a fluctuation between contingent systems of meaning, but rather an equivocality of effects within each event, the double play of dissemination that destroys a momentary system or configuration before it has a chance to institute itself.