



ABSTRACT BOOK

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CONTENTS

(clickable links)

<u>Featured Panels</u>	3
<u>Pre-organised Panels</u>	8
<u>Panel Series</u>	27
<u>Art Exhibit</u>	39
Individual Abstracts (alphabetical by last name)	41
<u>A–B</u>, <u>C</u>, <u>D</u>, <u>F–G</u>, <u>H–K</u>, <u>L</u>, <u>M</u>, <u>N–O</u>, <u>P</u>, <u>R</u>, <u>S</u>, <u>T</u>, <u>U–Z</u>	

FEATURE PANELS

FEATURE PANEL: If Deconstruction Were a Field

This title begs a question. To unpack what is at stake here, let's begin with several well-rehearsed assumptions. First, the "no outside-text" appeal of deconstruction evokes the complexity of interiority, and with it, the destabilisation of identity as we conventionally understand it. Also, as Derrida makes clear, the entanglement (*différance*) of any specific identity with whatever we define it against, implies that relationality, or difference, doesn't fall between, or outside, pre-given entities. And finally, a Derridean understanding of "textuality" is not confined within the covers of a book and does not exclude reference and the world (*Limited Inc.* 137). Our panel takes on these three challenges to commonsense that encourage us to reconceive our terms of reference, including what we mean by "reference." We consider grammatology as a *field* whose involvements call into question the disciplinary limitations that have come to define and contain deconstruction as a regional method. Deconstruction to date has largely been restricted to certain disciplines and "methods" within the humanities, such as literary studies, philosophy, religion, law, architecture and the arts, where the importance of representational symbolism is emphasized. But where are the sciences? Indeed, what is a science if we accept grammatological complexity? If we take "originary *différance*" seriously, then an intervention will not be content with merely adding what seems to be missing. To better target some of these complications, we will also draw on aspects of Georges Simondon's work because it figures the individual in terms of a field of "individuation." What can relationality or difference mean if "otherness," or what is deemed "alien" and "outside," remain internal to "individuation"? Could a field theory allow us to better appreciate why deconstruction has something important to say about quarks, ozone, or the chattering ubiquity of radiation? Or, because the notion of the non-human already assumes what is essential to being human, can a grammatological field show why we might concede that vegetal literacies evidence an "originary humanicity"? In sum, as one panellist surmises, can the *socius* be redefined in a way that doesn't return us to the nature/culture division?

Vicky Kirby (University of NSW)

Fielding Alien Literacies

This paper represents a preliminary attempt to acknowledge deconstruction as a field theory. The challenge is to revisit the more well-rehearsed concepts in deconstruction that have arguably lost their provocation when "no outside-text" is read as containment, circumscription, or prohibition. Readers of deconstruction will agree that an entity, identity, or individual, is not what it seems. It cannot be a self-evident presence if to be itself it must refer, or draw energy, from outside itself; to be an individual it must "individuate," as Gilbert Simondon puts it. We tend, for example, to think of the sign's identity, or value, as a production effect generated through an economy of other signs. But what are we evoking when we say "other signs"? Signs that are presumably outside and different from this one, as if the sign's elusive and problematic identity is answered, or stabilised, by a context, a surround, a "difference from" that conjures what remains in question? Because to evoke a context, surround or difference whose "own" identifiability will depend on yet another context, another difference, another outside, is to acknowledge an infinite deferral/referral that never arrives. Or - because this does not involve a linear slide from one sign to the next - can we reconfigure identity as "specificity, articulated by the general"? If value "works" through the constant and necessary evocation of the non-local *as* local, can this process be contained by the linguistic system itself, or even a semiology of different systems that *together* return us to human endeavour, namely Culture? As the systemic involvements of this ontologising riddle confound the very terms of its explanation, we are provided an opportunity to revisit what counts as "alien." If there is no "outside sign," then isn't the identity, the in-itself of "sign" a super-positional energetics - a hologrammatic field, a general language of capacious entanglement? How, for example, does the possibility that plants have language, indeed, that plants *are* language, complicate human exceptionalism? Can we agree with Michael Marder's deconstructive pronouncement that humans can have no access to this seemingly contained and alien form of vegetal "writing"?

Aleksander Kopka (University of Silesia in Katowice)

Derrida and Simondon: The Problem of Originary Relationality

This paper opens a dialogue between the approaches of Jacques Derrida and Gilbert Simondon to the question of singularity, or the individual. I will argue that both thinkers propose a domain of originary relationality or referentiality that, ontologically speaking, functions as a condition of possibility and impossibility for any emergence of what may be considered an ipseity, a subject, or an individuated being. Singularity, however, does not stand in opposition to complexity, and originary relationality in both philosophers may also be glossed as originary complication. Thus, the search for a principle of individuation (instead of simple presence) leads inevitably back to something like “network” or “play”—or what Derrida calls gramme or grapheme in *Of Grammatology*, namely, an element without simplicity. Derrida’s opening move is often to insist on the heterogeneous character of ipseity in a variety of situations—turning from auto-affection to hetero-affection in the context of phenomenology, from autonomy to heteronomy in the context of ethics, from sign to writing in the context of structuralism, and from psyche to infinite mourning in the context of psychology. Similarly, I will argue, Simondon turns from the individual to individuation and thus to a complex set of relations he refers to as the preindividual and the transindividual field. In other words, I propose to read Derrida and Simondon as providing two distinct ways of conceptualizing a shared intuition about the complexity and inherent exposure of living beings to alterity. Finally, building on these two approaches to originary relationality, I wish to explore how they may offer a new framework for thinking social relationality, acknowledging the ontological support for the social fabric without necessarily succumbing to a choice between the atomized and the homogenized vision of the social—what Jeremy Gilbert calls “infinite” or “radical relationality.”

Thomas Lamarre (University of Chicago)

Nuclear Communication: A Field Theory

Derrida is not widely embraced for his contributions to thinking with non-human agency. Bruno Latour dismisses Derrida’s approach for bearing exclusively on the rhetorical and discursive and thus on the human; Haraway similarly questions his work on animals. In this presentation, however, I propose to show how Derrida invites us to consider the agency of non-humans, specifically the agency of nuclear radiation, by reference to his account of nuclear war and nuclear criticism in “No Apocalypse, Not Now.” It is true that, in this essay, Derrida places a good deal of emphasis on rhetoric, working through texts about nuclear war and apocalypse, to explore how we speak or write about the nuclear. In speaking of nuclear destruction, we assume, as if by convention, that nuclear technologies can be successfully held at arms length, placed over there, deferred, not now. Yet Derrida does not rest content with a critique of rhetorical or textual effects. Acts of nuclear destruction resonate, or double, with acts of nuclear communication, to issue a challenge. Why do we assume that the nuclear is not immediately communicating, speaking, writing? I propose to take on Derrida’s challenge of admitting nuclear communication and avowing the agency of radionuclides, drawing support from Latour and Gilbert Simondon. A tentative contrast with Latour is instructive. Latour worries about which humans are best equipped to speak for a host of excluded nonhuman actors, such as quarks, ozone, and radionuclides, in a manner that overcomes the modern divide between nature and culture. In contrast, Derrida questions the tendency to assume that the agency of some entities can be isolated from others, for instance, the agency of radionuclides from the agency of humans. Here, Simondon’s philosophy of individuation provides a useful counterpoint to Derrida, for it underscores that agency cannot be restricted to individuals; it belongs to the field of individuation. Reference to Simondon helps us understand Derrida’s approach as a field theory. Such a field theory has the potential to open a reconsideration of the enmeshment of nuclear weaponry and nuclear energy at the current juncture.

FEATURE PANEL: Jacques Derrida, *La Chose*. Séminaires (1975-1977)

Chair: Phil Lynes (University of Dundee)

Joseph Cohen (University College Dublin)

Heidegger/Ponge (1975)

Reading the 1975-1977 Seminar "The Thing," and through the active re-reading Derrida engages here with Heidegger, we shall trace and develop the relation between "thing" and "singularity" and thus develop how and why Derridian "deconstruction" deploys, through a radical questioning of Heidegger's structure of donation and givenness as Event, a radical re-orientation of the "question" toward other performatives irreducible to donation and givenness. Toward which heading can the Thing singularly orient thinking?

Leslie Hill (University of Warwick)

Heidegger/Blanchot (1976)

This paper will aim to provide a brief overview of the seminar sessions devoted to the work of Blanchot by Derrida in 1976. It will seek to document the implicit "dialogue" (as Derrida calls it) between Blanchot and Heidegger, and comment in passing on Derrida's account of the relationship between Blanchot and the thought of Emmanuel Levinas, before concentrating on Derrida's reading of Blanchot's (non-)concept of the neuter and its relevance for narrative, as explained by Blanchot in the 1964 essay "La Voix narrative [The Narrative Voice]" (in *L'Entretien infini*; *The Infinite Conversation*), and pursued by Derrida in a lengthy commentary on Blanchot's 1948 récit, *L'Arrêt de mort* (*Death Sentence*). In conclusion, it will contrast Derrida's reading of the neuter in Blanchot with differing interpretations proposed, among others, by Marlène Zarader, Roland Barthes, and Jean-Luc Nancy.

Benedetta Todaro (International Studies Institute)

Heidegger/Freud (1977)

What does it mean for a thing to return? This article takes as its guiding thread the circulation of the *thing* – Heideggerian, Blanchotian, Freudian – across three of Derrida's readings of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: in the seminar *La vie la mort* (1976), the seminar *La Chose* (1977), and the text *Spéculer – sur "Freud"*, published in *La carte postale* (1980). The method of this article is one of parallel re-readings: *La vie la mort*, *Spéculer – sur Freud*, and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* have been read side by side, following and against the grain of *La Chose*. Since Derrida had intended to gather *La Chose* and *Donner le temps* into a single project, *Donner le temps* has also been read in parallel. Three hypotheses emerge. The first hypothesis concerns the placement, the fact that Derrida's reading of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is placed third in a series of texts in both *La vie la mort* and *La Chose*. However, its function is different: the same text does not operate as a third term in the same way. In the former, the reading of Freud comes after readings of Jacob and Nietzsche to deconstruct thethetic opposition of life and death through an a-thetic logic. In the latter, Freud arrives after Derrida's reading of the Thing in Heidegger and in Blanchot. This repetition necessarily inflects the function Freud's text is called upon to carry, which is to be the "other" of Heidegger. But what exactly is it that makes this Freudian Thing the other of the Heideggerian Thing? The second hypothesis concerns what the article calls the *doublure*. I suggest that, in many respects, the Blanchotian Thing is already the other of the Heideggerian Thing, so that Freud becomes the other of this already-other – an internal lining of Blanchot's text. This doubling reintroduces, into a discourse that had privileged space and place, the temporality of trace and *frayage* (*La scène de l'écriture*) and the question of rhythm (the conclusion of *Spéculer*). Drawing on *Résistances de la psychanalyse*, this article traces a movement from the *ritournelle* – the symmetric rhythm of the *fort/da* as economy and mastery – to an asymmetric, limping rhythm that the Freudian thing alone can carry, and that exceeds both Husserl's auto-affective temporality and Heidegger's being-toward-death. The third hypothesis concerns retroactive effect. The passage of Derrida's reading of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* through *La Chose* – simultaneous with the composition of *Donner le temps* – is not without consequences for *Spéculer*. Derrida's reading of Freud in *La carte postale* deals with the problematic of debt more deeply than *La vie la mort* does, because it has traversed a meditation on giving, survival, and the Blanchotian thing that the earlier seminar had

not. In this sense, *La Chose* is the "incorporated other" of *Spéculer*: kept within it, as its footnote and its crypt. This traversal suggests that the problematic of debt was being elaborated in parallel in *Donner le temps* and in *La Chose*, and that more than one reading is possible. In *Donner le temps*, Derrida grasps the quasi-transcendental condition of the (im)possibility of giving in the originary erasure. In *La Chose*, through the reading of *L'Arrêt de mort*, the condition of giving is the fact of its irrecoverability as determined by the mortality of the other.

FEATURE PANEL: History, Singularity, Spectrality

This panel will put forth three different readings of Derrida's always insistent approach to the question of History. From a common hypothesis which marks how and why the question of History engages an incessant "deconstruction" of historical narrative, identity, recognition, comprehension which provokes, *without* reserve, *arche* or *telos*, an irreducible exigency of justice in the name of singularity, and furthermore of a singularity always *to-come*, we will deploy, by thinking with Derrida, other manners of approaching the idea of history which, *without* seeking a unification of approaches, allow a wholly other recasting of historical consciousness and commemoration, of forgiveness and reconciliation, responsibility and testimony. In this sense, our panel shall, with Derrida, attempt to engage a novel approach of our rapport, in History, to war *and* peace by opening towards a wholly other assignation to the irreducible singularity in and of historical events: according to which Law are we assigned to *singularity* in History and from which place are we to face the irreducible *returns* (*revenances*) from History? Towards which futurities will these returns project our historical responsibility for justice?

Joseph Cohen (University of Dublin)

We shall present and put forth a specific reading – inspired by both the *Donner le temps* (cf. *Donner – le temps II* (1978-1979), Paris, Seuil, 2021) and *La Chose* (1975-1977, Paris, Seuil, 2026) seminars – of Derrida's approach of the question of History. From a common hypothesis which marks how and why the question of History engages an incessant "deconstruction" of historical narratives, identity, comprehension opening to what we shall call an *aporology* engaging an irreducible exigency of justice in the name of singularity. In this sense, we shall deploy how and why, for Derrida, singularity as spectrality engages a diachrony of historical temporality which, according to our reading, also implies a *deconstruction* of the question of sacrifice and through this deconstruction a redefinition of historical responsibility.

Nicholas De Warren (The Pennsylvania State University)

The Thing About Things in Derrida and Heidegger

In this presentation, I return to Heidegger's the question concerning the thing in light of Derrida's recently published seminar *La Chose* (Heidegger/Ponge/Blanchot) 1975-1977. The guiding thread of my elaboration of the question of the thing is the attempt by Heidegger and Derrida to dislodge the sense of things from the thing traditionally most thought to define things, objectivity or objecthood. I will give special attention to poetry — Rilke, Ponge — in looking to another discourse of things not about things.

Phil Lynes (University of Dundee)

Heidegger, The History of the Question and the University

In *The University Without Condition*, Derrida affirms that nothing should be beyond question in the university, 'not even the authority of the "question" form, of thinking as "questioning."' Because deconstruction ruins in advance what is made safe and secured by the question, many of its detractors—as much in the seventies as in today's bizarre polemics against 'postmodern Marxism,' echoed in the far-right agitation techniques of 'just asking questions'—warn that it sacrifices 'the possibility of a pure questioning, a free, neutral, objective, etc., questioning[.]' As Derrida explains in his 1974-75 *GREPH* seminar, this freedom and purity of the question—its *wildness*, against all institutionalisation—is said to constitute philosophy's only contractual obligation. But to uphold this

wildness for Derrida casts a *naturalising* effect on the university which, he argues, amounts to a *neutralising*—call it a *greenwashing*. ‘By naturalizing,’ he explains, ‘by affecting to consider as natural what is not and has never been natural, one neutralizes. [...] One carefully conceals the forces and interests that, without the slightest neutrality, dominate and master—impose themselves upon—the process of teaching from within a heterogenous and divided agonistic field wracked with constant struggle.’ Derrida thus wonders whether the purported freedom of the question might not be a lure, a ploy or a trick, *une leurre*; ‘is this freedom with respect to every institutional contract not in fact a blind submission to the empirical institution, an alibi to avoid questioning the socio-political institution, for example, and then the university or pedagogical institution, and finally the institution of a very determined tradition to which the questioning subject is totally bound?’ The question itself for Derrida has never been pure, natural or meta-institutional; it has always been contractual, positional, thematic or thetic, indeed *historical*. To unpack this history, this presentation turns to Derrida’s long engagement with Heidegger’s *The Principle of Reason* in both his *La Chose* (1975-77) and *La Raison universitaire* (1982-83) seminars in an attempt to situate how an engagement with nonhuman nature, below and beyond the history of the question, might have important implications for the teaching of the environmental humanities today, and for the de-limitation of the university institution more broadly.

FEATURE PANEL: *La vie (et) la mort*

Leyla Sophie Gleisner (École Normale Supérieure)

A certain impossibility to say the event of one’s death.

This talk investigates the potential of Derridean deconstruction for a critically informed theory of trauma by referring to Derrida’s conception of one’s own death as the limit of what can be said. Whereas trauma studies have traditionally emphasised the necessity of fully expressing extreme suffering, along with the experiences that lead to it, deconstruction allows for a more nuanced analysis by giving space to what must remain impossible to articulate. This impossibility lies specifically in trauma’s intertwinement with what can be understood as an anticipated death. In this context, I argue, first, that by paying attention to the limits of language as well as to the structural givenness of omissions, lacunae, and silences, deconstruction allows for a critical shift in the way we conceive of trauma testimony: compelling survivors to fully revisit the traumatic event in language implies nothing less than asking them to do the impossible. Second, however, I will suggest that the persistence of a “certain impossibility of saying the event of one’s death” by no means implies that language is inadequate for engaging with trauma. Rather, deconstruction calls for an understanding of language that is *other* – not only repetitive but also transformative.

Ondra Kvapil (École Normale Supérieure)

Deconstructing Derrida on Death

In *Apories*, a 1996 book on death that I wish briefly to analyze in my paper, Derrida argues that there is no such thing as death itself, but only a potentially infinite number of finite representations of it. He bases his argument on a deconstruction of Heidegger’s famous concept of death from *Sein und Zeit*, while aiming to reveal the aporetic character of death: If my death is the possibility of the impossibility of my existence as such, as Heidegger claims, it is also the very limit of everything I can comprehend, Derrida points out and is therefore incomprehensible to me. In my paper, I will present an immanent critique—or deconstruction, if you like—of this argument and show, entirely in the Derridian spirit, that traditional onto-theological motifs contaminate it no less than Heidegger’s original concept. In doing so, I will, in opposition to Derrida, argue that there is, in the end, such a thing as death itself, and that thinking about it does not mean attempting to step outside of tradition, its language, and its conceptual frameworks, but rather, on the contrary, to fully mobilize its resources, since thinking about death, after all, compels us to think precisely about—our finite lives themselves.

Frédéric Worms (École Normale Supérieure)

PRE-ORGANISED PANELS

PANEL: Derrida and Sartre revisited

This panel will look afresh at the relationship between Sartre and Derrida. A closer examination of Derrida's assessment of Sartre in the light of recent publications reveals the degree to which his philosophy was indebted to his predecessor, in ways that are acknowledged, unacknowledged and frequently denied. It is over 40 years since Christina Howells first attempted this project, and since Derrida's death in 2004 several posthumously published seminars have made a substantial contribution to our understanding of the question. The 1960s show an evolution in the public position adopted by Derrida towards Sartre, as the strong rejection of 'Les fins de l'homme', for instance, was in fact preceded by a more patient and generous engagement in his earlier teaching. The three members of our panel will explore different but inter-related aspects of the arguably vexed relationship with a focus on negation via *Penser, c'est dire non* [seminars from 1960-61; 2022]; on the subject and the ego in *Du même à l'autre* [seminars from 1963; 2024]; and on the problem of alterity in phenomenology, particularly in relation to the specificity of writing, in *Psychanalyse et critique littéraire* [seminars 1969-70; 2025].

Raphaël Authier (University of Strasbourg)

Penser, c'est dire Non. The work of the negative from Sartre to Derrida.

L'un des cours récemment publiés de Jacques Derrida (dans *Du même à l'autre*, 2024) permet de reconsidérer le rapport de Derrida à Sartre à partir d'une discussion précise, concernant l'idée de « champ transcendantal sans sujet ». Dès cette époque (1963), Derrida se montre critique de la position de Sartre: il estime que la tentative sartrienne de se passer de l'idée d'*ego* transcendantal aboutit à une conséquence gênante lorsqu'il s'agit de rendre compte d'autrui. Le problème de l'intersubjectivité consiste précisément dans le fait qu'autrui est lui aussi, tout comme moi, un *ego*, quelqu'un à qui le monde apparaît. Autrui est bien *un autre ego transcendantal*, si bien que la notion d'*ego* transcendantal s'avère nécessaire pour ne pas réduire autrui à un simple élément du monde parmi d'autres. Pourtant, dès cette époque, Derrida reconnaît que ce désaccord apparaît grâce à une proximité d'objectif: c'est parce que Sartre comme Derrida se montrent insatisfaits de la place donnée à autrui dans la phénoménologie qu'ils tentent de réaménager les fondements théoriques de celle-ci. La proximité de Derrida avec Sartre est d'autant plus sensible que dans sa discussion critique, Derrida se sert d'un passage de *L'être et le néant* pour suggérer que Sartre aurait lui-même été conscient des limites de l'analyse menée dans *La transcendance de l'ego*. L'examen de cette question permet alors de souligner la finesse du rapport de Derrida à Sartre: le traitement du problème de l'intersubjectivité par Sartre n'est pas à rejeter, aux yeux de Derrida, mais à reprendre, à partir d'un examen plus précis de ce que l'idée husserlienne d'*ego* veut dire. Par là même, l'originalité de la position de Derrida dans le contexte des années 1960 apparaît: si Derrida reprend l'idée de « champ transcendantal sans sujet », hypothèse avancée dans de nombreuses discussions de l'époque (Ricoeur, Hyppolite, Lacan, Lévi-Strauss, et plus tard Foucault et Deleuze), et dont il esquisse une typologie dans *Du même à l'autre*, il n'en conclut pas pour autant à l'abandon de l'idée d'*ego*.

Samuel Buchoul (University of Cambridge)

Sartre, Genet and Derrida: Writing and the Contamination of Subjectivity

The recently published seminar from 1969-70, *Psychanalyse et critique littéraire* (2025), confirms the negative sentiment developed by Derrida towards Sartre, at the end of the decade that saw him become a prominent figure in his own right. The sixth *séance* of this seminar could potentially have been the occasion for a more rigorous criticism than in the contemporary article, 'Les fins de l'homme' (1968), as Derrida explored the overall project of 'existential psychoanalysis' by going back to the question of bad faith and its relation to the Freudian unconscious, in *L'être et le néant*. But his argument remains brief, and it does not go further than Sartre's *Baudelaire* (1947). Just five years later, Sartre published *Saint Genet*, which would become at most only a background interlocutor even when Derrida went back to

Genet in *Glas* (1974). This paper will attempt to bridge that gap, by revealing Derrida's interesting silence on a series of theses developed by Sartre around the case of Jean Genet: what happens to the writer when his text is read, and how these activities affect subjectivity and inter-subjectivity. The question of the *alter ego*, in and after Phenomenology, is thus a heritage shared by both authors, and it is undeniable that the entry of writing as a link between myself and the other changes the way we approach that canonical problem. But, in fact, this challenges the usual story of a *contestataire* generation keen to bring an end to 'the old world' of post-WWII France, whose incarnation was, supposedly, Sartre: this omission of *Saint Genet* on Derrida's part reveals, on the contrary, that Sartre, not Derrida, was the most subversive on this matter. The remarkable life, and disquieting writing of Genet helped Sartre understand that any act of meaning-making *requires* an inherent project of contaminating the Other's consciousness. Once we revise grammatology with this less-known segment of the existentialist corpus, we realise that it modifies significantly some of the moral and political horizons Derrida set out for deconstruction.

Christina Howells (University of Oxford)

Sartre, Genet and Derrida: Writing and the Contamination of Subjectivity

In this paper, I will propose an overview of the question and explore some of the ways in which Derrida's undeniable debt to Sartre and his equally undeniable difference from, and rejection of, his philosophy have been clarified by the various posthumously-published seminars. I will focus in particular on *Penser, c'est dire non*, which contains what is (I believe) Derrida's earliest extended discussion of the Sartrean *néant* in the light of Alain (1960-1). I will contend that this seminar contains the most analytic and objective assessment that Derrida gives of Sartre since in it he aims to explain rather than refute Sartre's theses. Already in 1963 in *Du même à l'autre*, his seminars on Husserl, Derrida is more critical, and by 1968 in 'Les fins de l'homme' (collected in *Marges*, 1972) he is primarily concerned to reject Sartre rather than do him any kind of philosophical justice. I shall argue that during the 1960s when Derrida's star was in the ascendent we can observe a fairly rapid change of approach from respectful explanation to iconoclastic refusal. As we know, Derrida later moderated his critique to the extent of partially revising the negativity of his own early, and arguably immoderate, positions (in, for example, 'Il courait mort' in *Les Temps modernes*, 2012-3). The posthumously-published seminars which Derrida gave in the 1960s show how carefully he read Sartre initially in order to use him in his teaching and, depending on one's perspective, can be seen either to justify his later dismissal of Sartre's work ['he knew Sartre's work well and was well-placed to reject it'] or, alternatively, to propose more self-interested reasons for his hasty and inaccurate later comments ['he knew Sartre's work well but preferred to dismiss it in a form of "anxiety of influence" or more familiarly "parricide"'].

PANEL: Eyes, Ears and Education

There are traces of eyes and ears throughout Derrida's oeuvre, intimately tied to questions of perception and dissemination, but also often embedded in thoughts about education, pedagogy, and the institution. These themes have only grown in significance since Derrida wrote of them around the turn of the 21st century; regularly we hear of threats to academic freedom, responsibility of teachers, necessitation of listening to students, defence of curriculum, and so on. Too often do these demands lack the necessary interrogation that Derrida once gave them. Derrida was troubled *with* and offers a troubling *of* the university (here we think of the university *qua* the teaching institution – the school, the nursery, and so on). In thinking about eyes and ears and education, this panel will return to these three themes with different emphases in each talk. Paper 1 deals with the violence of the teaching scene in its centring of the eye in its educational logics. Paper 2 explores the instrumental ear in education and what would constitute listening to singularity of voice. Paper 3 explores how the voice and language of the other is heard in educational counter-terrorism policy. All however are driven by an underlying impulse, aligned with Derrida's, to 'contest, displace, deform' (2004, p.121) education within the field of the eye and the ear.

Nick Stock (University of Birmingham)

Deforming the teaching scene

Bringing an object into the teaching scene incurs a necessary violence be done to that object *and* the teacher and students that encircle it. This pedagogical and curricular drive necessitates a phallogocentric law of the teaching scene by instituting a mastery of the object. So too does it orient the scene around the eye and light (Derrida, 2004, p.129) to demand a clarity of vision, despite the 'ear [being] at stake in teaching and in its new institutions' (1985, p.20). To abandon the institution and its violence only instantiates its rebirth, doomed to repeat its previous utterances (p.30) and forges it in the grounds of the politics of the time. Instead, Derrida calls for the founding of new institutions, made more prescient by the threat of minimizing disciplines and closure of universities today. And yet, it is only in initiating the violent teaching scene that the founding of the institution occurs. Still, teaching for Derrida remains both a responsibility (2004) and a pleasure (1985, p.4). Indeed, in the *compulsion* to seek the pleasure of teaching and in adhering to the responsibility of being in the institution, how does one unsettle education without repeating its phallogocentric law? This paper thus finishes with thoughts on the ways to work within these aporias of education whilst in its politics and responsibility, particularly through the ear and the eye of the other.

Emma Williams (University of Warwick)

'It Has You by the Ear': Listening, Reception and Voice in Education

This paper explores the relationship between a thinking of the ear and a thinking of education, drawing on Jacques Derrida's writings. The notion of the ear foregrounds the possibilities of listening and what it means to listen—questions that resonate deeply with educational theory and practice today. Contemporary classrooms often operate under a model where the ear functions as a mere receptacle for the transmission of content: education trains us to 'hear in one way.' Against this instrumental conception, the paper examines Derrida's essay *Otobiographies* (1985), a text profoundly concerned with education, where he provocatively describes educational systems as 'acoustic or acroamatic devices.' Rather than reducing listening to high-fidelity reception, Derrida engages with Nietzsche's notion of 'listening with small, finely tuned ears,' suggesting an alternative mode of attentiveness. This paper situates that idea within Derrida's broader conception of language and *archi-writing*, arguing for a patient, open listening that attends to what exceeds the fixity of the sign and resists closure. Such listening unsettles the dominance of communicative efficiency and invites us to rethink education beyond the rules of effective transmission. What would change in educational theory and practice if we embraced this conception of listening? The paper contends that this shift opens spaces for dimensions of human life—speaking one's own words, meaning-making, fragility—that risk being effaced by the dominance of instrumental discourse. In doing so, it calls for an education that does not merely inform but listens, creating conditions for the emergence of singular voices.

PANEL: Capital Crimes: Neoliberalism as the Undecidability of Speculation and Gift

Jonathan Basile (University of Toronto)

Constitutive Complicity in the Con Economy: Debt, Guilt, and Gold

Quinn Slobodian's *Hayek's Bastards* charts a curious genealogy of neoliberal and far right theorists, pundits, and charlatans focused on the inherent value of gold. His genealogy makes clear that this value is understood as much economically as morally. If the dollar "debauched" its value when it abandoned gold backing to prop itself up with growing debt, this financial sin was understood, in the imaginations of religious and social conservatives, to underpin everything they disliked in the modern world: welfare spending that dissolved the natural family, the funding of abortions and thus sexual promiscuity and women's lib, immigrants with access to public benefits, and so on. Ultimately, it has fueled the apocalyptic tone of end-times fantasies, what Melinda Cooper has called debt millenarianism. In an

absurd con, the asset value of gold was inflated by con artists who promised their marks it was an inherently valuable substance—a true storehouse of wealth that would provide financial security even beyond the apocalypse, a treasure laid up in heaven. It is, literally, the con to end all cons—the promise that wins the confidence of the credulous mark is of an unconnable asset, something with a value so inherent that it is exempt from the speculative cycles that make conning possible. Its value is even claimed to be independent of the social bonds, the faith or confidence, propping up all other currency, as it is promised to outlast human civilization itself. I will place Slobodian and Cooper’s writings on this economy of credit, faith, and morals in dialogue with Derrida’s writings on counterfeit money, speculation, and chrematistics. At one and the same time, it speaks to the anxieties unleashed by the extremes of speculation to which every aspect of life is exposed today, and yet to something ineluctable, older than any periodization of neoliberalism. Something that is sure to outlast even the apocalypses currently being declared, as the “end of neoliberalism,” and those yet to come. How does it change our understanding of what is happening today, or of how and when today got started, our etiologies of the present, and our prognoses or cures, the dystopian and utopian futures envisioned by the right and left, if the speculative con is ineluctable?

Naomi Waltham-Smith (University of Oxford)

Derrida Losing His Head: Capitalism in a Tailspin

In his *Ästhetische Theorie*, Adorno makes the assertion that “artworks draw credit from a praxis that has yet to begin and no one knows whether anything backs their letters of credit.” This peroration is preceded by the claim that “[art’s] ether...epitomizes the unsubsumable and as such challenges the prevailing principle of reality: that of exchangeability.” Whether Adorno’s philosophy of art—to the extent that it is mortgaged to a Kantian model of the bourgeois self-determining individual—offers the “model of a possible praxis” or a utopian confidence trick ultimately providing an alibi for the capitalist violence it critiques remains an open yet urgent question. I bring Derrida’s often ambiguous appeals to the aneconomic to bear on this challenge, specifically its figuring as a “vertigo” of capitalization whereby subsumption seizes hold precisely of what should be unsubsumable. To flesh out the political-economic stakes of this idea briefly alluded to in *La peine de mort*, I trace the figure of “vertigo,” which also appears “dizziness” or “losing one’s head” across an array of Derrida’s seminars and publications. These range from passages in *Spectres*, *Donner le temps*, and “Le papier ou moi, vous savez...” which explicitly address the question of a general (rather than restricted) economy, the gift, accreditation, or spectralization, through characterizations of sovereignty and the political as hyperbolic in *La bête et le souverain* and *Politiques de l’amitié*, to uses of this figure in *Glas* and *Le calcul des langues* to analyse metaphilosophically the very structure of the transcendental and of deconstruction as head-spinning. In the first instance, I read these passages to put pressure on the periodizing thesis of the totalization of capitalist subsumption: that, alongside unbridled speculation, the logic of the market has insinuated itself into every corner of social life such that there is no longer any “outside” of capitalism. Second, turning to Derrida’s reading of the poster’s vertigo-inducing injunction “tu le veux” in Blanchot’s *La folie du jour* allows me to address Adorno’s problematic by locating a freedom not *outside* but *within* unfreedom, critically accompanied by an indeterminate dispossession of the subject.

PANEL: Dissident Textual Bodies: Writings of the Intractable and Strategies for the Unworking of Gender/Genre Devices

This panel investigates dissident textual bodies in which writing operates as a practice of resistance to gender and genre devices that aim to stabilize identity, subjectivity, and relational norms..Bringing together deconstruction, feminist, queer, and transfeminist perspectives, it focuses on forms of writing that engage what remains intractable to normative grammars of sexuality, embodiment, and community. Rather than approaching bodies as objects of representation, the contributions composing the panel treat them as material operators within language, whose inscription produces political effects..A shared theoretical gesture underlies this inquiry: the displacement of sexual difference from

an ontological framework to a political and relational one. Writing is examined as a site where this shift takes place, undoing the authority of confessional transparency, genealogical filiation, and normative affective economies. When bodies enter the text, they do not function as stable referents but as perturbing forces that alter syntax, narrative form, and regimes of legibility. In this sense, writing becomes a practice of unworking, loosening the mechanisms through which gender and genre operate as technologies of normalization. Central to this inquiry are relational figures such as confession, friendship, and *aimance*. These figures challenge familial, fraternal, monogamous, and identitarian models by foregrounding modes of being-with that resist organization, hierarchy, and mastery. Writing emerges as the space in which such relations are invented and sustained, often through formal experimentation and the opening of the text to non-linear, hybrid, or non-verbal modes. Illness and vulnerability also emerge as privileged sites for thinking dissident embodiment. The writing of the ill body reveals how regimes of health, sexuality, and morality intersect with gendered and colonial power structures, while simultaneously generating practices of relation, touch, and survival. Across these trajectories, writing is conceptualized as an act that touches the limit without appropriating it, making visible dissident modes of life that resist capture. Together, the contributions articulate a critical reflection on how writing can unsettle gender/genre devices and open spaces for alternative political and relational possibilities.

Anita Borella (Università degli studi di Bari 'Aldo Moro')

Derrida's Aimance and Contemporary Transfeminist Thought: Friendship, Power, and the Political

Beyond the many shades of Derrida's reflections on *aimance* in *The Politics of Friendship* lies the question of a completely *other* kind of love and of another kind of friendship: "of a future for love the like of which it is not known if anyone will have ever had the experience". This contribution mobilizes this notion of *aimance* to interrogate its contemporary drifts in transfeminist thought, approaching this *other* relationality as both a deeply political and an intimate matter. It examines Derrida's legacy in the work of Brigitte Vasallo (particularly *Monogamous Mind, Polyamorous Terror*, 2018) and Paul B. Preciado (from *Counter-Sexual Manifesto*, 2000, to *Dysphoria mundi*, 2022). The paper argues that, in these authors, the *other* love and the *other* politics for which Derrida appeared to be preparing the terrain in 1994 emerge as crucial political and philosophical turning points. Vasallo's work, in particular, develops a radical de-hierarchisation of relations grounded in the deconstruction of the distinction between love and friendship – a distinction already problematized by Derrida through his readings of Nietzsche and Aristotle. Furthermore, Vasallo explicitly links monogamous pyramidal relational models to structural racism, identity politics, and nationalisms that continue to haunt our societies and our political imaginaries. I contend that the urgency to experiment with and theorize affective and political revolutions – what I propose to call new politics of *aimance* – runs through Vasallo's work and, through a different inflection of Derrida's legacy, also structures Paul B. Preciado's thinking. The contribution therefore turns to the relational paradigm underpinning Preciado's concept of the body as *somateca*, understood as an archive of living writings, marked by encounters and by the singularity of each process of subjectivation. Whether the deconstruction of love and friendship serves, as in Vasallo, to imagine new politics beyond identitarianisms and nationalisms, or whether the relational body itself becomes the site of political rewritings of sexual differences, desires and power relations, as in Preciado, what takes shape is Derrida's *aimance* at work as a transformative force within contemporary transfeminist thought.

Mattero Maria Paolucci (Università degli studi di Bari 'Aldo Moro')

Writing Friendship – with an open heart

In *Politics of Friendship*, Derrida invokes the necessity of thinking and writing friendship against "the great number." "If there were a community of writing," he writes, "it would be played out precisely against the great number and its hegemonic language." In this context, Derrida also speaks of such a "community" in terms of a "communism of writing," an expression that implicitly echoes Jean-Luc Nancy's notion of "literary communism," first formulated in the 1980s and subsequently taken up on several occasions, particularly in his interviews. The present contribution lingers on this echo, allowing it to resonate with those passages of Nancy's work in which the demand for a "literary communism,"

and for an articulation of community unfolded against its “organization,” is articulated precisely in opposition to hegemonic figurations of communal space—that is, against words and institutions that hierarchize, order, and distribute filiations among bodies. When bodies, in their singular plurality, resist the immanence to which such figurations seem to consign them, it becomes necessary to invent—and this resistance is in fact coextensive with that invention—new writings of the body, other textual bodies. More specifically, when the linearity of familial space among bodies, structured around gene, blood, and descent, is undermined and reconfigured through friendship, this rewriting takes place through the invention of a new body of the text. This is particularly evident in *Un désir démesuré d’amitié* by Hélène Giannecchini, in which the author stages this invention within the very body of the text itself, through work on sentences, chapters, and margins, and by opening the text to non-verbal languages such as photography. By bringing Nancy’s reflections on “literary,” and more broadly “artistic,” communism, on the corpus, and on friendship and family (as in *Sexpositions*) into dialogue with contemporary queer and feminist writing practices, this contribution shows how Derrida’s circumspection toward any form of “brotherhood” at work in Nancy’s reflections on community can be set aside. In doing so, it seeks to demonstrate the fecundity of the conceptual tools offered by Nancy for reading, rethinking, and rewriting friendship today.

Iulia Ponzio (Università degli studi di Bari ‘Aldo Moro’)

Confession as a Gender/Genre Dispositive: Assonances and Dissonances between Cixous and Derrida

Focusing on the question of “Confession”, this paper examines the dialogue between Jacques Derrida and Hélène Cixous, tracing points of convergence and divergence in their conceptions of the relationship between body and writing. Both detach confession from its traditional definition as transparent exposition of interiority and reconceptualize it as a critical dispositive through which subjectivity, discursive authority, and mastery of language are put into question. Confession thus ceases to function as privileged access to the truth of the self and becomes a site where the conditions of enunciation themselves are destabilized. In *Circonfession*, Derrida introduces the confessional dimension as an exposure of the philosopher’s body, challenging the ideal of pure, disembodied thought. The body enters the text through references to circumcision, genealogy, illness, memory, and photographic material. This exposure disrupts the neutrality traditionally associated with philosophical writing and foregrounds the body of the philosopher. As Cixous observes in her analyses of *Circonfession*, notably in *Contes de la Différence Sexuelle* and *Portrait de Jacques Derrida en Jeune Saint Juif*, such destabilization nonetheless remains partially contained within the economy of the book-form. Despite its formal singularity, the body continues to appear as narratable, archivable, and interpretable, preserving the legibility of the text within philosophical discourse. Cixous intervenes more radically in the literary genre of confession by explicitly inscribing in it the body as a sexed body, thereby making confession—and writing more generally—a gender/genre question. The paper focuses in particular on the section entitled “Confession” in Cixous’ *Entre l’écriture*. Here, writing does not proceed through self-narration or the reconstruction of personal history, but instead it questions and destabilizes the linguistic mechanisms that enable the identification of the subject. The body is not thematized as discursive content; rather, it operates as a principle of perturbation within language itself, affecting syntax, morphology, and lexical invention.

Valeria Stabile (Università di Bologna)

Infected autre cap: Writing the Ill Body in Marta Dillon and Lina Meruane

In this presentation, I examine the relationship between writing and ill body through two accounts of HIV/AIDS: *Vivir con virus* by Marta Dillon (2004) and *Viral Voyages* by Lina Meruane (2014). The hinge of this presentation is represented by the relationship between illness and writing and its multiple levels and possible approaches, which I articulate through a circular structure. Beginning with what Segato describes as “the normal and its anomalies – that is the real structure of binarism” (Segato, 2019, 2) I move to the configuration of the seropositive body as an otherness configured as defect. Within this framework, indeed, health appears as the normative condition, while illness marks the anomalous. Among the many forms of anomalous embodiment, HIV infection inscribes itself profoundly on the body: the infected body becomes simultaneously untouchable, marked by a sexuality construed as

deviant and dissident. The HIV-positive body writes in order to extend its life through relationships, new models of friendships, and forms of contact. This impulse resonates strongly in Dillon's words, where writing becomes a way of reaching and touching, every day, a limit that every body "writes" within the inseparable space of "la vie la mort" (Derrida, 2019). Conversely, fear of infection restricts touch, relationships, overlaying the "politics of friendship" with a pervasive malaise that primarily affects sexually dissident bodies. The trope of HIV/AIDS as "divine punishment" reverses the promises of sexual liberation, once again reinforcing the separation between "the normal and its anomalies" and thus reaffirming the colonial-modern power structure. Following Nancy, I argue that writing is not embodied but performs a "touching" of the limit. This limit – understood as the extremity and as the *other heading* – opens onto a reflection on the decolonial aspects of *Geschlecht III* (Derrida, 2018). I then close this circular movement by reconnecting these threads to the panel's topic– the inscription of sexual difference in bodies as a singular expression of dissident political modes of living – by returning to writing as an act that touches but is also capable of extracting and unveiling what is hidden behind a body that stretches the lines of its textual life.

PANEL: The Ethics and Economy of Home and Forgiveness

One of the aporetic conditions of genuine hospitality, argues Jacques Derrida, is the supposed sovereignty of the "master of the house," or the one who is uniquely capable and entitled to "welcome" the other to feel "at home" – a gesture which, as Derrida continues, reveals the "absolute precedence of the welcome" to any purely monadic sovereignty. Understood this way, "the host [*hôte*]" is "already a *guest* [*hôte*] in his own home," conditioned by an always anterior welcome. This is an important reason why purely "unconditional" hospitality is "impossible," for both the host and the guest stand passive before that more original condition of their being welcomed and welcoming; that, genuine hospitality, to be hospitality at all (to be "worthy of the name"), must endlessly interrupt the sovereignty of the sovereign, even and especially the familiar sovereignty of its own constitutive concepts (host, guest, home, etc.). It is more than a historical curiosity, one almost entirely unacknowledged in contemporary scholarship, that Derrida's 1995–97 seminars on hostility and hospitality were immediately followed (1997–99) by seminars on perjury and pardon. For Derrida, in the latter seminar and invoking the former, it is because "the gift of hospitality is always insufficient" that "one cannot dissociate the scene of hospitality from the scene of forgiveness." This panel responds to the ever-present danger of dissociating (or, even and rather, merely attempting to disassociate) hospitality and forgiveness, a danger which grows to the extent that hospitality, forgiveness, and their interrelation remain unthought today. Attentive to what Derrida called the "analogous" law governing both hospitality and forgiveness, this panel proposes to think the relation – and non-relation – between these two sometimes-sovereign concepts.

Annabel Herzog (University of Haifa)

Derrida's Home

For Derrida, home exists only as a haunted space, constituted through what threatens it from both within and without. Drawing on *Specters of Marx*, *The Monolingualism of the Other*, and the seminars on hospitality, this paper argues that Derrida conceives home not as origin or shelter but as a site of paradoxical phenomenality in which interiority is continually contaminated by exteriority. Home is always already inhabited by the other—by what it excludes, fears, or seeks to master—and therefore never coincides with itself. Spectrality, a presence that is neither fully present nor absent, material yet intangible, names the condition under which home can appear at all, while simultaneously undoing any claim to stable belonging, identity, or sovereign self-possession. This spectral structure becomes politically and ethically explicit in Derrida's analysis of hospitality and sovereignty. Because home never coincides with itself, welcoming the other is both necessary and threatening. Hospitality thus assumes an antinomic form: it demands unconditional openness to the stranger while requiring conditional laws that protect the home's integrity. Sovereignty emerges precisely within this unresolved tension. To host, a subject or polity must assert authority over the home, yet this authority is constantly destabilized

by the very openness it enables. Hospitality thereby exposes sovereignty as fragile and self-divided, suspended between the violence of exclusion and the fear of self-dissolution. The paper develops this argument through Derrida's readings of two emblematic figures: Oedipus and Robinson Crusoe. Both figures expose the violence and fragility inherent in being-at-home. Oedipus embodies the logic of appropriation: he becomes sovereign only by killing his father and occupying the place of origin, revealing home as founded on expropriation and crime. Robinson stages the fantasy of absolute self-sovereignty, only to confront its collapse into autoimmune fear—the terror of being absorbed or destroyed by what one seeks to master. Together, these figures show that home is spectral space where sovereignty is continually undone from within.

Claire Katz (Texas A&M University)

Hospitality and the Impossibility of Forgiveness

On June 17th, 2015, Dylann Roof walked into the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC. After being welcomed into the community and praying with them for more than an hour, he opened fire, murdering nine congregants. On June 19th, at Roof's court appearance, Nadine Collier, the daughter of Ethel Lance, a seventy-year-old victim, said to Roof, "I forgive you." On social media, the praise for Collier was quick. Yet on June 23 two women offered responses that were very different from Collier's. In a *New York Times* op-ed, Roxane Gay justified why she will not forgive Roof, declaring some acts unforgivable. And in *Ebony*, Candice Benbow, then a PhD student at Princeton Theological Seminary, asked, "How are Black women supposed to understand that violation is wrong when they hear pastors celebrate how God is able to use it for His glory and their development?" She then confides, "I must admit that I am long way from forgiveness." In his essay "On Forgiveness," Derrida provocatively raises the following question: "...there is the unforgiveable. Is this not, in truth, the only thing to forgive?" In other words, if it's forgivable, then what is the value of forgiveness? The aporia is powerful in its formulation—forgiveness only has meaning, only makes sense, when it forgives that which we have declared unforgiveable. Yet it seems even this formulation raises a different problem. Either forgiveness remains impossible, never able to cross the threshold of the unforgiveable; or it does, in which case, does this act not render forgivable what was once viewed as unforgiveable, thus puncturing the aporia? Starting with an appreciation for Derrida's aporia, this paper argues that forgiveness derives its meaning not from the call to forgive the unforgivable but precisely in the call not to forgive, to recognize the limits of forgiveness and to circumscribe some acts as unforgiveable.

Michael Portal (University of Louisville)

The Anarchic and Prosthetic Origins of "Original Forgiveness"

Nicholas de Warren's *Original Forgiveness* (2020) provocatively distinguishes between "forgiveness as encounter," or that determinate forgiveness which is one possible response to a discrete wrong, and "original forgiveness," which is pseudo-transcendental to any forgiveness in general. We must, he argues, already be "in" forgiveness to ever forgive or be forgiven, just as one is already "in" responsibility for the other's suffering for that suffering to ever appear as a problem, for there to be any "ethics" whatsoever. "Forgiveness as encounter" has an object (some wrong), while "original forgiveness" does not and, as such, is "anarchic," which is to say, it is not governed by any archē or logic whatsoever (of, for example, there being some border separating what can or cannot be forgiven). Instead, "original forgiveness," de Warren explains, is "a forgiveness *that I am*, as marking the stigmata of *here I am*." This paper concerns the relationship between "the origin" and "original forgiveness," and critically develops upon de Warren's account of the "Here I am" (*hineni*). I take my lead from a fragment of Maurice Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster* in which Blanchot challenges the sovereign act of "forgiveness": that, as Blanchot writes, "forgiveness accuses before it forgives" and, so, "makes the wrong irredeemable." "Forgive me," Blanchot writes, "for forgiving you." This thought reverberates in Derrida's *Perjury and Pardon* and his analysis of how sovereignty can "corrupt forgiveness," that "what threatens to corrupt forgiveness is precisely the transformation of unconditionality into an affirmation of sovereignty: 'I can forgive you.' This 'I can' is the end of forgiveness." For both Blanchot and Derrida, and in a critical anticipation of de Warren's account, the sovereign "I" affirms itself in its expiation. De Warren's analysis, I argue, correctly picks up on the originality of expiation but incorrectly uses it to

establish another, more original archē, this time under the rubric of “forgiveness.” I argue that the signal contribution of thinking “original forgiveness” is that it undoes the privilege naturally lent to the “origin,” which as I follow Derrida on this point, is always a prosthetic projection from the present.

PANEL: Deconstructing Japanese Philosophy

“There is anywhere else but in Greece something that can be rigorously called “philosophy”. Philosophy at least tends to liberate itself from the outset from its linguistic, territorial, ethical, and cultural limitations.” (Derrida, *For what tomorrow*) For Derrida, philosophy is inseparable from the name of Europe and its Greek origins. It is a process of infinite universalization that begins in Europe. Modern Japan, too, under the tide of Westernization, imported philosophy as a discipline while simultaneously attempting to invent a hybrid form by integrating traditional Eastern thought—such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto. Derrida, by inheriting French—a language that was not entirely his own—sought to deconstruct European philosophy from within. Likewise, the Japanese, through their encounter with “the languages of the other”, have experienced the invention of a unique philosophical idiom. Modern Japanese itself was shaped through the translation of Western philosophical terminology, drawing on the resources of classical Chinese. Even the very word “tetsugaku” (philosophy) was a neologism coined through translation, and the discipline was institutionalized accordingly. Through this experience of translation, Japanese thinkers forged their own syncretic traditions. Regarding Derrida’s intellectual exchange with Japan, he visited the country four times after 1983 and engaged in dialogue with many Japanese scholars. Most of his major works and critical studies have been translated into Japanese, and his thought has been studied across several generations since the 1970s. His philosophy of deconstruction has taken root and continues to influence Japanese intellectual practice. This panel proposes a deconstructive reading of Japanese philosophical texts from the 1930s and 1940s—an anachronistic gesture, in that these authors wrote before knowing Derrida. Kamei analyzes the notion of time in Kuki Shūzō; Miyazaki discusses Miki Kiyoshi’s theory of technology; Nishiyama addresses the questions of sacrifice and forgiveness in Tanabe Hajime; and Tenev examines Kimura Bin’s psychopathological reflections on intersubjectivity. By bringing deconstruction into dialogue with these classical texts that shaped modern Japanese philosophy, the panel explores how philosophy outside Europe may find ways to release itself from Eurocentric constraints.

Daisuke Kamei (Ritsumeikan University)

The Philosophical Intersection of Kuki Shūzō and Jacques Derrida on Time

Japanese philosopher Kuki Shūzō (1888–1941) resided in Europe from 1921 to 1928, engaging with Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Bergson. While famous for *The Structure of “Iki”* (1930) and *The Problem of Contingency* (1935), Kuki also produced the French work *Propos sur le temps* (1928), based on his lectures at Pontigny: “The Notion of Time and the Repetition of Time in the Orient” and “The Expression of the ‘Infinite’ in Japanese Art.” In these, Kuki develops an idiosyncratic and metaphysical theory of time that remains challenging to interpret today. Although no direct historical link exists between them, Kuki’s theory of time shares a profound affinity with the thought of Jacques Derrida. Kuki distinguishes between linear and cyclical time, positing that the very structure of time lies at their intersection—the coincidence of irreversible and reversible time, or difference and identity. This strikingly resonates with Derrida’s deconstructive rethinking of time as the “identity of identity and non-identity” in *Speech and Phenomena*, as well as his later conceptualization of the “event” as a verticality that interrupts horizontal continuity. Kuki remarked that “the once-only and infinite life is worth living,” an insight echoed in Derrida’s “idea of uniqueness as immediately iterable.” By juxtaposing these perspectives, this presentation aims to elucidate the convergences and divergences between Kuki and Derrida’s philosophies of time.

Yusuke Miyazaki (Senshu University)

The Deconstruction of Technology in Kiyoshi Miki and Jacques Derrida

Kiyoshi Miki (1897–1945), a prominent left-wing figure within the Kyoto School, studied under both Nishida Kitarō and Martin Heidegger. His major work, *The Logic of Imagination* (1939/1946), remained unfinished due to his imprisonment and death during the Second World War; however, the publication of an English translation in 2024 has renewed scholarly interest in this philosophical project. Miki defines the central task of imagination as the “unity of *logos* and *pathos*,” that is, the unification of the rational and objective with the sensory and affective dimensions of human experience. While drawing on Kant's conception of imagination as the mediating faculty between understanding and sensibility, Miki departs significantly from Heidegger by rejecting a purely metaphysical grounding of imagination. Instead, he situates imagination within a broader horizon encompassing myth, institutions, and, above all, technology. Imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) is thus conceived as a power of form-generation operating through artistic creation and technological invention, thereby articulating not a logic of mediation (in Hegelian term) but a logic of form, understood as a “thinking of formless form.” At this juncture, it becomes particularly fruitful to place Miki's argument in dialogue with that of Jacques Derrida, who develops the theme of invention precisely in relation to technology (in his essay “Psyche: Inventions of the Other”). It is especially significant that Derrida advances this discussion in the context of his engagement with Paul de Man, who, unlike Derrida, emphasized the technical dimension of deconstruction (in de Man's *Allegories of Reading*). Accordingly, the task of this paper is twofold. First, by reinforcing Miki's concept of invention through Derrida's arguments, it seeks to clarify the implications of Miki's philosophy of technology—implications that remained underdeveloped due to his untimely death. Second, Miki's account of imagination as a “thinking of formless form” invites us to reconsider deconstruction itself as a technique of invention—as a creative technology in its own right. In addressing these interconnected concerns, this paper aims both to elucidate the distinctive features of Miki's philosophy of technology and to demonstrate its broader significance for understanding Derrida's thought and the fundamentally technical dimension of deconstruction.

Yuji Nishiyama (Tokyo Metropolitan University)

The Question of sacrifice and forgiveness in Hajime Tanabe

Hajime Tanabe (1885-1962) is an original philosopher who developed his own thought in a profound turning point of the modern Japan, that is, from 1930's to the Pacific War. After having inherited the Chair of philosophy at Kyoto Imperial University from Kitarō Nishida, the leading philosopher in modern Japan, he framed the first generation of “Kyoto school”. In 1922, Tanabe studied abroad in Berlin University and Heidelberg University, had academic exchanges with Husserl and Heidegger. After having studied critically Kant's teleologism and Hegel's dialectic, from 1932, he began to publish a series of articles relating to “the logic of the species”. This was an ambitious endeavor. He replaced the logical category general-particular-individual by the existential category genus-species-individual, and tried to inflect the dialectic in his own manner based on the species as absolute medium. It was the period when Japan launched the war with China, the society quickly turned toward fascism. In such a dramatic epoch, Tanabe, using the Dialectics of the logic of the species, attempted to clarify the relation between state and individual in an ontological manner. In this presentation, I shall discuss the question of sacrifice and forgiveness, referring to Tanabe's logic of the species.

Darin Tenev (University of Sofia)

Jacques Derrida's différance and Kimura Bin's aida: Intermittent Intersections

I will focus on the intersections between the thought of Jacques Derrida and that of Kimura Bin (1931-2021), an important contemporary Japanese philosopher and psychiatrist. The two thinkers knew each other, they have met in person and, on several occasions, they have participated in the same conferences. Kimura Bin refers in his texts to Derrida, although, to my knowledge, Derrida never refers to Kimura Bin's work. After briefly sketching their personal exchange, the paper will offer a comparative analysis of some of their key notions, such as Derrida's *différance*, *hymen*, or *khora*, and Kimura Bin's between-ness (*aida*), self (*jiko*), and *metanoesis*. Then, I will show how their interpretation of the ontico-ontological difference partakes in their respective conception of time. I will argue that Derrida's understanding of the event and Kimura Bin's kairological explication of the in-between (*ma*) supplement each other. The final part of the paper will be focused on demonstrating what new perspectives can

Kimura Bin's philosophy and phenomenological psychopathology offer for the reading of Derrida, and how Derrida's deconstruction can further contribute to Kimura Bin's phenomenological theory.

PANEL: Derrida Beyond Europe: Inheritance, Iteration, Improvisation

This panel examines the logocentric structures that shape inheritance, tracing how repetition operates not as static transmission but as dynamic improvisation. Drawing on Derrida's notion of inheritance as always already reiterated within metaphysical and political formations, the discussion explores how repetition becomes transformative. This insight resonates across contemporary comparative race theory, visual echographical practices, and musical performance, particularly in contexts that displace Derrida's thought beyond its European metaphysical origins. The panel begins with Derrida's account of metaphysical inheritance in his critique of Leibniz's universal language, then develops inheritance as a form of adoption structured by rhythmic invention and transmission in his reflections on improvisation. It concludes by turning to the musical concept of improvisation as a way of reworking the metaphysical oppositions that continue to shape contemporary political discourse. In doing so, the panel stages textual, visual, and musical inheritance as an improvisational extension of Derrida's deconstructive project.

Héctor G. Castaño (University of Sofia)

Improvising Past and Future: Derrida, Adoption, and the Dynamics of Philosophical Change

Inheritance is a process whereby a will to transmit toward the future is mediated by an effort to respond to archives from the past. Its hybrid and mediated character, together with its dependence on institutional selection frameworks, makes the work of inheritance an integral part of the construction—and deconstruction—of collective identities. In light of the tension between mainstream philosophical heritages and calls to transform them, it appears that something must change, yet any just decision lacks a view of what those transformed institutions would look like. However, this formulation of the problem remains static: the features of the tension evolve over time. For instance, "Western metaphysics" and its exclusions acquire a different meaning today than they did in the 1960s or even two years ago. Phenomenology and deconstruction have introduced a non-essentializing understanding of the process of inheritance—inheritance as adoption—but they have not paid much attention to its rhythms. An exception is Stiegler (with his periodisation of the epochs of *différance*) and, earlier, Ortega and his theory of generations. Sociologically, Randall Collins has argued that philosophy worldwide develops in 33-year cycles, inscribing any philosophical novelty within a clear rhythmic pattern of invention and transmission. How does Derrida help us understand not only the *logic* of inheritance but also its concrete dynamism? Beyond his explicit investigation of inheritance patterns in texts such as *Specters of Marx* (with Valéry's Hamletian genealogy of skulls as a leitmotif), Derrida's views on improvisation can also provide insight. His attitude toward his own improvising—during lectures or in front of a camera, as in *Ghost Dance* or *Echographies of Television*—often reveals an unease. In "The Other's Language," Derrida's interview with Ornette Coleman, new avenues open for this inquiry. There, the relationship between frame and improvisation (the problem of the possibility of the event) is addressed through the lenses of identity, exclusion, and the mother tongue. These are basic ingredients of inheritance, and any *just* attempt to inherit from the philosophical past today must take them seriously into account.

Jungah Kim-Kiteishvili (City University of New York)

Cogito and the History of East: Derrida's Leibniz and the Postcolonial Grammatology

This paper examines Jacques Derrida's critique of the Eurocentric conception of Chinese ideographs, particularly in his discussion of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in *Of Grammatology*. Derrida's claim that Leibniz's vision of a universal language, grounded in a rational system of Chinese ideographs, constitutes a "European hallucination" has often been interpreted through sustained readings of his critique of the logocentric inheritance of Western metaphysics rooted in the philosophical tradition of the cogito. Rey Chow, for instance, argues that Derrida's perception of Chinese writing is paradoxically structured by a Eurocentric conception of the East, thereby producing a distorted understanding of the Orient. Yet rather than dismiss Derrida's intervention as a Eurocentric misrecognition, this paper argues

that Derrida's notion of the "European hallucination" opens a critical site for rethinking cultural boundaries and the global politics of racial representation. To develop this argument, I extend the discussion toward a critique of postcolonial studies and its writing practices across disciplinary boundaries, focusing specifically on Derrida's critique of logocentrism in relation to Kojin Karatani's analysis of Japanese phonocentrism, as well as W. E. B. Du Bois's reflections on the problem of the color line and his defense of Japanese imperial modernity. The relationship between Derrida's deconstructive project and postcolonial theory has not been sufficiently examined within contemporary scholarship, particularly with regard to the place of Japanese imperialism within postcolonial frameworks. By deconstructing the spectral presence of Japanese imperialism within the postcolonial archive, I argue that Derrida's critique of Eurocentric logocentrism exposes a deeper tension internal to postcolonial studies itself, namely its persistent difficulty in reckoning with Japan's imperial history, which is frequently relegated to a peripheral position within narratives centered on Western colonialism. Through a deconstructive reading of postcolonial writing, race, and colonial ideology, this paper offers a different perspective on debates concerning Afro-Asian solidarities and Japanese imperial modernity. In particular, I conceptualize the twentieth century's problem of the color line as a grammatical inheritance re-iterated within postcolonial discourse itself, through which racial hierarchy continues to be codified within the conceptual and discursive practices of postcolonial studies even as the field seeks to challenge Eurocentric structures of power. In doing so, the paper asks what remains occluded within the writing practices of postcolonial theory and what it means to write otherwise.

Sean Meighoo (Emory University)

Politics of Improvisation

In this paper, I would like to broach "the politics of improvisation" on one hand – to question the common association of the musical concept of improvisation with the liberal political concepts of freedom, spontaneity, and agency – and to formulate "a politics of improvisation" on the other – to suggest a deconstructive strategy of political intervention by drawing on various musical approaches to improvisation. In "The Other's Language," Derrida's interview with saxophonist Ornette Coleman, they discuss Coleman's approach to composition and improvisation in addition to their different experiences with racism and their so-called "languages of origin." Coleman comments on his musical approach: "[W]hen I was doing free jazz, most people thought that I just picked up my saxophone and played whatever was going through my head, without following any rule, but that wasn't true... People on the outside think that it's a form of extraordinary freedom, but I think that it's a limitation." In response, Derrida likens improvisation to reading: "[W]hat we often understand by improvisation is the creation of something new, yet something which doesn't exclude the pre-written framework that makes it possible... [T]he unique event that is produced only one time is nevertheless repeated in its very structure. Thus there is a repetition, in the work, that is intrinsic to the initial creation – that which compromises or complicates the concept of improvisation." Drawing on Derrida and Coleman's collaboration as well the attempted collaboration between saxophonist John Coltrane and sitarist Ravi Shankar, I want to suggest that the musical concept of improvisation offers an especially promising way of circumventing the metaphysical oppositions between freedom and constraint, spontaneity and order, agency and structure – metaphysical oppositions that continue to inform so much of our contemporary political discourse. I would also like to broach Derrida's comments on improvisation in *Dissemination*, the film *Derrida*, and "Play," a companion piece to "The Other's Language," some of which seem to contradict or at least depart from his interview with Coleman.

PANEL: Derrida–Blanchot: Récits Of Translation, Testimony, And Genres/Genders

In this panel, we discuss how Jacques Derrida reflects on the themes of language, translation, testimony, literary genres and sexual genders, primarily based on the works *Parages* and *Demeure*. In his philosophy, Derrida devoted himself to reading and, in the broad sense of the term, "translating" many

of Blanchot's texts (fictional and non-fictional). These acts of reading and translation are inscribed in his writing, revealing how language disrupts the possibility of ontological truth and what the philosopher himself calls transcendental meaning. Thus, in this panel we present the following three papers: 1) "Derrida avec Blanchot dans *Pas*," which discusses how Derrida, in the text *Pas*, constructs a philosophical reflection on the meaning of the word and writing on the horizon of the im(possible), appropriating (in expropriation) texts by Blanchot, setting in motion two fundamental words, *Pas* and *Viens*, in French; 2) "La folie des genres *sexuels*," which mobilizes two récits by Blanchot, *La Folie du Jour* and *L'arrêt de mort*, to discuss the Derridian disruption that confronts the law of sexual genders and literary genres—unstable, undecidable; 3) "Dwell/demeurer in the undecidable border of the *récit* - between fiction and testimony," which analyzes the aporias of testimony based on Derrida's reading of Blanchot, highlighting the threshold between testimony and fiction.

Aryadne Bezerra de Araújo (State University of Santa Cruz)

Dwell/Demeurer In The Undecidable Border Of The Récit: Between Fiction And Testimony

In *Demeure: Maurice Blanchot* (1998), Jacques Derrida addresses the aporias of testimony and its disturbing complicity with literature, more precisely with fiction. Based on his reading of Blanchot's *L'instant de ma mort*, the philosopher highlights the undecidable threshold between account and fiction, which forms the edge of a *récit* in which testimony unfolds. As is well known, *récit* can mean both narrative and report, and is therefore a form of writing that transcends the boundaries of textual genres, as Derrida demonstrates in *La loi du genre* and *Survivre*, essays collected in *Parages* (1986). Blanchot's *récit* develops as the promise of recounting an unspeakable event—the moment of an announced and suspended death—and thus becomes an emblematic writing of the simultaneous impossibility and necessity of surviving and witnessing one's own death. In this sense, the translators of *Demeure* into Brazilian Portuguese, Carla Rodrigues and Flávia Trocoli, emphasize Blanchot's aesthetic and ethical task of "resurrecting language and narrating death from the untranslatable scene". In this tension within writing, the aesthetic work with language causes the testimony to be permeated by fictionality, challenging reality when confronted with an unreal scene. Based on this discussion, this paper examines the aporias of testimony through Derrida's dialogue with Blanchot, focusing on how the unstable boundary between fiction and witnessing shapes the conditions of possibility and impossibility of testimonial discourse.

Élida Paulina Ferreria (State University of Santa Cruz)

Derrida Avec Blanchot Dans Pas

Cet article examine la manière dont Jacques Derrida construit une réflexion philosophique dans le texte *Pas* (2003), sur la signification du mot et de l'écriture à l'horizon de l'im(possible), en s'appropriant (dans l'expropriation) les textes de Blanchot, et en mettant en mouvement deux mots fondamentaux « Pas » et « Viens ». Dès le titre *Pas* (2003), Derrida impose une intraduisibilité, même en français, de ce « mot » qui se divise pour dire plusieurs choses; tantôt comme particule négative, tantôt comme pas (de passage, de pas de danse, etc.). Comme nous le voyons, la différenciation ne se fait que par la lecture ou l'écoute de ce mot, lorsqu'on explique à l'aide d'autres mots ce qui est en jeu entre pas et pas. Dans cette même veine, le mot « Viens » s'inscrit dans le texte de Derrida, qui se présente comme un dialogue philosophique. Le texte commence par une sorte d'appel (—Vient), dans une scène qui cite le texte de Blanchot, *L'arrêt de mort* : « Viens, et éternellement est là. », pour ensuite dire « j'ai commencé à parler d'un autre « viens », par l'autre à l'autre adressé puis gardé entre ses guillemets. Il était — déjà — entre des guillemets dans *L'arrêt de mort*, tout près de la fin, non pas à la fin, ni de la première ni de la dernière version, mais près de la fin, déjà divisé », parce que « Il ne dit pas « Viens », il dit qu'il le dit « Je dis éternellement « Viens » » et je me demande si la démesure du malheur ne s'y entraîne pas déjà, si son éternité n'est pas là, dans la division de cela, de ce « Viens-là » qui fait qu'« elle est là », éternellement. Il dit *maintenant* qu'il le dit, mais qu'il le dit, donc l' dit et le dira, éternellement ». Entre l'étrange mot « Vient » et l'événement d'une venue, nous pouvons réfléchir sur l'impossibilité de la présence en tant que telle du sujet, de l'écriture et de la signification.

PANEL: Signs of Survival

This panel is about Jacques Derrida's concept of survival, which develops from the idea of life death (*la vie la mort*) in the *Life Death* seminar and emerges as survival or living on (*survivance*) in such works as *Parages*, *Specters of Marx*, the *Death Penalty* seminar, the *The Beast and the Sovereign* seminar, and *Learning to Live Finally*, his last interview. For Derrida, it is not possible simply to live. We can only live on, only survive. But survival is not a poorer form of a proper life, fully lived. Survival is "the most intense life possible," he says in *Learning to Live Finally*. As such, it requires a new way of thinking about life, and death too, so that it is not a matter of "life and death" but "life death." Survival is an altogether other way of understanding the relation of life to death that requires life to know death from the start. As Robert Trumbull puts it in *From Life to Survival*, "The life of a living being...has to be originally exposed to its other in order to be at all,...has to welcome and repeat a certain exposure to death." Life death, survival, or living on is the complicated, compromising, and necessary structure of our existence. "Survival is an originary concept that constitutes the very structure of what we call existence," as Derrida concludes. An understanding of survival, this panel argues, is applicable to other key Derridean ideas of, for example, democracy, legacy, hospitality, and autoimmunity, which are central to explicitly political texts such as *Specters of Marx* and *Rogues*. Therefore, an understanding of survival should help us not only to understand the realities of our social existence but to interrogate the phantasms of absolute sovereignty, mastery, or immunity that rule today. How and in what forms do human and non-human selves and others survive? How and in what forms do societies, cultures, languages, institutions, social structures, systems of community, commerce, and communication, and systems of exclusion, oppression, violence, and exploitation survive?

Coughlan, David Coughlan (University of Limerick)

The Intensity of Survival

This paper begins with Derrida's statement in his last interview, *Learning to Live Finally*, that "survival ...is the most intense life possible." The focus is on the word "intense" and in particular on the forms of its appearance in the last four sessions of the 1975-76 *Life Death* seminar, which discuss Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and were later reworked and published as "To Speculate—On 'Freud'" in *The Post Card*. These forms include intensity, tension, and all those words which find their root in the Latin *tendere*, meaning *to stretch*. But because *tendre* or *to stretch* can also be written as *bander* in French, when we consider what is "the most intense," we also consider what Derrida, in "To Speculate—On 'Freud'," terms a "*bindinal* economy. Economy of the tie or the bond (*bind*, band, double band, double bind, contra-band)" or what Robert Trumbull, in *From Life to Survival*, refers to as Derrida's "logic of stricture." Binding, says Trumbull, "can best be understood as a certain tension internal to the structure of life." The paper concludes that the most intense life possible is the only possible measure of survival.

Diane Rubenstein (Cornell University)

"She the Living": Derrida, Spillers and Butler on Maternal Life Death

In the first session of the *Life Death* seminar (1975-76) Derrida invites us to think of life (*le vivant* [in the second session François Jacob's book title changes its gender from masculine—*vivant*—to feminine—*la vivante*]) along with François Jacob and Georges Canguilhem as "a language that partakes of a logic" (3/22). When it comes to the problematic of life death any Hegelian opposition is impertinent. Rather it is a "question of *an other alterity*." It is a strange sort of alterity "in which the other that is qualifying alterity, the other alterity, would no longer have anything to do with the alterity it would come to alter" (3-4/22). As read in this first session, Jacob's text destabilizes the question of genetic inheritance as it bifurcates the concept of program into memory and project. Derrida's reading underlines the enabling/disabling workings of "metaphor and concept in the domain of the life sciences" (23/44). While re-motivating the dominant concept of Jacob's genetics to apply to university instruction and the philosophic institution of the agrégation, Derrida introduces in the seminar's closing moments that (university) instruction happens through "a linguistic training... a living organism *whose life which it gets from the mother in the mother tongue, must be accepted rather than killed off...*" For Nietzsche, this

living body of the maternal tongue must be treated as living, not as a corpse for dissection/resection if Bildung is to proceed. Bildung is about “treating the living thing as something living” (24/46). Derrida’s seminar reads as if it were already in conversation with Hortense Spillers (“Mama’s Baby”) and Octavia Butler (*Bloodchild*). My proposed paper continues this encounter.

PANEL: Deconstruction and Reproductive Justice

Naomi Morgenstern (University of Toronto)

Abortion, Natality, and “Incalculable Justice”

The discourse of Reproductive Justice, as defined by Loretta Ross and Ricki Solinger, de-centers a classically liberal emphasis on reproductive choice, opting instead for an international human rights framework: “Reproductive justice,” Ross and Solinger write, “reintegrates human rights and civil rights and looks to the international human rights framework as a sturdy moral, political, and legal structure through which reproductive goals may eventually be accomplished.” But what happens to such “moral sturdiness” when, as is often the case, comparable arguments are made for the human rights (and the civil rights!) of embryos, not to mention blastocysts or even simpler cellular entities. This presentation will reconsider the “justice” of reproductive justice via a return to Derrida’s meditation on the “impossible” and ultimately “mad” decision in “Force of Law” (“this kind of justice which isn’t law, is the very movement of deconstruction at work in law and the history of law, in political history and history itself, before it even presents itself as the discourse that the academy or modern culture labels ‘deconstructionism’”). My presentation will also be informed by Barbara Johnson’s “Apostrophe, Animation, Abortion” (“is there any inherent connection between figurative language and questions of life and death, or who will wield and who will receive violence in a given society?”) and by Shelley Sella’s *Beyond Limits: Stories of Third Trimester Abortion Care*, a fearless account of the close relationship between midwifery and abortion care (“If there is one thing I have learned time and again throughout my practice, it is that each individual mother grasps—and grapples with—the viability of her pregnancy with far more knowledge, depth, and understanding than an outside policymaker can ever hope to”). Finally, I will draw on Fred Moten’s reading of Arendt’s “Reflections on Little Rock,” in which Moten conjures the figure of the “impossible [black] mother” who (recalling Derrida on the parasitic performative in SEC) stands for a general, as opposed to a restricted natality. These texts help us to think gestation and decision in their specific materiality and to explore continuities between bio and social reproduction.

Elina Staikou (Institute for Doctoral Studies in Visual Arts)

Undoing Reproduction: Maternal Forcefield and Reproductive Labour

“Did you put his limbs back together well?” asks Agave coming back to her senses at the sight of her son Pentheus’s dismembered body, whose flesh she had torn with her bare hands mistaking him in her Dionysian frenzy for a wild beast and now wanting to reverse this *undoing of reproduction*. The fatal and horrific act which will drive her out of Thebes for good is, however, pronounced by the tragic chorus as justice served. Reproduction will be understood here in terms of what Laura Briggs calls ‘reproductive labour’ showing reproductive politics as coextensive to politics per se as well as reproductive justice to social justice. The paper will appeal to the reproductive justice framework to retrace lineages between different modes and locales of maternal exile and inheritance across what it will call ‘maternal forcefield,’ the differential field of reproductive labour all the way down to the work of mitochondria as theorised by Nick Lane in relation to sexual difference and maternal heritability and up to Toni Cade Bambara’s quest for reproductive justice in *Those Bones Are Not My Child*. This will be framed by Derrida’s deconstruction of the logocentric inheritance of reproduction in *Life Death* alongside Fred Moten’s insistence on the ‘material trace of the maternal’, or else ‘reproductive materiality’ and his notion of ‘aurality’ as phono-graphe previous and anarchic to phonocentrism.. Maternal lineages and forcefield like an undercurrent beneath the ‘genetico-institutional’ text and phonocentric pro-gramme will recharge the space ‘between *logos* and *grammê*’ with implications for natality’s topo-logical and bio-logical prefigurations and for the political and philosophical ‘metaphorico-conceptual systems’ of

reproduction. Derrida and Sylvia Wynter's calls for 'transformative re-writing' of such vast programmes and pre-/de-scriptive statements at the root of 'national humanism' and the topological question of the human Geschlecht will be thought together with Moten's notions of 'aural writing' and 'invaginative maternity' and in terms of their interanimation within the general graphics and energetics of life death and their strong appeal to resisting every dismembering or undoing of reproductive justice.

Lynn Turner (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Touchpapers: Portrait of a Lady as Abortionist

'[T]he decision, if there is to be one, must advance toward a future which is not known, which cannot be anticipated.' - Derrida

Portrait de la Jeune Fille en Feu (Celine Sciamma, dir. 2019) is animated by portraiture's production of images. Soliciting allegory, extant criticism principally addresses its lesbian replay of the 'poet's choice' in *Orpheus and Eurydice*. My paper, however, alights on the depiction of abortion. While the central portrait is commissioned to contract a marriage emblematising the 'reproductive futurism' of Lee Edelman's now seminal work, the lovers – painter and painted subject – not only help a maid secure her abortion but Heloise insists that Marianne sketches that scene. Doing so, Marianne substitutes the abortionist's face for that of her lover. In 2009 Jennifer Doyle countered *No Future* (2004) by proposing that rather than the 'sinthomosexual,' the 'body standing in the way of reproduction, futurity, and life itself is quite specifically that of the abortive woman.' She then indicated the extreme difficulty in making that argument within the American university – her one untouchable subject (an almost quaint point in our embattled times). Doyle's excavation of a feminist archive on abortion disregarded by Edelman – even as the inflammatory imagery of the US anti-abortion lobby provided him with a key figure – sparks this paper. Edelman, Doyle reports, glosses only the most 'accessible' argument made by Barbara Johnson in 1986 regarding the personification of the fetus. While Doyle wonders why *No Future* disregarded her 'figural identification of feminist authorship with infanticide,' I alight on an incipiently Derridean path in 'Apostrophe, Animation, and Abortion.' There, Johnson wrote that "It is often said, in literary-theoretical circles, that to focus on undecidability is to be apolitical. [...] on the contrary, the undecidable is the political. There is politics precisely because there is undecidability. And there is also poetry." Movements defending abortion tend not to self-name as pro-abortion, but as the more palatable pro-choice rightfully exercised by individuals in possession of 'bodily autonomy.' Beholden to 'strategic' essentialism, I align with such petitioners before the law. But a wholly other thought was opened by Canadian philosopher-poet Karen Houle in 2007. Eschewing the liberal ideal of autonomy, displacing choice with decision, Houle invites Derrida to pause upon the Mount Moriah of abortion. In the firelight of the impasse of responsibility he identified in *The Gift of Death* as 'the most common thing,' Houle insists on the most common experience of abortion consequent upon unwelcome pregnancy as of core concern to ethics. The unwelcome pregnancy unaccompanied by any 'justificatory' story of coercion characterizes the highly unusual minor narrative of *Portrait de la Jeune Fille en Feu*: the maid's abortion. Yet among the film's numerous 'secret' paintings, the sketch of Heloise nevertheless burns away at the contractual calculation of the formal portrait. Edelman held 'reproductive futurism' to characterise narrative as such and thus no identity lead revolt could abort it..By means of the iterative image-making of *Portrait* together with the work of Johnson, Houle and Derrida, this paper kindles a *poeisis* that does not fire futurity but conditions it otherwise.

PANEL: Defending Democracy to Come

Democracies around the world are under pressure today. Democracies such as those defined by Jacques Derrida as democracy to come are particularly under attack. The four contributions take Derrida's understanding of democracy (introduced in particular in "Specters of Marx"; "The Politics of Friendship"; "Rogues: Two Essays on Reason") as the starting point for their reflections and, based on this, ask what "defense" can mean. The focus is hereby on the question of the role, function, and purpose of violence. Four perspectives explore (1) the question of how democracy to come can be defended democratically and what role violence plays in resistance to totalitarianism, (2) how violence

is framed, justified, or rendered intelligible within political orders, (3) how politics and ethics can be kept in relation, and 4) what role the theater plays in this.

Christine Abbt (University of St. Gallen)

Defending Democracies Democratically. On the Topicality of the Concept of Violence in the Works of Camus and Derrida

What does “defending democracies” mean today? In three steps, I develop, with Camus and Derrida, an anti-totalitarian stance between warmongering and pacifism, which combines politics and ethics and defines violence in its connection to law and justice. My contribution is structured around the following three questions: Which democracies? What defense? What violence to defend democracies to come? In my input, I first define democracies with Derrida as “democracies to come”; I then explain what defense means in this context and what specific problems democratic resistance faces; thirdly, I show with reference to Camus and Derrida what it can mean to understand violence as both necessary and illegitimate. On this basis, I conclude by explaining the extent to which the concept of violence is embedded differently in Camus and Derrida, but can nevertheless be systematically linked, and I argue that Camus and Derrida provide relevant and important answers for us today to the question of how to combat totalitarianism democratically.

Leire Urricelqui (University of St. Gallen)

Who Can Be Killed in the Name of Humanity? Derrida, Schmitt, and the Autochthonous Logic of Hyperpoliticized Violence

This paper argues that contemporary forms of eradictory state violence should not be understood as a depoliticization of sovereignty, but as its intensification. Rather than marking the collapse of the political, such violence signals a condition of hyperpoliticization: a saturation of the political by anthropological and moral determinations, in which destruction appears as protection and extermination as duty. I contend that this saturation is made possible by autochthony, the fiction through which a political community presents itself as belonging properly to a place, and grounds its legitimacy in origin, descent, and soil. Drawing on Jacques Derrida’s critique of political discourses of birth, fraternity, and nation, I reconstruct autochthony as an ontological grammar of the *chez-soi*. Autochthony names the schema through which the “proper” secures the authority of the logos and transforms exclusion into the defense of what is one’s own. It is this grammar that allows political belonging to appear self-evident, and violence to be articulated as preservation. From within this Derridean problematic, the paper rereads Carl Schmitt’s theory of political enmity. Schmitt famously warns against wars waged “in the name of humanity”, arguing that the figure of the absolute enemy emerges when powers appropriate universal concepts and moralize conflict. Yet this critique sits uneasily within his own account of the political. The friend–enemy distinction, grounded in the existential possibility of killing, already presupposes a normative anthropology of belonging: an implicit homogeneity of the political community and a territorialized understanding of a shared way of life. I argue that this tension is not a contingent inconsistency in Schmitt’s thought, but a structural aporia. I show that Schmitt’s attempt to purify the political of moralization depends on the very autochthonous logic that renders moral absolutization possible. The “enemy of humanity” does not arrive from outside the political; it emerges as the immanent fulfillment of an autochthonous logic in which the other is figured as contamination, and its destruction becomes a condition of communal self-preservation. Hyperpoliticized violence thus marks the foreclosure of what Derrida calls democracy to come, the exposure of the political to indeterminacy, contestation, and irreducible heterogeneity.

Anna Wieder (University of Vienna)

Staging Democracy to Come: Derrida, Theatre, and Politics of Representation

This paper reconsiders Jacques Derrida’s notion of democracy to come through the lens of his reflections on theatrical representation. Building on Derrida’s diagnosis of a shared *mal de représentation* in both theatre and politics, the paper situates theatre as a critical model for understanding the limitations and possibilities of democratic representation. With and against Lyotard, Derrida suggests that theatre should not simply portray political content but should restructure its own representational protocols so that the unrepresented—singular voices, marginalized perspectives, and

undecidable events— may emerge. This conception resists both the didactic political theatre of Brechtian tradition and the totalizing reforms of Artaud; instead it foregrounds theatre's constitutive indeterminacy as a model for democratic praxis that remains receptive to the unforeseeable. In this framework, defending democracy does not primarily mean safeguarding institutional mechanisms, but rather sustaining openness to interruption and cultivate what Derrida calls an art of disruption that is at once political and theatrical, giving the floor, at the most inconvenient of moments, to those who, within the prevailing order of representation, have no recognized right to speak.

PANEL: Témoigner in Translation

This panel brings together graduate students who participated in the 2025 workshop of the Derrida Seminar Translation Project. Last summer, we convened at IMEC in Caen for the translation of two seminars, *Penser, c'est dire non* (1960-61) and *Témoigner* (1992-93). On this panel, we consider the literary and philosophical stakes of the latter text, paying particular attention to limits and potentials of translation. The title alone of *Témoigner* speaks to the fraught possibilities of translating it into another tongue. Contained within this French term is a plurality of meanings: to bear witness, to testify, to show, to reveal, but also to be a *témoin*, a silent witness who sees and feels, who carries a testimony without necessarily testifying. As Derrida explains, it may be the case that to move from one side of this meaning to the other, to speak about what one has witnessed, is to foreclose the possibility of any true testimony, as one's singular witnessing cannot be translated into another idiom. To think through *témoigner* in its semantic variety to exist in this unbridgeable gap. Our first paper turns to translation theory, that of Schleiermacher and Benjamin, to read a particular moment in the *Témoigner* seminar when Derrida addresses the singularity of the French *je t'aime*. An individual phrase bears witness to the impossibility of translation and the necessity of any translation to stay with this impossibility. Literary fiction is considered in the second paper, taking the split between witnessing and testifying to read historical fiction. What appears at first glance to be a narrative depiction of an historical event is in fact an occlusion of any possible witnessing of such an event. The truth of witnessing and the truth of testifying emerge as fundamentally incompatible. Finally we move to the Francophone Caribbean in the third paper, reading Derrida with and against Glissant to examine the permanent abyss that lies between the two sides of witnessing.

Andrew P. Clark (Brown University)

Opening and the Other

In Derrida's translation series on the text tentatively entitled *Bearing Witness* (*Témoigner*, 1992-93), he draws attention to vulnerability experienced by the one who opens their mouth, addresses the other and is to be received. This structural relation to belief, delineated via a history of the word *témoigner*, lends itself to an investigation of an aesthetic space concerning the very impossibility of testifying to one's own testimony. For, if the claim that one is to be believed as one believes in God or a God comprises an act of faith—the necessary condition required in imparting a testimony—it is also impossible to think or access that order of thought in believing oneself, because of the very incertitude built into any such claims of certitude. A bottomless chaos or a gaping abyss, thus, opens itself up in the evocation of the mouth: it has at once so much to say and nothing to say at the same time. This paper thinks through the figure of the mouth and the gesture of opening oneself up to the chaos of faith and testimony in the postcolonial context of Edouard Glissant's text 'poetics of relation,' wherein the abyssal evocation of the middle passage as a womb or a bodily opening is intended to account for the impossibility of testifying for the brutalizing horror of slavery.

Bram Nealon (DePaul University)

Translation, Je t'aime

Many of the core thinkers in the history of translation theory center an idea of untranslatability. Friedrich Schleiermacher argues that works worthy of translation must be understood as products of both their author and language, and as such, any attempt to divide and reconstruct the text in a new

language will always fail. Walter Benjamin contends that in the original text, word and meaning grew together into an organic whole, like that between a fruit and its skin. Translation, rather, begins from a separation, and its language surrounds its content. This split between word and meaning defines the translation but becomes insurmountable. Jacques Derrida sees the translator as born with an unpayable debt to the original, as they can never use a sign to pay back the pound of flesh. This paper maps the untranslatability of “je t’aime” – as presented in the ongoing translation of Derrida’s *Témoigner* lecture series – onto translation as a whole, arguing one can use “je t’aime” as shorthand for the impossibility that lies at the core of translation. Derrida distills translation’s contradiction, its impossibility, by taking “je t’aime” and elucidating why it is untranslatable and why that untranslatability is important. “Je t’aime” is not merely a message aimed at an audience, but is a living event, a testimony. It transcends the category of missive; it does not seek merely to communicate one person’s feelings, but is instead an event in time produced by those feelings. “Je t’aime” is itself a translation of flesh into sign, pushing the heart’s quickened pace out of the brain’s dry mouth. It may ‘mean’ the same thing as “I love you,” “Ich liebe dich,” or a reiterated “je t’aime,” but since it exists beyond the realm of communication, any retranslation will fail to capture the register, the gravity, the flesh, the heart of the utterance. Just as Schleiermacher and Benjamin claim, any mark worthy of translation cannot exist outside of its original author and language. “Je t’aime,” in its apparent simplicity, acts out the untranslatable precisely because of its indestructible singularity, its beating heart that lies beyond language.

Rose Taury (Brown University)

Witnessing History

This paper thinks through Derrida’s *Témoigner* seminar in relation to the Don DeLillo novel *Libra* (1988). At the core of DeLillo’s novel is the question of if and how History can be witnessed, and what happens to those who try to witness it. A singular act, one man killing another, becomes an obsessive, labyrinthine search for authentic testimony, a search that speaks to the exact philosophical problems Derrida raises in his seminar of witnessing and testifying. Derrida identifies two key gaps in any act of witnessing and testifying, the gap between the moment of witnessing and the moment of testifying, and the gap between a reliable testimony and a repeatable testimony. Both arise from the two forms of truth inherent to any testimony, truth content (veridicity) and a desire to be heard as true (veracity), elements that are simultaneously inseparable and in conflict. Between these two terms there is always a risk that the performative alters or corrupts the descriptive by changing the story. There is also the risk in repetition. Anyone’s true testimony must be their own singular witnessing, but this singular testimony, in order to be true, must be repeatable, thereby corrupting its singularity. Testimony always has a possibility of occurring and a possibility of losing itself in a search for repeatable truths. In short, Derrida opens up the double meaning of the French *témoigner*, meaning both to witness and to bear witness. *Libra* gives us characters stuck in this very split. The story of an assassin ends with him witnessing himself in the act of assassination, dying before he can share his testimony. This paper reads this conclusion with reference to what Derrida describes as a perception of attendance, a phenomenon in which one can only come to witness an event through an abstraction that prevents one from participating. The only “true” testimony exists within one who can share it. For the protagonist of *Libra*, this aporia has lethal consequences.

PANEL SERIES

PANEL SERIES: The Status of the Quasi-Transcendental and the Future of Deconstruction

This series of panels brings together an international group of scholars committed to a rigorous interrogation of the philosophical innovations that define Jacques Derrida's work, from his 1953 *Mémoire* through his final seminars. This collective project is unified by a shared attention to a central, yet underexamined, feature of deconstruction: Derrida's complex faithfulness to the transcendental tradition. Moving beyond the reception of deconstruction as a merely literary or linguistic turn, these panels seek to expand and challenge current accounts of Derrida's thinking as "quasi-transcendental" by excavating the specific theoretical problems that motivated his transformation of transcendental philosophy—doing so with greater philological rigor and philosophical precision than has been applied to date. The contributors are, above all, interested in returning to the "sources" of Derrida's thought. Through meticulous archival and theoretical work, the papers gathered across these panels demonstrate the enduring necessity of engaging with the transcendental tradition for understanding the contemporary stakes of deconstruction. Gathered under the titles: "Reopening the Quasi-Transcendental Field," "Arche-Writing and the Phenomenological Field: Closure, Idiomaticity, Genesis," and "The Horizons of Deconstructive Reason: Axiomatics, Truth, and Epistemology Otherwise," the nine papers that compose this panel series stage an urgent intervention in contemporary Derrida Studies. The primary stake of this collaboration is the reclamation of deconstruction as a rigorous, structural transformation of the transcendental tradition, rather than a simple departure from it. By grounding the "quasi-transcendental" in its ancient and scholastic roots, the first panel provides the philological and theoretical prelude to the second panel's focus on Derrida's way of departing from the phenomenologico-transcendental tradition, which remains so faithful to many of its gnoseological commitments that deconstruction could indeed be seen as the most rigorous form of a phenomenological-transcendental thinking in the wake of the closure of the metaphysics of presence. The third panel then extends this line of inquiry by examining how Derrida's thinking forces us to rethink the status of axiomatization and truth, leading to the possibility of a transformative epistemology, no longer wedded to the phantasm of a single, unitary reason. This movement from archival retrieval to the call for an "Enlightenment to Come" and a dissemination of reason demonstrates that the philosophical vitality of deconstruction depends on its ability to rethink the transcendental as an open horizon, contaminated by historicity and accidentality. Ultimately, these panels argue that only by returning to the formal rigor of Derrida's sources can we properly articulate the future of deconstruction and its capacity to sustain and nourish an unconditional taste for the event. By organizing these sessions within the framework of *Derrida Today*, the participants aim to foster a sustained dialogue on the philosophical import of Derrida's work at the most significant international conference devoted to his thinking.

1. The Horizons of Deconstructive Reason: Axiomatics, Truth, and Epistemology Otherwise

This panel serves as a critical continuation of our previous inquiry into the transcategorical and transcendental structures in Derrida's thought. While the earlier session traced the medieval and scholastic roots of the "quasi-transcendental," and the second panel analyzed Derrida's faithful departure and transformation of Husserlian phenomenology, this panel shifts the focus toward the gnoseological effects of deconstruction's operations. By interrogating the limits of teleology, the resistance of truth to intentionality and phenomenality, and the necessity for a deconstructive retrieval of the concept of axiom, these three presentations collectively seek to articulate what remains of "reason" and "truth" after the deconstructive displacement of traditional ontotheology. The first presentation, "Axiomatics or 'Critique in the Derridean Sense'" interrogates the status of the "axiom" in deconstructive discourse, which seemingly renders all axioms impossible. It identifies an ultra-

transcendental axiomatics—an inescapable *il faut*—that motivates deconstruction itself. This talk seeks to define a renewed critical philosophy that navigates the “deconstructible yet indestructible” desire to articulate the world as it is. The second paper, “Intuition et donation; don et témoignage,” examines the limits of phenomenological intuition through a dialogue between Derrida, Husserl, and Jean-Luc Marion. By radicalizing the concepts of the “gift” (*don*) and “testimony,” the presentation explores how truth manifests in resistance to visibility and subjective intentionality, specifically within the poetic intertextuality of Paul Celan. Finally, “The Enlightenments to Come: Towards a Deconstructive Epistemology,” deconstructs the teleological constraints inherited by Husserl from Kant. It argues that the “infinite task” of reason often neutralizes the event” of knowledge by subordinating the unknown to a predetermined *telos*. The paper proposes a pluralized, future-oriented epistemology capable of postulating a universal beyond relativism and nationalism.

Alice Serra (Université Fédérale de Minas Gerais)

Intuition et donation; don et témoignage : Remarques à partir de Derrida, lecteur de Husserl, Marion et Celan

Cette contribution propose à reprendre la question de la vérité thématisée par Jacques Derrida d’abord à partir des répercussions de son intertextualité avec la pensée d’Edmund Husserl (Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl; La voix et le phénomène) et d’un dialogue qui a eu lieu entre lui et Jean-Luc Marion en 1997 dans l’Université de Villanova. Si, chez Husserl, le problème de la vérité est lié à l’analyse des modalités de l’intuition (perceptive, imaginative, eidétique) et aux degrés d’évidence dans lesquelles le phénomène se produit consciemment, Marion, quant à lui, propose souligner les manières dont la phénoménalisation se subsume au concept de donation : celle-ci inclut ainsi non seulement les modalités intuitives, mais aussi l’intentionnalité qui se tourne vers quelque chose, même lui manque un corrélat. Or, Derrida, par la déconstruction des concepts phénoménologiques d’intuition et donation, signale dans quelle mesure les analyses phénoménologiques ne suffisent pas devant quelques circonstances lorsque la vérité se manifeste sans caractères visibles, sans intentionnalité subjective et en résistance à sa propre phénoménalité. Derrida met en évidence ces nuances en différenciant la donnée et le « don » et, enfin, en attribuant à la vérité le caractère de témoignage. Comme on en lit surtout dans *Politique et poétique du témoignage* et *Demeure : Maurice Blanchot*, lorsque quelqu’un témoigne d’un événement, d’une chose ou d’une personne, cela se fait à travers une série de déplacements par rapport à l’acte, à l’intentionnalité qui l’accompagnerait et aux moyens par lesquels la vérité se manifesterait. Finalement, par les déconstructions des rapports entre fiction et vérité, Derrida radicalise les conditions d’(im)possibilité de l’accès à la vérité en tant que don (sans contre-don) et témoignage. Ces conditions s’exacerbent dans son intertextualité avec Celan.

Donovan Stewart (Leiden University & Leuphana University)

Axiomatics or “Critique in the Derridean Sense”

What is the status of the ‘axiom’ in Derrida’s thought? Deconstruction, after all, is at least also a discourse which demonstrates the fundamental impossibility of any axiom worthy of the name, an axiom which would be infinitely identically repeatable, irrefutable, and sovereign, that would be, in sum, a properly transcendental condition. Deconstruction’s oft noted irreducibility to critique would seem to stem precisely from its intimate relation to a difference that would expropriate any ontotheological ground, including any axiom, with an alterity that both enables and renders them impossible. The axiom, with its additional etymological appeals to harmony, equivalence, and the proper (and *dikē* as *Fug*), would seem to name that which deconstruction threatens above all. And yet, why is it that we nevertheless will continuously encounter axioms by name throughout Derrida’s texts, often inhabiting a position eerily reminiscent of the transcendental? In order to respond to this question and as a way into the problem of the transcendental more generally ‘after deconstruction’ or into ‘critique in the Derridean sense,’ I develop an axiomatic line of thought that runs through his work. We will see that it is not simply a matter of articulating the axioms that must and should be at play, such as the oft repeated: ‘it’s better to leave the future open’, ‘necessity to make as if there were world’, or ‘absolute demand to respect the secret’; but this axiomatics is also a question of thinking the inescapable *necessity* of articulating these axioms as such. There is an ultra-transcendental axiomatics,

an *il faut*, that motivates the delimitation of all that says, *il faut*. The readings here will distinguish these two levels of axiomatics and think their relation to the logic of the *il faut* and quasi- transcendental. Above all this work will participate in the broader collective project of developing a renewed sense of critical philosophy after deconstruction, or what is the same, to continue to learn how to mitigate the deconstructible, yet indestructible, ontotheological desire to articulate what is as it is as such—and to do so *well*, or perhaps in an arcane sense, *axiomatically*.

Francesco Vitale (Università degli Studi di Salerno)

The Enlightenments to Come: Towards a Deconstructive Epistemology

In “The ‘World’ of the Enlightenment to Come,” Derrida reinterprets Husserl’s *The Crisis of European Sciences* in an attempt to conceive the conditions for a future coming of reason and therefore of knowledge, in a context where the production of scientific knowledge seems to be reduced to mere calculation, the application of a predetermined program, the realization of the ideal of a *mathesis universalis*, made even more credible today thanks to the extraordinary advances in computational power. The paper aims to reconstruct Derrida’s deconstruction of Husserl’s reactivation of the “infinite idea (in the Kantian sense) of an infinite task, as *theoria*” as an antidote to the objectivist rationalism of modern science, and a return to the origin of “universal scientific reason,” in order to show its metaphysical constraints and consequent epistemological limitations. By explaining Derrida’s critical references to Kant regarding the “regulatory use of Ideas” as a condition for a coherent and systematic understanding of nature, we will show that Husserl inherits from Kant a long-standing metaphysical constraint: teleology. We will also show that this constraint imposes an epistemological limit on scientific knowledge: Instead of freeing knowledge from the calculating objectivism of modern science, it leads to “the neutralization of the event.” Teleology prevents scientific knowledge from accounting for the structural and structuring role of becoming— that is, of the unpredictability that constitutes the irreducible condition of the constitution of the phenomena that are the object of knowledge. This teleological prejudice leads to the consequent reduction and subordination of the unknown to the already known, ordered to the *telos* of the unity of Reason, that is, of a totalizing, coherent, and systematic knowledge—the matrix of every form of determinism. Finally, we will attempt to show that Derrida’s deconstruction of modern epistemology is not limited to the *pars destruens* but proposes some conditions for a future epistemology: A pluralization of reason capable of “postulating a universal beyond all relativism, culturalism, ethnocentrism, and especially nationalism.”

2. Reopening the Quasi-Transcendental Field; or, Back to the Sources

This panel explores the structural persistence and radical transformation of the “transcendental” within Jacques Derrida’s deconstructive project. While Derrida’s work is often associated with Kantian and Husserlian inquiries into “conditions of possibility,” these presentations argue that understanding his “quasi-transcendental” operations requires revisiting the medieval understanding of the transcendental as *transcategorical* and the traces of a Platonist understanding of sensibility that haunt Heidegger’s retrieval of Kant’s imagination as the source of the transcendental. By revisiting Derrida’s engagement with medieval ontology, Kantian imagination, and Platonic receptivity, the panel illuminates how his thought functions at the intersection of existential predication and the “third terms” (trace, *pharmakon*, *khôra*) that traverse metaphysics. The first presentation, “The Abyss of Receptivity,” focuses on the transcendental imagination as the common root of sensibility and understanding. By linking Plato’s *khôra* to Kantian receptivity, the paper reads Derrida’s work as a deconstructive retrieval of Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant, questioning whether Heidegger’s “abyss” remains complicit with a “platonism” regarding the trace. The second presentation, “Being Transcategorical (As if Quasi-Transcendental),” investigates Derrida’s privileging of the medieval definition of the transcendental—that which transcends Aristotle’s categories. Through a reading of *Le supplément de copule* and the 1969-1970 seminar *Théorie du discours philosophique I*, the paper argues that the “quasi-transcendental” grafts medieval and modern traditions, reducing modern conditions of possibility to the status of transcategorical being. The third paper, “The Transcategoriality of Being and the Operation of Supplémentarity,” frames Derrida’s conception of writing as an autonomous transcendental field that

iterates the medieval doctrine of being (*ens, unum, verum, bonum*). By examining scholastic analogy, the paper demonstrates how “non-synonymous substitution” mirrors analogical operations, allowing marks to function simultaneously at the transcendental and conditioned levels.

Matías Bascuñán (Universidad de Chile)

The Abyss of Receptivity: Transcendental Imagination in Derrida's Plato

This paper examines two references to Kant's transcendental imagination in Derrida's writings on Plato. The first appears at the opening of the second section of “*Plato's Pharmacy*,” where Derrida associates the differential character of the *pharmakon* with transcendental imagination understood as the common root of sensibility and understanding. The second occurs in *Khôra*, where Derrida links Plato's account of *khôra* in the *Timaeus*—the *triton genos* (third kind)—specifically in its determination as receptacle and receiver (*pandekhai, dekhomai, dekhomenon*), to the Kantian meditation on receptivity. In both instances, transcendental imagination is brought into relation with the aporia of originary inscription, or “trace,” that Derrida identifies in Plato's text, and more broadly with what he elsewhere describes as the constitutive yet irreducible heterogeneity of the “third term” that silently traverses the history of metaphysics. Insofar as in both cases Derrida gestures toward transcendental imagination as the differential origin of receptivity, I argue that these references function as deconstructive retrievals of Heidegger's “violent interpretation” of Kant in the *Kantbuch*, where Heidegger famously claims that, in composing the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant recoiled in fear from the transcendental imagination as from an abyss—a figure Derrida himself repeatedly takes up in *Khôra*. On this basis, the paper advances the following hypothesis: Heidegger's “violent interpretation” of Kant may remain complicit with what Derrida calls “Platonism” to the extent that Heidegger interprets the “abyss of receptivity”—that is, time as auto-affection—as the essential structure of selfhood. In so doing, Heidegger's reading of the first *Critique* risks turning transcendental imagination into the very essence of what Derrida, in his late work, terms *ipseity*, thus violently closing off the possibility of exposing imagination, and with it, the transcendental, to the thinking of the (quasi-transcendental) trace.

Valeria Campos Salvaterra (Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso)

The Transcategoriality of Being and the Operation of Supplémentarity

In the introduction to Husserl's *The Origin of Geometry*, Derrida maintains that writing allows for the configuration of an “autonomous transcendental field from which every actual subject can be absent.” As an inscription detached from the modes of constitution conditioned by any *actual* subjectivity, writing can be understood as a transcendental speculative structure. In this paper, I will argue that Derrida conceives of this transcendental field as an iteration of the medieval notion of the *transcategoriality of being*. To defend this thesis, this paper turns to several essays (*Le supplément de copule* “Violence et métaphysique”) and unpublished seminars (*Le sens du transcendental*, *La chose*, and *Théorie du discours philosophique*) in which Derrida addresses the medieval doctrine of transcategoriality. At stake for Derrida is the legacy of the medieval claim that being is *transcendental* because it is predicated *transcategorially*. In scholasticism, *transcendens* was commonly used to characterize what is formally predicated of all entities insofar as they are not essential predicates but existential ones: *ens, unum, res, aliquid, verum, bonum*. Transcendental field is thus transcategorial precisely because everything that *is* can be said *to be* or to be *one*, to be a *thing* or *something*, to be *true* or *good*, regardless of its generic-specific (i.e., categorial) determination. More important for my argument is the fact that transcendental “concepts” are *analogically* related to each other in such a way that they are “replaceable” by each other. Exploring this medieval context allows us to understand the role that transcategoriality plays in Derrida's conception of the supplement, which, I argue, relies on the possibility of existential—not essential—predication. Medieval analogy thus allows us to understand Derrida's notion of textuality as a transcategorial structure produced through analogical operations of non-synonymous substitution that exceed the medieval delimitation of analogy through comparison. When understood against its medieval backdrop, supplementarity names the operation that enables any word or mark to function *both* at the transcendental level (i.e., as names, titles, or metaphors for the condition of possibility of any given field) *and* at the level of the conditioned.

Kristian Olesen Toft (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg)

Being Transcategorical (As if Quasi-Transcendental)

As dictionaries of philosophical terminology will note, the term *transcendental* has had two primary and quite distinct inflections in the history of philosophy: a medieval notion of transcendentals as properties (*being, unity, truth, goodness*) which transcend Aristotle's categories, and a modern notion, beginning with Kant, of the transcendental as concerning conditions of possibility. While the latter conception is today dominant, throughout his works, from early to late, Derrida emphasizes that he understands the term *transcendental* "in its most rigorous sense", which, somewhat surprisingly, turns out to be the scholastic one: "transcendental means transcategorical." Derrida thereby not only privileges the medieval sense over the modern, but also suggests that, despite their apparent incompatibility, the latter may in fact be reduced to the former: "Despite their different contexts, this definition [...] also fits the Kantian and Husserlian concepts of the transcendental." In this paper, I consider what the reason may be for this surprising conflation, and what its consequences are, proposing that it plays a key part in Derrida's formulation of the notion of the *quasi-transcendental* in so far as this may precisely be described as a grafting upon each other of the two conceptions of the transcendental. After reading relevant passages from Derrida's texts which support this, I turn in the second part of the paper to his reflections on the word *being*, in particular, as transcendental (that is, transcategorical), initiated in the opening pages of *De la grammatologie* and developed more fully a few years later in the 1971 article *Le supplément de copule*, in which Derrida indicates an "absolutely unique relation between language and the transcendental." To conclude the paper, I broaden the discussion to Derrida's still unpublished seminar from 1969-1970, *Théorie de la discours philosophique I*, the sixth session of which was revised as *Le supplément de copule*, but whose other sessions also touch upon how the transcendental functions in the discourse of philosophy.

PANEL SERIES: Transdeconstruction

Transdeconstruction—isn't this a tautology? Isn't deconstruction always already trans? Certainly, the works of Derrida, Cixous, de Man, et al. comprise a rich archive of scholarship on the conceptions of *trans*—denoting crossing or moving through, over, beyond, or outside—that have shaped European thought. In Derrida, for example, problematics of translation are never more than a few pages away, often appearing alongside other themes of aporetic crossing such as transference (re: the gift, metaphor, psychoanalysis, etc.), transformation (re: the event, confession, iterability, etc.), and the (quasi-)transcendental. As for sexual difference, deconstruction has strongly influenced the queer and feminist theories of gender that spawned Trans Studies, not least Judith Butler's work on performativity, inspired by Derrida's contribution to speech-act theory. Indeed, despite rarely addressing the specific transitions and transgressions of sex and gender that motivate Trans Studies, the general "intersexuality" of Derrida's work (to borrow Elissa Marder's term) is notably transversal to the coordinates of what we now call cisnormativity. At the risk of periodising, however, it is evident that the transness of deconstruction has undergone something of a transition of its own this century. Since Derrida's death, the "dream" of "innumerable" sexes that he evokes in "Choreographies" has materialised in an astonishing diversification of expressions of gender and sexuality, including the proliferation of trans and nonbinary genders all over the world. While only a few of these identities (e.g., genderqueer) typically view themselves as enacting deconstruction, the unprecedented destabilisation of such binaries as male/female, man/woman, and sex/gender should not be disarticulated from the consequences of Derrida's interventions. Accordingly, as many have observed, the resulting backlash—a furious and violent rejection of trans life—can be understood as an outgrowth of the "theory wars" of the 1980s. This two-part panel examines some crucial dimensions of the recontextualization of deconstruction and trans. Part one considers the politics and erotics of transness today, interrogating the challenges posed to transdeconstruction by resurgent materialisms as well as transphobia. Part two explores deconstructive approaches to the ontology and phenomenology of

transness, bringing Heidegger, Baudrillard, and others into conversation with Derrida around topics such as transition.

1. Deconstructing Philosophies of Sex

Christina A.T. Brinker (Leuphana University)

Transitioning and the Socio-Semiotic Deconstruction of Body and Habitus

Theorizing transition positions the body as a multi-faced factor regarding one's interaction with the world. It is at once the medium of interaction, a core aspect of one's aesthetics of existence and the conduit of one's proprioception. To transition is to critically engage with each of these elements, become aware of their functions, dynamics, interactions. I would argue that there is a significant overlap between trans-, disability- and media-studies, yet to be properly explored, centring the body as the horizon of the considered-to-be possible. To be trans is to challenge that horizon. In particular, I would like to talk about the body in terms of its socio-somatic potential in relation to power, not in terms of power enacted externally but from the perspective of the self which inter-acts through it, which has to utilise this medium-symbol as form, saturated with historical a priori, to communicate the content referred to as "self." Staying with the theme, the authors I would like to reference may also be split into form/methodology and content. Methodologically, I am orienting myself along the lines of Luhmann and Heidegger, relying on their work done regarding self-environment/world interactions and perception. Regarding content, I am fascinated by the figure of the beast, as it is discussed by Deleuze & Guattari in the *Mille Plateaux* as well as Derrida in his 2001–2003 Seminars. Placing parallel the beast and queer bodies, we can follow paths ready-made, looking for a phenomenology of transitioning that acknowledges its subversive potential, insecurity, internal precarity. This is congruent with the tendency of many trans people to cherish the monstrous, myself included. If time allows, I would like to explore this dynamic as well, body-horror as virtual deconstruction of the physical self. There is catharsis in this process, association with the eldritch as both a power-fantasy and as a means to address abject proprioception.

Enrico Schiró (University of Bologna)

Queering Seduction: Baudrillard's Trans-Deconstruction

This paper argues that *Nous sommes tous transsexuels* (1987) articulates a structural relation between transness and Derridean deconstruction, and that the aporia traversing the text, when fully interrogated, reveals in Baudrillard an alternative model of "trans-deconstruction" grounded in ambivalence and duality rather than in the logic of dissemination. The aporia is double. On the one hand, Baudrillard interprets the technical and semiotic proliferation of sex/gender as a weak form of transgression—one that multiplies identities without interrupting the identitarian logic that sustains them. On the other hand, he claims that transsexuality is the site of all seduction, echoing his 1979 thesis that seduction is intrinsically trans-sexual. This tension does not indicate inconsistency but the collision of two distinct deconstructive styles: a Derridean one based on iterability and polysemy, and a Baudrillardian one based on ambivalence understood as non-identity and duality. To make this alternative visible, the paper turns to *De la séduction* and *Mots de passe*. In these texts, seduction is defined as a "deontology" that prevents any sex/gender from grounding itself ontologically or imposing itself as a sovereign term. Seduction functions as a de-ontology: a structural operation that displaces the ontology of sexual difference not through the multiplication of signs but through their reversible play. Baudrillard describes seduction as the becoming-masculine of the feminine and the becoming-feminine of the masculine, and valorizes metamorphosis—figured paradigmatically through Tiresias—as the point at which identities collapse into their own non-identity. From this perspective, transness is not the proliferation of gendered identities but the structural operator of ambivalence that exposes identity to its reversible limit. This operator contrasts sharply with Derrida's logic of dissemination, which suspends the origin under erasure and multiplies supplements and prostheses. Seduction, by contrast, is original: entities are already trans insofar as they have always transgressed the limits of their identity, opening to an alternative trans-deconstruction. The paper thus proposes a re-reading of Baudrillard's work that discloses a trans- deconstructive logic irreducible to Derrida's, and argues that

this logic provides a distinct conceptual resource for thinking the relation between seduction, gender, and non-identity within trans studies.

Myron A. Vourakis (University of Panteion)

Geschlecht and Death

This paper will discuss a few relations one may draw between Derrida's analysis of Heidegger's *Geschlecht* and Reiner Schürmann's analysis of Heidegger's Death. As Schürmann would put it, it is an analysis stemming from Heideggerian conceptions, that the man Heidegger would be deeply uncomfortable with. Derrida analyses Heidegger's *Geschlecht* as a character integral to the Dasein and at the same time non-ontological. It is important to situate that *Geschlecht* appears as a partial *topos* of Dasein's in-the-world-being as well as a deeply *unheimlich* movement that pulls Dasein towards a neutrality that opposes race, gender and sexual binarities and hierarchies. It is important here to remember Schürmann's remark that the Ereignis is expressed firstly as Ent Ereignis. It is in this capacity that we think an analysis vis-à-vis Schürmann's interpretation of death in Heidegger's work is relevant. Schürmann interprets death as a movement beyond and dissolution of identity and the breaking down of a world where Dasein is no longer *in*. Schürmann gives the example of a fresco depicting Agamemnon covering his face during Iphigeneia's sacrifice, and argues that Agamemnon's identity as Iphigeneia's father, his Fürsorge towards Iphigeneia in this case, is dissolved. One, including perhaps Agamemnon himself, cannot see Agamemnon after that sacrifice as anything else as the ruthless leader king of the Aegeans. What we propose is that *Geschlecht* is an integral *topos* that death takes place and even more so that it does in both "small" (such as living through a transformative sexual experience, Saketopoulou would put it in her book *Sexuality Beyond Consent*) and "big" instances (such as coming out to oneself). True to Derrida's spirit, we see *Geschlecht* as a *topos* of difference, an undecidable difference, that is beyond any consciousness or unconsciousness but rather founds them in their being. The originary power that Derrida attributes to Dasein's *Geschlecht* is founded according to us exactly on that process of death, and even more so it is what transforms the pain (in Han's sense) to the truly *unheimlich* existence that is mortal existence in this topological sense.

2. Politics of Trans Life and Study

Christopher Griffin (The Open University)

Tangents of Gender: Trans-auto-hetero-affection in the Autobiographies of the Human

For readers of his *Confessions* today, Rousseau's belief that masturbation is a corrupting vice that "destroys Nature" (as Derrida puts it) may seem quaint, even laughable. But a version of the idea persists in "autogynephilia," a theory that defines transness as an auto-erotic fetish, and which has ongoing currency in anti-trans discourse, despite being widely discredited. According to Ray Blanchard, the sexologist who proposed the theory, many trans women are really heterosexual men who, due to an "erotic target location error," gain sexual pleasure from the fantasy of themselves as women. Blanchard's theory has been condemned as essentialising, pathologising, and simply incorrect—which is not to deny that "female embodiment fantasies," as Julia Serano calls them, are harmlessly enjoyed by people of many genders and sexualities. The endurance of the spectre of the autogynephilic pervert offers an insight into the transphobic imaginary that is crucial to understanding the abjection of transness and the recent abrogation of trans rights in the UK and the US. In this paper, I respond to "The Masturbating Animal: The Auto-hetero-affection of the Living," Nicole Anderson's contribution to *Erotics of Deconstruction: Auto-Affection After Derrida* (2024), a version of which formed her keynote at the 8th Derrida Today Conference. Taking inspiration from Anderson's reading of the auto-hetero-affection that mediates the threshold of human/non-human, I explore the role of auto-hetero-affection in crafting the ontological boundaries of sex-gender. For Derrida, the approach to self-relation that we inherit from European metaphysics disavows the touch of the other that accompanies all self-touching, thereby occluding alterity and *différance*, and reducing auto-hetero-affection to auto-affection. To show how this disavowal galvanises the fraught libidinal economies of the gender wars, I argue that anti-trans accounts of sex-gender are autobiographies of the human that universalise and naturalise dominant ontologies, immunising them from the dangerous supplement of transness. If cis subjectivity

fails to contend with the extent to which its constitutive exclusion of transness introduces a tangible heterogeneity into its own putatively congruous connection with assigned sex-gender, then it risks complicity with a colonial project: building a global episteme around a single autobiography of the human.

Sixian Liang (University of Warwick)

The Autoimmunity of Trans-gender: A Critique of Anti-trans Movements

In this paper, I interrogate anti-trans movements through a close reading of the autoimmune logic of life in Derrida's *Rogues*, proposing a transposition from democratic to transgender life-forms. Firstly, I argue that originated from etymology-biology, Derrida's autoimmune democracy operates through a disruptive logic that autoimmune democracy-to-come persistently breaches any self-protective ipseity of sovereign forms of democracy, while imminently holding open—without guaranteeing—its unforeseeable, heterogeneous alterity of new forms of democracy. Secondly, I argue that autoimmune logic itself enables its transposition from democratic life to transgender life. This is because such logic, as Derrida deconstructs it through the metaphorical 'turn' of 'auto', is characterized by a free-wheeling, errant process of trans-formation from one form of presence to the alter one, rather than a self-rounding, identical one. The logic's transposable nature is evidenced in three ways I find in *Rogues*. Finally, I argue that autoimmunity transposed in transgender life embodies two meanings: (1) Trans is a substantiated identity, a life-form that determines its own gendered existence yet excluded by the cisnormative frame and (2) more fundamentally, trans is an unceasing, disruptive trans-formative dynamic: it perpetually subverts the bio-essentialist creed of such rigid cisnormative identity anti-trans movements, like TERF, seeks to insist on and protect. It, then, transforms into a renewed transgendered identity beyond cisnormative frame, rather than merely recognizing an abjected one or legitimating it within cisnormative frame. Autoimmune transgender unceasingly traverse in-between multiple life-forms of gender, an open-ended chain from cisnormative identity to transgender to come (that is, a transgender identity never been fully substantiated but remains incomplete). To conclude, autoimmunity manifests in what I call the twofold movement of the trans-gender to come: a movement of trans-formation (verb-noun) inherent to any singular life that simultaneously disrupts substantiated gender forms and imminently demands new trans-formative, plastic ones (noun) as its after-effect. Every life, thus, is originally trans-gender in both senses. The gendered life-form is or ought to be, like democracy, hospitable to alterity and engaged in a free-wheeling, trans-gressive movement into otherness of gendered life-forms.

PANEL SERIES: Deconstruction and the Sciences

In his *Life Death* seminar of 1975-76, Jacques Derrida demonstrated that general textuality and the movement of the trace affect not only what were then called the "human sciences" (from philology and literary studies to psychoanalysis, history, and sociology), but science in general. Modern biology's reconceptualization of life in terms of code, program, and information—that is, its determination of life as *text*—amounts to a radical "mutation" that affects all science, right down to its condition of possibility. For if life is essentially constituted as text, then all its products must also be textual. And the sciences, even the "hard" ones, are products of life. Decades later, thinkers working in deconstruction are exploring the consequences of Derrida's insight, making significant forays into biology, physics, neuroscience, and information technology, to name only a few. In this series of panels, we explore the contributions deconstructive thinking has made to sciences over the last 50 years. We begin with the rise of information and the dawn of the nuclear age, with Derrida in conversation with Simondon, Ruyer, and Heidegger. Next, we turn to the stars, to examine the astrobiological implications of Derrida's thought, above all for the contemporary search for extraterrestrial life. Finally, and to conclude, we look at the burgeoning problems posed by digital technologies and artificial intelligences, especially in their impact for biological systems.

1. Deconstruction and Digital Life

Ian James (University of Cambridge)

"Life and the Digital Empire"

This paper will build on recent work by Jean Lassègue and Giuseppe Longo that makes an argument for understanding our dominant contemporary ideology as an empire of the digital or of the numerical. *L'Empire numérique. De l'alphabet à l'IA* (2025) discerns in this prevailing contemporary ideology (which they trace back to the logic of alphabetisation as manifest in the Ancient Greek alphabet) a core operation that reduces the complexities and continuities of shared worldly and historical experience to the discrete units of digital or numerical coding and their processing via information technology. In effect, such an ideology proposes that, in their most fundamental ontological ground, both physical or biological existence and intersubjective experience are constituted in discrete, denumerable units, liable to orders of calculability and informational processing or transformation. The paper will interrogate this configuration of contemporary digital ideology in the light of deconstructive and post-deconstructive thinking about life and the recent evolution of developmental biology, in particular the science of epigenetics. Lassègue and Longo draw a distinction between what they understand to be the continuous and analogue character of biological life in particular and the irreducibility of this to the discontinuous, ultimately binary coding of discrete digital systems and operations. This character of biological life will be explored in relation to the undecidabilities and aporia that deconstructive and biodeconstructive thought associate with the operations of the living, drawing on Derrida's thinking of the calculable and the incalculable but also on post-deconstructive contexts that understand the local contextual functions of the living to be imbued with sense and meaning. The paper will conclude by interrogating the ways in which this deconstructive and post-deconstructive thinking can foster specific critical approaches to the empire of the digital as identified by Lassègue and Longo, in particular in relation to the question of artificial intelligence viewed in the context of humanities research.

Alžbeta Kuchtová (Slovak Academy of Sciences)

"The Deconstruction of the Digital Archive"

Jacques Derrida claims that there is a kind of virtual archive that encompasses all the creations we produce. This virtual archive existed even before the internet, claims Derrida. He says that any kind of creation is always already virtual because it is transmissible. In contrast, I will refer to Heidegger, who uses the concept of *ποίησις* as the creation of *ἀλήθεια*, which involves artistic creation and its dissemination. However, I propose rethinking the concept of *poiesis* in reference to Stiegler and Derrida. In Derrida's view, all creation is iterable and technological because it can become a part of collective memory. For example, from this perspective, writing is already a technology, or even an oral transmission of a story or a fairy tale (in this case, voice is the technology that enables us to repeat the story). However, I will defend that this has the consequence that any form of archiving and information transmission is already a technological process. In our contemporary world, creation in general has become digitalized, and this is possible because creation in general is already technical. This corresponds with the idea that there is an internet archive in which all our writings, images, and recordings are stored. And tools such as AI generators use this archive to generate new images. Nevertheless, we will ask: who is excluded and censored from the digital archive? Is this digital archive an institution, and what kind of institutions are at play here? How is the contemporary digital archive constituted? Does it disadvantage marginalized groups, or does it even facilitate attacks on these groups? Could it work in favor of the marginalized groups as a tool of poetic resistance? How does this relate to a non-institutional digital archive, and what would be the nature of such a non-institutional archive?

Avery Slater (University of Toronto)

"The Simulfactive: AI and the Life Sciences"

This paper will explore Derrida's thinking on overlaps between biological and machinic sciences, or biotechnics, in the context of contemporary advances in AI / ML. The recent ascendancy of neural networks has remapped how the industry of biotechnics will develop in years to come. The story of AI is usually outlined as a triumph of "predictive powers" enabled by advanced computation. In one

prominent example from 2024, DeepMind researchers shared the Nobel prize in chemistry for their protein-folding prediction model AlphaFold. This paper will draw on Derrida's work at the interface between biotechnics and mnemotechnics – the natural “codes” of DNA that govern protein synthesis and human powers of archivization. As scientific acclaim falls on works of science that “unlock” the secrets of nature, with the AI scientist now included, I will ask: what is the connection between prediction and encryption? What dynamics govern this relationship in the sciences in this new age of machine learning? Derrida's *Life Death* seminar critiqued François Jacob for calling DNA a “text without an author.” As Derrida saw in François Jacob's cybernetic metaphors, we follow such science to “a modernity... that tends to decipher the living as a language.” Today, new ligatures are forming between biotechnics and AI, leading to an epistemic merger between prediction and encryption: offering both a simulation and a creation (or, as it were, a simulfaction) that encrypts in order to predict. With “life” now being deciphered in the secret workings of its “code,” between encryption and prediction, AI's authorial fiat to rewrite biological life lies with these entangled powers.

2. Deconstruction, the Rise of Information, and the Dawn of the Nuclear Age

Ben Brewer (Emory University)

“Nachlass: Textuality, Extinction, Inheritance in the Nuclear Age”

Martin Heidegger was unimpressed by the threat of the annihilation of human life at the dawn of the atomic age. As he emphasized in myriad texts from 1945 on, the true horror was not the threat of the human extinction but the threat that we might go on consigned, as he puts it in one unpublished note, to the “desert of the futureless.” More than the material annihilation of life, what terrifies Heidegger is ontological exile from the essence of history: the loss of the possibility of appropriating the past as a way of taking up the openness of the future. In this way he distinguishes between two different forms of futurelessness—on the one hand, the material annihilation of human life; on the other, the reduction of Dasein's proper historicity to the mere continuation of human life. Nevertheless, recent archival and historical research has shown that Heidegger was not so unconcerned with the threat of nuclear war as his philosophical works might have us believe. Not only did it remain an issue of constant philosophical reflection for him, but the anxiety about the need to preserve his written works in the event of a nuclear war appears to have been the motivation for authorizing the publication of the *Gesamtausgabe*, among other key decisions about his *Nachlass*. In this paper, I read this strange tension at the heart of Heidegger's thinking of inheritance and history under the specter of nuclear war through Derrida's claim that the nuclear age is “fabulously textual.” The specter of nuclear war, as Derrida makes clear, always implies the threat of the total extinction of the human species, but the question of a written *Nachlass* opens up the possibility of an inheritance beyond extinction.

Deborah Goldgaber (Louisiana State University)

“Information and Form: Notes on Simondon, Derrida, and Ruyer's Philosophies of Information”

In 1962, Gilbert Simondon organized an interdisciplinary symposium—attended by Norbert Wiener, but also Giorgio de Santillana, Lucien Goldmann, Benoit Mandelbrot, André Lwoff—at Royaumont on “The Concept of Information in Contemporary Science” (Le concept d'information dans la science contemporaine). Taking stock of the heterogeneous senses of the term, and the paucity of agreement across disciplines, participants wondered if information were not more a loose schema or metaphor than a proper scientific concept, despite the increasing hegemony of Shannon and Weaver's apparently precise and quantifiable meaning. In such a context of disagreement, what precisely are the stakes of claiming and developing a philosophical concept of information and what are the prospects for its uptake or intersection with the senses of information current in the natural sciences? These questions are as relevant and critical today as they were 65 years ago. In this talk, I will trace the ways that three important French philosophers of the period, Derrida, Simondon and Ruyer, responded to these questions, focusing both on the novelty and distinctiveness of their respective approaches and, where applicable, their similarities. Specifically, I will endeavor to make explicit the logic that, for each of these philosophers, ties shape and form (morphogenesis or ontogenesis) with information. I conclude with a

particular focus on Derrida's grammatological conception of information as both the "formation of form" and "becoming-imprinted of the imprint."

Basile, Jonathan (University of Toronto) – Respondant

3. FEATURE PANEL: Outside Context Problems

Armando M. Mastrogiovanni (Baruch College)

Outside Context Problem

Adam R. Rosenthal (Texas A&M University)

Inside Context Problem

4. Deconstruction, Astrobiology, and the Question of Planetary Life

Joshuah Schuster (Western University)

"Envoi to the Alien"

Much of the research in SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) and METI (Messaging Extraterrestrial Intelligence) devoted to coding and decoding interstellar messages is focused on formal linguistics and the technical means of messaging. Such research lacks an expansive approach to messaging that would include insight from poetics, especially regarding the aesthetic effects implicated in the act of sending out messages to unknown destinations. For this talk, my focus will be on elaborating the poetics of sending messages as envoys/envoi. The envoi is a sending out, a sending without knowing for sure if there is an addressee and when the message will arrive. The envoi is also a minor genre of poetry, common in early modern poetics (used by Chaucer, Petrarch, and Troubadour poets, among others), and appearing on occasion through modernity. The envoi often appears as a final stanza in poem, where the poet addresses the poem itself and bids it to go out to its destined addressee. The envoy instructs the poem in the arts of departure and arrival; it also divulges the concern that the poem may not arrive, may stray, or become lost. The poem may never be read or may become transformed in the transmission. All these concerns over the arts of sending and receiving are embedded in all messages, but they are especially aestheticized in poems. Derrida, in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, writes a series of letters or postcards that he calls envois. In these missives, Derrida expands upon the envoi, beyond the poetics of address, to the extent that one must consider the giving of being (es gibt) as a sending. In the giving of being, via its *différance*, "there is postal maneuvering, relays, delay, anticipation, destination, telecommunicating network, the possibility, and therefore the fatal necessity of going astray, etc. There is strophe (there is strophe in every sense, apostrophe and catastrophe, address in turning the address)" (66). With Derrida's missives on the envoi, I consider how SETI/METI must incorporate an aesthetics and philosophy of the envoi for both messages sent and received. The envoi presumes someone on the other side (the alien, or the other other) who would recognize the genre of the envoi. We can assume, or have to assume, that aliens make envois too. But the envoi also entails not knowing where the letter or address will go – and in the envoi genre, as far back as the Troubadours, there was mention that the poem/message may have intentions of its own.

Brad Tabas (Institut Polytechnique de Paris)

"The Sacrifice of the Planetary: Derrida as (Post)Planetary Thinker"

Philosophers are obsessed with planets. Responding to the urgency of our epoch of planetary crisis, they are calling on astrobiology and other disciplines in the hope of imagining co-evolutionary futures brighter than our seemingly annihilation-bent present. They speak about planetary "turns," "thinking," and "ethics"; they work on "planetary," "geopoetics," the "intraplanetary," and the "multiplanetary." Derrida was anything but a planetary thinker. That is not a point about history or philology: Derrida was perfectly aware that there was such a thing as planetary thinking—he cites Axelos' *Vers la pensée planétaire*. He was a (post)planetary thinker. His thought constituted precisely a refusal of the repressions—of the outside, of spatio-temporal alterity, even of the satellite technologies—which make planetary models possible. Deconstruction was never anything other than this: an ex-orbitant attempt

to *atteindre le point d'une certaine extériorité par rapport à la totalité de l'époque logocentrique*—hence to think beyond the orbital re-planetarization of thought under its own gravitational pull. Thinking the dissemination is to ponder the impossibility of containing information within the bounds of the planetary system, even of the solar system. The dissemination, if understood through exobiology and the long philosophical tradition of reflecting on panspermia, pushes thought beyond old binaries and boundaries whose resurrection would allow for the resurrection of the 'planetary' absolute. For Hegel, the planet was the self-seeding image of the totality of history. For Derrida "history [l'histoire] resembles nothing" precisely because the seeds of time could no longer be contained within the globe. But why deconstruct the planetary? To expose its sacrifices. To show its planetarity: its blind and unthinking repetition of problematic terrestrial binaries. To acknowledge that what is "saved" by planetary theorizing is not life on Earth, but the soteriological pretention itself—the very idea of saving the whole. To confront the cost of this salvific operation: eliciting the recognition that the sacrifice of the accessible outside to astrocolonial exploitation is the dark side of all planetary thinking.

Armando M. Mastrogiovanni (Brauch College) – Respondant

ART EXHIBIT

THE PHILOSOPHER'S DRAWINGS

by Ewa Bobrowska

How can visual art and contemporary philosophical reflection meet? What correspondence between these humanities will not be some form of illustrating philosophy? The Philosopher's Drawings assertively touches on this question by creating an imaginative sphere inspired by Jacques Derrida's thought....Jacques Derrida himself curated an exhibition of drawings on the theme of blindness, titled "Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins" (*Mémoires d'aveugle: L'autoportrait et autres ruines*), organized in 1990 at the Louvre. Bobrowska's exhibition is conceived in philosophical dialogue with this event...Most of her drawings are asemic; they do not contain letters, but characters that resemble them. The artist's abstract notations, which signify different modes of expression, do not simulate the notes of a particular philosopher; they materialize the process of intellectual work itself. This work becomes present through references to concepts, distinctions, oppositions, or ambivalences in the making, inspired by both philosophers' texts and the artist's reflection. They remain open to various interpretations, confident that viewers will find signs that speak to their intuition.

– Grzegorz Borkowski

The exhibition...is an artistic protest against the limitations of thought. For Bobrowska, both philosophy and art represent forms of thinking. The artist suggests that by confining themselves to boundaries – either imposed externally or created internally, [both philosophy and art] undermines its own creative nature. *The Philosopher's Drawings* serve as an intersection where the traces, languages, and configurations of two seemingly different realms – philosophical intelligibility and spatial, sensory artistic visualization – meet, blend, and overlap. The exhibition offers a unique opportunity to question the separation of these two domains...[and understand] their interconnectedness and intertwining. The artist invites viewers to engage in the tension...the duality and inseparability of elusive openness and the dynamic nature of thought, contrasted with its immobilizing rigor. It is not just a matter of confirming or questioning the distinction between the intellectual and the visual...*The Philosopher's Drawings* consist of the artist's visualizations of meaning – hidden, blurred (impossible to reproduce or convey), marked in hastily made notes as if under the influence of the moment. The writing of treatises, ironically and mockingly crossed out by images of donkey heads – this truly Shakespearean irony is brilliantly highlighted by Ewa Bobrowska, another boundary that philosophical thinking encounters. The boundary of freedom of thought can also be viewed as a form of schematization, mapping, and observing from a broader perspective....The category of the visible in discourse refers to that which is silent, which resists interpretation. Ewa Bobrowska's works are underpinned by this hidden drama of speech and silence. This drama is most evident in her drawings, where the paths of black lines create a palimpsest of the struggle between two functions: revealing and concealing meaning...what is conceptual in philosophical discourse...transforms into sensual perceptibility, subject to direct and varied experience. The conceptual becomes realized here as an object or image. Note that even the colloquial term "to make sense" leads to the meaning "to realize something" – to place in one's reality, to make it real.

– Iwona Lorenc

Ewa Bobrowska, PhD – visual artist, aesthetician, philosopher. She holds a PhD in Fine Arts from the University of Arts in Poznań and a PhD in Philosophy from the University of Warsaw. She is a recipient of a Kościuszko Foundation Fellowship at UC Irvine. Since 2013, she has been an assistant professor at the Faculty of Media Art at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, where she co-directs the Studio of Public

Domain Art. Her art has been exhibited, among others, at: Zachęta–National Gallery of Art, CCA Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, The Foksal Gallery, Trafo in Szczecin, Salon Akademii, Muzeum Mazowieckie, Academic Design Center in Łódź, Fordham University, The University of California in Irvine Museum of Art, and in Castello and Nova Sin Gallery. She is the author of the books *Parateoria. California School from Irvine* (2013), and *UCI Critical Theory and Contemporary Art Practice: Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Bruce Nauman, and Others with a Prologue by Georges Van Den Abbeele* (2020) and the editor of the *California Critical Theory. Anthology of Texts: Derrida, Lyotard, Hillis Miller*. (in Polish, 2019).

INDIVIDUAL ABSTRACTS

A

Abreu, Luis Felipe (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro)

Spectral communities: writing another concept of living together, with and against Derrida

"Je n'aime pas beaucoup le mot de communauté, je ne suis même pas sûr d'aimer la chose," Jacques Derrida remarked in a 1991 interview. How should we understand this rejection, especially coming from a philosopher whose project consisted in engaging with concepts considered problematic, not by dismissing them, but by seeking to reveal the potential inscribed in their structure? In other words, how are we to understand Derrida's move to place the concept of community at the limits of deconstruction? To understand it, this paper explores the fraught status of the idea of community in Derrida's thought. The idea stems from a research attentive to contemporary debates on living together, particularly those shaped by democratic crises and the emergence of alternative forms of collective life. Within this framework, special attention is given to conceptions of community grounded in difference, most notably those elaborated by Maurice Blanchot and Jean-Luc Nancy. Yet it is precisely these models of community that Derrida calls into question in *Politics of Friendship* (1995), where he critiques the naivety of imagining a "community without community." Our central claim is that community is marked by an ineluctably spectral character, both within the concept itself and in its circulation throughout Derrida's work. As a present that never fully presents itself, community takes on a ghostly form, legible through its relation to difference, iterability, and constitutive aporias – features that Derrida, since *Specters of Marx* (1993), has understood as intrinsic to processes of spectralization. Untimely by nature, the communal figures simultaneously as a lost utopian past and as the promise of a redemptive future, and can be read only insofar as it haunts contemporary modes of living together. The spectral presence of the communal in Derrida's work is thus expressed in his recurrent (and, at times, forceful) refusals, which signal the persistence of a critical interest. From the 1990s onward, the aporias of the common increasingly orbit Derrida's concerns, as evidenced by his sustained return to questions adjacent to the communal, without ever addressing it directly; such as linguistic coexistence, democracy, sovereignty, and the injunction to learn how to live together.

Alafouzou, Fay (Emory University)

On spacing or Derrida's time out of joint

Beginning from Derrida's *The time is out of joint*, I return to his 1967-8 texts, in order to reconstruct his quasi-concept of spacing, which marks the necessary dis-jointedness of time as it holds it together. It is, perhaps, the key to understanding Derrida's deconstruction of the concept of time: of the presence of the present and vice versa. Thus, spacing is, as Derrida later puts it, the "first word of any deconstruction" . Spacing, in general, names pure distance and self-dividing. Specifically, it refers to the "becoming-space of time or the becoming-time of space". It is, I suggest, structurally analogue to the Kantian a priori synthesis, for it accounts for the formation of time and space and the relation to exteriority, in general; (it names "the enigmatic relation [...] of an inside to an outside"). Yet, it exceeds it: Spacing refers to an irreducible complexity —a conjunction— that remains an irremediable disjunction, preventing synthesis from closing upon itself. Taking as my point of departure Derrida's scattered hints at Kant's analogy of the line (i.e. we can only represent time by virtue of our representation of space), I turn to Kantian synthesis, whereby time is determined as succession, a process of self-affection which accounts for temporality. Is it, perhaps, spacing? The latter is the hyphen of self-affection: inner sense (time) forms itself only in its complication with outer sense (space). Then, I turn to Derrida's spacing/temporization. Time affects itself with its other, it modifies itself, it becomes space. First, the self-disjointment of time —its spacing— accounts for the *passing* of time, what Derrida calls "dead time" at the heart of the present. Second, if time spaces itself, it is —contra Kant— no longer simply succession. Spacing names an "impossible co-existence" —that of simultaneity (space) and succession (time). There is no pure simultaneity nor pure succession but division and delay: distance. Spacing is the *first* word of any deconstruction: there is no conjunction that is not a

simultaneous disjunction, thus there is no origin that is not synthetic and, at the same time, the concept of synthesis is irretrievably displaced.

Alombert, Anne (University of Paris 8)

Thinking artificial intelligence with Derrida: informational logocentrism and digital spectrality deconstruction of the technological metaphysics of telepresence

In the 1950s, Heidegger invited us to consider modern technology and cybernetics as the achievement of metaphysics. In this talk, I would like to consider current digital technologies, (particularly generative artificial intelligence systems) and transhumanism as the achievement of “logocentrism” and of the “metaphysics of presence” that Derrida had begun to deconstruct in the 1960s. I will first show that generative AI systems are based on a logocentric conception of creativity, which denies the embodied and material dimension of symbolic activities, reducing all artistic practice to a linguistic instruction. Until today, this linguistic instruction involved writing a “prompt”, but such prompts could soon be spoken aloud, given the development of voice recognition software, which is increasingly used on cell phones (writing messages are gradually being replaced by voice recording messages). I will argue that a new phonologocentrism is thus establishing itself behind digital screens, supported by a new form of algorithmic performativity. This is all the more so given that theoretical computer science is based on the opposition between software and hardware, which revives, in the technoscientific field, the logocentrist opposition between signified and signifier inherent in the linguistic field, according to Derrida. The central notion is no longer that of *sign* (independent of its material inscription) but that of *information* (independent of its material support). The idea of an information being independent of its support directly leads to the transhumanist mythology of mind uploading, according to which it is possible to extract information from its cerebral or organic support (the brain) and transpose it onto electronic media (USB sticks or data centers), thus saving minds after the biological death of bodies. This new metaphysical dualism now permeates the industrial sector and marketing ideology of deadbots, which are interactive AI systems designed to simulate the behavior of deceased people by training large language models on all the data they left. These deadbots manifest the desire to maintain dead people in a digital “telepresence,” bypassing the work of mourning and the experience of revenance and spectrality which is implied by it. From informational logocentrism to the bypassing of spectrality, via the prompts’ algorithmic performativity, I will attempt to describe the digital achievement of the metaphysics of presence: I will show that Derrida’s reflections can help us understand our current technological epoch and open up ways to transform it. Contrary to Heideggerian analyses, which urge us to flee modern technology in favor of meditation or poetry, Derridean reflections rather invite us to conceive and develop alternative digital tele-technologies, which abandon the deadly desire of computational presence and open up to the indeterminacy of the future to come.

Alquicira Z, Gerardo (National Autonomous University of Mexico)

Des petits grands remaniements: On the differences between “The Second Session” of La vie la mort and Otobiographies

In the summer of 1976, Derrida took part in a conference organized by the University of Virginia to commemorate the bicentennial of the signing of the United States Declaration of Independence. On that occasion, he read an excerpt from the second session of the seminar *La vie la mort*, which he had delivered in the autumn of 1976 at the École Normale Supérieure. In 1982, this second, “conference” version was published as *L’oreille de l’autre*, and two years later appeared under the title *Otobiographies*. The original “seminar” version, in turn, remained unpublished until 2019, when it was finally released by Éditions du Seuil in the “Bibliothèque Derrida” series. In the introductory text to this seminar, the editors Pascale-Anne Brault and Peggy Kamuf argued that Derrida did not introduce any “major reworkings” (*de grands remaniements*) between the 1975 papers and the conference version, and that he merely carried out minor editorial adjustments to mitigate the primitive “oral presentation”. The aim of my paper is to show that, although the changes Derrida introduced between the 1975 seminar and the 1976 conference did not disfigure his original discourse, they were nevertheless significant enough to re-signify it. The first—and most decisive—changes occur at the very beginning of

the text. Whereas in his 1975 notes Derrida urged anyone who needed to and was able to interrupt him to do so, and invited those who could not or did not wish to follow him to leave the room, in the 1976 conference he granted his audience only the second prerogative. And whereas in the seminar he stated that his intention was for his students to learn *from him* the “auto-biographical pleasure”, in the conference he expressed the intention that his listeners learn this pleasure *from him / through him*. The depth of these changes thus becomes apparent: in the *Otobiographies / L’oreille de l’autre* version, the “autobiographical lesson” became practical. Derrida altered the 1975 papers to be able to say “me” with greater emphasis—and malice.

Arnott, Jeremy (Concordia University)

Critique, Deconstruction, Violence: Derrida & Benjamin on the Politics to Come

This paper examines the relationship between critique, deconstruction, and violence through a sustained confrontation between Walter Benjamin’s *Critique of Violence* (1921) and Jacques Derrida’s *Force of Law* (1990), situating their disagreement within a broader historio-philosophical reflection on sovereignty, myth, and political action. Against readings that reduce Benjamin’s essay to an apologia for destructive or “divine” violence, I argue that Benjamin’s project is best understood as a critique of the mythical foundations of law and state power, aimed at exposing the persistence of archaic forms of sovereignty beneath modern narratives of progress, democracy, and justice. Drawing on Benjamin’s conception of critique as a decisive yet non-instrumental practice, the paper shows how his rejection of teleological notions of historical progress and “justice to come” opens onto a weakly messianic ethics of the present—one grounded in language, education, and lived forms of non-mythical relation rather than future utopias. The paper further argues that Derrida’s unusually harsh treatment of Benjamin stems from a misidentification of the essay’s “signature,” leading Derrida to conflate Benjamin’s notion of critique with a Schmittian logic of sovereignty and law-founding violence. By reconstructing the internal logic of Benjamin’s text and its Weimar political context, I show that Benjamin decisively banishes divine authority from politics, rendering sovereignty historically contingent and exposing critique itself as a fragile but necessary human practice. In contrast, Derrida’s appeal to a democracy or justice “to come” risks reinstating a futural messianism that displaces political responsibility from the present. Ultimately, the paper contends that Benjamin’s thought offers a more urgent response to contemporary conditions marked by recurring states of emergency, the normalization of authoritarianism, and the exhaustion of progressive narratives. By refusing amazement at the repetition of historical catastrophe and insisting on the redemption of past possibilities in the present, Benjamin provides a critical framework for political action beyond both mythical violence and deferred hope.

B

Ball, Karyn (University of Alberta)

*The Content of the Form? On Jacques Derrida’s “Fatal Performatives” between Sigmund Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and Adania Shibli’s *Minor Detail**

In this presentation, I will extrapolate the “fatal performative” from Jacques Derrida’s various evocations of it in his remarks about Sigmund Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism* in *Archive Fever* and in “The Force of Law.” In a prototypically deconstructive strategy, Derrida illuminates how metaphysical oppositions invert over time. A performative contradiction transpires when an argument that selectively reactivates an ambivalent intellectual lineage enacts the very problems a critic targets. The appearance of hypocrisy that arises becomes “fatal” when it destroys a text’s authoritative “force,” or capacity to command belief. Imploded authority corrodes the promise of wisdom that an argument projects, along with its potential to move readers and critics beyond the circumstances that the latter condemn. To exemplify fatal performatives, I will very briefly return to a sudden reversal in Immanuel Kant’s theorization of the relationship between space and time in the *Critique of Reason* before replaying its echo in Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* where he mentions Kant while reflecting on the “timeless” contents of the unconscious. Ultimately, then, I will consider what is at stake in a completely different twenty-first century context: Adania Shibli’s 2016 novel entitled *Minor Detail*,

which became particularly controversial in Germany and elsewhere after October 7th, 2023. In a novel divided quite starkly into two incommensurable parts oriented by a third-person early occupier in the first and a contemporary Palestinian researcher in the second, the latter as narrator calls attention to the perceived oddity in the eyes of other bus passengers of her (over?)reactivity while facing Israeli surveillance. The question that this painful perception raises is whether readers should infer that her behavior is genuinely “odd” and, if so, should we view her as unstable and her narration as “untrustworthy” by extension. My sense is that this unresolved question remains in abeyance, and I will devote the remainder of my presentation to speculating about the implications of this potentially fatal undecidability.

Banerjee, Aritra (Independent Scholar)

Paratextual Fissures: A Deconstructive Reading of the Fifth Norton Heart of Darkness

The cover image of the Fifth Norton Critical Edition (2016) of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) articulates a semantic aporia through its deconstructive rupture of race, culture, and power. Such a displacement of the transcendental signified unfolds the hidden multiplicity of connections and metaphorical resonances which incessantly shift and interact within the text's larger (para)textual landscape, challenging the imposition of a personal and universal “truth” by enacting an absence of both critical and narrative closure. In essence, the text and its image serve as a visual allegory for the philosophical and psychological contradictions, dissonance, and ambiguity that inherently expose the structural instability of the term “darkness.” The paper attempts to understand how the multifaceted references to the evolving symbol of darkness act as a point of continual deferral both in the cover and the text as necessitated by a crisis of linguistic machination and the dissolution of logocentric certainty. By doing so, the paper, in its focus on the complex interplay of light and darkness, manages to reframe the darkness as a dynamic (para)textual space where a multiplicity of suppressed alterities find expression. To fulfil these objectives, the fissured (para)textual terrain will be interrogated through a synthesis of Jacques Derrida's notions of language, text, and its margins, as well as his concepts of *différance* and aporia. This study allows for a praxis of deconstruction as the impossible interplay between the visible parergon and the invisible centre—leading towards an aesthetic realisation of the negation of a “God” (an absolute centre) through the novella's style of perpetual linguistic play. The paper argues that the (para)textual frame offered by the aforementioned Norton edition of *Heart of Darkness* holds a mirror to the narrative's internal crisis, contending that the novella's characteristic undecidability precipitates a critical juncture where any interpretative certitude collapses under the pressure of its own inherent contradictions.

Barberousse, Tristan (École Normale Supérieure)

Literature and Its Metaphorical Inscription, or the Problem of the “Philosophical Incarnation” According to J. Derrida

Derrida is often described as “literary.” But this adjective is often pejorative. It generally refers to the preciousness, or even obscurity, of his style. As such, philosophy would be impeded, and its message obscured, in the crystal-clear transmission of meaning, by the materiality of writing—its “mud.” I propose to take this label seriously. More precisely, I propose to study the literary aspect of J. Derrida's philosophy through the role of metaphor, first in *La voix et le phénomène*, then in “Force et signification”. These texts share a common approach of theorizing the incarnation, or embodiment of philosophy, its “voice,” through metaphor, in the sense that all “inscription”, necessary medium of philosophy, is metaphorical. I would like to attempt to understand the meaning of this *inscription*, this “voice” in the broad sense of a writing device that would bring philosophy into existence while always undermining its claim to *pre-scription*. This act of writing or speaking would reveal the inaccessible absence of meaning, its non-pre-existence, and therefore its *différance*. The *metaphor* would be the figure of this literary incarnation of philosophy (determination, presentation of aspect, donation of “as”) for two complementary reasons. On the one hand, inscription metaphorizes because it substitutes one thing (a work) for another (the pure work); it then indicates it by derivation. On the other hand, inscription metaphorizes because it disguises, or gives a layer, thus covering the origin.

Barsamian, Philipe (Independent Scholar)

The Failure of Reflection: Différance, Stabilization, and the Resistance to Crystallization

Contemporary algorithmic systems promise what Jacques Derrida's critique of the "metaphysics of presence" identifies as structurally impossible: meaning that arrives without delay, remainder, or trace. From predictive policing to large language models, these systems simulate necessity while bypassing temporal traversal—producing what this paper calls *stale necessity*: results without responsibility, conclusions without the committed passage through uncertainty that lends judgment its authority. Against this algorithmic return of presence, deconstruction appears not as historical critique alone, but as the structural condition for any system seeking to remain open to the future. This paper argues that the structural constraint of *différance* proves indispensable for systems that persist through time. Translating the temporal delay of *différance* into recursive modality, I formalize the trace not as poetic absence, but as a structural property of self-referential systems. Within this framework, necessity names not immediate presence, but prospective commitment: a state in which a system proceeds as if a conclusion must hold, even though it remains unrealized. The decisive structural feature is the persistence of a gap between commitment and realization—formally expressible as the failure of reflection ($\Box\phi \rightarrow \phi$). In plain terms: what the system treats as necessary, it cannot yet inhabit as actual. This formalizes the temporal logic of the trace. Rather than treating this gap as a defect, the paper argues it constitutes the habitable space of *l'avenir*—the future "to-come" that remains open rather than programmed. The paper further develops this insight through Derrida's logic of auto-immunity. Symbolic systems face two terminal risks: dissolution, in which distinctions collapse into indifference, and crystallization, in which they harden into absolute presence—foreclosing the revisability that sustains meaning across time. Deconstruction operates as resistance to crystallization, a continual reopening that prevents systems from domesticating their own exclusions. Any system satisfying reflection would reach terminal rigidity: no longer a living structure but a closed a. The failure of reflection is the success of the future.

Bayındır, Evrim (Royal Holloway, University of London)

Derrida and Deleuze on the Failure to Think: Stupidity Beyond Transcendental Possibility

In his essay on 'transcendental stupidity' in Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, Derrida argues that the 'provocation' of Deleuze's concept of 'stupidity' is to supplant Kant's mechanism of error. Whereas error secures the 'transcendental form' as an already-given 'possibility', stupidity dislodges this very possibility from its 'usual territory': resisting inclusion within the 'table of categories', it expresses the subversive *capacity* of a 'nonfaculty'. Unlike error, stupidity is not a misuse of transcendental faculties, a misjudgement linked with the failure to recognise the transcendental illusions born of reason; rather, it announces the failing of the transcendental apparatus itself. Derrida conceives this as an opportunity to open thought onto an *act* beyond judgement and *a priori* conditioning: thought no longer represents the act – erroneously or non-erroneously – but itself acts by exhausting its transcendental possibility. This provokes a peculiarly animalistic stupefaction: 'So, bêtise is a thought. Bêtise is thinking'. Thought *does something* only when it does something stupid: when it fails to think. However, Deleuze compromises this insight when his residual Cartesianism forecloses animals from encountering the abyssal, inhuman unconscious opened up by the breakdown of the transcendental apparatus. Derrida observes a striking anomaly here: precisely where stupidity emerges, the theme of the unconscious abruptly disappears. Interestingly, although Derrida reads this omission as a sign of 'inconsistency', he nevertheless holds that any genuinely non-Cartesian rupture with error must abjure the unconscious altogether. The problem, then, consists less in the omission itself than in its rationale: a mere symptom of Deleuze *unconsciously* neglecting the unconscious due to Cartesian commitments. We contend that Derrida's crucial observation concerning Deleuze's disregard for the unconscious (or the death drive) indicates *Difference and Repetition's* deeper compulsion to confront thought with an instance beyond what Deleuze calls the 'genitality' of thought – namely, thought as a faculty that is *born* rather than given *a priori*. In fact, Deleuze's genital thought qua death drive already performs the act beyond transcendental possibility. Stupidity, by contrast, rather than merely becoming identical with genital

thought – as both philosophers suggest – might function as an opportunity to grant it the capacity to think its constitutive failure: its *death*.

Behnke, Heike (Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel)

Mediated immediacy as différance: a haunted conversation between Helmuth Plessner and Jacques Derrida

While Jacques Derrida and philosophical anthropologist Helmuth Plessner may be divided by a generation as well as an entire philosophical paradigm change, a lot is to be gained from linking their work. Plessner's relatively unknown philosophy of language focuses on the dialectic between the uncovering and the concealment of meaning and proves particularly compatible with Derrida's thoughts. In his famous *Stufen des Organischen* (1928), Plessner deems language the highest form of mediated immediacy, making it the keystone of human's excentric positionality, albeit without providing an analysis of the systematic consequences. If we take this at face value, it leads to a surprisingly poststructuralistic understanding of language as suspension, relating productively to Derrida's notion of *différance*. This reading of Plessner points to other structural similarities within his anthropological framework, as language's dialectic of mediation and immediacy only repeats the fundamental antagonism which renders human existence – and in a basic way even life itself – possible. While Plessner only implies the close relationship between language and the body, combining this pointed reading with Derrida sheds new light on the potential of his philosophy and makes it viable for post- and transhumanistic approaches. With the aim of examining this underestimated constellation, the paper provides a reading of Derrida's "*Le puits et la pyramide*" (1972) through a Plessnerian lense. Two lines of analysis will be of particular note: The Hegelian concept of *Aufhebung* as a mutual point of orientation will allow for the question, whether Derrida's image of the perfect machine as a negative that will not be negated can be transferred to Plessner's excentric positionality, providing an idea for one last step beyond the human position. The second follows Plessner's philosophy of language more closely: While he does not, in fact, elaborate on a semiology, Plessner's concept of language as both garment and bones of a meaning mirrors Hegel's passage on the pit and the pyramid. An analysis of the corporeality of the sign according to Plessner's understanding of a living body of language will confirm and enrich Derrida's understanding of *archi-écriture*.

Ben Pazi, Hanoch (Bar-Ilan University)

Jerusalem as a Spiritual Model of Hospitality: A Derridian Reading on Levinas's Cities of Refuge

The idea of Hospitality in Derrida's philosophy is developed in few contexts of his writings. In this paper, I would like to suggest a new interpretation of Derrida's hospitality, as the deepest demands of ethical responsibility within the liberal life. In one of the most interesting Talmudic Readings, Levinas offered a radical reading of the biblical issue of "the cities of refuge." The biblical law deals with the optional punishment, of the unwanted murder to escape and find a shelter in one of chosen cities - city of refuge. According to Levinas, a relevant reading of this law, allow us to think about the meaning of responsibility. This responsibility emerges and includes the city's fringe, the delinquency on the suburbs, social responsibility on crimes within the community. Levinas suggests to think also about the wars that happened - close or distance - because of the social gaps. For Levinas, the life in the western cities - worthy and liberal bourgeois lives - as life of "refuge", what he calls life of "half innocent - half guilty." Derrida's study of this issue suggests a radical interpretation of Levinas's discussion. For Derrida, the image of these cities relates to ethics, to politics, and in relation to the special status of "hostage". This is the deep meaning of Hospitality - towards the infinity, towards God - A-dieu..The ethical examination of hospitality, undermines the validity of hosting: who is the hosts? Who is the guest? Who is the commander? Who's comment? Derrida's reading contributes ethical meaning to eschatology, and eschatological meaning to ethics. I would like to follow this mode of thinking, and ask the questions: of being hosted within the text, being the master of the text, and allowing others to be guests within the text.

Emanuela Bianchi (New York University)

Matter and the Secret

This paper returns to Derrida's 1991-1992 Seminar, *Répondre du secret*, and rethinks the structure of the secret developed there in relation to the question of matter as it is articulated and "encrypted" by the Western philosophical tradition. The investigation passes through Derrida's engagements with Melville and Baudelaire on the ethico-political force of the secret, and then turns to Aristotle's *Physics*, which systematically establishes matter as a passive substrate. In ontogenesis, matter is relegated to an indeterminate placeholder, divested of capacity for motion, force, or desire; agency is instead apportioned entirely to external "sources of motion" exemplified by Aristotle as "the father of the child" or "the advisor," figures of paternal authorization. This systematic separation and distinguishing of matter aligns precisely with the Latin path of the secret, secretum as *se-cernere* (to separate, dissociate, set apart, distinguish). The separation of matter is further understood as a kind of abjection, indicated by Derrida's recognition of a veiled passage between *se-cernere* and *excrementum* (excrement). Matter, made to "lie under," is simultaneously encrypted according to the Greek logic of *kruptein* (to hide), exemplified by Heraclitus's "nature loves to hide"; a forced concealment paralleled by the fate of disruptive feminine figures in tragedy. As a contrast, the paper evokes the atomist discourses of Lucretius, which never separated movement from matter, emphasizing the crucial role of the uncaused swerve (*clinamen*) necessary for the aleatory encounter. The analysis notes that gravity—the force that enables being through its power of gathering together, and which possesses an infinite reach—is the modern manifestation of a force immanent to matter, yet it remains a secret that eludes particle physics. Finally, the paper asks what it would mean to free matter from this long encryption, reuniting it with motion and force beyond the desire for a final decryption.

Bielik-Robson, Agata (University of Nottingham)

Derrida with Laplanche: Secret, Enigma, Revelation

In my presentation I want to juxtapose Derrida with Laplanche and interpret the former's concept of revealability in terms of the latter's psychoanalytic "general theory of seduction." Laplanche proposes a new concept of radical otherness (*étrangereté*) which he sees operative in the original formation of human psyche, determined by the "enigmatic encounter with the other." According to Laplanche, our unconscious is shaped by "the other implanted in me, forever an internal foreign body" and that earliest psychic formation can be best described by a reference to what he calls an "experience of revelation." I will argue that Derrida's concept of revealability, which he borrows from Heidegger (*Veroffenbarkeit*), can be fruitfully explained through the lense of Laplanchean "psychotheology," i.e., as a universal messianic structure of openness towards the other as the unique and singular Event. This openness to the radical outside exposes the subject to what Laplanche terms as a "pure culture of otherness" which relates psyche to the forever enigmatic other, never to be captured or reduced to any conscious content. Revealability is an experiential mode in which the subject remains open to the other revealed in her secret-enigmatic uniqueness and absolute singularity (*tout autre*), which can be interpreted by the subject in only one way: not via understanding that would dissolve/analyze the otherness into general concepts, but via the "transference" into the realm of ethical relations with others, then also conceived as equally enigmatic-singular. Both in Laplanche and Derrida, the other can never be fully revealed "face to face", but it is precisely this original enigma-secret that determines our sense of what it means to be singular as "always slipping away." Revealability, therefore, constitutes the apriorical structure of subjectivity as constitutively open to the other *as other*, never to be reduced to any familiar form of sameness.

Bobrowska, Ewa (Academy of Fine Arts Warsaw)

The Transimmanence of Art in the Philosophy of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy

The proposed analysis examines the relation between art and thinking, or the art of thinking designated by Plato as *phronesis*. For Nancy, art appears as more originary than the language in which philosophy is inscribed. In this sense, the philosophy of art may take the form of self-reflection, tracing the artistic dimension within the architectonics of philosophical discourse, as discussed by Derrida in *The Truth in*

Painting. Derrida identifies close analogies between the procedures of the philosopher and those of the artist-architect, a line of inquiry further developed in M. Wigley's *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, particularly regarding Derrida's collaboration with P. Eisenman on the Parc de la Villette project. The architectural character of deconstruction manifests in its strategy of displacing concepts within philosophical structures, testifying to the interpenetration of philosophical and artistic modes of thought. In *What Do We Need Art For?* (2019), Nancy likewise emphasizes the connection between art and thinking. He notes that the conception of art as a unified extra-worldly transcendence exceeding the world, meaning, and language crystallized in the nineteenth century, although reflections on art as a totality appear earlier in Schiller and Hegel. The artwork thus unites two extremes: the transcendence of the world and the immanence of its own meaning, occurring at their intersection. *Poiesis* and *eros* intersect through libidinal energy. Erotic and aesthetic pleasure alike open a path beyond introversion toward relation with the Other. Nancy's analysis of touch presents it as a sense engaging the body as a whole and leading it outward, dissolving the boundaries between self and other. This energetic model of the body, marked by discontinuity, resonates with Lyotard's *Libidinal Economy*. The body, understood as openness—a space presenting a spectacular surface—invokes the metaphor of landscape as a structure of unity-in-multiplicity. Whereas Lyotard's notion of the Great Ephemeral Skin emphasizes the plasticity of unconscious figures, Nancy's *Corpus* treats the body as a record of suffering and existence, affirming its ontological significance. The artwork constitutes an extension of the artist's mode of being, expressing unconcealment and exteriority. Art thus appears as a form of transimmanence—a transcendence of immanence—that ultimately touches only itself.

Bock, Joel (Old Dominion University)

Derridean and Stieglerian Approaches to CRISPR Gene Editing Technologies

Contemporary aspirations to prevent or eradicate diseases through genetic editing technologies such as CRISPR-Cas9 rely on implicit assumptions about the capacities of humans and technology to eliminate risk, disease, and other forms of toxicity. This paper argues that Derridean and Stieglerian analyses of such aspirations—illustrated through the “Mice Against Ticks” project, which aims to genetically modify white-footed mice on the islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard to reduce cases of Lyme disease—reveal the self-undermining metaphysical and ethical assumptions at the core of such ambitions. In particular, I consider the ethical commitment of the project's lead scientist, Kevin Esvelt, to a vision of scientific research as a collaborative enterprise that should be fully transparent with the public about the details of the research from its earliest stages. Yet this rhetoric presupposes a hierarchy that privileges certain (white, affluent) lives, voices, ecosystems, and futures over others. A deconstructive approach—which aims to reveal the constitutive metaphysical assumptions of a given discourse—helps expose several hierarchies assumed by the project: in particular, between humans and other species and between security and risk. Furthermore, these hierarchies operate within a technoscientific imaginary in which risks such as Lyme disease can be isolated and eliminated without generating other unpredictable and potentially irreversible risks (such as ecological disruption beyond the targeted islands). I then turn to Stiegler's pharmacological and organological approach to technics, which conceives of technics as simultaneously curative and toxic at the constitutive and co-dependent biological, psychological, and social levels of life. This framework clarifies the economic, political, and environmental stakes of determining which technoscientific projects merit funding, who is entitled to define certain risks as “acceptable,” and how such interventions shape and reshape social and environmental structures over time. I conclude that Derrida and Stiegler offer complementary ways of exposing the constitutive metaphysical, ecological, and political hierarchies and utopian imaginaries reinforced by dreams of genetically engineering a future free of risk. As this analysis of the “Mice Against Ticks” project shows, any attempt to engineer a cure or security itself reinscribes new forms of toxicity and risk.

Boros, Janos (University of Public Service Budapest)

L'œuvre comme fleuve: Héraclite, Derrida et Krasznahorkai

László Krasznahorkai, écrivain lauréat du prix Nobel 2025, a publié en 2025 un roman en hongrois intitulé *La sécurité de la nation hongroise. Chasse au papillon*. À première vue, le titre n'a rien à voir avec le texte du roman. Derrida a examiné le rapport entre le titre et le texte littéraire dans son ouvrage *Titre (à préciser)* (publié dans le volume *Parages*). En lisant le texte de Derrida, on peut avoir l'impression que Derrida a lu l'œuvre de Krasznahorkai, ce qui est bien sûr tout à fait impossible. Dans ma présentation, je lis en parallèle les écrits de Derrida et de Krasznahorkai, en posant la question suivante : quelles nécessités littéraires, linguistiques, cognitives et musicales poussent les écrivains à écrire des textes qui résonnent et se répondent mutuellement jusqu'au plus profond de leur essence ? Au cours de cette lecture parallèle, je ne cherche pas seulement à déterminer comment les textes se prêtent mutuellement comme points de repère pour la lecture de l'autre, mais je trouve également des endroits où le texte de Derrida agit comme une lampe de poche qui éclaire les recoins obscurs du texte de Krasznahorkai. Les textes de Derrida sont vivants en ce sens que, lorsque nous les lisons, nous sentons les pulsations ou les ondulations de l'histoire de la philosophie ou de la philosophie contemporaine. Avec Derrida, la philosophie est comme le fleuve d'Héraclite. Chaque fois que nous le lisons, c'est différent, mais chaque fois que nous essayons d'interpréter des textes philosophiques à travers sa lecture, nous découvrons des significations et des connexions nouvelles et différentes. Chez Derrida, on voit, on sent et on vit que l'histoire de la philosophie n'est pas terminée, mais qu'avec la pensée et l'écriture actuelles, c'est la philosophie elle-même, c'est-à-dire l'histoire de la pensée, la pensée sur la pensée, qui se produit. Elle continue à se produire. Le fleuve coule et change constamment. À ce moment précis. Cette dynamique ouverte du texte se retrouve également dans les écrits de Krasznahorkai. L'interférence entre les deux textes nous donne une lecture particulière du nouveau roman de Krasznahorkai, qui n'a pas encore été traduit dans d'autres langues. Je voudrais également montrer que le texte de Derrida est également éclairé sous un nouveau jour par la lecture du texte de Krasznahorkai.

Bose, Biboswan (Independent Scholar)

Stasis and Other: The Gift of Space in Comics

In *Derridabase*, Geoffrey Bennington writes that *différance* 'is always in-between or in-the-process-of, never itself, never present'. The implication is straightforward enough – that if spacing has to be conjoined to temporization in *différance*, then time cannot be conceived as a transition between synchronic, static states, that diachrony itself has to be thought anew, apart from its strict distinction from the synchronic. Any element that appears on the scene of presence must already suffer from a temporalizing detour, a delay, relay, reserve, etc. Perhaps this is what Gayatri Spivak indicates when she speaks of the relation of the 'law' of *différance* to the experience of the impossible, where she says that '[t]he space of being is the gift of time (so to speak) – we fall into time, we begin to "be", unanticipatably'. Despite the difference in contexts, and perhaps also levels of articulation, a line of thought seems to join the two together: that a call of the 'other' pulls us, keeps us, in time; that space is a gift of time, any static present is already genetic, already in-the-process-of, already in-between. Yet we know that Derrida insists, over and over, that *différance* is neither static nor dynamic. How should we read this insistence? To speak of *différance* as 'in-the-process-of', is to explain the genesis of the static through the dynamic, to think of space as a gift of time. It is to spoil their opposition, but from *one side*. What would it be to think of *différance* through *stasis*? To try to spoil the opposition from the *other side*, and to ask, as a mirror of Spivak, what it means for the time of being to be the gift of space (so to speak). I try to think of this question through the image of comics, a medium where the passage of time appears as space. I ask: can we entertain the absurd notion that in comics the 'call' of the other is spatial, that it relates the other to a certain kind of stasis that is not simply the structure of time itself, but rather has something to do with the 'genesis' of the genetic? In this paper, I try to think of the economy of *différance* through and from stasis, and I bring comics as a tentative image of this relation, not to reach a resolution or to forward a ready concept, but to follow and remain with its power to provoke.

Bracken, Christopher (University of Alberta)

Derrida and Occultism

In his essay "Telepathy," first published in February 1981 but intended for *The Post Card*, Derrida speaks of and as Freud, for example by rehearsing the argument of "Dreams and Telepathy" in Freud's voice as if reading Freud's mind. What Freud says through Derrida-the-medium, is that telepathy is a "foreign body" that psychoanalysis both swallows and rejects. In three "fake lectures," written between 1921 and 1932 but never delivered, Freud disavows then avows it. Just as Derrida speaks as/of Freud, in his second fake lecture, "Dreams and Occultism," Freud speaks as/of Frederic Myers, who coined the word "telepathy" in 1882. Telepathy, says Myers through Freud, is "the alleged fact" that "an event" befalling someone "at a particular time" can be perceived by someone else "distant in space." He does *not* really believe in "the objective reality" of "telepathy," but only proceeds "as though" he believes. Freud opposes fictional to factual belief. But can the opposition be sustained? What Myers says through Freud, and Freud says through Derrida, is that telepathy offers "a new thought" of *Ereignis*. An event can take place without being real. Freud, like Myers, worries that the belief in the reality of unreal events is a survival of "the superseded convictions of primitive peoples." Derrida-the-medium echoes them: how can a letter produce all kinds of events? His answer is that the letter conjures an addressee and an addressor who are determined only upon receipt, by an impossibly "performative causality." Hence any event of communication presupposes a telepathic conjuration: an arche-telepathy. But who is Derrida channelling when he posts this fantastic avowal? Still speaking as/of Freud, he remarks that telepathic utterances, such as fortune tellings, mediums, and clairvoyants, participate in the thing they predict: in foretelling an event, they provoke it. Though it is Derrida who puts the word "participation" in Freud's mouth, it is Lévy-Bruhl who puts it in Derrida's. For it was Lévy-Bruhl who, working by ethnographic telepathy, conjured up the "primitive mentality" as a way of expressing the forbidden the hope for a "participation between the symbol and what it represents." Did Derrida share this hope? And what does it mean for "tele-poetics," which might be another term for deconstruction?

Briggs, Robert (Curtin University)

Derrida, Lacan and the Question of Apian Desire

In *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Jacques Derrida proposes a "reinscription" of the Lacanian psychoanalytic schema "beyond any simple opposition between animal and human" (124) via two moves that appear to pull in contrary directions. With one gesture, Derrida appears to undermine any dogmatic human-animal distinction when he argues that the "differentiality of signs" that Lacan attributes solely to human language "can and must be accorded to any code, animal or human" (124). But in another, he expresses a lack of interest in "attributing to what Lacan calls 'the animal' what he also calls a 'subjectivity' or an 'unconscious'" (125). In this way, Derrida stops short of affirming *tout court* a psychoanalysis of the nonhuman animal, despite reserving the possibility that "certain animals, in certain contexts" might be figured in something analogous to an analytical situation. What prompts Derrida to pull back from this possibility? Indeed, what drives Lacan to deny it from the outset? Is something like a psychoanalysis of nonhuman animals conceivable, and if so, what it would look like? Would it be a matter primarily of putting cats and dogs on the couch, so to speak? Or would it engender in the first instance a transformation of the Lacanian schema, beginning with the very meaning of the concepts of "Truth", "desire" and "the unconscious". And just how far could this possibility be taken? No doubt the forces of socialisation and individuation governing the lives of family pets render their psychoanalysis relatively plausible, but surely the same could not hold for the humble honeybee?

Brlek, Tomislav (University of Zagreb)

Of Literature; or, the Prosthesis of Originality as a Critique of Doxographic Discourses

Among the manifold responses elicited by Derrida's work in general and by *Monolingualism of the Other* in particular, the constitutive role assigned to the particular use of language that might be called *literature* – which, as the recent publication of *Psychanalyse et critique littéraire* (1969-1970) might yet again remind us, was of cardinal relevance to his endeavour – with respect to the notion of identity, the possibility of critical discourse, as well as the understanding of writing itself, seems to be conspicuous

by its absence. Of the many descriptions that Derrida never ceased to propose for the event of literature, “inventing a language different enough to disallow its own *reappropriation*” might be the most cogent due to its patent relevance to the project of deconstruction, which is nothing if not notorious for resolutely availing itself of “a language that is impossible, unreadable, and inadmissible.” It is of signal import in this regard that among the many means of prescriptive subjugation which are to be eschewed in any such “improvisation of inaugurality” (which is, needless to say, “without the shadow of a doubt, the impossible itself”), Derrida should parenthetically include the “mechanisms of avant-gardist reproducibility” and “the indefatigable regeneration of the literary superego.” In the all-but-unread paper on “Some Statements and Truisms about Neologisms, Newisms, Postisms, Parasitisms, and Other Small Seismisms,” the complacent consistency of sundry critical approaches bent precisely on reappropriating deconstruction for the reproducibility of their own “pseudo-identities, labels, or slogans” is remorselessly pitted against reading: “it would be much more urgent, interesting and exciting too, at least less boring, to *read* and to *elaborate* theoretical configurations whose structure, writing, conceptual and institutional modes, and social and historical inscription were irreducible, precisely because of a certain force of transplant, to the dialectic of the merry-go-round or to the merry-go-round of the parody of dialectics in 'post' and 'new'.” Given that the “doxographic discourses” predicated upon identity (“this concept of which the transparent identity to itself is always dogmatically presupposed by so many debates on monoculturalism or multiculturalism, nationality, citizenship, and, in general, belonging”) have been going from strength to strength ever since, it is even more urgent to take interest in writing that “cannot be confined to boxing rings, merry-go-rounds, and round-tables.”

Buck, Louisa & Moninska, Janina (University of Brighton & Independent Scholar)

Musings: La Différance and Artistic Research: A collaboration seen through the lens of Iteration and the Muse

This paper will consider how Art Practice as a research methodology, referring to both process and practice, can broaden research outputs in terms of contributing to new enquiry through experimentation, exploration, conversation and accessibility. Examining the concept of Derrida’s *La Différance*, combining the core notions of to differ and to defer, (*Writing and Difference* 1967) referring to shifted meanings and comprehension, this research will investigate slippages in translation created through the use of alternative art practices.—Since 2011 Moninska and Buck have had an on-going dialogue on critical theory, philosophy and art practice. In 2023 Moninska, struggling with writer’s block, came across a reference to the Muse of Inspiration and the Muse of Realization. (*On Writers Block, Nelson, V. p.77, 1993*) She commissioned Buck to draw her a muse. In response to Moninska’s request, Buck proposed she would draw Moninska the nine Greek muses in return for nine artistic responses. What has emerged from this collaboration, Buck and Moninska suggest, is the muse as a Derridian process of iteration, difference and deferral. For example, how did Erato, Muse of Poetry, become a story about a sauna in Oslo? Clio, Muse of History, a secret voice recording of a text read in Shakespeare and Company’s historic bookshop in Paris? Derrida’s ideas of Iteration allow for these varied interpretations whilst alluding to a core identity. Moninska and Buck come from different disciplines, drawing and live art. Live art is not an art form as such, but a framing device for an emergent strategy to include the excluded. Although informed by performance art, live art is shaped by realities of now and new ways of activating audiences. It occupies all sites and explores the immediacy of things and ambiguities of meaning. (Live Art Development Agency (LADA). As such it resonates with Derrida’s concepts of iteration and *la différence*. For this presentation Moninska will share images and texts that emerged from the Moninska Buck Muse collaboration through a Derridian lens, (10 mins) followed by a Derridian participatory live art dialogue with Moninska and Buck. (10 mins)

Burik, Steven (Singapore Management University)

Daoism as Post-modern Philosophy

This article is an attempt to show how classical Daoism is both compatible with the main tenets of post-modern thought, and how Daoism could be considered as a ‘supplement’ to post-modern philosophy itself, and thereby could be used to address some of the criticisms aimed at the perceived weaknesses

in post-modern thought. I pursue two lines: First, how Daoism and post-modern thought (by which I understand the tradition criticising the dominant way of thought in the West identified by Heidegger as ‘metaphysics’, and running roughly from Nietzsche, through Heidegger, to Derrida), can both be perceived as a counternarrative to their respective dominant traditions. Second, how both can be seen as a counternarrative to grand narratives or metaphysical systems thinking in favour of a process thinking of change and provisionality. Daoism is generally understood to have arisen at least to a large extent as a criticism of the flaws and limitations of mainstream thought in Classical China, that is, of Confucianism. Post-modern thought can similarly be identified as a countermovement to the dominant tradition in Western philosophy. While both can be identified as a countermovement, this is in itself no guarantee for any similarity between these two strands of thinking. In this article I argue how Daoist thought has similar goals, strategies, and methods as post-modern philosophy. I will first identify and explain some of the most salient features of post-modern philosophy. Next, I will apply post-modern thought to Daoism to show how both are best understood as providing counternarratives to the perceived one-sidedness of the dominant philosophical tradition of their respective times. The next section continues this approach to see how both Daoism and post-modern philosophy are not only to be understood as providing an alternative to the dominant tradition, but how both argue for a deconstruction of the philosophy of Grand narratives and systems in general. I finish with some considerations on how Daoism so understood may address some of the criticisms levied at post-modern philosophy.

C

Campanioni, Chris (Pace University)

Staging Trace: Derrida & the Non-Indexical Object of Digital Documentation

Attentive to the “hauntological echo” produced by the decade-long interval between Jacques Derrida’s portrayal in the film *Ghost Dance* (1983) and the publication of his *Specters of Marx* (1993), this presentation aims to enfold different generational and geographical fabrics, illuminating connections between Derrida’s later deconstruction of archival technologies (*Paper Machines*), a transnational current of intermedial art that emerged during the Cold War, and the non-indexical object of contemporary digital documentation. Reading creatively across fields, including Jacques Rancière’s analysis of an inherently impure cinema capable of challenging both representative and aesthetic logics through subverting the effects of recognition and revelation, appearance and presence; Trinh T. Minh-Ha’s reassessment of “real time” and “filmic time”; and Harmut Winkler’s notes on processing, “Staging Trace” brings together aspects of new media studies, including digital intimacies and AI photography, and the larger field of life writing to complicate aspects of source and destination through the narrative temporalities of watching.

Carotenuto, Silvana (l’Università di Napoli)

De/constructive Countersignatures: Silence du choir by Mohamed Mbougar Sarr

My topic is ‘writing’ and what *la difference* does; in my Derridean reading, it does the *countersignature*; writing does (the) countersignature (of itself, ultimately). Derrida gives his account of this deconstructive writing in “Countersignature”, the speech presented at Cerisy-la-Salle, in August 2000, for the decade “Poétiques de Jean Genet. La Traversée des Genres”, published, in English, in the journal *Paragraph*. I read this text in conjunction with *Silence du choir* by the Senegalese prize-winner Mohamed Mbougar Sarr, the novel that writes itself to countersign the ‘silence of the choir’ (echoing with the ‘silence of the heart’) on the question of migration, the Italian – and worldly – hospitality to the other who arrives, when and if she arrives. *La difference* of its writing *does* the *countersignature* of its own title. My critical interest lies in the countersignatures here at play: Derrida’s deconstruction of western thought; Sarr’s postcolonial literature; my own literary analysis. Through the interplay of their differences, I hope to demonstrate how *la difference* writes its own de/construction – the Derridean legacy as the ultimate affectability, passivity, demise of all traits of sovereignty (the final section of Sarr’s

oeuvre speaks “The Language of Stones”; it would be interesting to read the countersignature inscribed by the ultimate ‘alterity’ of such a language).

The Derridean texts I read are “This Strange Institution Called Literature”; “Before the Law”; “The Law of Genre” (in J. Derrida, *Acts of Literature*, ed. by Derek Attridge, 1992); “Hostipitality”, *Angelaki*, 5, 3, 2000; and “Countersignature” (2000), *Paragraph*, 27, 2, 2004..

Cerrato, Maddalena (Texas A&M University)

"Psychoanalysis in Deconstruction. Dufourmantelle and Derrida: Secret, Witnessing, and Responsibility"

In the 1991-92 seminar *Répondre-Du Secret*, Derrida suggests that psychoanalysis introduces a split in the semantics of the secret between, on the one hand, the logic of an ultimate hidden meaning and on the other, the logic of an irreducible non-phenomenality of experience. He shows that, nevertheless, both logics coexist in Freud's own discourse. The tension between the hermeneutics of a transcendental secret and the an-economic experience of the secret as the asemantic limit of representative consciousness traverses Freudian psychoanalysis and haunts the paradoxical Freudian imperative to *say everything*. Yet for psychoanalyst Anne Dufourmantelle, responding to such a paradoxical imperative means recognizing in the unnamable secret the very condition of relation, rather than striving for self-transparency. Indeed, her 2015 book *In Defense of Secrets* opens with the assertion “To become a psychoanalyst is to cross over to the secret's side” (3). By reading Derrida's recently published 1991-92 and 1992-93 seminars together with the work of Dufourmantelle, this paper sets aside the common misconception that psychoanalysis depends upon the two opposite and reciprocal responsibilities of patient and analyst—one testimonial and the other hermeneutic—in order to explore how the questions of the secret, witnessing, and responsibility intersect at the very core of psychoanalytic experience. The secret of the phenomenological aporia of singularity emerges as the shared space where the performativity of psychoanalytic care takes place. For Dufourmantelle, this is the secret where death and the body are silently intertwined, which begins with the enigmatic relation to the bodily alterity of the mother. All the complexity of transferential dynamics depends, at its very core, on the impossibility to testify to the secret, that is, on the impossibility—which Derrida discusses in November of 1992 via Paul Celan—of testimony's addressee *to bear witness for the witness*. This impossibility functions as a thirdness, a third dimension of absence that disrupts the dual relationship of analyst and analysand while enabling the analytic event in its necessary singularity and iterability.

Chabbert, Marie (Utrecht University)

What Tolerance Could Henceforth Be

In 1994, Derrida opened the Capri conference by naming the “problem of tolerance” as one of the most urgent challenges of our time. Thirty years later, that problem remains both ethically pressing and philosophically unresolved. This paper returns to Derrida's reflections on tolerance to ask what they can still teach us about how to live with the religious other—a challenge that liberal democracies, despite formal commitments to pluralism, continue to approach through logics of asymmetry and conditional inclusion. While influential critiques by thinkers such as Wendy Brown and Herbert Marcuse, have convincingly shown how the ideal of tolerance can be manipulated to justify exclusion, Derrida locates the problem of tolerance at a deeper level: not merely in its practice, but in its conceptual architecture. To tolerate is already to assume a sovereign position: one grants space to the other on one's own terms. This hierarchical logic, Derrida observes, is fundamentally incapable of sustaining the ethical relation tolerance claims to uphold. Derrida's notion of “unconditional hospitality” provides a critical horizon from which to interrogate the violence inherent in such conditional modalities of welcome. Yet, as this paper argues, the hospitality paradigm—primarily centered on the figure of the foreigner—somewhat eclipses the distinctive challenge posed by *religious* difference, or what has historically been referred to under that name. Here, the issue lies not only in welcoming the stranger, but in learning to coexist with others whose most deeply held convictions may conflict with one's own. The challenge, then, is not just how to open our homes or ourselves to the unfamiliar, but how to live in peace amid rival claims to ultimate truth. In response, this paper takes up Derrida's unfinished philosophical invitation to imagine “another tolerance,” one that might interrupt the logics of sovereignty and of epistemic

privilege that continue to govern our relation to religious difference. Rather than refining existing models of pluralism, it calls for a deconstructive rethinking of the very grammar through which religious difference is encountered, understood, and negotiated. Tackling the problem of tolerance, this paper suggests, must begin with this rethinking.

Chakraborty, Saikat (Kazi Nazrul University)

Wrong is Right: A Study of the Vernacular Vehicle Inscriptions

The following paper tries to study the inscriptions inscribed on the public vehicles of India through what is specifically known as 'ordinary language philosophy'. The inscriptions due to their vernacular lineage and a quirkish association with the public vehicles seem to challenge the Derridean notion of 'iterability'. By iterability Derrida means the 'repetition of a signification' (anomalies, parasites, cancerizations) in unlimited variety of contexts beyond its 'living present'-in order to exist. Put simply, iterability means the functioning of a word beyond its present context of production. The possibility of functioning of a word when the sender, addressee and the living presence of the context is absent. However, in case of the inscriptions of the public vehicles this particular idea of 'iterability' seems inapplicable. Put simply, these public vehicle inscriptions do not have any repetition of signification beyond its context. The anomalies or discrepancies associated with these inscriptions are put to meaning-making only within the context of their association with public vehicles. Those same inscriptions, put in any other context such as homes or other institutions would be considered as wrong. However, the inscriptions put within the context of public vehicles are not considered as wrong due to an agreement between the sender and addressee, also known as 'attunement'. Therefore, the following paper tries to look at how the practice of engraving the public vehicles with inscriptions becomes a context which challenges the notion of Derridean 'iterability'. Put simply, these inscriptions do not repeat beyond their context and yet, they exist and also signify meaning within the mode everyday existence.

Chen, Changyuan (Bergische Universität Wuppertal)

Re-sexualiser le discours philosophique : Derrida et la différence sexuelle

Cette communication examine tout d'abord l'intervention de Jacques Derrida sur la question de la différence sexuelle, en se concentrant sur son *Auseinandersetzung* avec Levinas et Heidegger à travers la série de recherches réunies sous le titre *Geschlecht*. D'une part, Derrida interroge la figure du « féminin » chez Levinas en y mettant au jour une aporie structurale : l'impossibilité, pour le féminin, d'accéder à l'autorité de l'œuvre — c'est-à-dire à la possibilité même d'« écrire un livre ». Cette impasse ne relève pas d'une lacune contingente, mais manifeste ce que Derrida nomme le « phallogocentrisme » de la langue métaphysique, là où, c'est précisément dans et par un geste de neutralisation, que la configuration du discours philosophique se trouve virilisée. D'autre part, s'appuyant sur sa lecture de Heidegger — notamment le cours GA 26 — Derrida explore la possibilité d'une différence sexuelle pré-dualiste, ouvrant ainsi la voie à une « re-sexualisation » de la philosophie à partir du neutre ontologique. Ensuite, contre toute réduction idéologique de cette démarche, cette étude met en lumière une subversion, voire un « refondement », de la différence sexuelle qui ne conduit ni à une simple inversion des pôles ni à une re-naturalisation du sexuel, mais à une interrogation radicale de la langue philosophique elle-même. Dès lors, la différence sexuelle ne se donne plus comme une essence, mais comme une lisibilité en devenir, produit par la trace, le récit et leurs effets de dissémination. À la manière d'une « fourmilière » de significations, elle se déploie dans l'invisible par le travail de l'interprétation, demeurant dans un état constant de passage, de déplacement et de fluidité.

Chen, Ying (University Paris 8)

La pratique comme « bord » : Derrida et l'auto-délimitation impossible de la philosophie

Dans son cours de 1975-1976, Jacques Derrida mobilise la notion topologique du « bord » pour réinterpréter la refonte marxiste de la « pratique ». Loin de n'être qu'un simple objet théorique, selon Derrida, le couple théorie/pratique touche ici à la limite même de la philosophie, non comme une ligne de démarcation claire, mais comme une « structure retorse ». C'est cette structure qui, à travers ses

lectures de Marx, Kant et Althusser, détermine la façon dont la philosophie se définit elle-même et s'exclut du non-philosophique. Notre parcours suivra le déploiement de cette opération en trois mouvements. D'abord, Derrida avance que les *Thèses sur Feuerbach* de Marx ne sont pas seulement une nouvelle théorie « sur » la pratique, car leur forme textuelle relève elle-même d'une « pratique » : le texte accomplit cela même qu'il énonce. Il s'agit ainsi d'une auto-détermination pratique de la pratique, qui institue les conditions de la théorie là où la théorie ne peut atteindre. Ensuite, pour penser ce mouvement, Derrida s'appuie sur la conjonction kantienne « *weil* » qu'il traduit, par un glissement significatif, par le mot français « par ». Il réinterprète ainsi cette notion de « pratique » comme une série de préfixes de traversée (per-, tra-, trans-), un mouvement de « dé-bordement » qui constitue la condition des arrivants et l'intérêt de la raison humaine en général. Enfin, via sa lecture d'Althusser, Derrida rattache la pratique en ce sens à l'auto-délimitation de la philosophie : si le propre de la philosophie s'inscrit seulement dans son auto-responsabilité (elle seule peut tracer sa limite), la détermination marxiste de la pratique accomplit le geste philosophique le plus authentique précisément là où s'achève la philosophie théorique. La philosophie n'est philosophie que parce qu'elle transgresse incessamment ses propres bords, devenant un mouvement d'extériorité qui lui fait perdre sa clôture. Et ce mouvement du bord ou vers le dehors, nommé la pratique dans ce cours, préfigure les élaborations derridiennes des années 90 sur les « verbes impossibles » (donner, pardonner, etc.).

Chirita, George (Romanian Association for Audiovisual Communication)

Derrida In Reverse Perspective And The New Phenomenology

Derrida focused his analysis on a critique of language from within language, moving away from the ontologizing obsession with presence manifested through inner speech. After him, the new phenomenology—through Hermann Schmitz, Renaud Barbaras, and Emmanuel Alloa—disrupted this presence marked by ontological pulsions already abolished by Derrida, replacing it with what was called the concept of *atmosphere*. As an echo of Merleau-Ponty, this reinstated the world as the primordially of perception, not as an “audio object” with ontological status, but as an undifferentiated totality of objects that could no longer oppose themselves to a subject, which thus also disappeared. And yet, within the momentum created by the new phenomenology, Derrida’s tools can be inserted—seen from an inverted perspective—to refine phenomenological discourse. Thus, in Emmanuel Alloa we find the concepts of the co-appearance of world and subject and the reversibility of perception, in the sense that we are *in* perception as if we were *perceived* by the world itself. In Derrida’s terms, this thesis can be read more appropriately through the notion of the *trace*: all appearances come as traces, having a common origin—not in the pure sense of origin that Derrida rejects, but in the sense that both the self and the world “have common memories.” Renaud Barbaras presents the idea of phenomenality without a subject, in the sense that phenomenality is the dynamic of the world itself, and the subject is only an effect of this opening. Through this, Barbaras offers an ontological framework similar to what Luther experienced as an exposition *coram Deo*—to live *coram Deo* is to live in the presence of God; indeed, we live in the presence of the world. Derrida addressed the need to return to the surface of life by observing that inner speech is not on its own plane. The shift toward the silent movement of differences relocated the identification of life to this domain of the world’s silence. This leap made by Derrida must be recovered in order to be integrated into the perspective introduced by the new phenomenology. The simple transition from the discursive plane to the plane of lived life, as proposed by the new phenomenology, although expected, does not by itself ensure the complexity necessary for understanding the human situation in the world. This situation cannot be merely a perceptual phenomenon, because the plane in which perception unfolds—namely Schmitz’s *atmosphere*—is an “atmosphere of meanings” which, admittedly, are not organized into discourse but only mutually support one another. Revisiting Derrida’s position on reality’s slipping into *trace* can add substantial depth to our understanding of the complexity of life in its immediacy, which is always an “immediate after.” Conclusion: The new phenomenology must be “updated” with Derrida’s tools in order to make room for the full complexity of life—specifically by preserving the play of differences that Derrida describes, within which the identity of one element is expressed through the identity of another.

Chiurazzi, Gaetano (Université de Turin)

La déconstruction entre naturalisme et culturalisme

La question de la nature ne semble pas constituer un thème explicite dans la philosophie de Derrida. Une large part de *De la grammatologie* lui est néanmoins consacrée, plus précisément la deuxième section, intitulée « Nature, culture, écriture » ; on trouve également de nombreuses références à la nature dans d'autres écrits, souvent de manière indirecte, depuis les premiers textes consacrés à la phénoménologie husserlienne jusqu'à ceux portant sur la vie ou sur l'animalité, qui ont d'ailleurs suscité une attention accrue dans la littérature secondaire, notamment à partir de textes posthumes tels que *L'animal que donc je suis*, publié en 2006, et *La vie la mort*, séminaire de 1975-1976 publié en 2019. Toutefois, même dans ces textes, la position de Derrida à l'égard de ce thème n'apparaît pas univoque. D'une part, si l'on se réfère principalement aux analyses développées dans *De la grammatologie* à propos de Rousseau, il semble possible d'affirmer que le concept de nature est indissociable de la métaphysique de la présence, tandis que la culture (en tant qu'écriture) représente cette insertion supplémentaire qui vient miner une telle métaphysique. D'autre part, si l'on pense surtout à *L'animal que donc je suis*, il semble au contraire qu'il faille soutenir que l'ensemble du domaine du culturel (c'est-à-dire de l'humain) est affecté par un préjugé humaniste et anthropocentrique, que l'animal vient précisément mettre en question. C'est autour de ce nœud problématique que se développera la présente communication, en formulant certaines questions aujourd'hui particulièrement actuelles pour la compréhension et la portée de la déconstruction dans le débat contemporain : la déconstruction est-elle une forme d'hyperculturalisme, qui ne laisserait aucune place à la « nature » ? Mais que faut-il entendre par « nature » ? Ou bien, à l'inverse, la déconstruction est-elle une forme de « primitivisme naturaliste », comme certaines pages de *L'animal que donc je suis* semblent le suggérer ? À mon sens, la réponse à ces questions passe par une interrogation plus générale : est-il possible d'inscrire la déconstruction dans l'une des nombreuses formes de monisme (naturaliste ou culturaliste) aujourd'hui si répandues ?

Clarke, Simon (Royal Northern College of Music)

Derrida, Undecidability and the Paradoxical Unity of the Object

Undecidability in Derrida's work has been much discussed, particularly by Paul Livingston in *Politics of Logic* (2012, adapted from his *Derrida Today* article of 2010). But where Livingston's aim was to reflect on the implications of formalism and the inherent reflexivity of language, the suspicion remained that the so-called undecidability of key Derridean terms such as *différance*, supplement, hymen, dissemination, pharmakon etc. only holds by what Graham Priest (in *Beyond the Limits of Thought*, 2002) calls a 'rather shaky analogy with Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem' (p. 217). However this may be, Priest nevertheless considers, e.g., *différance* as paradigmatic of what he calls the 'inclosure schema', by which in this instance the totality of possible statements must both exclude and include statements about *différance*. Here, however, my concern is for the implications of this thinking for the contradictory status of the unity of objects in Priest's *One* (2014). At the outset, though, we should emphasise that Priest defines objects as anything we can think about, refer to or quantify over which, as a self-proclaimed noneist, he insists may or may not actually exist. And it is in search of the unity of such (partite) objects, whereby this unifying element is more than simply a further part itself in need of some further unifying factor (and the infinite regress that this entails), that Priest proceeds. His solution in Part 1 of *One*, then, from Frege's unity of the proposition to Aristotle's property instances, to Heidegger's Being of beings, is what he calls a *gluon*. Here we find an object which yet isn't an object, and which must be identical to each of the parts of its unity, even given that these parts aren't identical to one another, and which thus cannot be identical to itself. A gluon, therefore, is in a sense within its own limit, whilst also marking this limit itself, and yet necessarily beyond any such limit as well. In this paper, then, the question is whether and to what extent certain Derridean concepts (we might fittingly call them quasi-transcendentals here) and their extensions may be understood on these same terms, being both beyond and not the limits of thought, language and quantification, with particular reference to Derrida's *Aporias* (1993)..

Cohen, Rona (Tel Aviv University)

Learning to Die? Derrida and Nancy on the Limits of Philosophical Consolation

In this lecture, I seek to reflect on the relationship between philosophy and death through the figure of Derrida—both as a philosopher and as a human being. I will explore this through Jean-Luc Nancy's posthumous article, *Scandalous Death*, wherein Nancy points to the gap, or even the irrelevance, of philosophical thinking for those whose death is imminent. Nancy does not reflect on this topic in the abstract; rather, his point of departure consists of the philosophers he knew—contemporaries like Derrida, Lyotard, and Lacoue-Labarthe—who, facing their own deaths, found no comfort in philosophy, least of all in their own. Facing the facticity and empirical reality of death, philosophy—which in its Platonic ideal was a "learning how to die"—proved in practice to be "a scandal! It [death] is intolerable!" In Lacoue-Labarthe's words, it offered little comfort and bordered on disappointment. Indeed, in *Learning to Live Finally*, the philosopher of *Aporias* and *The Gift of Death* claims that he has not learned to live "finally," as he has not been able to accept death: "So, to finally answer your question, no, I never learned-to-live. In fact, not at all! Learning to live should mean learning to die, learning to take into account, so as to accept, absolute mortality." The figure of Derrida, both as a philosopher and a man, reveals a certain truth about death and its aporias. Is there a way out of this impasse for philosophy, or is philosophy—in its relation to death—bound to remain a scandal: a theoretical meditation that offers little for the tending of the dying? I will address this question by relying on Nancy's suggestion to rethink a philosophy of death in *Scandalous Death*, while following Derrida's own entanglement with this topic.

Colony, Tracy (Brad College Berlin)

Before the Sovereign: Walten in Derrida's Final Seminar

Derrida delivered *The Beast and the Sovereign* seminars at the EHESS in Paris each academic year from Fall 2001 until Spring 2003. While the themes of sovereignty and animality remain at the center of these seminars, they also open new perspectives and points of engagement within Derrida's long-running encounter with Martin Heidegger. This is most evident in the final seminar with its focus on Heidegger's lecture course *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (1929-30). However, Derrida's explication of Heidegger in this seminar is unlike any other. He identifies Heidegger's use of the term *Walten* in this early lecture course, as well as in *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935) and *Identity and Difference* (1957) as so fundamental it "gives form to the whole Heideggerian text." Derrida rejects the usual translation of *Walten* as simply to reign or govern and draws out its sense of force, violence and imposed sovereign power. While the reception of Derrida's treatment of *Walten* in this final seminar has focused on the indeed crucial aspects of force and violence, Derrida repeatedly describes *Walten* as also functioning for Heidegger as the source or origin of the ontological difference. In my paper, I examine this often overlooked aspect of Derrida's reading of *Walten*. In the first section, I briefly present the centrality of *Walten* in Derrida's seminar. In the second, I then demonstrate the importance Derrida accorded *Walten* in its role as a hyper-sovereign origin of the ontological difference. In the final section, I then show how, for Derrida, this aspect of *Walten* obfuscates questions about the emergence of the ontological difference in terms of history and life. In line with the seminar's key themes, Derrida's treatment of *Walten* as a hyper-sovereign origin articulates a crucial limitation in Heidegger's thought vis-à-vis what is living. From this perspective, further light is shed on why Derrida accorded *Walten* such a singular role in his orientation to Heidegger, and in his final seminar.

Corleis, Carl (Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel)

"Le risque, c'est donc la lecture juive". Derrida's examination of Hegel's treatment of Judaism in Glas

For Derrida, Hegel's philosophy is not just one philosophy among many; rather, philosophical language would find its own logic in it, with which it would be neither reasonable nor possible to break. At the same time, however, Derrida suspects that Hegel's work expresses a problematic relationship between so-called Western thought and Judaism, which could be demonstrated particularly clearly here precisely because of the exemplary nature of Hegel's philosophy. This examination reaches its climax in *Glas* (1974), in which Derrida attempts to show that the devaluation of Judaism in Hegel's philosophy cannot be attributed to mere prejudice but is structurally inherent on a logical-metaphysical level. According

to Derrida, the adequate mediation of Judaism fails for essential reasons, which consequently reveal Judaism's irreducibility to the Greek-Christian logos and force a minor but consequential shift in philosophy. In Derrida's examination of Hegel, the question of the cultural depth layer in which anti-Semitism is rooted intersects with the question of the alterity of Jewish thought, whose excluded truth could only be understood through an immanent critique of philosophy. On the basis of an exegesis of *Glas*, I will first highlight the immense significance of Hegel's philosophy for Derrida, and then go on to present Derrida's specific form of immanent critique, with which he detects breaks in the logos precisely at those points where philosophical thinking attempts to incorporate Jewish thought, from which a revision of thought becomes imperative. In doing so, I will attempt to show the extent to which this revised thinking does not constitute a new form of knowledge but leads beyond the dialectic of meaning.

Costa, Hugo Heleno Camilo (State University of Rio de Janeiro)

Interdisciplinarity, Context, and Curriculum Reform in Brazilian High School: a Deconstructive Perspective

This article examines successive proposals for curriculum reform in Brazilian high school from a post-structuralist perspective inspired by the thought of Jacques Derrida. The study conceptualizes reform discourse as a broad and dynamic political movement that reiterates a promise: the production of subjects capable of acting effectively in an uncertain and rapidly changing world. This promise is largely articulated through the advocacy of interdisciplinarity and contextualization, presented as solutions to the perceived limitations of a curriculum organized around school subjects. Derridean notions of writing, translation, trace, and dissemination are mobilized to challenge the assumption that curriculum can secure transparent relations between knowledge, subject, and context. Official curriculum policy documents are approached as distinct moments within an open-ended process of textualization, in which meanings are continuously translated and altered across different contexts. In dialogue with post-critical curriculum studies, it argues that although interdisciplinarity and contextualization are frequently defended as emancipatory and integrative pedagogical principles, within the framework of reform they tend to operate as regulatory mechanisms aimed at controlling the uncertainty inherent in school experiences. By presupposing identifiable contexts and anticipatable forms of action, reform discourses seek to appease the indeterminacy of social life through prescriptive proposals, thereby reinscribing logics of control under the rhetoric of flexibility and autonomy. Central to the argument is the Derridean concept of translation, understood as an impossible task. In this sense, every attempt to fully adapt knowledge to context generates new and unpredictable meanings—surplus that escape curricular calculation. The curriculum thus appears haunted by what it lacks: a complete body of knowledge, a fully formed subject, and a fully knowable world. The article concludes that, by denying this constitutive dissemination and indeterminacy, curriculum reform risks producing an educational framework more restrictive than the disciplinary model it seeks to overcome, reinforcing a logic of control disguised as innovation.

Cotton, Nicholas (Collège Édouard-Montpetit)

« La scène de ce séminaire » : sur une certaine possibilité impossible de transmettre le secret

Avec cette communication, nous voulons poursuivre le travail amorcé d'analyse des dispositifs littéraires mis en place par Jacques Derrida dans ses séminaires, et plus particulièrement dans l'ensemble « Questions de responsabilité » (EHESS, 1991-2003). Pour ce faire, nous proposons de nous appuyer sur ce que nous pourrions appeler l'« aporie de la parole enseignante » – communiquer l'incommunicable – déployée dans le séminaire inaugural Répondre – du secret (1991-1992). Qu'est-ce qui s'enseigne dans un séminaire ? Comment transmettre un secret ? Cette « opération insolite [de] l'enseignement », suggère Derrida lors d'une séance de discussion qui n'était pas destinée à la publication, est au fondement même de sa pratique : « Personne n'est jamais venu enseigner, jusqu'à moi, en disant : « Je viens ici non pas pour vous dire la vérité [...], mais pour garder un secret ». ». Nous proposons d'analyser ici quelques-unes des multiples stratégies discursives et créatives de simulation et de dissimulation mobilisées par Jacques Derrida dans ses cours pour garder et offrir le secret. Sur le

plan formel, nous serons en ce sens particulièrement attentif aux marques d'une certaine dramaturgie prévues ou improvisées séance tenante, et à plus forte raison, sur le plan conceptuel, aux deux hétéroportraits qu'il fait des écrivains Charles Baudelaire dans *Répondre – du secret* et de Marcel Proust dans *Secret témoignage* (1994-1995). Ce qui a tous les aspects d'une mise en scène théâtrale, voire d'un rituel, n'est-il pas après tout au cœur de l'enseignement derridien comme la fiction est au cœur de la possibilité même du témoignage ? Enseigner, dès lors, ce serait témoigner en gardant intact ce qui se secrète performativement en séminaire – s'insémine et se dissémine – à savoir ce qu'il nomme la « scène » de son séminaire.

Courchesne, Jacob (Université de Montréal)

Derrida talmudiste: la déconstruction comme écho du midrash

Dans la conférence « Abraham l'autre », Derrida affirme au détour d'une page qu'il serait possible de démontrer que la question de sa judéité « dans [s]on travail d'écriture, de pensée ou d'enseignement [...] organise à peu près tout ». Notre pari sera de prendre cette affirmation au sérieux en nous demandant en quoi la déconstruction et le quasi-concept de « différance » participeraient d'une herméneutique à caractère talmudique. Pour ce faire, nous nous concentrerons sur trois aspects de l'herméneutique talmudique, plus précisément midrachique, à savoir (1) ce que David Banon a appelé dans son livre éponyme la « lecture infinie », c'est-à-dire l'ajournement de la clôture interprétative sous forme d'un « commentaire qui n'immobilise pas le texte ». Le deuxième aspect (2) concernera l'altération du texte qu'exemplifie le troisième des quatre paradigmes de l'interprétation talmudique (PaRDeS), le Drash que Marc-Alain Ouaknin traduit par « interprétation-altération-altérité ». Ce niveau d'interprétation se place sous l'égide du rabbin Elisha Ben Abouya, nommé l'« hérétique », celui qui fait violence à la lettre du texte, le déconstruit, mais seulement pour lui permettre de s'ouvrir à l'autre de son sens. Enfin (3), le commentaire talmudique est polyphonique, c'est un débat à plusieurs voix qui ne se synthétisent presque jamais ni ne cherchent à surmonter l'aporie. Nous argumenterons que la déconstruction présente à sa manière ces trois caractéristiques en (1) différant l'attribution d'un sens définitif à un texte, (2) en faisant valoir l'espacement qui creuse de l'intérieur tout texte, l'altère, en interdisant l'interprétation univoque et (3) en laissant sourdre un différend, c'est-à-dire « plus d'une langue » à l'œuvre au sein du texte. Ce faisant, nous espérons faire droit à un aspect souvent négligé de la pensée derridienne, notamment sa grande proximité avec les sources juives – entre autres bibliques, kabbalistiques, mais surtout modernes – et ce, depuis 1967 avec l'Écriture et la différence.

Czajka, Agnes (The Open University)

Specters of Home: Derrida, Migration and the Politics of Home

Derrida does not tackle the concept of home head on. Yet home (as *maison*, *chez soi*, *demeure*, *l'autochtonie*, *le propre*) is indispensable to Derrida's work. It has a structuring presence in his writing on Europe, democracy, hospitality, belonging, refuge and exile. It is a spectral figure that is perpetually unsettled without being explicitly theorised. The proposed paper explores the ways in which home emerges and is unsettled in Derrida's work, attending to its various traces, articulations and inflections: as dwelling and abode; space of mastery and self-possession; condition of hospitality and sovereignty; and mythic foundation of self-sameness and autochthony. The paper then brings Derrida's work in conversation with the insights of postcolonial scholarship, critical work in the field of migration and refugee studies, and the author's own fractured experiences of migration and home. For migrants, home is fluid and uncertain, spans multiple geographies, identities and histories, and is inhabited as thresholds, fractures and dissonance. Seen through the work of Derrida and the lens of migration home can thus radically unsettle identity, community and belonging. In incorporating autoethnographic reflection, the proposed paper offers a critical, embodied perspective on the radical, political potential of home. It aims to challenge conservative and reactionary 'politics of home' (grounded in the imaginary of home as fixed, closed and self-same) by reimagining it as always already unmoored, provisional and haunted by the presence of other.

D

Dadlez, Jakub (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University)

Plastic Transcendentalism: Malabou after Derrida

In the paper, I will reflect on the survival of the transcendental form of philosophy after its deconstruction. Certainly, the idea of universal, *a priori*, subjective conditions of possibility of the empirical world has been discredited. However, structures that give form to things and shape thought—although historical and tangible, contingent and mutable—do exist. In this context, Catherine Malabou, on the one hand, rejects the transcendental perspective and advocates a new materialist philosophy. On the other hand, she criticizes the anti-transcendentalist arguments advanced by speculative realism. Ultimately, Malabou appears undecided about the status of transcendentalism and subjectivity. I will argue that her notions of the brain, epigenesis, and anarchy are in fact post-transcendental concepts. By “post,” I mean deconstructed forms of transcendentalism and subjectivity developed by Jacques Derrida. Consequently, I will show that Malabou remains a deconstructionist philosopher, although at the same time her turn toward biology, her concept of anarchy, and above all her idea of plasticity provide powerful new resources for critical inquiry. This endeavor, however abstract and speculative, seems especially urgent in light of the subjectivities and subjections yet to come.

Damyanova, Zhana (Sofia University)

Derrida a-t-il une place dans l'histoire des sens?

L'étude des sens est une activité « scandaleuse » depuis que Marx, puis Frederick Jameson et enfin Martin Jay ont décrit l'attachement si inhabituel de la philosophie et de l'histoire au corps. Aujourd'hui, les pastorales rhapsodiques, tout comme les histoires strictement académiques sur les sens connaissent une splendeur incroyable et marquent de manière prévisible le triomphe d'un *tournant sensoriel*. Derrida a-t-il sa place dans cette *succes story* ? Mon hypothèse de travail consiste à décrypter les passages textuels qui pourraient étayer une réponse positive et nécessairement très nuancée à cette question. La méthodologie présente des similitudes avec l'analyse discursive, sans toutefois s'y limiter. Nous allons parcourir un itinéraire en terrain escarpé, où les paysages impressionnistes de l'histoire des sens rivalisent avec les intuitions abstraites de Derrida, qui bouleversent les conceptions traditionnelles et les plus avant-gardistes des sens. Ce parcours s'ouvre sur la célèbre question, posée dans *Glas* : « Comment l'ontologie peut-elle s'emparer d'un pet ? » Donc la trajectoire des sens commence par *Glas*, passe par *Mémoires d'aveugle* et s'installe pour un certain temps dans *Le toucher* ; Jean-Luc Nancy, avec quelques détours surprenants vers des passages textuels qui thématisent les sens dans d'autres textes. L'imbrication inextricable du *visuel* et du *tactile* dans les travaux tardifs de Derrida, ainsi que la déconstruction de l'héliocentrisme, donnent lieu à une conviction qui touche à la métaphore. La percée de Derrida dans les études sur la métaphore dans « La Mythologie blanche », ainsi que la mise en avant répertoire de son ancrage sensoriel depuis l'époque d'Aristote, sont une réponse possible à la réflexion dédiée aux sens – cette corporéité insignifiante, restée en dehors de l'attention philosophique..En ce sens, le *tournant sensoriel* est annoncé par le *tournant linguistique*, et la métaphore s'avère la pierre de touche dans la concurrence entre le sensoriel et l'intelligible..L'hypothèse selon laquelle les sens font partie d'une technologie d'archivage des données sensorielles motive le choix du thème inexploré ou bien rarement exploré des sens chez Derrida.

Davanger, Oda K.S. (Norwegian University of Science & Technology)

Tracing Inscriptions: Can Signs be Embodied?

The paper, “Tracing Inscriptions: Can Signs be Embodied?” analyzes the linguistic implications of what it means to theorize bodies as *inscribed*. In critical phenomenology, the notion of embodied *inscription* has been important to investigate the effects of agency on gendered and racialized bodies, as theorized by I.M. Young and F. Fanon's building on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. The paper identifies structuralist tendencies in Merleau-Ponty that have survived critical phenomenology's doubled critique of and appeal to his work. The paper does so by invoking Jacques Derrida's critique of Saussurean structuralism in *Writing and Difference*, by positing inscription as a form of Althusserian

interpellation that does not need speech as such to be operative and analyzing the body as *trace* instead of sign. The notion of *trace* is developed by drawing on *Of Grammatology* and *Voice and Phenomenon*. The influence of Saussure on Merleau-Ponty is introduced into a dialogue with Derrida, especially in the *Phenomenology of Perception*, although this is arguably before Merleau-Ponty's study of Saussure, and the "Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language" lectures, which are contemporaneous with his Saussurean moment. The author asks, what might the critique of structuralist premises in critical phenomenology disclose in terms of its analysis of otherness? For it is not *inscription* alone that leads to inhibited intentionality. As black existentialism and feminist phenomenology have shown, whiteness and maleness are likewise *inscriptions*. Analyzing the body as *trace* rather than sign reinvigorates Derrida's critique of Saussure's privileging of speech over writing, and presence over absence, in new gendered and racialized terms. Understanding *inscription* as an operation on the body as *trace* (combining language, temporality and otherness) makes it possible to phenomenologically analyze embodied experience as effected by history, by symbols, myths and behavior that inscribe it, and the body as vulnerable to effects of historical injuries that preexisted its own time and experience. The paper argues that Saussurean structuralism and Merleau-Ponty's temporal notion of habit do not suffice to do that work. This paper provides a deconstructive approach to critical phenomenology's work on gender and race that reveal the human condition as *inscribed* altogether.

De Michele, Giustino (Aix-Marseille Université & LLCP & Université Paris 8)

Deconstruction as Economic Epistemology

This paper aims to identify the scope of deconstruction in economic epistemology by critically assessing its interpretation in the context of the "linguistic turn" and "postmodern" approaches to economic methodology. Deconstruction integrates a reference to the economy at the rhetorical, theoretical and – to a certain extent – empirical levels. Nevertheless, it has almost never been applied to economics as a framework for textual, genealogical, or conceptual analysis. Very few exceptions exist: from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, spurred by the rise of a linguistic turn in the 1980s (notably McCloskey and Klammer, with related debates involving Mirowski and Mäki), the project of a postmodern economic epistemology emerged within an American heterodox Marxist milieu (Ruccio and Amariglio). In this context, deconstruction itself was advanced (Rossetti) as a tool for analyzing scientific discourse, potentially more insightful than alternative pragmatist or even "postmodern" options. Drawing on this concise yet significant body of literature, this paper reconstructs and critically assesses the profile of deconstruction that emerged therein, whose defining features are: 1) its – purportedly – linguistic character; 2) its incompatibility with – classical – forms of pragmatism. Deconstruction's grafting on this milieu did not last: while a rhetorical analysis aims to reveal hidden contradictions, paradoxes, internal tensions, and situated stances within scientific discourse, deconstruction's understanding of paradoxes and contradictions is too fundamental: its contradictions are not exposed in order to be resolved, or its paradoxes to be untangled, but rather to expose an irreducibly aporetic structure of reality. Deconstruction thus proved too paradoxical. Yet the assumptions underlying textual or discursive deconstruction point to an even deeper paradox. If, as Derrida suggests, "différance is the concept of the economy", then deconstruction claims a proximity to the economic that surpasses that of any other "economic thought": pragmatist, postmodern, and scientific alike. Stated otherwise, deconstruction's recognition of a primacy of "the economic" marks – taking up heretically Marx's final thesis on Feuerbach – the departure from a normative-theoretic ground, and the recognition of a performative-materialist one for thought in general. It is on such ground that an engagement with deconstruction would require to be taken up anew within economic thought.

De Miquel, Juan (Pompeu Fabra University)

From complit to Ansatz: Derrida and the cosmopolitics of comparative literature

In Derrida's partially unpublished 1979-80 seminar "Le concept de littérature comparée et les problèmes théoriques de la traduction," René Étiemble's entry on "Littérature comparée" for the *Encyclopaedia Universalis* is made to stand as exemplary of the manic encyclopedism as well as the unnerving political implications of the "complit" project: a discourse that dismisses its own structural

aporias as mere accidental obstacles on its Babelian path towards universal completion. Derrida's reading of Étiemble is still to be studied in detail, but perhaps one way to pursue this task is precisely to compare the comparatist's text to a similarly programmatic one, namely Erich Auerbach's 1952 "Philologie der Weltliteratur." Auerbach admits at the same time the political relevance of Goethe's unrealized utopian announcement —the era of *Weltliteratur* in which humanity will leave nationhood behind by recognizing poetry as a human patrimony— and the immeasurability of the material to be studied and made into a common good. However, by advancing the (hardly translatable) notion of *Ansatz* as a textual detail with radiating force, he opens the way to a work that might have more in common with deconstruction than has so far been acknowledged. In a similar vein, Auerbach's notion of cosmopolitanism, still deconstructible if less naïf than Étiemble's, is not unsensitive to some of the aporias explored by Derrida on matters of nationality, universalism, and citizenship. Here, then, is one possible approach of Derrida's most direct engagement with the "complit" project: what would have happened had Derrida chosen Auerbach's text as the program to examine? What might an encounter between Auerbach and Derrida's thought on exemplarity, nationalism and "worldliness" look like? Would a Derridean reading of Auerbach's commitment to *Weltliteratur* allow us to rethink our own notion of cosmopolitics? A brief comparison of Auerbach and Étiemble's short texts under the light of Derrida's seminar shall help us to establish the preliminary conditions in which such questions might be developed.

Deere, Don (Texas A&M University)

Ecologies of Trembling Between Glissant and Derrida

In 2004 in Meina, Italy, Jacques Derrida and Édouard Glissant met for the last time, shortly before Derrida's death in July. The conversation was centered around the theme of "trembling" at an event hosted by the artist Valerio Adami and organized by Glissant. Both Derrida and Glissant delivered talks on this theme along with a brief dialogue afterwards. These two talks and the conversation were published in an Italian journal afterwards but have received little commentary and acknowledgement until recently. In my talk, I will develop on the concept of trembling as an ecological mode of thinking that connects both with a critique of the Western metaphysics of presence and stable being while pointing to another mode of aesthetics. Trembling names an attunement to the instability of the earth and the conditions of existence that can at any moment be struck by an earthquake, a hurricane, or the instability of a shaking hand that can no longer write. Is it to be avoided or a risk to be embraced? I frame these questions in terms of some larger issues about the relationship between deconstruction and creolization that can be situated around earlier conversations between Glissant and Derrida in Strasbourg in 1993 and Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1992. Overall, trembling is a concept that captures both the instability and constant transformations of thought in the world as it undergoes the movement of creolization and deconstruction..

Delain, Pierre (École Normale Supérieure)

« *Die Welt ist fort, ich muss dich tragen* » une mise à l'épreuve par le truchement du cinéma

Pendant sa dernière année d'enseignement, Jacques Derrida est revenu sans cesse sur une phrase issue d'un poème de Paul Celan : « *Die Welt ist fort, ich muss dich tragen* ». On peut lire cette phrase à la fois comme une formulation condensée de son œuvre et comme un testament. La phrase réunit deux propositions, toutes deux discutables, dont l'articulation pose question. Je voudrais dans cette intervention soutenir l'hypothèse selon laquelle on peut, par le truchement du cinéma, les mettre à l'épreuve. Devant l'épuisement ou l'effacement d'un monde (qui n'est pas le monde en général), cinq positions sont possibles : le subir, en souffrir, s'en retirer, faire venir en soi un autre monde, ou encore, comme le proposent Celan et Derrida, dire à l'autre : « Je te porte ». On peut trouver des films pour soutenir chacune de ces positions, par exemple, parmi les films les plus connus : *Un Tramway nommé Désir* (Elia Kazan, 1951) (Subir), *Le Désir Rouge* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1964) (En Souffrir), *Le Syndrome Asthénique* (Kira Mouratova, 1990) (S'en retirer), *Persona* (Ingmar Bergman, 1970) (Un autre en soi), ou la chorégraphie de *Café Müller* (Pina Bausch, 1978), dont on dispose d'une captation (Je te porte). En analysant ces films de près et en les comparant à d'autres, on peut déployer sous différents

aspects la position éthique derridienne. Tandis que les autres positions sont conditionnelles, dire à l'autre *Je te porte* inconditionnellement, c'est *l'éthique même*, une expression rarement utilisée par Derrida mais sur laquelle il revient à la fin de sa vie. Dans son séminaire sur « La Bête et le Souverain » Partie II (2002-2003), mis à part Robinson Crusoe, Derrida donne peu d'exemples de ce positionnement. Sans doute n'en a-t-il pas eu le temps. Mais l'« abîme du sans-support » auquel il fallait déjà répondre à l'époque s'est encore approfondi. Comme d'autres arts, le cinéma propose plus d'une réponse, que nous pouvons tenter d'entendre.

Domine, Gregory (Marc Chagall High School)

Le présent comme architrace de la circonfession, temporalité marrane

En manière de préambule : ce que savait Derrida. — Le rouleau d'Esther marque le passage de l'hébraïsme au judaïsme comme passage de la prophétie à l'interprétation et se tourne vers le secret de la chambre d'étude. La reine dissimule, c'est-à-dire *joue* son (31 :18) מֶלֶךְ נִי פִּי identité. Telle la fille du roi (Ps 45 :14), Esther resplendit intérieurement, cachant son visage à cette éclipse du Nom (Dt PeNYME) dit le dedans. Le rouleau d'Esther s'ouvre aussi par הֵן נִי (VaYêEY,) apparaissant pour la première fois en Gn 01 : 03. Plus précisément, c'est par la lettre ו (vav), converse par excellence, que ce mot et subséquemment le texte commence. Cette entête du rouleau vacillant entre révolu et irrévolu, André Chouraqui la traduit au moyen du présent : « Et c'est aux jours d'Ahashvérosh ». Le midrach d'Esther, comme le traité Meguila du talmud, insiste d'autre part sur l'aspect néfaste voire désastreux du mot הֵן נִי (VaYêEY) où peut concomitamment s'entendre « Hélas » (soit en outre le dernier mot de *Bérénice*, tragédie homonyme de cette autre princesse racinienne juive portant un nom grec et sise au lendemain traumatique de la destruction du second Temple). Mais la lettre ו (vav) converse est semblablement *inverse*, étant comme le cours du temps susceptible de permuter le genre : en Gn 01 : 27, c'est apprendre en effet de l'Adam sa formation homme & femme, בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ סָבִיב (ZaKhaR VouNeQeBE, et d'observer que la lettre *f* et sixième de l'alphabet français garde cette valeur inverse de la sixième lettre de l'alphabet hébreu). Dans « Abraham, l'autre », texte repris comme seconde partie du *Dernier des Juifs*, Derrida mentionne que son édition de *Réflexions sur la question juive* de Sartre comporte ce qu'il appelle *une étrange et signifiante coquille* : « le Juif est une homme ». Ailleurs, citant Yerushalmi, Derrida dira d'Esther : « la première Marrane, l'archétype ». La condition — l'incondition — marrane serait d'abord donc *féminine*; écrit sans tiret ou trait d'union, ce mot de *circonfession*, פְּרִדְסֵי אֶסְתֵּר « superposantsinonmêlantlorsdutravaildudeuillaconfessionaugustinienneneau » (PaRDêS), quadrifolié de la cabale, à peine *faufilerait* une *insituable frontière*. La circonfession ne serait de la sorte d'aucun mode relevant du *propre* ; plus elle se date concrètement et s'exhibe, plus elle s'encode et se chiffre. Sa mise en lumière, sa promotion ne pénètre pas le gisement de sa crypte : tenant de la circoncision comme *tourner autour* et *pellicule* en récusation d'un centre ou d'une origine, à la fin efface-t-elle l'aveu qui toutefois et bel et bien s'y love. Cette temporalité de la période ou de la bandelette, telle celle du rouleau d'Esther comme temporalité d'une catastrophe à la fois universelle et intime, serait-elle celle de l'*architrace* soit d'un passé n'ayant jamais été présent *et* ou *comme* celle d'un événement *inanticipable* ? Et si l'*architrace* procède de la *trace anarchique de l'Autre* lévinasienne, s'en distingue-t-elle en cela qu'en elle se meuve une nostalgie ou *nostalgérie* de la présence du présent justement comme ἀρχή ? Mais encore, contrairement — et irréductiblement — à la temporalité du monde comme extériorité et direction qu'il emprunte, celle ourdie au canevas de la circonfession et pareille à celle du rouleau d'Esther anagramme sans *h* de son *reste* serait-elle follement *réversible* ? La temporalité d'Esther, temporalité de la circonfession, serait donc celle de l'intériorité de la chambre — ou usant du lexique racinien, de l'*appartement* — comme temporalité ou temps *marrane*. Quand par la dialectique de son histoire promise à la parousie de la présence l'irréversibilité du cours dudit monde escompte un jour levé en tiers *comme différence en évidence de ce qu'il éclaire*, l'*architrace marrane* qu'est le temps réversible d'Esther serait *anachronique* et pourtant le seul réel d'un *présent* dont atteste déjà *La voix et le phénomène* : « Il n'y a et il n'y aura jamais que du présent ». Mais *de fait* à la *hantise* qu'il accueille d'un *futur antérieur* lié à l'interruption qu'est la rencontre, rompant donc le temps homogène et vide égal à l'espace uni- forme, dénué d'affect, ce présent serait temps de l'éthique et fragile justice comme messianicité sans messianisme soit démocratie en passe d'advenir —

mieux : venant maintenant, *maintenant je viens* —, nécessairement perfectible et révisible à mesure du danger de sa solidification.

Dominique, Marie (University Paris 8)

Spectres de Foucault dans Témoigner (Séminaire 1992-1993)

Un spectre hante le séminaire Témoigner que Derrida inscrit dans le cadre de la série « Questions de responsabilité ». « Comment être juste avec Foucault. » en est l'une des questions sous-jacentes, bien que non-dite ou muettement adressée, au fil de ce séminaire toujours hanté par le spectre de Foucault. Par-delà les séances initiales consacrées aux apories du témoignage, un autre tribunal, une autre barre se tracent : celle à laquelle Derrida n'aura cessé de témoigner depuis le différend initié par « Cogito et Histoire de la folie » en 1963, autour de la lecture de la première des Méditations métaphysiques de Descartes. Si beaucoup d'encre a coulé sur ce différend, assortie d'un impressionnant corpus de publications, il reste que le dossier — ou les blessures — ne sont pas refermés trente ans plus tard : le « spectre » de Foucault surgit à deux reprises dans l'index de Témoigner, tout comme, ici et là, surviennent des renvois au « panoptique » ou à la question de la « décision » — terme que Derrida relevait dans sa critique de 1963 et qu'il remet ici en circulation.

Downes, Paul (University of Toronto)

Fossil Metaphysics: Reading the Resistance to Solar Energy

A glaring example of what David Harvey calls the “madness of economic reason” logic is on display in contemporary refusals to embrace solar energy as an immense source of free, clean and ubiquitous power. A relatively simple Marxist analysis tells us that sunlight is anathema to capitalism, precisely because its ubiquity (what Andreas Malm discusses in terms of the opposition between “flow” and “stock”) makes it extremely difficult to limit, control and commodify (and simultaneously makes it ineffectual when it comes to controlling and extracting value from labor power). But is there also a metaphysics at play in capitalism's resistance to solar energy? And might Derrida's account of the way sun and sunlight functions for metaphysical thought (in, for example, *Dissemination*, “White Mythology” and “Violence and Metaphysics”) have any explanatory value when it comes to analyzing modes of contemporary resistance to solar energy? Plato's allegory of the cave in Book VII of the *Republic* (which Derrida encourages us to re-read in *Dissemination*) associates the sun with the realm of divine truth rather than the “evil state of man” (the “world of being” rather than that of “becoming”) and suggests that “ministers of state” should be those who are educated with a view to being able to look towards this light. But Derrida suggests that there is always a light behind the light for metaphysics (“But did not the Platonic sun already enlighten the visible sun”? Doesn't metaphysics betray an investment in “the light of light beyond light” [“Violence and Metaphysics,” 86])? Fossil capital demonstrates an interest in protecting this ideal light (or ideal energy) as a kind of magic (thereby protecting its activities from political as well as deconstructive undoing via a kind of metaphysical sunscreen)? Does solar power somehow threaten to expose the investments of fossil metaphysics? Does the increasingly accessible technology of solar energy menace one of the founding metaphors of metaphysics by materializing “the good (father, sun, capital),” thereby exposing the “hidden, illuminating, blinding source of logos” (“Plato's Pharmacy”) as a trick of the light performed on behalf of capitalist power?

Dreyer Hansen, Allan (Oskilde University)

Populism, if there is such a thing – or, (perhaps?) a populism to come

The discourse and hegemony theory articulated by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe stands as one of the most significant interpretations of deconstruction within the realms of social and political science. Nonetheless, Laclau's approach to populism, is not presented in a clearly ‘deconstructive style’. Scholars such as Ardit, Tormey, and Thomassen have compellingly connected the concepts of populism and deconstruction, and the principles of undecidability and im/possibility are discernible within Laclau's treatment of populism. However, his elevation of the concept of populism to an ontological status—distinct from a ‘hauntological’ interpretation—contradicts the tenets of deconstruction. This paper

intends to reframe the notion of 'populism' within a more comprehensive deconstructive framework, thereby identifying at least three distinct possibilities for further inquiry. To begin with, it is essential to highlight the inherent undecidability that characterises both academic and public interpretations of the term 'populism'. The term has undergone a significant transformation since its inception in the United States during the late 19th century, as noted by scholars such as Woodward, Postel, Frank, and Jäger. Despite extensive discussions, a consensus on its definition has not been reached. By emphasising this undecidability and deliberately refraining from proposing yet another definition of what populism 'is', one can illuminate the fundamental challenges associated with attempting to categorise all political forms within a 'scientific' framework. Second, and conversely, one could emphasise the need of an (*ethico-theoretical*) decision and propose a definition of the concept. It would lead to a re-articulation of Laclau's theory, a 'de-ontologisation' of populism, conceptualising it as a set of historical experiences (not least, more explicitly capturing the US American experiences from *The People's Party* onwards). Such an ontic definition would effectively elucidate how populism, more distinctly than other political forms, manifests the hauntological implications of the inherent impossibility of achieving final closure. It would also, thirdly, lead to a much more political positive view of populism than is dominating (including Derrida's own few mentions). The paper therefore concludes with considering the possibility of a populism *to come*.

Dumitriu, Silvia (Independent Scholar)

Deconstructing Mimesis: The Path Beyond Theatrical Reason

Although Derrida never addressed theatre directly, applying his notion of the parergon to the theatrical field mobilises a series of productive questions. If the stage is neither inside nor outside the work, what does this imply for contemporary discourse on theatre? As Derrida writes: "the parergon stands out both from the ergon and from the milieu...It is neither work (ergon) nor outside the work, neither inside nor outside" (Derrida, 1987, p.55). If we understand the stage as a supplement that exposes the shifting play between centre and periphery, what follows for other characteristic elements of theatre, such as the actor, mimesis, the theatrical text, and the very idea of theatricality --understood as the specificity of this artform? A deconstructive reassessment of the relationship between the anti-theatrical prejudice and the aesthetic discourse on theatre, originated in Aristotle foundational writings, reveals a problematic status at the heart of theatre: the notion of mimesis. This presentation argues that (1) mimesis as re-presentation regulates and normalises both the content and the context of the stage ; (2) such regulation reveals the theatre's subordinate position to the presumed priority of "the real", "the present", "reason", (3) the very concept of theatricality can be deconstructed in the name of theatre's parasitic lack of essence (which is thoroughly explained by Aristotle's discourse) and (4) mimesis can be recuperated through a deconstructive reading as a spectre that haunts theatre..As contemporary theatre raises unprecedented questions concerning the limits of what be considered theatre, Derridean deconstruction can respond to the aesthetic demand for a theoretical framework capable of embracing both traditional mimetic theatre and contemporary anti-mimetic forms. This presentation therefore engages in a deconstructive critique of theatricality, a term whose inflation has rendered it unstable: "The idea of theatricality has achieved an extraordinary range of meanings, making it everything from an act to an attitude, a style to a semiotic system, a medium to a message. It is a sign empty of meaning, it is the meaning of all signs" (Davis, 2003, p.1).

Dumont Garr, Shana (Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts)

Witnessing Beyond the Human: Derrida, Animality, and Non-Human Testimony in Janis Rafa's Lacerate

"Who witnesses to what and for whom? Who proves, who looks, who observes whom and what? What is there of knowledge, of certainty, and of truth?" (Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, p. 127) This paper interprets Janis Rafa's film *Lacerate* (2020) through Jacques Derrida's philosophy of witnessing, responsibility, and the limits of humanist ethics, drawing on *The Gift of Death* and *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. Murder mysteries typically begin with evidentiary certainty—a corpse as proof and narrative anchor. *Lacerate* unsettles this logic. Commissioned for *Mascarilla 19*, an exhibition on domestic violence presented by the Fondazione in Between Art Film, the video presents a male body,

nude and partially veiled, but refuses to stabilize that body as evidence. Rather than offering moral instruction, *Lacerate* stages a sustained hesitation around what it means to see, to know, and to respond ethically to violence. Crucially, the film's narrative is told through non-human, surreal elements within a domestic space: a pack of hunting dogs, elaborate arrangements of food, and running water become witnesses and agents. This displacement raises urgent ethical questions: Who counts as kin? How should loyalty be distributed? Who is it acceptable to kill? Rather than directly answering these questions, this paper interrogates how Judeo-Christian myths continue to structure power dynamics and ethical hierarchies. By foregrounding animal presence and agency, *Lacerate* questions the ownership and oversight of non-human life—an intervention directly relevant to understanding domestic violence as a problem through widened and deepened ethical considerations. I argue that the formal properties of video art—duration, continuous motion, and spatial arrangement within gallery exhibition—create conditions for what I term "rhizo-reified witnessing," a mode of testimony that disperses agency across human and non-human actors. Drawing on *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, I demonstrate how *Lacerate* troubles anthropocentric structures of violence, testimony, and ethical agency by positioning animals, humans, and objects within the same field of visibility and responsibility. In dialogue with contemporary animism (Isabelle Stengers, David Abram), posthumanism, and vibrant materialism, I argue that *Lacerate* extends Derridean deconstruction beyond language toward a materialist, affective ethics that refuses humanist moralism and visual certainty. Ultimately, *Lacerate* offers a reconfiguration of the conditions under which violence may be witnessed—demonstrating how Derrida's later works contribute to contemporary animist, posthumanist, and vibrant materialist thought.

F

Feng, Janice (Trent University)

Derrida and Utopia: Towards a Feminist and Anti-Colonial Critique

The contemporary moment has seen a resurgence of utopian political thinking. Scholars from different fields deliberately evoke utopia and take up utopia as a modality of theorizing to imagine alternative forms of collective political life that would enable us to move forward from the current impasse and overcome the sense of hopelessness. More commonly, in its common-sensical use, utopia often works as a shorthand of an idyllic and ideal society, signaling a time and place that is better than the here and now.

Some political philosophers have consistently defended the emancipatory value of utopian political thinking against charges that associate it with totalitarianism, leveled by conservatives and anti-communists in the second half of the twentieth century. Jacques Derrida, in his last seminar, "The Beast of the Sovereign II," offers his interpretation of utopia via a close reading of one of the most influential narratives of the genre, *Robinson Crusoe*. Derrida reads the narrative as an instance of erecting sovereign mastery on an island that is posited as empty, and especially interrogates the relation between Crusoe and the *Other*: slave and woman. In this paper I draw on Derrida's reading of *Robinson Crusoe* and his earlier critiques of sovereignty and logocentrism to further develop a feminist and anti-colonial reading of early modern utopian narratives, revealing the ways in which utopia is imagined is intertwined with phallogocentrism, settler colonialism, and racial capitalism. I contend that Derrida helps us better understand utopian thinking, especially and that those who mobilize utopian thinking must reckon with the entanglement between utopia and the structures of domination and exploitation that they think utopia can transcend.

Feldmann-Kaye, Miriam (Bar-Ilan University)

A Derridean Reading of the Burning Bush: The Impossibility of Translation and the Possibility of Responsibility

This paper offers a Derridean reading of the Burning Bush (Exodus 3) as a paradigmatic scene of withdrawal rather than manifestation, arguing that the episode stages a decisive disruption of metaphysical presence through the deconstructionist method. Whilst Jacques Derrida doesn't provide

a sustained exegesis of Exodus 3, his reflections on translation, différance, and Hauntology, especially in: *Of Grammatology*, *Sauf le nom*, and *Donner la mort*, initiate a philosophical engagement with the idea of revelation. I will present Paul Ricœur's writings on the Burning Bush, and then in light of this examine Derrida's potential interpretation of several themes which arise in the narrative: the ambivalence 'eheye' as a non-name; the untranslatable nature of essence which is continually self-deconstructing and re-disseminating; a linguistic gesture which refuses stabilisation, and so on. This theologically original meditation on Derrida will take into account his critique of sacred texts as well as theology itself. In contrast to Ricœur's hermeneutics of mediated meaning and Kearney's emphasis on narrative and ethical hospitality, Derrida radicalises the scene into one wherein responsibility becomes key at the 'moment' (as defined by Jean-Luc Marion) of revelation, precisely from the impossibility of presence. Overall, I will suggest in light of this analysis that despite Derrida's ambivalence towards aspects of theology, aspects of his thought are critical in religious thought and interreligious dialogue.

Francia, Fortunato (Université de Bari "Aldo Moro")

Les contextes. Jacques Derrida et les philosophies des langages

Soixante ans se sont écoulés depuis que les réflexions sur le langage de Jacques Derrida sont arrivées aux Etats-Unis. Cet événement a marqué le début de la réception de la pensée derridienne en Amérique, marquée par une influence vaste et interdisciplinaire. Le philosophe français a représenté – avec d'autres « collègues » – une réelle nouveauté pour le panorama intellectuel et universitaire américain, mais en même temps il a attiré une grande quantité de critiques. L'un des exemples les plus éclatants est représenté par la polémique entre Derrida et John Searle dans laquelle ressortait un dualisme apparemment irréductible entre philosophie « continentale » et philosophie « analytique ». Derrida a poursuivi son parcours critique à l'égard de la conception univoque et auto-fondée du signe ainsi que du contexte dans la théorie des speech acts de John L. Austin. Avec ces présupposés, il était impossible de concevoir le langage comme une corrélation claire d'une intention communicative. Dans la logique des années 60 – presque contemporaine du travail de Derrida – l'idée de défaire le rigide binarisme formel en faveur de la nuance de l'attribut avec l'utilisation de la logique floue se faisait jour. Dans le même sens, il faut souligner aujourd'hui l'existence d'études en matière d'intelligence artificielle comme celles d'Elad Vromen. Ils conçoivent les modèles de langage génératif comme des "machines sémiotiques", récupérant certains concepts structuralistes et poststructuralistes - en particulier derridiens - pour étudier certaines caractéristiques, comme par exemple la répétition différente des mêmes termes. Il semble donc aujourd'hui que l'utilisation des langages implique des pratiques de plus en plus complexes et "indéterminées" mais sans doute collectives et pragmatiques, efficaces. L'intention de cette contribution est de croiser les réflexions linguistiques de Derrida avec différentes tendances, explicitement débitrices ou inconsciemment proches de son travail. Une comparaison sera ensuite tracée avec la philosophie analytique, à la fois logique et du langage, les approches pragmatiques de Richard Rorty et Robert Brandom, les études sur l'intelligence artificielle pour montrer l'importance de ce penseur dans la réflexion d'aujourd'hui.

Freitag, Gloria (HSG St. Gallen & the Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena)

"outside of all tears." Politics of Mo(u)rning

A few days after October 7, 2023, writer Dror Mishani notes in his diary, later published under the title *Au ras du sol*, that instead of a military response, demonstrating strength, a time of collective mourning is needed—to mourn one's "own" dead and the dead of "others". To break the logic of violence requires to acknowledge vulnerability, one's own and a shared suffering. While weapons of a "war against terror" continue to produce "casualties", the Israeli-Arab grassroot movement "Standing Together" organizes "Silent Protests", to mourn those who died on the "other" side, thus clouding the lines between one's "own" dead and the dead of the others. They "weep for a mourning" (Derrida 2023), aiming to create (public) places in which mourning is possible and in which the lives taken *count* without being countable. Derrida goes as far as to claim that the other—if a loved one—never dies a natural death. "I" let them die, *as if* I were able to save them from dying, from mortality even. In terms of love, death is never natural. What Derrida claims for the death of those near to us, can and ought to be

extended to the “other who is not mine”. Derrida refers to an originary mourning “outside of all tears” that reveals the interconnectedness of self and other(s), and a conception of subjectivity that is defined by care and carrying: “I carry the other in me”. The other’s mortality is vulnerable *within me*. It is inscribed in the constitution of the self, of *ipseity*. If this were taken seriously, what would that mean for social bonds and for a politics—of some one—to come? Drawing on both Derrida and on examples of artistic and collective practices of mourning, I’ll argue that it is precisely mourning that can contribute to a “morning” to come not despite, but besides all tears—to a *political to come* that no longer fights the other, but cares for them, whoever they may be.

Friedman, Lyat (Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design)

Derrida’s Frames: “But the frame does not exist”

In “The Parergon” (*Truth in Painting*, 1987), Jacques Derrida focuses attention on frames of beautiful works of art. Three examples are given to that which stand besides a work of art: a transparent cloth decorating Lucretia’s lower body (Cranach, 1533); columns of Cryptoportico, at Fontainebleau, not providing support to the building; and beautiful frames of paintings that are not too beautiful so as not to seduce viewers away from artworks. The parergon, Derrida argues, “comes against, beside, and in addition to the *ergon*, the work done...it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside (54). It is a supplement. In this essay, Derrida compares Kant’s use of frames in the *Critique of Judgment* with the structure of the analytic method in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Derrida asks: Is the framework of knowledge, of universal, subjective, objective experience a mere supplement to the structure of knowledge? And replies, “the question of the frame is already framed when it appears at a certain detour of the *Critique*” (67). According to Derrida, Kant imposes the framework of experience taken from the first *Critique* onto the framing of aesthetic judgments. He writes, “Kant imports this table...into the analytic of aesthetic judgment...a *logical* frame is transposed and forced in to be imposed on a *nonlogical* structure...no longer essentially concern[ing] a relation to the object as object of knowledge” (69). The problem, he argues, is that one cannot impose conceptual tools onto the notion of the beautiful, for the beautiful exceeds logic and thinking. In this paper, I propose to take Derrida’s claim further and frame Kant’s analytic method as a computer-based system, one which depicts sensory details as a set of data that are analyzed by pre-given categories, by rules of logic, that is, by use of algorithms. Such framing of human experience reduces any experience, aesthetic or not, to a mere process of calculation. It computes experience and thinking. Indeed, Derrida concludes, “there is frame, but the frame does not exist” (81).

G

Ganascia, Thomas & Tsakiroglou, Aimilianos (École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, Sorbonne University & National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

Deconstructing Infrastructure- Derrida’s “teletechnologies” read through the prism of Malaparte’s Technique du coup d’Etat

Our paper starts from an overview on Derrida’s seminar *Theory and Practice* from 1976. We will try to link the notion of technique which Derrida elaborates in this text with the definition of politics in modernity which can be thought from Curzio Malaparte’s essay *Technique of Revolution* (1931): namely that politics has become a *form of technique of operating and organizing infrastructure*. Elaborating this notion of infrastructure will give us a new insight on Derrida’s dialogue with both the Marxist and Heideggerian traditions, as we will try to distinguish the concept of infrastructure both from the Marxist notions of *Basis* or *Productive forces* and from Heidegger’s ontological understanding of *techne* and technology. Since modern tele-technologies, as Derrida describes them, have become de-territorialized and decentralized by design, and thus tend to dissolve the modernist nexus of citizenship and democracy, we argue that focusing on the notion of infrastructure, understood in its materiality as the *arche* of every *techne*, may shed a new light on later Derrida’s political thought.

Gaon, Stella (Saint Mary’s University)

An Inquiry into Real & Ruling Abstractions or, How Deconstruction & Marxian Theory Intervene

The thesis of this paper is that deconstruction “is *not* neutral. ...it [*does*] intervene” (Derrida). Moreover, the same can be said for Adorno’s Marxian social theory. In other words, and contrary to claims to the contrary, I argue that Derrida and Adorno both meet the Marxian challenge, which is that philosophers must not merely “interpret the world,” but “*change* it.” Marx’s challenge implicates a dialectical conception of thinking that, I argue, is evident in both deconstruction and in negative dialectics. For both approaches, on my view, imply a form of thought that stems from and expresses actual life activities even while it produces those activities at the same time. Indeed, like Marx, Derrida maintains that “thinking is acting” – provided, he says, “that one considers thought otherwise than as theoretical speculation.” If formulations such as this one have been widely and frequently misunderstood, it is generally because thought is conflated with abstract theoretical speculation, and speculation is understood in opposition to a purportedly materialist or activist perspective. Concomitantly, critics who charge Derrida and Adorno with either uselessness or idealism fail to understand the relation between theory and practice dialectically. In response to this failure, I aim to show how theory and practice are dialectically related, specifically, by analyzing the ways in which the abstractions embedded in social life *govern* it in concrete ways. Two major types of governing abstractions will be explored: “real abstractions,” in a Marxian (political-economic) sense, and “ruling abstractions” in a critical (social-theoretical) sense. Notwithstanding their differences, both forms of abstraction illuminate the dialectical relationship between the so-called “conceptual” and the so-called “real” that Marx may possibly have had in mind. The analysis will show that just as concepts are sedimentations of historical becoming, the obverse is also true: society already embodies, and is governed by, socially and politically-constituted abstractions. Consequently, it is necessary not only to understand but to interrupt the conceptual dimensions of reality if one wishes to address domination. This is precisely the practical, political *change* that Derridean deconstruction and Adornian negative dialectics can help to bring about.

Gemora, Jacinto (University of Warwick)

Non-Binary Gender and Deconstruction: All Opposed Say “Bi”

There is, perhaps, a cynical or pessimistic impulse, when speaking of non-binary gender, to attempt to demonstrate how it fails to escape the binary. It is after all a new gender *category*, one more identity among the others. Perhaps some of the most brutal critiques of this variety issue from Slavoj Žižek, whose recent works and “anti-woke” hand-wringing treat non-binary gender plasticity as ironically “coinciding with its opposite” and insidiously creating “a new apartheid, a new network of fixed identities.” I should like to offer a more hopeful, if aporetic, Derridean reading of non-binary gender, one which illustrates non-binary gender’s potential to creatively navigate the undecidable tension inherent in deconstruction. Derrida speaks of two “phases” of the deconstructive movement, one which is necessarily caught in oppositionality, and another which undermines the opposition and creates something new. (The pessimistic reading abruptly stalls after the first phase). These two phases are not chronological, and this paper endeavours to show how non-binary gender is capable of holding them simultaneously, albeit always in tense negotiation. The first part of the paper is my Derridean response to the pessimistic account of non-binary gender. Here I explain the necessity of the first phase of deconstruction—non-binary gender must remain in opposition with binary gender if it is to retain any undermining force whatever in its second phase, in which discrete gender identity is transformed into an intensive spectrum. In the second part, I describe the negotiation between these two phases through Derrida’s notion of “strategic undecidability” and examine relevant real-world cases. It is finally demonstrated, reading Derrida with Deleuze, that, at least in some cases, having non-binary gender as a discrete gender option (opposed to male and female) is precisely what opens up the possibility of resisting discrete binary oppositions and of producing new gender expressions more hospitable to one’s desires.

Giardino, Alessandro (St. Lawrence University)

Derrida’s Resistance in Geopolitical Mediation

This paper focuses on Jacques Derrida's notion of resistance not only as a key to his engagement with psychoanalysis, but also as a concept with analytical traction for contemporary geopolitics and its psycho-social underpinnings—particularly in contexts of contested borders and unresolved frontiers, such as the Russian–Ukrainian conflict. By foregrounding resistance from the outset as a productive force rather than a mere impediment, the paper argues that Derrida's reflections provide a philosophical framework for geopolitical mediation that cannot dispense with questions of social psychology and symbolic investment in contested territories. Against the dominant critical narrative that interprets Derrida's early hesitation toward Freud as culminating in a rejection of psychoanalysis, the paper demonstrates that Derrida does not abandon psychoanalysis, but instead strategically utilizes its internal resistances to articulate a non-totalizing analytic method. Resistance, in this sense, is not external to meaning, nor simply reactive, but constitutive of the very processes of signification and interpretation. Through close readings of Derrida's analyses of *analein*, repetition compulsion, and the figure of the "letter that may not arrive," the paper foregrounds his insistence on a *philolytic*, dispersive logic that destabilizes narratives of return, origin, and symbolic closure. Resistance comes to name an interval between analysis and foreclosure—an interval Derrida persistently elects to inhabit. Foregrounded by psychoanalysis yet never fully mastered by it, this interval functions simultaneously as an epistemological and ethical posture that may inform mediation practices attentive both to geopolitical resolution and to the negotiation of plural, marginal, and competing narratives. Amplifying this insight, the paper suggests that Derrida's concept of resistance offers a compelling lens through which to read geopolitical conflicts structured by repetition, symbolic overinvestment, and psycho-social attachments to territory and origin. In the case of the Russian–Ukrainian conflict, resistance operates not merely as military or political opposition, but as a structural refusal of symbolic stabilization. Ultimately, Derrida's resistance emerges as a critical tool for thinking through conflicts—psychosocial as well as geopolitical—that persist precisely by resisting analysis, resolution, and closure.

Gissinger, Simon (Université Bordeaux-Montaigne)

La déconstruction, une autre pensée de la pensée

En repartant du problème de la « contre-bande transcendante » (selon lequel les conditions non-philosophiques – économiques, psychologiques, historiques, etc. – de possibilité de la philosophie ne sauraient être pensées qu'à la faveur de catégories qui sont elles-mêmes déjà implicitement philosophiques, et donc d'une pétition de principe) et en nous penchant sur des textes où Derrida s'interroge sur le nom propre ou la signature (de Ponge ou de Nietzsche, de Genet ou de Hegel), nous proposons de comprendre la déconstruction comme une tentative pour penser les conditions pré-conceptuelles de la philosophie ou, plus simplement, comme une autre pensée de la pensée. Nous consacrerons une partie importante de notre communication à justifier cette expression, dont la syntaxe indécise se situe à mi-chemin entre une autre pensée de la pensée (autrement dit un renouvellement de la métaphysique la plus canonique, d'Aristote à Hegel) et une autre pensée de la pensée (et ainsi une redéfinition, elle-même indécidable comme nous le verrons, de la pensée). Cette indécidabilité syntaxique rappelle que la pensée des conditions pré-conceptuelles de la pensée se produit chez Derrida à même l'écriture. Nous pourrions dès lors répondre à une objection fréquente : puisqu'elle déconstruit la présence, ne faut-il pas dire que la pensée derridienne est éternellement différée ? Que donne-t-elle et que nous dit-elle aujourd'hui ? Nous tenterons ensuite de répondre à une autre objection : parler de la déconstruction comme d'une autre pensée de la pensée ne revient-il pas à en faire une pensée sans objet et ne s'intéressant qu'à elle-même ? Enfin, nous soutiendrons que le caractère indécidable – c'est-à-dire irréductiblement contaminé par la philosophie – de cette autre pensée de la pensée est précisément ce qui distingue la déconstruction de la plupart des discours philosophiques, dans la mesure où ceux-ci se caractérisent par leur aspiration apocalyptique à mettre fin à la philosophie.

González-Núñez, Humberto (University of Texas at Dallas)

Ousia and Energeia: A Note on a Note to Margins of Philosophy

In “*Geschlecht pollachos legetai*: Translation, Polysemia, Dissemination,” Geoffrey Bennington suggests that there does not seem to be any example of Derrida’s treatment of Aristotle analogous to the one that he devotes to Plato in “Plato’s Pharmacy” (i.e., a reading of Aristotle against the grain of Aristotelianism that would match the reading of Plato contra Platonism). In this presentation, I turn to Derrida’s most sustained engagement with Aristotle via Heidegger in “*Ousia and Grammé*: A Note on a Note to *Being and Time*.” In this text, we can begin to see the possible generous reading of Aristotle in Derrida’s confrontation with Heidegger. However, as I intend to argue, the main obstacle of this double reading of Aristotle is precisely Derrida’s confrontation with Heidegger. Rather than approach Aristotle on his own terms, Derrida instead anchors his reading of the Aristotelian text within the issues raised by Heidegger, which I suggest prevents him from developing an alternative reading. To supplement this oversight, I conclude with some indications of what such a generous, deconstructive reading of Aristotle might look like by drawing on both other Derridean texts on Aristotle and contemporary Aristotelian scholarship influenced by deconstruction.

Grandi, Alberto (University of Bari)

Deconstructing Organisational Language with Derrida: Différance as a Practice for Re-signifying the Phallogocentric Discourse in Contemporary Companies

Derridean deconstructionist reflections have challenged the entire Western philosophical and social tradition, identifying phallogocentrism as the paradigm that has governed the order of meaning through the centrality of the logos and the phallus. In particular, such centralisation has generated binary and essentialist schemas in which one pole of the opposition acquires value, authority, and precedence, while the other is subordinated. This hierarchisation concerns not only categories such as “masculine” and “feminine”, but permeates the entire process of signification: within the network of *différance*, semantic concatenations and iterations privilege certain traits, naturalising power relations and establishing what may appear as neutral, universal, or necessary. This dynamic extends to contemporary organisational language, where central terms—“competition”, “performance”, “resilience”, “leadership”—are stabilised through traces that reflect phallogocentric metrics: aggressiveness, domination, productivity, self-sufficiency, command. Their performative force thus operates a double function: on the one hand, it produces subjectivities aligned with neoliberal logics; on the other, it excludes or marginalises bodies and modes of existence that do not conform to the implicit model of value. The hierarchies of meaning that govern the world of labour are therefore not mere social reflections, but effects of a discourse that self-reproduces through its own linguistic concatenations. Drawing on *différance*, this contribution proposes a practice of resignification that intervenes not in opposition to neoliberal vocabulary but within its very folds: it consists in mapping the semantic concatenations of central terms and inserting new iterations capable of shifting their horizon of meaning. “Competition”, for instance, can be decoupled from traces of domination and overpowering and rearticulated through traits such as the valorisation of differences, sustainability, or co-evolution. In this way, deconstruction operates as a transformative practice: it does not eliminate, but defers, disseminates, and reshapes. The contribution thus highlights how Derridean reflections remain central today for understanding and intervening in organisational languages, offering tools to disarticulate the phallogocentric dispositifs that regulate value, subjectivity, and labour relations. Deconstruction, when applied to corporate communication, enables the generation of non-hierarchical metrics and discursive practices capable of opening spaces for inclusion, plurality, and equal opportunities.

Grange-Marczak, Zoe (École Normale Supérieure)

The Material Conditions for Deconstructing Politics: Derrida and the French Derrideans in the 1980s

In 1984, Nancy Fraser defined the “French Derrideans”: a group of writers composed of Jean-Luc Nancy, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jacob Rogozinski and others, who proposed a specific political reading of Derrida. Around this group, conferences (the four Cerisy decades from 1980 to 2002) and institutions (the Collège international de philosophie in 1983, the Centre de recherche philosophique sur le politique from 1980 to 1985), both commented and involved Derrida. This paper aims to shed light on

Derrida through a detour, namely his echo in French political thought in the 1980s, trying to understand shifts in his corpus via the interpretations of his work during his own lifetime. How did the discussions of Derrida in the 1980s inform the changes in his thought? The starting hypothesis is that such critical discussions, happening in specific institutions, re-problematize and transform a large part of Derrida's thinking in the last 25 years of his life. This would mean that Derrida must be understood as open and always in dialogue, and that his main concepts and discussed authors from the 1980s onwards come from this collective elaboration. It will also involve a critical assessment of the specificity of his reception in France. The goal is threefold: examining Derrida in dialogue his readers; understanding the material conditions of French philosophy in the 1980s; and investigating the effect Derrida had on political thinking. By reading Derrida in his own time, we will also seek to examine the question of the political shift in his work through the lens of a political shift in French cultural and intellectual history in the last decades of the 20th century. The idea is to resituate the possibility of deconstructing politics in a certain historical and conceptual context, and to show how the institutions of philosophy allowed for an interrogation of politics themselves, leading back again to question the very possibility of the politics of deconstruction.

Griffith, James (Middle East Technical College)

God's Mistake and Anxiety: The Animal That Therefore I Am and the Creation of Ishah

In *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Derrida deconstructs the second narrative of the creation of life in Genesis by focusing on Adam's naming of the animals in Eden under God's silent yet unknowing supervision. In doing so, he notes that this naming occurs "before the creation of Ishah, the female part of man" (p. 16). That God does not know what words, or sounds, Adam will use to name the animals, supervised though it may be, is for Derrida "God's exposure to surprise" (p. 17). It also exposes God to the anxiety of being looked at and named by Adam, perhaps contained within human imagination and language: "What name is he going to call me by, this naked man, before I give him woman...?" (p. 18). Derrida does not note two aspects of the second narrative, though. The first is the reason for the creation of animals, as helpers for Adam's solitude (Gen. 2:18). As Nietzsche says in *The Anti-Christ* (§48), this goal fails, albeit after the silent, unknowingly supervised naming, which is why Ishah was created. The second aspect is that God perhaps gets ahead of the anxiety of being named by naming the first people Ish and Ishah (Gen. 2:23). If, following Derrida's reading of Benjamin's "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man," being named sets off a sadness because of an "impossibility of reappropriating one's own name" (p. 20), we might then question what exactly was this help that the animals and then Ishah were supposed to provide Adam. And what was this Adamic solitude? Why was it not good for Adam? Might it have been, rather, not good for God? Was a possible exposure to what is not good be what surprised God? If so, who was to be helped by the creations of animals and Ishah? This paper will investigate these questions by following on the heels of Derrida, supplemented by turns to Nietzsche and Benjamin.

Gronouwe, Lucas (Texas A&M University)

Derridean Deconstruction and Latin America: A Post- and Decolonial Assessment

How should today's intellectual respond to the historical legacies of colonialism and their enduring logics? One influential response, articulated by postcolonial thinkers such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, holds that one must acknowledge oneself as the heir to a cultural tradition deeply entangled with colonial violence and mobilize that positionality to disclose and unsettle this entanglement from within. A different set of responses—often articulated in explicit tension with this postcolonial strategy of immanent critique—has emerged from decolonial thinkers such as Aníbal Quijano, Walter Dignolo, and Catherine Walsh. These scholars call for a displacement of the geography of knowledge, away from the Global North—especially Europe and the United States—and toward the epistemic perspectives of the Global South, notably Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa. In this paper, I situate Derridean deconstruction within this post-/decolonial controversy. While not uncontroversial, recent scholarship increasingly characterizes Derrida—and deconstruction more broadly—as *postcolonial*. I will endorse this characterization, though along a trajectory distinct from the

now-familiar appeal to Derrida's biography. Yet is Derridean deconstruction *decolonial*? Does it shift the geography of knowledge? I argue that while deconstruction constitutes a full-fledged postcolonial response to Western legacies of imperialism, colonialism, and racism, it does not, de facto, enact a decolonial shift toward epistemologies grounded in the Global South. To make this case, the paper focuses on Derrida's engagement with Latin America, which has received comparatively little sustained attention in Derrida studies. This neglect is unfortunate, for it is precisely around Latin America, I argue, that the contrast between postcoloniality and decoloniality comes most sharply into view. Hence, I undertake a targeted reading of Derrida's 1981 lecture "Geopsychoanalysis," delivered at a Franco-Latin American meeting in Paris, and place his geopolitical reading of psychoanalysis in critical dialogue with Mignolo's decolonial manifesto *The Idea of Latin America* (2005). Ultimately, I suggest that while Derridean deconstruction may fall short of constituting a decolonial intervention, it can nonetheless function as a critical, postcolonial response to decolonial thought—or, more provocatively, as that which unsettles the very logic upon which the post-/decolonial opposition is founded.

Gruber, David R. (University of Nevada)

A Library Confessional: Derrida's Three or Four Books

In the 2002 film *Derrida*, the philosopher disarms his audience with the startling admission that, out of the hundreds of books filling his home, he has read perhaps "three or four." The statement undermines the very image of the philosopher as a master of his library. Yet, as with so many of Derrida's gestures, the remark is playful, disruptive, and serious. In this presentation, I explore five interpretations of Derrida's remark. It becomes a prism through which to glimpse how his philosophy relates to intellectual labor, pharmakon, artificial intelligence, human mortality, and humor. Each section neither resolves contradictions nor reconciles oppositions. We merely try to find "the end of the world," as Derrida does, to consecrate another moment of creation. For the sake of this abstract, the productivity of Derrida's quip is shown in reference to large language models, which have, in a literal sense, "read" everything in their libraries yet understood nothing. LLMs operate through an endless traversal of textual surfaces, building networks of symbolic associations. AI's combinatory calculations might make them ideal Derridean readers: they approach texts without the metaphysical baggage of seeking originary meaning or authorial intention. However, Derrida would probably experience suspicion toward the way that LLMs are understood and sold. The drive to make AI "maximally truth-seeking," as Elon Musk says, in order to act as a politically unaligned judge of truth for polarized societies whose experts cannot be trusted represents precisely the logocentrism Derrida spent his career deconstructing. LLMs can never "read" enough, we hear Derrida proclaiming; their combinatory expertise undermines the logocentric effort, as the read book reveals itself as forever unread. Overall, I show how Derrida's words live; how many times we can read again his little quip and discover the central issues of our day anew.

H

Haglund, John (Åbo Akademi University)

Inscription Invisible: Derrida's Miscitation of Jabès

While translating Jacques Derrida's early essay *Edmond Jabès et la question du livre* (first published in 1964, later notably included in *L'écriture et la différence*, 1967) into Swedish, I have discovered an astonishing citational anomaly. Among the many quotes from Jabès's *Le Livre des Questions*, one diverges at a single, decisive point. It reads: « Marque d'un signet rouge la première page du livre, car la blessure est inscrite à son commencement ». Yet, in Jabès's original it is: « ...car la blessure est invisible à son commencement ». *Invisible* has become *inscrite*. The wound, once hidden, now written—and the invisible, invisibly displaced. There are but two possibilities. Either this was done deliberately, or it was not. If deliberate, a concrete inscription of Derrida's own word into Jabès's text, it is a peculiarly violent intervention. Though perhaps understandably tempting—in a passage about separation as ontological condition, writing as the mark of absence, and the Jewish exilic experience as *conscience malheureuse*—this would be bold to the point of dubiousness. It would also raise questions of where

else Derrida might have made similar insertions. If it was an error, a lapse in memory or transcription—a *simple* mistake—it is a most remarkable one. Not only was Derrida meticulous, but more than that, since the misquotation occurs in a passage that encapsulates the very question of the *invisible* and the *inscribed*, this *exchange* signals a number of crucial points in his readings of Jabés. Which possibility is the more spectacular? That Derrida should have silently altered the quote with full awareness, or that the citational unconscious authored the substitution on his behalf? – be it an honest mistake or a gesture of wishful thinking. The aim is not to solve this mystery, but to linger in its implications. Derrida’s substitution might betray a structural possibility, a *paraciting*, implied everywhere in citation. This specific moment of silent slippage thus opens a space for thinking the implications of citational instability. Like the wound, the quote is already marked by undecidability..

Haile, Ben (New School for Social Research)

From Socrates to Derrida: On the Structure of Sending in Envois, Phaedrus, and Zeit und Sein

“I stopped dead with a feeling of hallucination (is he crazy or what? He has the names mixed up!)... Socrates writing, writing in front of Plato, I always knew it...” (PC, 9). Such was Derrida’s reaction to Matthew Paris’s enigmatic image of Socrates appearing to write while Plato peers intently over his shoulder. On the back of this image (both figuratively and literally) Derrida crafts “*Envois*,” a series of love letters exploring, among other things, the backwards logic of a Socrates who writes, and a Plato who comes before him. In untangling this odd image and the implications of an inverted order of philosophical inheritance Derrida writes: “of course it is to Socrates that I am addressing myself at this very moment, you are all a crowd, my sweet love, and you see him reading me at this very instant, already in the course of answering me.” (PC, 67) Drawing on the “L before K” logic of *The Post Card*, this paper takes this thought seriously, proposing a new reading of Socrates’s myth of the presentation of writing in the *Phaedrus*, as a response to Derrida illustrated by Paris on the back of the Oxford card. Derrida’s admission of address to Socrates directly follows a letter describing an imagined back and forth between Derrida and Heidegger on the place of “the *tekhnē* of the post” in Heidegger’s analysis of sending in *Zeit und Sein*. Derrida’s reading of *Zeit und Sein* in this letter is perhaps the closest he comes in *Envois* to giving a rigorously articulated account of the post and its relationship to the destinal structure of Being. The letter also contains many parallels between Derrida and Heidegger’s imagined back and forth and the *Phaedrus*’s “family scene.” Dissecting these parallels, this paper reconstructs the logic of Derrida’s impossible postal structure, analyzes the post’s relationship to metaphor (is the post simply a metaphor or does metaphor already implicate the post?), and considers the implications of the myth of the presentation of writing as a Socratic response and the complexities such a reading brings to existing interpretations of the *Phaedrus*.

Hall, Chris (University of Ozarks)

Unliving: The Afterlives of Vitality

Within the interstices of the living, of biology and biopower, of politics and epistemology, lies a contact zone where life and death reside together in undecidability, a zone replete with what Jacques Derrida has described as “life death.” This paper deconstructs the thematics of the entanglement of the living with the dying via the nonliving, interrogating the supposed coherence and independence of each of these categories as matters of the organization of the vital through David Wills’ notion of “inanimation.” Where Wills looks to the hauntological capacities of textuality and art to unbind the assumed distinguishability between the animate and the inanimate, the living and the nonliving, this project turns the insights of life death and inanimation to the biopolitical sphere, building particularly upon Wills and Carl Schmitt. In doing so, I argue that the politics of enmity levied by Schmitt and drawn by Wills into an analysis of the oppositional logic sustaining the boundary policing of the living and the dead also reveals the inanimacy that restricts politics today. If modern politics is indeed, as Foucault claimed, a biopolitics of populational management and state vitality, then the insistence upon taxonomizing and enclosing life in order to purify it from the corrupting forces of death has also been a project of inanimation, of not only denying the vitality of the inorganic and the dead, but of actually devitalizing valorized forms of life by reducing them to the categorical and identarian. From there, inanimation and life death make

it possible to perceive how what has been called life as the ends of politics becomes inverted, not only for those the state inflicts itself upon, but for those it cares for as well. This proliferation of inanimation does not, however, lead to necropolitics and pessimism: rather it opens the possibility of learning to *unlive* finally, to seek life beyond its binarism. In this way, the presentation builds upon work I presented on the economies of the living at the 8th Derrida Today Conference in Athens.

Hay, Natasha (De Paul University)

Poetic Evidence: The Politics of Witness to Historicide in Palestine

My presentation will reconsider the relationship between poetics, history, and the archive in Derrida's "Poetics and Politics of Witnessing" and *Archive Fever* with regard to the present situation in Palestine. I will begin by unpacking the structure of an event that aims to destroy its own future recollection. The erasure of history or historicide names this totalizing destruction of testimonial and documentary evidence in order to deny the reality of atrocities. In his analysis of archive fever, Derrida not only situates the destructive force of the death drive at the core of the archive's institution, but also remarks the structural possibility of revisionist history and false witness that trouble its statements. Nonetheless, the survival or afterlife of the event in the archive holds open the possibility of reparation and truth. This dual structure of the archive remarks the givenness of history that conditions our thinking and action as well as its vulnerability to eradication. For Derrida, it is the singularity of the poem that bears necessary yet impossible witness to the event of annihilation. I am interested in this suggestion that the aesthetic qualities of poetic writing can transmit a reality and truth that is missing from the knowledge conveyed in the journalist's and the historian's accounts. It spotlights the formal and linguistic remediation of erasure that takes place in the presentation of poetic evidence. Derrida's reading of Celan speaks incisively to the pivotal role of poets in narrating the repetition of genocide in Gaza and contributing to Palestinian liberation. The use of English to address a Western audience raises problems of monolingualism and translatability inherent to writing in the language of the Other. The radical dependency of poetic witness on the reader's belief sharpens psychoanalytic issues of abjection, foreclosure, and disavowal in response to disclosure. I would like to bring Derrida's analysis of the witness and the archive into dialogue with Edward Said's concept of 'permission to narrate' in order to examine 1) the ways in which poets in Palestine and its diaspora are witnessing to historicide and 2) the responsibilities of their readers toward this act of witness.

He Luming (Lehigh University)

Radicalizing Otherness: Reading the Ethicality in Jacques Derrida's Formulations of Iterability and Writing

This paper seeks to examine the ethical moment that arises in Derrida's formulations of iterability and writing, particularly in 1972 essay "Signature Event Context" and his 1984 address to Joyce scholars, entitled "Ulysses Gramophone: Two Words for Joyce." In light of the "ethical turn" in the critical reception of Derridean deconstruction, many of Derrida's writings have been approached from an ethical lens. Scholars have often focused on the philosopher's explicit engagements with ethics and politics, notably *Of Hospitality* and *The Animal that Therefore I Am*. In his paper, I contend that an ethicality can already be uncovered from Derrida's early meditations on language and *écriture*, in which his approach to ethics shares an affinity with Emmanuel Lévinas while providing a radicalization of the Levinasian philosophy of difference. I begin by examining Derrida's critique of J. L. Austin in "Signature" in developing an ethics of iterability, which suggests an open-ended and porous textuality that conduces to a meaningful encounter with alterity. I then turn to Derrida's radicalization of Levinasian alterity in "Ulysses": By advancing an infinite, indissoluble otherness that builds upon Levinas' Other, Derrida suggests a complex mediation between the self and the other in the workings of language, particularly in the (counter-)signature and the redoubled yes. For Derrida, the affirmation of alterity does not necessarily consist in a movement from the Same to the Other, but rather an endless, labyrinthine circulation that he finds in the *oui-dire* in Joyce. An ethical relation can take place when there exists a Yes-saying to a not-yet-present other whose otherness is both irreducible and infinite—an otherness that has yet to be acknowledged *as such*. The pre-performative force embedded in the event of literary

writing, for Derrida, provides a gateway to an ethicality where one welcomes and affirms the yet-to-come other.

Hekkilä, Maartta (University of Helsinki)

En abyme: Mimesis of Difference

In the proposed presentation, I approach the deconstructionist idea of mimesis especially in Jacques Derrida. While the classical notion of mimesis refers to *homoiosis*, adequation and imitation – that is, the (re)production of truth and similitude with another thing – the aim in Derrida’s undoing of mimesis is opposite: it destabilises the idea of truth in advance. I wish to examine the scope of Derrida’s argument that mimesis does not mean bringing to life the presence of another thing, but rather the production of differences and indecision. In *Dissemination*, Derrida writes that the instability of meanings stems from the abysmal ground of mimesis. Such ground is always in absence, in a fundamental untruth. What happens to mimesis if it suggests the impossibility of sameness, instead of creating coherence and resemblance? I shall discuss these questions and exemplify them with art, perhaps the most traditional realm of mimetic operations. Particular attention will be paid on Derrida’s notion of photography, in which the “true” referent is always already absent, so that it cannot be reproduced mimetically. Instead, Derrida speaks of photographs in terms of their ghost-like existence and as a “writing of shadows”: metaphors that exceed both the categories of the living and the dead, of presence and absence, and lead us instead to a situation in which such oppositions are dismantled. Photography is the art of the intermediary. For Derrida, as well as for Roland Barthes, photographs are not so much mechanical reproductions of reality than something comparable to phantasms: they offer themselves to perception by showing an image of something seemingly real and thus “living”. However, as such, they are images of something the identity of which is ambiguous; with perhaps no idea to which they would owe their truth as representations. How to describe this ontological condition that bypasses the traditional logic of mimesis?

Henig, Roni (New York University)

Derrida and the Question of Hebrew

This paper examines Derrida’s engagement with Hebrew in several avenues of his thought, first and foremost in “The Eyes of Language: The Abyss and the Volcano,” devoted to Gershom Scholem’s 1926 letter to Franz Rosenzweig. Derrida posits that in his “Confession on the Subject of Our Language,” written in German about the potentially dangerous “actualization” of Hebrew in early twentieth-century Palestine, the Zionist Scholem identifies an evil in Zionism that is latent in its language. I revisit Derrida’s discussion, first, by putting it in conversation with the broader discourse of “Hebrew revival”; the vast literary, pedagogical and political debates over the transforming status of Hebrew during the first decades of the twentieth century. Conceptualizing “Hebrew revival” from the vantage point of the uncontrollability of a language purportedly in need of resuscitation, I highlight the anxiety and ambivalence inherent in this discourse, an anxiety Scholem certainly shared but which also stretched far beyond his eschatological concerns. Second, I follow Derrida’s discussion of the mother tongue as a condition of madness (in *Monolingualism of the Other*) in order to reflect on the current incarnation of Hebrew and its role in the ongoing destruction of Gaza. Reflecting on the catastrophic potentiality of Hebrew—a language, which, according to Scholem, threatens to violently erupt one day against its speakers—I ask, can a sacred language go mad?

Hirtenstein, Jacob (Duquesne University in Pittsburgh)

Pharaoh’s Geist: Derrida’s Isomorphic Sequence

This paper contends that Derrida’s early essay, the Pit and the Pyramid, depends on a semantic, quasi-transcendental account of signification exceeding and subverting Hegelian negation. The secondary account is distinct from the essay’s main account. The reading offered in this paper aims to make explicit the secondary account, developing a quasi-constructive reading of the text through the usage of a developing sequence of isomorphies read as implicit conditions within Derrida’s argument. Derrida’s argument is not an anti-Hegelian polemic but an interpretive displacement: Derrida will interpret

Hegel's logic in a direction that separates but does not break from Hegel, and he will displace it using the terms he develops to demonstrate the priority of speech over writing. The basis of Derrida's critique is that Hegel's logic depends on an unacknowledged precedence of speech. Crucially, Derrida borrows Hegelian negation to develop the definitions in his account. We will track these definitions using an isomorphic model that maps the definitions into a sequence of dichotomies. 'Isomorphism' here is taken to weakly mean 'there is a shared structure between these terms'. The whole of the isomorphic model follows a '2+1' structure, meaning that there are two sequences of isomorphies followed by a condition which is able to incorporate two modes as part of its single definition. The 2+1 structure is the means of interpretively displacing Hegelian negation, as the 'one' will be demonstrated to likewise reject the law of non-contradiction (LNC). Each progression of the isomorph's dichotomies extends the conceptual scope of the isomorphism. This essay is divided into three related sections that follow Derrida's development of the isomorphic pairs. The first section tracks Derrida's development of the first pair in the isomorphic model, semiology and psychology. The second explicates Derrida's development of *relève* and time as they transition into speech. The third section marks the exhaustion of the logic of *relève* upon the development of lexicology, or the science of semantic relations as they are expressed by users of a language. Lexicology is then used to develop the final account of the Pit and the Pyramid by translating previously developed terms into an appropriate register.

Hodge, Joanna (Manchester Metropolitan University)

What calls for thinking? Reading Heidegger with Jean-Luc Nancy

Humanity and the earth of human beings have not yet been discovered. "*Unerschöpfte und unentdeckte ist immer noch Mensch und Menschen –Erde*" (Nietzsche, *Also Sprach Zarathustra I: von der schenkenden Tugend*. KSA 4: 100). Heidegger's lectures *Was Heisst Denken?* (1951-52), the first and last delivered by him at the University of Freiburg, after his reinstatement, were published in German in 1954, by Max Niemeyer Verlag, and translated into English already in 1968, as *What is called thinking?*. The title of my proposal intimates a shift of inflection, as a consequence of reading Heidegger in the company of Jean-Luc Nancy, who by chance as a child was part of the French occupation of Southwest Germany, under which Heidegger lost his licence to teach. Nancy reports himself as, at first, underwhelmed by Heidegger's writings, changing his view through exposure to readings by, variously, Maurice Blanchot, Jacques Derrida and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe. There are three shared themes: Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin, on a break, or caesura, constituting a distinctive new epoch of danger; various reinscriptions of Mallarmé's '*livre à venir*', responding to Heidegger's distinction between an open and a pre-inscribed future; and a notion of reading as infinite conversation (*entretien infini*). Within this shared context, the paper will explore two features of Nancy's responses to Heidegger: his focus on the vanishing of the theme, *Mitsein*, in *Being and Time* (1927), and his rewriting of the call to rethink thinking. Three texts by Nancy develop the former feature: *Le Partage des Voix* (1991, 1982); his thesis from 1987, *L'expérience de la liberté* (1993, 1988) and *Etre singulier pluriel* (2000, 1996), with its decisive opening citation from Nietzsche, with which this proposal opens. The rewriting of the call for thinking arrives in a movement from a finite thinking, the focus in his 1990 collection of essays, *Une pensée finie*, to that of the 2001 collection, *La pensée dérobée*, thinking stripped bare. In the latter, Nancy combines responses to Nietzsche, to Heidegger and to Bataille to reveal a role for thought as disguising and masking, rather than illuminating a current condition of crisis. Heidegger's call of conscience is to be displaced in favour of a call to strip thinking of its pretensions to overview and mastery.

Hogan, Michael (Independent Scholar)

Art of the Street: Derrida and the Aesthetics of Displacement

Western aesthetic discourse has grown complacent with the situs of art as planned encounter. Certain historical locations, such as the church, the museum and the gallery, have embedded the expectation of artistic encounter within the confines of their walls and gardens. Although certain practices like Earth Art and Public Art have moved art to outdoor locations open to and accessible by the public, they too perpetuate the notion of the planned aesthetic encounter through their public approval processes,

newsworthiness, and fixed locations. Certain practices of street art challenge this legacy in critical ways. First, they do so by the intentional placement of the artwork outside of constrained institutional environments amid places where humans work, live and commune. Moreover, their methods render the work at once fixed by appending them within a static public context, and paradoxically ephemeral because of the likelihood that they will be removed, eventually fade or dissolve, or be painted over. Through these practices emerges what I call the aesthetics of displacement – that is, a decontextualization of the artwork which inhibits its re-placement in the museum and gallery. This paradigm operates similarly to the notion of displacement that, though often not explicit, is woven throughout the work of Jacques Derrida and carries forward Martin Heidegger's advocacy for a movement away from metaphysics. In this paper, I identify similarities between certain practices of street art and the effects of displacement Derrida observes in the written text. I argue that, when considered as a manifestation of the *aesthetics of displacement*, street art represents a liberation of aesthetics as a constrained western metaphysical concept. This is to say that, in street art, aesthetics is disencumbered in the same manner Derrida's contributions to our understanding of the text unshackled our reading from the historical binary constraints of metaphysics.

Horváth, Eszter (Université Métropolitaine de Budapest)

Le graphisme des graphèmes: Derrida, Nancy et le « désir de la ligne » (enjeux épistémologiques)

Quarante ans après avoir achevé son tableau phare, Peinture (Écriture rose), Simon Hantai accepte de travailler avec Jacques Derrida et Jean-Luc Nancy, accompagnant de ses travaux picturaux le livre de Derrida, *Le toucher*, Jean-Luc Nancy. Cette collaboration résulte en une série de peintures pliées – travaux « de lecture », comme il dit – , remplies d'écriture : on y discerne peu à peu les textes des deux philosophes, copiés les uns sur les autres jusqu'au point où l'écriture, désormais illisible, donne lieu à l'image. Les travaux de Hantai mettent en œuvre une sorte de palimpseste pictural où peinture et écriture se reflètent l'une dans l'autre, donnant un nouveau sens au terme « réflexion ». L'écriture de Hantai, illisible, nous donne à penser. Le dialogue qui a eu lieu ici, entre pensée philosophique et art plastique est emblématique en ce qu'il relève d'un changement décisif dans la relation des deux domaines. Ma proposition consiste à revisiter le dialogue entre l'art et la philosophie qui a eu lieu pendant les années poststructuralistes en France. Ce dialogue contribue à la mise en valeur d'une sorte de « tournant visuel » français (avant la lettre, si je peux dire, avant même que les deux versions bien connues dans le monde des sciences humaines – la version allemande, celle de Gottfried Boehm et celle américaine, signée W.J.T. Mitchell – aient trouvé leurs expressions dans les années 1990), un tournant visuel qui joue un rôle très spécial dans le développement d'une nouvelle approche aux savoirs, une sorte d'épistémologie hybride, une épistémologie qui tient compte de ses intuitions sensibles et gestuelles qui se manifestent dans l'écriture lorsque celle-ci devient image, geste ou matière. Cette fois nous allons nous concentrer sur le graphisme de l'écriture derridienne, la plasticité qui souvent évoque la tactilité de la ligne tracée, du parcours corporel et matériel de la création, nous allons suivre le « désir de la ligne » (Cézanne) qui s'exprime dans le graphisme du graphème et la texture du texte dans l'œuvre de Derrida, le parcours (et le discours) du trait, de la trace, du toucher à la « vérité en peinture ».

Hutchinson, Colt (Duquesne University)

The Language of Excess: Derrida, Condillac, and the Limits of Archeology

To understand Derrida's relationship to the eighteenth-century—and, more specifically, to Enlightenment philosophy—one is most often directed to his seminal reading of Rousseau within *Of Grammatology*. Yet, what has been lost behind such a move is precisely Derrida's comments on other eighteenth-century French thinkers, perhaps most notably, Étienne Bonnot, Abbé de Condillac. Indeed, despite having dedicated two texts to Condillac—*The Archeology of the Frivolous* and *Le calcul des langues*—surprisingly little attention has been paid these in Derridean scholarship. Derrida's reading of Condillac is, however, anything but marginal. On the contrary, Condillac's radical empiricism, with its emphasis on method and analogy, provides a crucial site for Derrida's deconstruction of Enlightenment reason. As Derrida argues, Condillac's efforts to establish a rigorous, methodical language for philosophy increasingly reveals a crisis at the heart of the Enlightenment project: the impossibility of

eliminating ambiguity and securing a systematic body of knowledge..The more Condillac attempts to secure clarity through calculation or analogy, the more he exposes the inherent instability of his method..The very tools meant to secure philosophy against *frivolity* or ambiguity ultimately turn against themselves, becoming sites of endless proliferation, excess, and supplementation..Addressing this gap in Derridean scholarship, this paper pursues three aims: (i) to sketch an overview of Condillac's theory of *signs* in the *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*, (ii) to offer an explication of Derrida's 'double reading' of Condillac, and (iii) to analyze the broader context in which Derrida turns to Condillac. Thus, Derrida's engagements with Condillac constitute a decisive moment in his broader critique of Western metaphysics..Situating these texts within Derrida's wider œuvre also clarifies their relevance for further reexaminations of the Foucault-Derrida debate. Derrida's readings not only problematize Foucault's assertion that Condillac belongs to the "classical episteme" but also, more radically, challenge the possibility of positing any coherent "theory of *epistemes*." Taken together, Derrida's readings of Condillac will be shown to merit far more attention than they have yet to receive in the secondary literature.

Ishihara, Takeru (University of Tokyo)

Rhythm of fort/da: The Problem of Degree in Différance

In his various discussions of *différance*, Derrida often dismisses the "differences of degree" as merely empirical. As he puts it, "Différance is not a matter of degree," "différance is beyond all measurement." Of course, it would be a mistake to simply project the logic of empirical differences of degree directly into *différance*. Yet, insofar as differences of degree can be conceived empirically at all, there must be something within *différance* that serves as their condition of possibility. This is precisely how Derrida himself criticized the later Heidegger: if the empirical plurality ("dispersion") of beings is to be possible, dispersion must already have taken place at the transcendental level. This presentation argues that, as a point of departure for thinking about such (quasi-) transcendental differences of degree, it is necessary to address the problem of rhythm in *différance*. More specifically, it first shows that it is periodicity that is historically accumulated within *différance* and that determines the empirical differences of degree, through a reading of Derrida's discussion of the concept of "facilitation" (*Bahnung*) in Freud's *Project for Scientific Psychology*, as developed in "Freud and the Scene of Writing." It then turns to "To Speculate—on 'Freud,'" examining the structure of "stricture" (or, the complexified structure of the Mystic Writing-Pad) as the mechanism that makes such periodicity possible, by producing an interdependent relation between pleasure and unpleasure through the rhythmic binding and release of excitation. Finally, through readings of Derrida's texts criticizing later Heidegger—such as *Of Spirit, Given Time*, and the *Geschlecht* series—it shows that these discussions can be understood as advancing a model of indefinite *fort/da*, set in opposition to Heidegger's privileged *Da* that brings together the *fort/da* relation itself. Accordingly, in contrast to Heidegger's language (*die Sprache*) that guards and preserves the Truth, Derrida's words consist of "blinking" (expression in *Limited Inc.*) concepts that are rhythmically inscribed. This presentation concludes by suggesting that the speed of this blinking can be brought into relation with the problem of differences of degree.

Islekel, Ege Selin (Texas A&M University)

Archives and Afterlives: Hauntologies of Necropolitics

The old walled city called Sur is one of the central districts of Diyarbakir province in eastern Turkey. From 2015 to 2017, Sur became the site of urban warfare between Kurdish armed groups and Turkish security forces, wherein 252 total round-the-clock curfews were declared. During the curfews secured by military presence, inhabitants were not allowed to leave their houses. When the last curfew was lifted, the face of the area was revealed: two thirds of the city's population were gone, many buildings were destroyed, remaining buildings were marked by bullet holes and graffiti, some with racial slurs, some with the hopeful notes of the insurgents. Turkish Public Mass Housing Administration recently announced their new program of building new condos over the old city: the advertisement campaign

of the project stated, “We are Building Sur Anew.” Those who remain in the region say that they will not move to new condos, for those streets are filled with ghosts: not only of those past, but of the violence that took place. This paper analyzes the relation between memory and violence with respect to spaces of violence. Specifically, I am interested in the haunted archives that remain in the aftermaths of contemporary political techniques of destruction and building anew of spaces of violence. In the first part of the paper bringing Mbembe’s framework of necropolitics in dialogue with Derrida’s analysis of the trace, I show that necropolitical interventions in space attempt, yet necessarily fail, to erase marks of violence, producing instead a haunted space, a space of irreducible *différance*. In the second part, engaging Derrida’s reflections on the archive in *Archive fever*, I show that reconstruction in such space is not the negation of destruction, but rather its continuation: it is a re-inscription that both conceals and reiterates what it seeks to overwrite. In the final part, I turn to hauntology to theorize Sur as a space in which the past is neither absent nor fully present but persists as a spectral remainder that disrupts claims to renewal and pure presence. To engage the histories of such space, however, is a task not of recovering the origin (*arkhē*) of violence, but to attend to the trace, to what remains in its very withdrawal. I argue that a deconstructive approach to necropolitical space reveals haunting not as metaphor, but as the very condition of possibility for thinking memory and violence otherwise.

J

Jenson, Deborah (Duke University)

Sylvia Wynter on Jacques Derrida and the “We” of Man

The first essay in which Jamaican philosopher Sylvia Wynter poses the question “But who are ‘We’?” is the 1976 “Ethno, or Socio Poetics?”, presented at the 1975 First International Symposium associated with the *Alcheringa* journal. She would later explicitly identify the question with Jacques Derrida’s 1968-inspired query “But who, ‘we’?” in his 1969 “The Ends of Man.” In “Ethno, or Socio Poetics” Wynter glosses the problem as follows: “We who are gathered here can be labelled as people who come from the First World, people who come from the Third World. Although these terms have been much abused, they serve an operative function; they serve to define a relation – a relation between a We and an Other” (1). Much later, in the 2015 dialogue with Katherine McKittrick titled “Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species” in the volume *On Being Human as Praxis*, Wynter would write,

To me Derrida’s most radical essay was his revised version of a talk he gave at a philosophy conference in 1968, where he refers to the fact that Martin Luther King had been assassinated, that the Vietnam War was going on, and the student uprisings in Paris were in full force. Now his talk was called “The Ends of Man.”⁴⁰ At the end he asks, “But who, ‘we’?” The referent-we of man and of its ends, he implies, is not the referent-we of the human species itself. Yet, he says, French philosophers have assumed that, as middle-class philosophers, their referent-we (that of Man2) is isomorphic with the referent-we in the horizon of humanity.

Wynter points to the mistaken quality of that assumption that the referent-we of middle class first world philosophers was a pronoun for the human species itself. It veiled a “referent-We of liberal monohumanist man,” steeped in the formative rituals of *homo oeconomicus*, and it represented, startlingly, “the single issue with which global warming and climate instability now confronts us.” How? “Because for all genre- specific subjects who are reborn from the same eusocializing origin myth and / or cosmogony, their genetically encoded individual biological life and its attendant imperative of naked self- preservation,” a group-collective symbolic life will involve the overlay of neurochemical reward systems, sociolinguistic pseudo-speciation, and will create a DNA-like “second set of instructions.” In this paper, I will analyze in detail the connection between Wynter’s concepts of “Man,” which are central to her historical paradigm, and the work of Jacques Derrida, considering how Wynter finds “unexpected allies” in French deconstruction for her decolonial critique of “Man-as-Liber.”

Judy, Hugo (Institut Catholique de Paris)

How to say yes

Transcendental constitution lingers in Derrida's explorations of the performative. Present in Reinach's phenomenology before its popularisation in Austin's work, the performative troubles 'genesis and structure' as early as 'The Problem of Genesis in the Philosophy of Husserl.' Strange auto-affectation: language founds itself. This structure encapsulates Derrida's early concern for a historicity of the transcendental. The enlarged notion of performativity outlined in 'Signature Event Context' begs the question of its beginning. Such a question is broached in 'Ulysses Gramophone': a 'Yes' that closes as much as it opens. By an appeal to mystic thought, the foundational performative would be both transcendental and anthropological ('A Number of Yes'). But how to pose a foundational performative without calling upon origin? The ur-performative is made a foundational iterability ('Et Cetera'): an arche-trace. I close by suggesting ways this might bear on Goldhaber's reading of Malabou as regards the mnemonic quality of the trace, as well as broader debates concerning the use-mention distinction.

K

Kakinami, Ryosuke (Yamagata University)

Pour une déconstruction (im)possible de l'affect

Comment la déconstruction peut-elle porter sur la notion d'affect ? On considère souvent que la pensée déconstructive s'accorde mal avec l'affect, supposé « hors texte », pré-langagier ou irréductible à une lecture discursive. Dans ce qu'on appelle l'*Affective Turn*, les références philosophiques majeures furent Spinoza, Deleuze et Guattari, Massumi, plutôt que Derrida. Certes, l'affect ne constitue pas son mot-concept central, mais il apparaît de manière implicite dans la problématique de l'auto-affectation, déjà interrogée et critiquée dans ses premiers travaux sur la phénoménologie. Or, dans l'histoire de la déconstruction, un moment remarquable mérite attention : les textes de Jean-Luc Nancy et Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, notamment « La panique politique » et « Le peuple juif ne rêve pas », consacrés à une relecture de Freud, autre source majeure de la théorie de l'affect. S'appuyant sur *La psychologie des masses*, ils interrogent la notion de « lien affectif », qui joue un rôle constitutif aussi bien pour l'individu que pour le collectif : ce qui fonde l'identification et le noyau de l'être social, c'est l'affect. Cependant, en tant que mode de manifestation de la pulsion, l'affect ne peut devenir objet de conscience ; il demeure inconscient tout en orientant paroles et conduites. Cette problématique de l'affect inconscient et collectif conserve aujourd'hui une acuité particulière dans un contexte marqué par les *fake news* et la post-vérité. Un dilemme apparaît alors : plus on insiste sur l'affect pré- ou infra-individuel, plus on risque de le réifier. Comment dès lors penser l'affect sans lui assigner une substance stable ? Je proposerai de lire, avec Nancy et Lacoue-Labarthe, cette impasse en mettant en question le statut même de l'affect : s'il y a de l'affect, il n'est que *ça* — une pulsion qui nous pousse à parler et à agir, tout en échappant à la compréhension. Ils reformulent alors le problème, sur un mode lacanien implicite : « *l'inconscient est déstructuré comme un affect* ». La Chose ou la Cause, qui ne relève pas de l'ordre ontologique constituée mais ne cesse pourtant de le hanter, n'est-elle pas ce qui s'y joue dans toute déconstruction (im)possible de l'affect ?

Karaman, Hatice (Yeditepe University)

From the Silent Phrase to Letting Live: Testimony and Eco-Deconstruction

This paper will attempt to discuss the problem of testimony and witnessing within the framework of eco-deconstruction, with the premise that any possibility of a justice-to-come must also be ecological. To this end, the study will first place Jacques Derrida in dialogue with Jean-François Lyotard and Giorgio Agamben. Drawing on Lyotard's *The Differend* and Agamben's *Remnants of Auschwitz*, the paper will reconsider a shared aporia: testimony is ethically indispensable yet remains impossible. In Lyotard, justice demands fidelity to the silent phrase that cannot be articulated without wrong; in Agamben, testimony is grounded in the figure of the witness who cannot speak, exposing the collapse of subjectivity at the limit of experience. Both accounts situate witnessing at the threshold where language fails and responsibility begins. Derrida's reflections on testimony complicate this threshold by insisting on survival, iterability, and countersignature. Testimony, for Derrida, is neither the recovery of presence nor the preservation of silence, but a risky act that survives only through repetition and technical

mediation, always exposed to erasure and misappropriation. Secondly, building on this insight, the paper will turn to eco-deconstruction, where deconstruction is repositioned in relation to ecological finitude, planetary exposure, and survivance. In this context, Philippe Lynes's reading of Derrida—particularly his discussion of “letting live” as a non-sovereign ethical position—will be emphasized. Re-reading the reflections of Derrida, Lyotard, and Agamben on witnessing and testimony through an eco-deconstructive lens, this paper argues that a justice-to-come—one that pertains to a “post- or beyond-human promise”—cannot be grounded in adequate representation, authoritative speech, or sovereign decision. Rather, it emerges from a vigilant practice of witnessing that affirms life while remaining attentive to what resists articulation. Living well, in this sense, does not mean securing ecological futures through mastery or control, but inhabiting the fragile interval in which testimony remains both necessary and impossible—an interval in which responsibility consists in letting life, human and nonhuman, continue without foreclosure.

Kargupta, Sourav (Independent Scholar)

A subtle and tortuous “reconnoitering”: projecting a more restricted deconstruction in the world, at the limit of ‘nonhuman witnessing

In “Force of Law”, discussing the concept of ‘equity’ (*la droiture*) that Emmanuel Levinas conceives as not reducible to ‘equality’ or “calculated proportion”, and therefore not to law or right (*le droit*), Jacques Derrida supplements, “of course, but the two values are not unrelated” (Derrida 1992). Might this mean that there can be a certain ‘work of deconstruction’, attentive *even* to the restricted instances of the historically instituted legal apparatuses, and therefore to the contingent field of ‘disproportions’ between ‘law’ and ‘justice’? What might such a deconstruction be, and what might constitute its ‘work’ within the irreconcilably punctuated economies of a world divided along the lines of ‘intra-anthropological’ difference, the “boundaries within which a history and a culture have been able to confine their criteriology”? Could this relationality without positive relation between *la droiture* and *le droit* lead to a more ‘restricted’ work of deconstruction, perhaps even a ‘postcolonial’ deconstruction, that is, an inward folding of deconstruction *in the world*? Would that be a ‘deconstruction’ worthy of its name? And yet, how comfortably does such an ontically inclined proposition sit with the retreat that Derrida so often seems to make, withdrawing toward the “apparently ahistorical allure of logico-formal paradoxes”? This paper argues that in certain key moments in his later oeuvre, Derrida comes close to outlining such a project. For example in *Of Spirit*, in the middle of a painstaking reading of Martin Heidegger, tracking the decisive shift between ‘mention’ and ‘use’ of the term ‘spirit’, and demonstrating what this vigilance guards and what it must risk—namely, a certain “humanist teleology”: “the price to be paid in the ethico-political denunciation of biologism, racism, naturalism, etc”—Derrida significantly also wonders whether such a program is possible: “Can one escape this program? [...] In any case, it will not be avoided all at once and without reconnoitering it right down to its most tortuous ruses and most subtle resources (Derrida 1987). The somewhat awkward ‘reconnoitering’ (*reconnaître*) signals a topographical or strategic survey. This is one of the moments in which this paper recognizes a decisive gesture toward a ‘program’ of a more restricted, and therefore riskier, ‘ontic’ deconstruction—more exposed to the ethico-political spacing of the world—that is eventually left un-pursued by Derrida himself. The paper leans heavily on “Force of Law” to make its case, while building on my earlier proposition (Kargupta) that, following (what I loosely call) Derrida’s ‘legal turn’—marked by his works on ‘legal philosophy’ and on ‘witnessing’—an ‘ethico-topographical’ rearrangement opens up unprecedented possibilities for deconstruction to survey the “performative-pragmatic” (Derrida 2005) institutions that regulate and restrict the unmotivated trace. Consequently, the paper argues that the eventually inescapable program, which Derrida repeatedly invokes but never mobilizes, can also be gleaned from several other moments in his late oeuvre.

Katsou, Natalie (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Hospitality and Sanctuary. From Ancient Greek tragedy to current legal frameworks

My paper ‘Hospitality and Sanctuary. From Ancient Greek tragedy to current legal frameworks’ investigates the connection between theatre and law in the field of forced migration. More specifically,

my study identifies the ethical principles and the performative processes that define protection for people in situations of forced migration. It uses Derrida's work as the blueprint for understanding the dynamics of acceptance, and it builds on Marina Warner's concept of 'sanctuary' to frame possibilities of resistance in the current reality of people's movement. Ancient Greek Tragedy becomes a tool to examine 'the question of the question' (Derrida in Dufourmantelle 2000) and to envelop the ethical frame in the legal frame, focusing on migration. Jacques Derrida opens the question of hospitality by projecting the contradictory principles of unconditional welcome and conditional hosting. The ethical 'aporia' exposed in Derrida's work forms a preliminary attempt to address the 'constantly developing hostility of the European governments towards certain categories of aliens, such as migrants and refugees' (Kakoliris, 2017). In my paper, Derrida's negotiation of the figure of the 'foreigner' guides a review of the different foreigners that matched the term 'xenos', but also the concept of 'migrants' in Ancient Greece, including Orestes in *Eumenides* and the daughters of Danaos in *The Suppliants* by Aeschylus. Theatre played a crucial part in civic engagement, inviting the audience to witness stories, but also to absorb political and legal formations. It functioned as a sanctuary and hosted questions on ethics, social dilemmas and law. Warner introduces the concept of sanctuary as a physical place designated as 'a haven', but primarily as 'a site of narrative' (*Sanctuary*, 2025). Warner notes that 'sanctity' expands horizontally through shared ideas on the rights of others and vertically through perceptions about the transcendental. By analysing the performative aspects of supplication presented in Greek Tragedies, my study draws a parallel with the current legal framework. It scrutinizes the practical prerequisites that allow or deter a forcibly displaced person from seeking sanctuary within 'fortress Europe'. It also attempts to connect hospitality with sanctuary as an active practice that can be performed in theatre and in law.

Kerecsenyi, Geza (Oxford University)

Large language models are not, in fact, the ideal Derrideans

Derrida is a frequent topic in discussions of the philosophy of large language models (LLMs), and appropriately so for an author so deeply fascinated by the relationship between writing and will to a machine which can, seemingly, generate writing without any clear equivalent of a "will" in itself. Between Pollard, Clark, Coyne, and others, recent commentary suggests on the basis of Derrida's rejection of the primacy of speech that LLMs – and the (pseudo)metacognitive artefacts they produce – vindicate Derrida, and serve as a reflection of the ways in which linguistic patterns can become entirely detached from the immediacy that some believe speech to offer. We take issue with these widely-proliferated interpretations, considering them reductionist and as a misrepresentation of both the situation of LLMs and of Derrida's presentation of the relationship between speech and writing. It is imperative to note the roles into which LLMs are placed in social discourse, with individuals discussing, turning to, and "empathising" with models as they would with fellow conscious subjects. From a phenomenological perspective, it is not at all clear that LLMs ease understanding of the Derrida's nuanced relationship with the *hors-texte*, as the urge to empathise necessitates subjects imbue the model itself with pseudo-subjectivity – and thus capacity for a (misleading) descriptor of "immediacy" as in speech; a "presence" reconstructed in situ by the audience. Furthermore, these models do in fact produce outputs in line with *will*, but a distributed will: model outputs, as reinforcement-based alignment is optimised, are projections of the thoughts, intentions, and beliefs of their creators to no less an extent than a text written by these individuals would be directly representative of an author's intentions – implicit, yet generalised, obscured, and displaced. We therefore call for a greater degree of reflection before labelling LLMs the "perfect Derrideans", as they not only have something akin to "will", they are also treated as having subjective experience by society. Far from serving as a straightforward case of text without *hors-texte*, the phenomenon of LLMs and the societal response thereto must be treated as the object of deconstruction in itself.

Khannavov, Ildar (John Hopkins University)

On Screens, Sails and Spurs: Revisiting the Styles of Nietzsche and Derrida

Screen is a device that shows and hides at the same time as in Greek *κρίνω - κρύπτω*. Screen is a membrane, a veil that separates the space of theatrical or cinematic action from the outer world. A wall of choir, the spirit of music that gives birth to tragedy. The screen is also a sail, and an umbrella that Nietzsche kept forgetting. Screen covers the event (*Ereigniss*) and allows us to forget it (*ἀλήθεια*). The screen shows a grand narrative. It selects the most trivial points and filters out the ones that present meaning and value. Heidegger and Heraclitus seemed to complain about the same thing: the selectivity of the screen as a barrier between the subject and being. The screen is a part of reading as a procedure. Reading: consistent and thorough following by the alert eye of the letters, words, and sentences, from left to right. This activity is expected to end with creation of a sense, or even of a completed meaning. And then, a blow (*le coup*) happens, exerted by the spur or a *stylo*, and the text is blown apart. Most of it disappeared; some of it stayed, but not in any preconceived order. Derrida compares this blow to a musical beat, to a hit of the gong. The eye is blinded; the ear is deafened. To continue with musical allegory, melody builds a line: a beat arrests it. Wagner wanted melody to flow endlessly. Nietzsche in his *Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* at first supported and then rejected that idea. The remnants occurred to be interesting, though. They revealed (unveiled) the place from which the thought itself originates, the prediscursive premises of writing. Freud touched the limits of this darker space. Lacan lectured on investments and counterinvestments from it. Blanchot offered a non-conceptual account of this dark space that he worded as the “intimate immensity of the forest.” For Mallarmé and Boulez, even a portrait, supposedly, the most coherent expression of subjectivity, turns into *pli selon pli*.

Kicsák, Lóránt (Károly-Eszterházy Catholic University in Eger)

Pensées intempestives de l'autoimmunisation politique

De nos jours où des leaders forts imposent, dans de nombreux pays, une ferme clôture à leur société, il semble non seulement intempestif mais aussi insensé à penser le fonctionnement d'autoinstitution de la société comme processus d'autoimmunisation ou processus de perversion normale et normative, comme l'appelle Derrida dans *Voyous*. Or, la survie dépend, à chaque niveau, de la plasticité de l'organisme et de l'organisation, c'est-à-dire de la capacité de l'auto-réorganisation qui comprend dans le temps réel la réorganisation permanente de l'*autos*, de l'ipséité et de la souveraineté. Dans ses essais politiques, Derrida explore divers domaines de la sphère politique et sociale, dans lesquels il met en évidence des processus organisationnels et fonctionnels qui peuvent être interprétés selon la logique de l'immunologie, à la fois immunitaire et autoimmunitaire. Il ne se contente pas de décrire les cas où le système de défense d'une organisation donnée se retourne contre lui-même afin de protéger son immunité ou de se protéger de sa propre activité immunitaire, mais dans certains cas (avant toute décision éthique et politique sans précédent), il recommande, voire exige, une auto-immunisation, car des effets néfastes peuvent s'avérer bénéfiques (*double bind* de menace et de chance de l'autoimmunité). En brisant ou en suspendant partiellement le fonctionnement du système immunitaire, l'auto-immunisation apparaît chez Derrida comme un principe d'action politique effective visant à faire place, à créer un espace pour l'autre (les autres) dans chez soi. C'est pourquoi l'hospitalité en devient un exemple privilégié, l'accueil et l'intégration de l'autre pouvant remplacer la destruction de l'étranger conçu, de prime abord, hostile. Dans ma contribution je me concentre sur l'interprétation critique du concept de l'autoimmunité de Derrida en m'appuyant, entre autres, sur les textes de *Foi et savoir*, de *Spectres de Marx*, de *Voyous*.

Kingston, Andrew (Maine Maritime Academy)

Darkness Made Visible: Derrida and Teju Cole on the Shadow of Photography

In his essay “Spectrographies,” Jacques Derrida argues that photography carries the night with it, that it enacts a kind of “night visibility” [visibilité de nuit]..My paper will explore some implications of this aporetic claim—though in doing so it will focus less on what Derrida’s nocturnal metaphors might tell us about photography than on what a Derridean approach to photography can tell us about certain traditional conceptions of darkness. Along these lines, the paper will demonstrate how Derrida’s idea of a “transcendental blindness” that “must proceed in the night” —originally articulated vis-à-vis the practice of drawing in *Memoirs of the Blind* —can be understood in relation to the prosthetic eye of the

camera itself (an object which indexes blindness and darkness already in its earliest name, the “dark room” or camera obscura). After setting up a deconstructive framework for this nocturnal interpretation of photography, in which the photograph acts as an archive of light transformed by shadow, it will become possible to trace out a variety of aesthetic consequences that follow from it—found across several different genres of image, from the skiagraphia of Butades to the nuclear shadows at Hiroshima; or from Teju Cole’s photography and his writing on the image (as well as his work on other photographers like Santu Mofokeng) to nineteenth-century night photography and the modern cosmic blindness set in relief by technologies like the James Webb Space Telescope. In each of these cases, Derrida’s ideas will be used to read photography as an exercise in (to quote Milton’s famous description of Hell) making darkness visible.

Kirkkopelto, Esa (Tampere University)

The Logic of the Corporeal Supplement. Reconsidering Mimesis with Derrida and Lacoue-Labarthe

The presentation considers the implicit yet constitutive role of the performing body in French deconstruction, as seen through the debate between Jacques Derrida and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe on the meaning of *technè* and *mimesis*. I argue that this debate is encapsulated in the concept of ‘supplement,’ which both authors adopt from Rousseau, albeit in different ways. In Derrida, the supplement characterises the logic of writing and the simultaneous overabundance and lack of sense that this implies. In contrast, for Lacoue-Labarthe, the supplement relates to the ‘technical’ capacity of the human being as the ‘most mimetic animal,’ as exemplified by the art of the Diderotian actor. Reconsidering the genealogy of these two concepts reveals a blind spot in the logic of both thinkers. When the Derridian notion is compared with the structuralist idea of the ‘floating signifier’ in Lévi-Strauss, to whom Derrida is indebted, it becomes apparent that the Derridian notion leaves without attention the corporeal aspects of the latter, i.e. the possibility that the supplement can be embodied in words, objects, and persons. Conversely, Lacoue-Labarthe’s account of the actor as a supplementary being lacks an analysis of their technical process, which risks presenting it as another metaphysical and anthropocentric figure. *Mimesis* cannot be considered a ‘capacity’ of any being, but rather an inherent aspect of its corporeal existence. This conclusion coincides with Derrida’s simultaneous critique of the structuralist idea of the ‘sign’ based on the ‘signifier/signified’ divide. If the latter is abandoned, then logically any being can function as a linguistic instance. However, this is only possible if it has some kind of body capable of leaving a ‘trace.’ As my recent philosophical analysis of the act of performing has suggested, that artistic processes imply a non-anthropomorphic and partial idea of corporal existence, where languaging and embodiment complement each other. This approach provides a solution to the aforementioned debate and opens up a contemporary perspective on deconstruction.

Koulouris, Theodore (University of Brighton)

Derrida, Heidegger and Virginia Woolf: The ‘Cotton Wool’ of UnBeing

As she once noted in her diary, Virginia Woolf thought that writing constituted the ‘synthesis’ of her Being. When she then wrote a short autobiographical essay entitled ‘A Sketch of the Past’ (1939), she used the image of ‘cotton wool’ to illustrate what she called ‘non-being’, a state of affairs during which no recording of information or experience takes place because the author does not write (record) or has no recourse to writing (recording). For Woolf, the thick impenetrability of cotton wool is seen as a metaphor for the impasse in which Being finds itself when it has no recourse to writing and is, therefore, unable to record the experience of being. By way of Heidegger and Derrida – especially via the latter’s critique of the former mainly in *The Question of Being and History* (2016) – I invert Woolf’s ‘cotton wool’ metaphor to retheorise (the) UnBeing, a radical new concept designed to describe Being in digital times. Moving on from the Heideggerian conceptualisation of Being as *being-there* but (re)deploying his *Being-towards-death* and *potentiality-for-Being*, I move to mobilise Derrida’s arsenal – trace, *différance*, iteration – with a view to showing that although Woolf’s ‘cotton wool’ metaphor may as well conceal Being, it nevertheless neatly elucidates UnBeing especially when Derrida provides us with the requisite critical wherewithal to tease apart its edges. In my work, (the) UnBeing does not inhabit the absolutes – presence/absence, human/non-human, visibility/invisibility – but the interstices, the ambiguities, the

uncertainties. As such, (the) UnBeing becomes that which cannot be immediately seen or witnessed. This is the last instalment to my theorisation of (the) UnBeing, which started at the Derrida Today conference in Washington DC (2022), continued in Athens (2024) and, finally, in Paris (2026).

Kujala, Will (Huron University)

"A Tautological Interest"? Economies of Violence and the Politics of Self-Defence

In the second set of lectures on the death penalty, Derrida turns to a close reading of Walter Benjamin's *Critique of Violence*, dwelling on how the state in modern political thought seems to have a "tautological interest" in accumulating, "capitalizing" on, violence by expropriating individuals of the capacity to use force. He shows how for Benjamin, this interest can never be totally fulfilled: there always remains an asymptotic gap between the total 'monopolization' of violence and its actual circulation among individuals, primarily in self-defence. Self-defence has an unstable character: it both 'fills' the gap in the state's monopoly on violence and threatens to 'declare a new law.' I argue that Derrida's reading of this instability – via Benjamin – offers a useful framing for thinking about the legacies of self-defence in radical antiracist politics in the United States. I do so through a reading of Robert F. Williams 1962 book *Negroes with Guns*, where he details and justifies armed self-defence against racial terror and in service of desegregation. For him, the racist calculus of the relative worthiness of lives – white and Black – allows for a productive, minimal use of violence, given that the white populace was unwilling to sacrifice its more 'valuable' lives to protect segregation. This racial economy of violence inhabits the gap between the monopolization and circulation of violence. The circulation of violence among the white populace enables a politics of armed self-defence that expands the range of possible actions toward liberation. However, critics such as Harold Cruse argued that far from being broadly emancipatory, this politics of self-defence merely reinscribes the state, effectively demanding a re-monopolization of state violence. This critique does an injustice to the productive instability of self-defence, though: even if self-defence often relies on, or even demands, the underlying state monopoly on violence, it often cannot but open a space for a "new law," one that converts what Walter Benjamin called the "great criminal" into a lawgiver or political founder.

L

Lampropoulos, Apostolos (University Bordeaux Montaigne)

Derridean Archival Pulse, Between Cixous and Bourcier

This paper draws on the conviction that reworking the articulation of deconstruction with feminism, gender studies, and queer theory opens up a field of possibilities in these areas. It also pulls on the thread of certain consequences that are implied by these modes of thought, weaving them anew. While the publication, almost ten years ago now, of the volume *Derrida and Queer Theory* (edited by Christian Hite in 2017) revived this dialogue, more recent volumes entitled *Erotics of Deconstruction* (edited by Lynn Turner in 2024) and *Repenser la différence sexuelle* (edited by Marie de Gandt and Apostolos Lampropoulos in 2026) reflect the continued productivity of these connections. More specifically, this paper attempts a return to Derrida's thought regarding the archive. Only to some extent does it return to *Archive Fever* and to some of the ways in which Derrida revolutionized our understanding of memory and, among other things, contributed to the emergence of the archival turn in contemporary literature and art. Rather, this paper is primarily focused on two other texts. The first of these is *Geneses, Genealogies, Genres and Genius: The Secrets of the Archive* (*Genèses, généalogies, genres et le génie. Les secrets de l'archive*, 2003), based on the speech Derrida delivered on the occasion of the creation of Hélène Cixous's archive at the National Library of France. Derrida considers Cixous's atypical writing and her *écriture féminine* to be an exemplary case of literature as a place where everything can be said and, at the same time, where secrets can be kept. He insists on the fact that we expose and throw ourselves at the "Omnipotence-other" of Literature, and that "this thrownness resembles both the movement or the flutter of a pulse, an urge, a compulsive and irresistible impulse that cannot not go, as if self-propelled, to face the most dangerous wholly other." The second text on which this paper focuses is Sam Bourcier's recent account of their long-standing involvement in LGBTQ+ archives,

entitled *The Pulse of the Archive – It Is in Us That It Beats* (*Le pouls de l'archive, c'est en nous qu'il bat*; 2025). Even if Bourcier does not consider themselves a deconstructionist, they draw extensively on Derrida – systematically called “Dididada” throughout the book – in order to imagine an experience and a practice of the archive well beyond conventional understandings of literature and history. Among things to be avoided, Bourcier mentions, for instance, “self-narratives [that] fall under the Caudine.– and Western.– yoke of writing-as-control, and then of writing-as-literature,” as well as the practice of “historians and other manipulators of the archive [who] remain indifferent to the materiality of the geo-bio-necro-political archive.” In both cases, and in somewhat surprisingly resonant ways, the question is also one of both the hospitality of and hospitality vis-à-vis the archive, as well as of a pulse which leads us to it. The paper places Derrida in the liminal space between the moment in which he thinks through the different dimensions and consequences of archiving Cixous’s writing, and the moment in which he is reread by Bourcier in order to articulate a queer experience of, and approach to, the archive. In a nutshell, this paper explores the hypothesis of a Derrida driven by a pulse toward one of the archives of New French Feminism, and of a Derrida who, in turn, gives or adds to the pulse of a queer archive.

Langen, Daniela (University of Bonn)

Duty to Doubt

How to approach an other? In *L'Animal que donc je suis* (2006), Jacques Derrida discusses the question with regard to animals or more precisely his female cat. As I will argue in my paper, his considerations can help us with the question of how to approach others as others, which is important to do them justice – although Derrida’s considerations need supplementation. In *L'Animal que donc je suis*, Derrida begins his considerations from the observation that he feels ashamed when being naked in front of his female cat. As I will elaborate at the beginning of my paper by referring to different theories of shame, this observation can be explained in different ways: On the one hand, one can argue that people who experience shame in front of an animal feel ashamed in front of themselves because they see reason for shame (on the occasion of the animal). On the other hand, one can understand the observation by theorizing that people who supposedly feel ashamed in front of an animal feel ashamed in front of other people (that the animal reminds them of). Finally, as I will carry out in my paper, with Derrida one can also understand the animal as an opposite asking for shame. In this case, the animal is taken seriously as an other who has an idea of or at least is not indifferent to how the situation develops. As I will argue, taking the animal seriously as an opposite asking for shame is different from understanding the animal as a reason for shame: If the animal asks for shame, one has to respond by asking for the animal’s reason to ask for shame, instead of reflecting on one’s own or other people’s demands. Nevertheless, Donna Haraway (2017) criticizes that by focusing on how *he* feels Derrida is already reducing an otherness of the other. In my paper, I will discuss this criticism by referring to Hélène Cixous (2010), who is influenced by Derrida, but has a feminist approach to how to face others – which is appropriate given that Derrida describes the animal as a *female* cat.

Langeron, Paul (University Paris 8)

La porosité économique : un autre capital contre le capitalisme

Nous proposons de relire la relation Marx/Derrida en repartant d’une analyse renouvelée du concept de *capital*. Il s’agit de comprendre comment la déconstruction peut prolonger et radicaliser un certain esprit du marxisme, comme Derrida l’affirme dans *Spectres de Marx*. Il est question de produire une autre critique de l’économie politique prenant en considération les objections derridiennes sur la théorie de la valeur. Pour Marx, la valeur d’usage renverrait à une réalité extérieure au marché, permettant de fonder la critique du capitalisme sur une dimension non contaminée par l’échange. Derrida conteste cette séparation : il affirme que la valeur d’usage est toujours déjà hantée par la valeur d’échange. Avec cette hantologie de la valeur, est mise en évidence l’impossibilité d’une critique de l’économie politique, reposant sur la domination de l’*oikonomia* sur la *chrématistique*, comme chez Marx. La porosité de cette dualité est ce qui conditionne cette hantologie. La relecture derridienne du fétichisme de la marchandise souligne ainsi que la critique du capitalisme ne peut s’appuyer sur une réalité qui serait extérieure au marché. Nous repartirons du concept de *capital* tel qu’il est analysé dans

L'Autre Cap pour faire jouer celui-ci contre le capitalisme et donc rendre possible, comme le voulait Derrida, une nouvelle culture du capital avec une lecture extra-monétaire de celui-ci, comme développement de la valeur *esprit* en constant devenir. Or, le capitalisme, en tant que mode de production qui résulte en partie de cette accumulation de capital, refuse toute alternative au nom de son « réalisme », entre en contradiction avec ce capital et son développement. L'accumulation du capital, soit la *chrématistique*, suppose une décapitalisation du capitalisme, puisque le devenir du capital tend à rendre possible l'élaboration d'autres organisations que celle de l'économie de marché, au-delà de tout prix. Ceci met en évidence la compréhension improductive du capital, rendue possible par la chrématistique, qui cherche à excéder la limite du capitalisme par l'accumulation illimitée du capital, et dont on retrouvera notamment la trace dans les concepts de don et d'hospitalité qui résultent de cette nouvelle approche du capital.

Larios, Joe (Leiden University)

Bilingualism of the Self: Derrida and the Paradox of Language Shame

In *Monolingualism of the Other*, Derrida analyzes the phrase, "I have only one language; it is not mine." The idea of language as an origin breaks down since the language we inhabit is a language that must be given to us. It does not come from us and yet it must be appropriated by us to speak. It is not ours, even though it permits an expression to occur that is. Hence, his subtitle: *Or, the Prosthesis of Origin*. What this gets at is the sense that the language one might naturalize as a core part of identity is actually unnatural; something added on which functions as a replacement. If language is a prosthesis of origin, however, then is it language itself which is prosthetic for an origin or is the idea of an origin itself that which is prosthetic? It is towards thinking through these questions in another register that I bring Derrida's text into conversation with the experience of language shame felt by many heritage speakers of a language where their bilingualism produces a different kind of fracture leading to the reversal of the title of Derrida's text. While heritage speakers of a language are bilingual, the use of the modifier "heritage" often implies that they have a historical connection to a language which they might, nonetheless, not be proficient in. For the bilingual heritage speaker, there are two languages that function differently. One is in accordance with Derrida's analysis, but the heritage language appears to reverse his terms. In an interview about her frustration at her limited proficiency in Spanish, one heritage speaker exclaimed, "This is my language. How come I'm not good at it?" In other words, "This is my language; I do not have it." While, for Derrida, the key insight was that the language I have is not mine (comes from the other), here we have the phenomenon of an internal fracturing of the self through a language which cannot be *had* despite the feeling that it is *theirs*. The origin is detached, like a prosthesis they cannot access, reversing Derrida's subtitle as well.

Lazo Briones, Pablo (Universidad Iberoamericana)

Derrida's reading of Nietzschean future community of friends

Some may argue Nietzsche's idea of a new culture made up of empowered and emancipated men - free thinkers or free spirits who are self-governed, creators of their own values - is just an illusory utopia, not achievable in the material realm of social things. Such a stance lies above all in the criticism of the idea of *Overman* as empty of actual social content and unattainable in terms of a community. Contrary to this criticism, I will argue that the recovery of Nietzsche's symbolic language does allow one to think of a community in an ethical and political sense that is relevant to building a future culture and, in fact, opens the question of the future itself. Of course, such a future community, and the particular experience of friendship that makes it possible, do not correspond to the traditional understanding that Nietzsche is rejecting. Jacques Derrida has emphasized in his essay *Politics of friendship* the specific model of political community and friendship that animates Nietzsche's wager. According to the French philosopher, we can distinguish two entirely different strands of philosophical interpretation of friendship: on the one hand, the legacy common to thinkers who claim it is a relationship governed by the value of reciprocity, by homological concord. On the other hand, we find the legacy of counter-traditional thinkers who break with this idea while defending non-reciprocity, heterology, dissymmetry, infinity, and transcendence as components of friendship. The friends and the community formed by

them in this second model do not attend to values like commonality and similarity and the "law of the same," but they instead seek rivalry (*pólemos*), the distance among them, and difference. Following Derrida, I will defend Nietzsche is a central case of thinker that defends such a sense of friendship, based in the symbolic language and its strength. I will then look at the consequences to critique the current type of community that devalues or destroys symbols and friendship bonds.

Lee, Amitié (Tallin University)

Governing Haunted Futures: Hauntology, Artificial Intelligence, and Permacrisis in Science Fiction Cinema—La Bête (2023)

This paper examines Bertrand Bonello's *La Bête* (2023), a genre-hybrid science fiction (SF) film, through Derrida's concept of hauntology (*Specters of Marx*, 1994), exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) mediates temporality, crisis, and decision-making. Drawing on Derrida's account of futurity through *l'à-venir*, the paper explores how *La Bête* mobilises SF as a narrative form uniquely suited to staging hauntological time. Structured as a non-linear triptych unfolding across multiple temporalities (Paris, 1910; Los Angeles, 2014; Paris, 2044), the film anchors its present in an eerily still, post-catastrophic society in 2044. Here, an omniscient AI system governs temporality and affect by identifying volatile emotions as latent risks, managing them in advance through "DNA purification" procedures. AI thus functions not merely as a technological motif but as an apparatus of anticipatory governance that translates spectral futures of extinction and catastrophe into present-day regulatory logics, rendering affective and temporal hauntology visible, calculable, and administrable. The analysis argues that AI-driven anticipatory governance operates by seeking to stabilise the future (standing in tension with Derrida's notion of *l'à-venir*), and by privileging calculation over the undecidability that Derrida associates with ethical decision and justice. Read alongside Reinhart Koselleck's account of crisis as a temporal condition structured by anticipation rather than resolution (2004), this configuration situates *permacrisis* as a persistent ontological horizon rather than a discrete event. Derrida's insistence on the irreducible openness of the future radicalises this condition—an openness that AI governance in *La Bête* seeks to foreclose. Through close analysis of the film's temporal structure, narrative repetition, and affective regulation, this paper explores how *La Bête* resonates with Derrida's insistence on ethical and political decisions as haunted by the incalculable. The promise of AI to neutralise uncertainty by calculating the future exposes a fundamental tension between algorithmic governance and Derridean responsibility. Reading *La Bête* as a meditation on hauntology and AI, this paper contributes to contemporary debates on temporality, crisis, and technological futures, demonstrating how SF cinema interrogates the spectral conditions shaping political-ethical life in the present.

Lemberger, Dorit (Bar-Ilan University)

Wholly Otherwise? Derrida's Dialogue with Levinas

Is ethics first philosophy, or is language the condition of possibility for all human expression, including ethical expression? This paper seeks to continue a longstanding scholarly discussion among Derrida and Levinas scholars concerning the question of their mutual influence (Critchley, 1992; Hammerschlag, 2016; Baring, 2019, et al.). The paper argues that despite the profound differences that initially distinguished their respective philosophical projects, a process of integration nonetheless emerged. This process culminated in a reciprocal, though not always explicitly acknowledged, incorporation of what had originally functioned as a contested philosophical claim. The dialogue between Derrida and Levinas is among the most remarkable in the history of philosophy. This dialogue extended over approximately thirty years and began with Derrida's incisive critique in *Violence and Metaphysics* (1964). Levinas responded directly in his essay "Jacques Derrida: Wholly Otherwise" (1973), and indirectly in *Otherwise Than Being* (1974). Taken together, these texts offer an integrative response in which Levinas demonstrates how Derrida's conception of language makes it possible to preserve the tension between the irreducible non-simultaneity of the said and the saying, as well as the gap that structures their correlation (Levinas 1973). At the same time, as Baring (2019) has demonstrated, Derrida's philosophical trajectory underwent several significant shifts in the wake of his engagement with Levinas. However, whereas much of the existing scholarship has focused on identifying affinities

that were already present between them, such as the claim that deconstruction takes place ethically (Critchley 2014, 8), the present discussion concentrates on the transformations that emerged through their dialogue. Derrida initially resisted the ethical demand as philosophy's primary point of departure, while Levinas challenged the primacy of language as the medium underlying every human relation. The paper shows how in their later works, Derrida in *Adieu: To Emmanuel Levinas* (1997) and Levinas in "Of God Who Comes to Mind" (1982), each thinker integrates his original position with that of the other. Levinas admits the relevance of linguistic dialogue to ethical obligation, while Derrida recognizes the primacy of the Other's response to the question that inaugurates philosophical inquiry.

León, Christina A. (Duke University)

Beyond Topological Analogy: Catachresis, Différance, and the Politics of Naming

This paper engages the rhetorical trope of catachresis as it resurges in theories of marked difference, arguing that its deployment must be rigorously re-anchored in Derridean insights. Through readings of key moments in Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and de Man's "The Resistance to Theory," I first critique contemporary analogizations of demographic negation. In Lee Edelman's *Bad Education*, for instance, the analogization of Blackness and queerness with catachrestic negation at a symbolic level risks conflating linguistic with phenomenal realities, relapsing into a pernicious aesthetic ideology. If all language is catachrestic and figurative, then figurations of negation cannot be said "to match up" ontologically. To confuse topological privation with material reality diminishes the asymmetric disparities of lived experience and arrests the movement of signifieds into a transcendental negation. Against this elision, I turn to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's deconstructive approach, which productively mobilizes Derridean premises. Spivak acknowledges the catachrestic nature of all naming, particularly under colonial conscription, yet insists on the strategic necessity "to name and take a position," to "actively transgress deconstruction, without giving it up." Her work models a reading practice that attends to historical sedimentation without clinging to the name as a fixed political program. In the postcolonial feminist scene, this means submitting terms like "woman" or "feminism" to a ceaseless negotiation with structures of violence, neither affirming their self-identity nor lapsing into pure ontological negation. Thus, by returning to the generality of writing and the literariness of all language, this paper argues for a catachrestic praxis that holds the topological and the political in a critical, Derridean tension—one that registers differential historical violences without ontologizing their symbolic figurations.

Levi, Jacob (Connecticut College)

Derrida and the Algerian War: On a Letter to Pierre Nora

The war in Algeria (1954–1962) was the defining political struggle for France in the second half of the twentieth century. After a century of colonial rule and eight years of brutal violence, Algeria's independence marked the collapse of France's empire and left a lasting scar on French political and intellectual life. Despite or perhaps because of its personal proximity, Jacques Derrida, born and raised in Algiers, never published commentary on the war. However, his silence was punctured briefly but decisively in a letter he sent in April 1961 to his friend from the Ecole normale supérieure, historian Pierre Nora, in response to the latter's polemic book *Les Français d'Algérie*. Written at the height of uncertainty over Algeria's future and published only posthumously, this letter constitutes Derrida's most direct engagement with colonial violence and reveals the ethical constraints shaping his politics. Nora's criticism targeted not hardline colonialists but French liberals, whom he accused of complicity in sustaining colonial domination. Central to this critique was his reinterpretation of Albert Camus's *The Stranger*. Rejecting Sartre's existentialist abstraction, Nora reclaimed the novel as a specifically Algerian novel, interpreting Meursault's murder of the anonymous "Arab" as the sublimated expression of the colonial unconscious of the *pièdes noirs* and as an anticipation of colonial guilt. Derrida's response both endorses and resists this position. He affirms Nora's insistence on historical specificity and his rejection of philosophical abstraction but contests the moral logic that collapses liberal opposition to violence into colonial culpability. Defending Camus's ethical singularity, Derrida resists collective indictment and insists on political distinctions erased by polemical urgency. Revisiting this letter in the context of his

political thought, my paper will discuss its stakes for Derrida's reflections on France and colonialism. Situating this letter within Derrida's broader political trajectory, from wartime silence to later reflections on exile, language, and hospitality, this paper argues that his politics emerge from a tension between responsibility and exposure. Derrida's silence on Algeria marks the limits of public speech under colonial violence, while the letter articulates a deconstructive response to colonialism that refuses both moral absolution and totalizing judgment.

Lo, Louis (National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University)

Feminine Revenge: On Kleist's Penthesilea through Derrida's Reading of Nietzsche

Derrida suggests that Heinrich von Kleist's *Penthesilea* is a model for Nietzsche's ideas of woman. This paper offers an interrogation of Kleist's paradoxical views towards women, attempting to open up a discussion of Nietzsche's feminism, which is otherwise badly reputed, via a Derridean lens. To understand the conditions of women who take revenge, I examine in what way is the 'gender of revenge' masculine and investigates if there is such thing as a 'feminine revenge.' If such a distinction exists, how does feminine revenge differ from Nietzsche's view that revenge is driven by *ressentiment*? *Penthesilea* features a woman who takes revenge against a man (Achilles) whom she loves by excessive violence, and afterwards stabs herself. Set during the Trojan war, the title heroine belongs to the Amazons, a society menacing the male Greeks and Trojans alike. Achilles, the Greek hero whom she loves, attempts to reduce her to a love object under patriarchy. Being the daughter of Ares (the Greek god of war) and Otrere (who commands her to take revenge against Achilles for the Amazonian women or womanhood at large), Penthesilea is in a double bind with no room for a 'rational' way to come to terms with Achilles, but to take 'revenge.' Her madness is constituted by the rule of the father and she is a victim of patriarchy. Deleuze and Guattari argue that the Amazons are 'state-less woman-people whose justice, religion, and loves are organized uniquely in a war mode.' Informed by Derrida's reading of Nietzsche in *Spurs*, I suggest that *Penthesilea* manifests the three mutually exclusive types of Nietzschean woman: the castrated, the castrating, and the affirming woman. As a female non-Christian, Penthesilea is as obsessive as but no less transgressive than Kohlhaas, demonstrating different types of revenge which are, however, outside *ressentiment*. Penthesilea, while being an affirming woman in relation to Achilles, has a Nietzschean 'good will for revenge.' I argue that revenge needs to be considered in gender terms, and a good will for revenge comes from the feminine, the embodiment of the heterogeneous, the contradictory, Nietzsche's ideas of the affirming woman.

Lo, Patrick (University of Sydney)

Identity as Protocol: Espacement at the Hotel Threshold in Architecture

This paper develops an account of identity from Derrida's *différance* treating *espacement* as a protocol of address rather than a thematic predicate. Institutional 'identity' is read as the governance of repeatable recognitions across intervals, the spacing that lets a mark operate without coinciding with itself. Following Derrida's *Différance* (1982), 'an interval, a distance, spacing, must be produced between the elements, and be produced with a certain perseverance in repetition.' I pursue this claim across domains: *naming*, *legibility as temporal pacing*, and *operative framing*. First, naming, the proper name functions as a quasi-proper programme: its 'sameness' is an artefact of iterability's governance, not a property it expresses. Second, pacing: legibility is a governed rhythm of opening and withholding, not by ontological substance. Third, framing: operative frames (parergonal thresholds, sequencing, signage) do not border identity, they produce it by staging admissible recognitions. Addressing the above is particularly important in the field of architecture because buildings stage recognisability at their edges: thresholds, sequences, and paratexts are not ornaments but instruments that govern who/what becomes legible. A compact case study, offered as tangible demonstration, in a contemporary hotel context – nameplate, threshold, interior cueing – shows how the three claims travel: the name operates as protocol; the entrance as a framed, timed interval; and the atmosphere as an iterable, paced inscription that must be repeated – and altered – to remain legible. On this view, 'hotel identity' appears as non-arrival: recognisable only as the rule of spacing that enables and interrupts recognition. The contribution of this paper is threefold: it distinguishes *espacement* from

constructivism by specifying how repeatable difference governs recognition; it shows, in naming, that 'brand coherence' is an effect of iterability rather than an essence iteration expresses, and, in pacing, that recognition is governed by rhythms of admission, delay, and reveal; and it repositions framing – entrance, signage, sequence – as operative sites that modulate recognisability through pacing and withholding not neutral containers of a prior identity. Taken together, the triad – naming, pacing, and framing – makes visible how espacement at the threshold operates as an architectural method for the production of hotel identity.

Lobato, Lucca (Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle)

La transgression comme geste de la déconstruction : la trace de Georges Bataille au cœur de la suppléментарité derridienne

Dans cette présentation, nous nous proposons de mettre en évidence la trace du concept de *transgression* du philosophe français Georges Bataille dans l'œuvre de Jacques Derrida, notamment dans *De la grammatologie*. Tout au long de cet ouvrage de 1967, Derrida mobilise l'idée de transgression au moment où son concept de supplément commence à se développer à partir de Rousseau. Notre hypothèse est que la transgression à laquelle Derrida fait référence renvoie directement au concept bataillien lui-même. Autrement dit, la transgression entretient un rapport structurel avec la déconstruction, en particulier avec le concept de suppléментарité, dont la présence reste souvent implicite dans l'œuvre derridienne. Pour comprendre la place de la transgression au sein de la suppléментарité, il convient d'examiner de plus près un certain parcours dans *De la grammatologie*, articulé en trois points principaux : (a) d'abord, l'écriture comme trace, où l'écriture se présente comme une rupture conceptuelle, autrement dit comme une transgression conceptuelle, et où il s'agit de mettre en évidence la transgression selon Georges Bataille et sa fonction de coupure en la rapportant à l'écriture telle que la conçoit Derrida ; (b) ensuite, la question du supplément, qui interroge la manière dont le concept servant à combler un manque dans la présence peut accomplir un geste transgressif à l'intérieur même d'une structure, la suppléментарité, telle que l'entend Derrida, constituant un mouvement de transgression susceptible de bouleverser la structure ; (c) enfin, une économie de la pression, présente aussi bien chez Bataille que chez Derrida, qui permet de comprendre ce franchissement sans dehors qu'est la suppléментарité. En somme, il s'agira de montrer comment la transgression devient un geste de la déconstruction à l'intérieur de la structure, notamment à partir du concept de suppléментарité développé dans l'un des ouvrages majeurs de Jacques Derrida.

López Serrano, Francisco José (Universidad de Granada y de Murcia)

Déconstruction à venir

A-t-on vraiment lu Jacques Derrida ? « On n'a pas [encore] commencé à me lire », il nous avoue en août 2004. Onze années auparavant, cette question se posait ainsi : « Lis-moi, en seras-tu jamais capable ? ». Si, comme le rappelle Derrida, on ne l'a pas encore lu, alors nous pouvons inférer que la déconstruction, telle que Derrida lui-même la pratique, reste à venir. Hypothèse excessive, affirmeraient certains; hyperbolique ou plus qu'hyperbolique signerait Derrida. Hypothèse excessive, diraient certains après les innombrables lectures de son travail et après les analyses abondantes et rigoureuses effectuées sur son œuvre. Revenons à la citation : « On n'a pas commencé à me lire, que s'il y a, certes, beaucoup de très bons lecteurs (quelques dizaines au monde, peut-être, et qui sont aussi des écrivains-penseurs, des poètes). ». Jacques Derrida insiste, deux semaines plus tard, que « certains signes me laissent croire... que, sauf de rares exceptions, on a à peine commencé à me lire – ou que pour moi, comme disait mon ami Althusser, l'avenir dure longtemps ». Ainsi, à partir de cet *instant* de lecture, nous pouvons *confirmer* que la déconstruction est, selon le sentiment de Derrida, à venir. Cette question nous amène à la suivante : comment hériter de l'écriture déconstructive derridienne et comment la donner à lire ? Les prémisses sont très claires : *relire Jacques Derrida tel qu'il se donne lui-même à lire*. Dans le « parcours » de la déconstruction et dans les passages où Derrida lui-même donne à lire son propre travail, nous pouvons *cons tater* qu'il n'y a aucun « tournant » dans la déconstruction et que la déconstruction, depuis le début jusqu'à sa dernière œuvre, n'a jamais été une philosophie. Dans cette communication, nous mettrons donc à l'épreuve deux questions majeures pour les lecteurs de la

déconstruction à venir: (1) que la déconstruction n'est pas (une) philosophie, ni Derrida un philosophe; et (2) que la déconstruction demeure *au-delà* de la clôture du savoir – y compris, entre autres, le savoir philosophique. Une déconstruction ainsi devrait donner lieu à une pensée « tout autre », à une écriture attentive à ce qui vient, à un monde à venir. ¡La deconstrucción r-est-e à venir!

Luce, Serena (l'Università Ca' Foscari de Venice)

Manger soi-même. Contribution à la biodéconstruction

À partir de trois séminaires derridiens du cycle *Politiques de l'amitié* (1987–1991), pour la plupart inédits, cet exposé examine les occurrences d'un terme théoriquement pertinent : « autophagie ». Reprise comme métaphore biologique et réélaborée dans un registre psychanalytique, l'autophagie s'y donne comme la figure d'un processus autosacrificiel dans lequel le vivant, tout en se conservant, n'entre en rapport avec l'altérité qu'au prix d'une forme de destruction de soi. L'émergence de l'autophagie dans *Politiques de l'amitié* apparaît ainsi comme un moment déterminant dans la genèse de la réflexion derridienne sur la logique auto-immunitaire. Une lecture rapprochée des séminaires met au jour l'articulation entre sacrifice, amitié et hospitalité, en continuité avec un intérêt pour le vivant et pour les métaphores phagiques déjà à l'œuvre dans des textes des années soixante-dix. S'inscrivant dans une approche de type biodéconstructif, cette analyse interroge la portée épistémologique des métaphores ainsi mobilisées par Derrida. Elle ouvre en outre sur une lecture écologique de la biothanatologie derridienne, en dialogue avec des modèles tels que le parasitisme et la symbiose, et met en lumière les implications éthiques et politiques d'une conception du vivant fondée sur l'auto-exposition et la vulnérabilité.

M

Ma, Qilu (Fudan University)

Peace as a Fragile Horizon: Derrida and the Ethics of Decision

This paper examines peace not as a stable political condition or merely the absence of war, but as a temporally fragile horizon in which ethical decision and justice remain exposed to uncertainty. For Derrida, ethical responsibility arises within an irreducible temporal openness: a decision worthy of the name must confront the impossibility of full justification and the aporia of undecidability. Contemporary forms of peace, however, are increasingly organized through legal and administrative infrastructures that rely heavily on digital technologies, algorithmic systems, and predictive governance, shaping perception, memory, and anticipation in advance of decision. Bringing Derrida into dialogue with Bernard Stiegler's insight that technology conditions language, temporality, and subjectivity, the paper asks: can Derrida's ethics of decision survive when exposure to undecidability itself is technologically managed? When peace is maintained through algorithmic coordination, digital archives, and security apparatuses, ethical responsibility is not eliminated but reconfigured: decision-making becomes technologically distributed, preconditioned, and technologically mediated in ways that both enable and constrain action. At the same time, the paper resists reducing Derrida to an uncritical ethics of decision. His insistence on the incalculable dimension of justice complicates any attempt to stabilize responsibility within technological or institutional frameworks, showing that no governance system can fully absorb the aporetic structure of ethical decision. Peace thus emerges as a site where ethical exposure, technological mediation, and temporal contingency intersect: a condition neither stable nor fully controllable, taking the form of a horizon in which responsibility must be assumed despite its inherent impossibility. By staging a productive tension between Derrida and Stiegler, the paper suggests how peace, far from being mere a background condition, exposes the limits of both ethical theory and technological mediation.

Macdonald, Fiona (Monash University)

Unfollowing Legacy

In *Geschlecht I*, Derrida traces Heidegger's neutralisation of sexual difference and the consequent gendering of neutrality itself from the ontology of Dasein and from what Heidegger calls its

“transcendental dispersion.” This operation, Derrida suggests, is *not benign*, asking: “And what if neutralization, which does not happen all by itself, were a violent operation?” This paper takes that question as a guiding problem, reading *Geschlecht* as staging a violence inseparable from its ordering of lineage, inheritance, generation, sexuality, race, and humanity. Decomposition is an insistent theme in *Geschlecht III*. It names the decline and corruption of humanity and *Geschlecht* in all its extensions that Heidegger reads through Georg Trakl’s poetry. Yet, decomposition also leads toward the dwelling place (*Ort*), understood as a site of gathering. Derrida glosses *Ort* as “the tip of the spear: the place toward which all the orienting forces of the weapon converge to gather there as an indivisible point” (*Geschlecht III*). Gathering gives rise to place as singularity and indivisible oneness. Yet, as Elina Staikou observes, this movement unfolds as “a procession in which familiar and familial figures—with the exclusion of the mother—step in and out” (*Decomposing Geschlecht*, 2023). The maternal is thus foreclosed within the logic of gathering. The paper proceeds through two gestures: a topological reading of *Geschlecht* through *Glade* (1994), an artwork that functions as a counter-site of gathering, rendering materially visible what *Geschlecht* neutralises; and, a reading of Apollinaire’s *Les Colchiques*, whose poetic economy inverts the legacy and generation of gathering. *Glade* calls forth the spectres of homosexuality (as supplement of paternity) and settler-colonialism that inhabit and disturb the topologies of *Geschlecht*. Here, the tip of the spear is traced to the penis in the act of fellatio; the moonlit seascape slips into an impenetrable abyss, and transcendental dispersion gives way to the pharmakon of the non-reproductive sperm. This other dispersion, figured through the hymen and marked by discontinuity, interrupts the procreative logic of gathering. It also opens onto the reappearance of the mother. This reappearance is developed through *Les Colchiques*, whose *mothers, daughters of their daughters* unsettle reproductive futurism. Read alongside *Glade*, Apollinaire’s poem articulates a dissemination that divides without gathering, dislocating *Geschlecht* and its orders of presence, and returning the mother from the ellipsis produced by neutralisation and decomposition.

Mansfield, Nick (Macquarie University)

“How Abyssal is Derrida?: Reconsidering Derrida on Bataille.”

In his early article on Georges Bataille, Jacques Derrida argues that not only is Bataille’s concept of sovereignty a version of Hegelian lordship, but the very thing that makes the master/slave dialectic possible. By taking death seriously, Bataille’s sovereign substitutes catastrophe for authority as the logic of thinking. If the pre-condition of Hegel’s foundational logic of lordship as the institution and guarantee of order, authority, systematicity and history is actually the irreducible excess and instability of Bataillean sovereignty, what does that mean for philosophy, politics and subjectivity? Derrida explores here the Bataillean motifs of excess, the abyss and the sovereign, that will play a crucial role in his later work, often in a de-literalised form. But can the accusation he makes here against Hegel, of relying on a fictionalised death rather than a literal one, be levelled against his own work? Does he pursue Bataille’s concepts towards the extremes they require? Or is Derrida’s later thought more violent, more destructive and less genteel than it is usually thought? This paper will rethink Derrida’s seminal work on Bataille in “From Restricted to General Economy: An Hegelianism Without Reserve,” to interrogate the enduring lure of danger in Derrida’s work.

Marexiano, Mattia (University of Milano-Biocca)

On What Makes the Link between Deconstruction and Education Strong: Derivation and Destinerrance

Many of the most common critiques of deconstruction stem from a failure to understand its “affirmative action”. Indeed, several positions acknowledge deconstruction’s considerable effectiveness in the *pars destruens*, while regarding it as weak in the *pars construens*. However, such assessments overlook the way in which Derrida’s work destabilises this very opposition. It operates through a movement that is neither purely destructive nor purely constructive, but rather articulated as an intensification of the ‘yes’ already at work. This contribution seeks to show that this movement, at once dismantling and inventive, plays a crucial role in explaining the direct entanglement between deconstruction and education. Although Derrida did not dedicate a specific work to education, his engagement with the subject is evident, even explicitly so, as can be seen in his involvement with the GREPH and in the

reflection condensed in the formula *Je voudrais apprendre à vivre enfin* (Derrida, 1993, 2004). Contemporary debates testify to the fruitfulness of this engagement. On the one hand, within pedagogical discourse, as a resource for rethinking specific educational issues (E. Bojesen, S. Haddad, S. Williams); on the other, as a trace for rethinking the very notion of education (G. Biesta); and further, as a source of inspiration for philosophers whose work is acquiring an increasingly significant impact on the educational field (J. Butler, K. Barad, C. Malabou, and B. Stiegler). Despite these studies, there is still a lack of research explaining why deconstruction and education are so closely intertwined. Such an inquiry is crucial in order to resist the temptation to conceive deconstruction as an educational method or as a form of indoctrination. On this basis, the present contribution moves from the acknowledged link between education and deconstruction to an examination of what makes this link strong, thereby illuminating the affirmative force of deconstruction from a different perspective. More specifically, the paper employs the categories of derivation and *destinerrance* to show that, in light of the uncertainty surrounding the effects of actions, education - no less than deconstruction - can be thought of as an affirmative response of survival (*survivance*).

Martell, James (Lyon College)

Derrida as a Narcissus Beyond Our Current Foiled Reflections

An essential dimension of the current explosions of authoritarianism, of xeno-, trans-, homo- and other types of phobia, as well as of the prevalence of philosophical apparatuses like Carl Schmitt's or René Girard's in the libraries of politicians like J.D. Vance or of technocrats like Peter Thiel is narcissism as what I call a "foiled reflection." From Derrida's statement in *Spectres of Marx* that the aporias of narcissism are "the explicit theme of deconstruction" (122), throughout his engagement in the photographic story *Droit de regards* with the reflective sight of amorous and agonistic encounters, his reflection in his cat's eyes at the beginning of *The Animal Therefore I am*, and the deconstructive tradition began by Gasché that configures Derrida's oeuvre in terms of (self)reflection, the instantiation of (self)reflection in/against another has proven to be a core preoccupation of deconstruction. Famously, Derrida did not see narcissism, as the common usage in English determines it, as a purely negative but also avoidable phenomenon. Instead, for him, as he explained it in the 1986 interview "Il n'y a pas le narcissisme," narcissistic reappropriation is a condition of possibility of any relation to the other and, consequently, of love and even death itself (*Points de suspension*, 212-13). In this presentation I will show that, following Derrida's engagement with Carl Schmitt's theory of the enemy in *Politics of Friendship*, one of the most radical critical potentials of deconstruction vis-a-vis our current crises of identification—of ourselves but also of our loved and/or hated others—lies in a revision of narcissism from and beyond psychoanalysis into its current onto-theological political instantiations. It is my hypothesis that by applying this Derridean key into our political crises stirred by the resurgence of authoritarianism, anxieties about masculinity and gender underdetermination, and by the yearning for technologically supported mirages of transcendence (i.e. illusions of Christ's second coming as a form of AI, praying apps, televangelism, etc.) we can distinguish more clearly the images of the world and the self enmeshed in agonistic battle, and perhaps too the reflective forms to get them beyond their "foiledness."

Mattos, Lucas (Boston College)

Derrida's Formatic "Transgressions"

Derrida's textual "transgressions" have been the subject of much academic interest during and since the 1970s, throughout which decade most of his formally and stylistically experimental works were published (in particular, "Tympan" [1972], *Clang* [1974], *The Truth in Painting* [1978], and *The Post Card* [specifically its "Envois," 1980]; looking ahead, one might also consider his *Monolingualism of the Other*, or, *The Prosthesis of Origin* [1996], with its chapter-length note on Rosenzweig, Arendt, and Levinas). The very fact of the publications of such works signifies a need of the time: a need for reconsiderations of a flurry of concepts, all revolving around the notion of academic writing, however proximally. From a certain coign of vantage, these works, and more, serve as—usually implicit—commentaries on the "formatic" (especially typographic, as far as Derrida's oeuvre is concerned, but also registerial) strictures

of the scholastic book. In particular, Derrida's explorations of such typographical features as the margin, the footnote, and the pull quote ought to be understood as performative demonstrations of their constructive, rather than merely supplemental, capabilities. As stated in the French edition insert of *Clang*, its distylistics and "incrustations" are a prime example of such a "constructive" function: what Derrida also calls its "colossal writing" serves, firstly, as "the analysis of the word *glas* in all the twisted and retrenched virtualities of its 'meaning'" (*Clang*, vii). The pertinent questions of this report are as follows: under what conditions did Derrida deem fit to intervene on the academic scene with the formatic innovations of such works as "Tympan" and *Clang*? Do such conditions persist today, and therefore justify new "transgressions" upon the conventions of academic literature? How does one "feel" for such conditions? How to deduce an adequate response therefrom? And finally, based on the answers to the above, how well-attuned are the inheritors of this experimental tendency in Derrida's work to the latter's justifications for his formatic excursions? Generally speaking, the objective of this report is to make sense, however summarily, of just these "excursions," taken as a whole; more specifically, it is to measure the aptitude of formatic experimentation for "saying the unspeakable": for going beyond language in order to make certain appeals against the strictures of academic writing and publishing.

McCarrin, Michael (Oberlin College)

Lady Lovelace's Objection: On Originality and Generative AI

In the notes to her 1843 translation of Luigi Menzies's "Sketch of the Analytical Engine invented by Charles Babbage," Ada Lovelace famously observes that Babbage's machine "has no pretensions whatever to *originate* anything." A century later, Alan Turing cited this remark as representative of what he called Lady Lovelace's Objection: the position that creativity is so closely tied to our conception of human intelligence that no machine without this quality can truly be said to think. With the widespread deployment of Generative AI systems, we are now confronted with systems that *do* have such pretensions, boasting the ability to produce writing, music or imagery that is not merely a direct reproduction of human-made artifacts, but can demonstrate a degree of novelty and responsiveness to custom requests. For those who view creativity as a key component of human intelligence, this achievement renews questions about whether generative AI systems are now or will eventually be creative enough to cross the line. The debate divides between those who claim Lovelace's objection has been met and those who believe the mechanisms of generative AI cannot achieve true creativity. I argue that Turing's response to Lovelace offers an alternative to this dichotomy that provides insight into contemporary views on generative AI by calling into question the status of "originality" as the arbiter of the human-machine distinction. Further, through a close reading of Turing's response, I demonstrate that this debate about originality is tied to the problem of the origin in general, and thus is open to a Derridean reading. Not only does the operative concept of creativity invoke the liveness and spontaneity of speech, it also inherits the ontotheological character associated with the ability to originate—that is, to function as an origin that produces something new by injecting free and spontaneous activity into an otherwise determined network of events. Theories of the subject premised on this capacity as a condition of full presence are therefore inherently logocentric. As such, I propose interpreting the current confrontation with generative AI also calls for a recreating of creativity in the absence of absolute originality.

Mendes, André (Universidade de Coimbra)

Du droit à la paix

En nous inspirant de *Force de loi* (1994) – « Du droit à la justice » –, nous reprenons la double écoute de ce titre (Bernardo, 2009) pour réfléchir sur la relation entre droit et paix selon Derrida: « Du droit à la paix », d'une part, évoque le pouvoir d'établir la paix selon le calcul juridico-politique de la réparation (comme vengeance) et de l'équilibre entre des maux. Nous analyserons, ainsi, le droit comme « dispositif stabilisable, statuaire et calculable » (Derrida, 1994) et comme « un mouvement de la *correction*, de la réparation, de la restitution, de la vengeance...du châtement. » (Derrida, 1993). Si la construction de la paix repose uniquement sur la réparation/vengeance/équivalence (droit), alors la

paix ne dépassera pas les limites de la comptabilité/opportunité juridico-politique. D'autre part, « du droit à la paix » nous fait entendre la transition du droit vers la paix – une paix *au-delà* des limites juridico-politiques qui la façonnent. Cette paix s'inspire de la dimension *méta*-onto-phénoménologique de la Déconstruction comme *pensée impossible/inconditionnelle* (Derrida, 2002) marquée par la *justice* qui, distincte du droit, se présente comme « infinie, incalculable, rebelle à la règle, étrangère à la symétrie » (Derrida, 1994). La *justice* « romprait...avec cette équivalence du droit et de la vengeance, de la justice comme principe d'équivalence (le droit) et loi du talion » (Derrida, 1994). Derrida ne néglige toutefois pas le rôle du juridico-politique dans la construction de la paix. Voici notre hypothèse: penser la paix aporétiquement. Faisant écho à la relation d'hétérogénéité sans opposition et d'indissociabilité entre *justice* et droit (Derrida, 1994), Derrida pense la paix comme une initiative fragile (*impossible/inconditionnelle/juste*) « avant tout échange et toute réciprocité à venir » (Derrida, 2001) donc *au-delà* de la calculabilité juridico-politique. Cependant, cette paix ne correspond pas à un *au-delà* candide. Quant au juridico-politique, lui, à lui seul, se réduirait au cercle économique. La paix *juste* s'inscrit, ainsi, dans le juridico-politique pour (*presque*) se réaliser, et, simultanément, cette *justice* perfectionne infiniment « la paix juridico-politique ». C'est cette inspiration (*impossible/inconditionnelle/juste*) – qui enjoint « Politique après! » (Derrida/Lévinas, 1997/1982) – que nous devons savoir écouter dans la réinvention si urgente des prétendus processus de paix.

Mendoza-de Jesús, Ronald (Emory University)

On Transcendental Death: Revisiting Arche-Writing at Metaphysics' Closure

Towards the end of *La voix et le phénomène*, Derrida seems to pit Hegel against both Kant and Husserl, offering the image of a philosophical gigantomachy in which what is at stake is nothing less than the *closure* of metaphysics: "And yet the entire phenomenological discourse is, as we have seen, gripped by the schema of a metaphysics of presence which relentlessly exhausts itself trying to make difference derivative. Within this schema, Hegelianism seems more radical: par excellence at the point where it brings to light that the positive infinite must be thought (which is possible only if it thinks itself) so that the indefiniteness of *différance* may appear as such. Hegel's criticism of Kant would no doubt also be valid against Husserl." The immediate aim of this paper is to interpret this sentence by explaining both *how* Hegel's emphasis on the actuality of absolute spirit opens unto the thinking of *différance*—which nevertheless remains "unthinkable" within the closure of metaphysics—and *why* the radicality of Hegel's commitment to the absolute is required in order to draw this closure. To do so, I turn to the second session of Derrida's 1963 seminar on Husserl's fifth *Cartesian Meditation*, recently published in *Du même à l'autre*. In this session, we find what is arguably Derrida's most sustained exploration of the Sartrean notion of a "transcendental field without subject." Derrida's argument vis-à-vis Sartre is that only arche-writing can open and validate the idea of a "transcendental field without subject" because only writing offers a model to think of the process of configuration, institutionalization and sedimentation of sense as a field of operations that occur despite, if not thanks to, the *death* of the transcendental subject. More important for this paper is the fact that Derrida explicitly invokes Hegel's notion of "objective spirit" as another model to think of this transcendental field. After sketching out this "Hegelian" interpretation of arche-writing, the paper concludes by making the case that a proper understanding of Derrida's quasi-transcendental requires a careful reconsideration of the place of Hegel in the advent of deconstruction.

Mercier, Thibault (University of Paris Nanterre)

Derrida, penseur de l'archi-économie

[Au sujet de la différence :] « Je dirais même que c'est le concept de l'économie, et puisqu'il n'y a pas d'économie sans différence, c'est la structure la plus générale de l'économie, pourvu qu'on entende sous cette notion autre chose que...la métaphysique classique de l'économie. » (*Positions*, p. 17.)

« Si maintenant, néanmoins, je disais non pas « l'économie est la dernière instance » mais « toute dernière instance » est « économique », cela aurait une chance de tout changer, à la condition que je définisse l'économie, comme je serais tenté de le faire, autrement » (*Politique et amitié*, p. 66). Penser l'économie autrement que sous sa détermination métaphysique : voilà l'une des propositions les plus

ambitieuses et stimulantes de Derrida et paradoxalement l'une des moins étudiées. Nous suggérons la mise en circulation du signifiant « archi-économie » pour tenter de dessiner les contours, nécessairement poreux, d'une pensée derridienne de l'économie. Il s'agira alors de justifier le choix de ce terme, absent du *corpus* derridien, mais hantant les pages où la question économique se médite. En particulier, nous voudrions montrer que : (1) De même qu'archi-écriture dit ce qui précède la distinction entre l'écriture et la parole et rend possible leur mise en relation, de même archi-économie désigne la racine commune de l'économie et de l'an-économie, ce qui les articule en les co-impliquant l'un dans l'autre. (2) Archi-économie exprime la structure la plus générale de l'économie. Cette indétermination n'est pas un manque de précision. Avant même de compliquer l'opposition entre économie et an-économie, archi-économie libère l'« économie » de sa prise economiciste, qui prétend que le modèle de toute économie serait fourni par l'économie politique. (3) L'archi-économie se précise selon les contextes. Par exemple : l'archi-économie *libidinale* articule principe de plaisir et pulsion de mort dans un rapport qui n'est plus simplement celui de l'au-delà ; l'archi-économie *politique* articule économie monétaire et éthique du don dans un rapport qui n'est plus simplement celui de la priorité de l'éthique. Ainsi, à partir d'une pensée de l'archi-économie, de nouvelles configurations politico-libidinales se dessinent aussi.

Mitra, Tirthadeep (Indian Institute of Technology)

Subject Exi(s)ts, or Subject after Justice

Subject is a ghost. Its disappearance and reappearance have historically corresponded to hegemonic strategies of domination to functionally affirm and preserve the sovereign and its work in the world-calculus of subjectivity, bereft of the incalculability of *l'à-venir*. This paper offers a counter-strategy to argue that the subject is a question of justice, it is *in* question and the *questioning* that responds to the impossible demands of justice, a suspension of being in the struggles to find “a singularity that dislocates or divides itself in gathering itself together to answer to the other” (Derrida 1995, 260). Here, the ontological passage cannot be grasped without an infinite responsibility where the subject lives open, but neither ‘its’ life nor ‘its’ openness comes from an ontological determination; instead, it is multiplied by ruptures in history, instructed by the facing of the defaced, and dehiscence by *hic et nunc* of *l'à-venir*. *Clôture* writes subject “as the very coming of the event” (Derrida 1994, 33); event, which is its matter in the world. Subject is a topological tension between *to exist* and *to exit*, mutual substitution of the time of origin and the advent of justice. In the coming of the other, the subject comes to be, or better, passes to be. Its passing is without pre-instituted being, but its being is passing. The question, therefore, is not whether the subject is dead or not. As *questioning*, it is passing, that through which future passes, a possibility from future that dislocates the sovereignty of the present. It is a coincidence of the passing of presence and the passing through of the future. For justice to come, the subject must come to pass away, must pass to be, this “must” which is its responsibility preceding being. It becomes a passage *for* justice *from* future. But, why subject, *now*? To deploy a resistance, this paper finally argues, a passage for justice against biopolitical totalisation, neoliberal expansion, and ethnonationalist violence. In short, the deconstruction of the subject comes from the urgency of responding, and yes, we are late, to a wounded world.

Mizrahi, Eliza (Independent Scholar)

Pour l'autre, pour personne: le témoignage aujourd'hui

Dans le travail de Derrida sur le témoignage — notamment dans *Schibboleth*. Pour Paul Celan, Répondre du secret, le séminaire récemment publié *Témoigner*, ainsi que *Poétiques et politiques du témoignage* — témoigner signifie d'abord s'engager dans la langue. Le témoignage prend la forme d'un serment ou d'une promesse : il engage une responsabilité sans s'appuyer sur la preuve, la substitution ou la garantie juridique. Ce qui lie le sujet parlant n'est ni la maîtrise ni la vérification, mais une relation au secret, à l'exposition et à l'adresse, relation qui ne peut se stabiliser sans se trahir. Dans *Schibboleth*, Derrida pense cet engagement fragile à partir de la figure du seuil. Le *schibboleth* fonctionne comme contre-signe et comme marque datée : il expose le témoin au risque, à l'appartenance et à l'exclusion, tout en résistant à la transparence communicative. Le témoignage ne cherche pas à dépasser l'impossibilité ; il

se tient à son bord. Ce qui est en jeu n'est pas la transmission d'un contenu, mais la force d'une adresse qui demeure singulière et exposée. À partir de cette configuration derridienne, cette communication interroge les déplacements contemporains du témoignage dans des régimes de visibilité, de circulation médiatique et d'exposition où la parole et la vérité tendent à se confondre avec le spectacle, l'immédiateté et la prise de position morale. Dans ces contextes, le témoignage risque d'être réduit à une mise en scène affective ou à une mémoire instrumentalisée, au détriment de ce que Derrida — et plus encore Paul Celan — situaient dans le travail même de la langue. Une intervention récente de Georges Didi-Huberman, *Témoigner pour le témoin*, rend ce déplacement particulièrement sensible en revenant sur le petit mot décisif pour dans le vers de Celan : «.Niemand zeugt für den Zeugen.». Inscrit dans un horizon derridien du témoignage, pour n'apparaître pas comme une simple préposition, mais comme un opérateur structurel de la langue française, où s'articulent orientation, adresse et responsabilité. Il ne fonde ni substitution ni équivalence ; il désigne un passage fragile — fait de retards, de silences et de lacunes — par lequel le témoignage demeure orienté vers l'autre sans se laisser capturer par le trauma, les récits officiels ou les usages gouvernementaux de la mémoire. La question devient alors : que signifie témoigner pour aujourd'hui ? Comment le témoignage peut-il encore porter une force poétique et politique lorsqu'il résiste à l'exposition, au spectacle et à la clôture ? Le témoignage ne fonde pas la vérité et ne résout pas la responsabilité ; il maintient un espace ouvert — pour l'autre, pour chacun, pour personne — où une responsabilité peut encore s'assumer sans alibi.

Mrejen, Romain (École Normale Supérieure)

"No Refuge: Derrida's Pas and the Impossible Topology of the Safe Zone"

Contemporary conflicts are saturated with spatial promises: safe zones, humanitarian corridors, shelters (zones where life is supposed to be protected from death). These spatial constructs rest on a fundamental philosophical assumption: that a stable frontier can be drawn between where life is preserved and where death operates. This paper argues that Derrida's thinking of the *pas*, and his broader project as a thinker of the *topos*, radically undoes this assumption. Reading *Parages* (1986) alongside *Apories* (1996), I develop what I call a Derridean disaster-topology: a conceptual spatiality in which no refuge can be secured, because no frontier between life and death can be localized. The *pas* (simultaneously a step and a negation) names a movement that displaces the frontier at the very moment one attempts to cross or draw it. The safe zone, in this light, is not simply politically fragile; it is conceptually impossible. What disaster reveals, Derrida suggests, is that the inside was always already traversed by what it claimed to exclude. Drawing on Derrida's thinking of *aporia* (literally *a-poros*, without passage) alongside his engagement with Blanchot in *Parages*, this paper shows that disaster-topology is fundamentally one without stable borders, without shelters, without the outside that would make an inside possible. *Survivance*, then, does not mean finding refuge from death, but learning to inhabit this aporetic spatiality: a life always already open to what exceeds it.

Mo, Hengkang (Université Paris Nanterre)

La « place pour la femme » ? Heidegger, Levinas et Derrida sur la question de l'altérité féminine

Derrida aborde plusieurs fois la question de la différence sexuelle, surtout dans la série des *Geschlecht*. Le mot allemand *Geschlecht*, intraduisible, contient différents sens, y compris le sexe. En examinant ce terme dans l'œuvre de Heidegger, Derrida entend « une tout autre expérience de la différence sexuelle », qui rassemble, comme la pointe de l'épée, toutes les pluralités dans une « simplicité », la tendre dualité. Mais cette « tout autre » expérience n'est pas assez autre, elle incarne en fait une nostalgie et un retour à la *Heimat*, geste que critique toujours Derrida et qui est lié à un « lieu ». La pensée en général de Heidegger n'attribue presque jamais un lieu ou une « place » à la femme : la neutralité du *Dasein* est avant la dualité des sexes et le bâtir exclut également, selon Iris Marion Young, la femme. En revanche, l'altérité féminine occupe toujours une place importante chez Levinas. Nous analyserons deux points : (1) La femme hospitalière, qui se tutoie avec le sujet levinassien, c'est-à-dire le maître de maison qui est pourtant l'homme ; (2) La femme dans l'ambiguïté de l'éros. Ces deux figures du féminin montrent que l'altérité de la femme se situe tant dans la dimension du Même que dans celle de l'Autre et la « place pour la femme » reste pourtant dans la maison. Nous voudrions montrer que

Levinas accepte la présupposition heideggerienne : autrui reste neutre quant à la différence sexuelle et sa pensée privilégie, comme beaucoup de chercheurs.euses le remarquent, la perspective masculine. Derrida, quant à lui, hérite de cette question de l'altérité levinassienne et la dépasse en proposant les « chorégraphies », différences sexuelles au pluriel. Pour le philosophe de la déconstruction, « il n'y a pas de place pour la femme », il n'accepte alors ni le retour nostalgique (pour chercher une simplicité sexuelle originaire) chez Heidegger, ni l'attribution de la place (dans le chez-soi levinassien) pour la femme. Selon nous, cette pensée de la différence sexuelle de Derrida sort plus radicalement de la tradition philosophique et reste cohérente avec sa propre philosophie, en trouvant un écho avec ses autres concepts : par exemple, la dissémination, les animots, etc.

Moon, Jueun “June” (Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto & Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam)
What Becomes of Différance? Touch, Desire, and the Future of Relation

The enduring force of Derrida's thinking lies in its exposure of the constitutive chasm at the heart of all relations—between signifier and signified, self and other, presence and absence—while simultaneously destabilizing the hierarchical logic that governs these oppositions. Yet the question remains: what forms of relation become thinkable after this exposure has been decisively made? Rather than reiterating deconstruction's gesture of unveiling aporia, this paper explores post-Derridean attempts to articulate how relation persists within and through constitutive distance. Drawing on the work of Luce Irigaray and Renaud Barbaras, I argue that recent philosophies of touch and desire offer resources for thinking mediation beyond the textual paradigm that has often framed Derrida's reception. These approaches do not seek to repair the rupture between signifier and signified, nor to restore any metaphysics of presence. Instead, they reconfigure relationality itself as sustained by spacing, interval, and non-coincidence. Irigaray's rethinking of touch resists both fusion and abstraction: touch is never immediate contact but a mode of proximity that preserves alterity and difference. Desire, in this sense, emerges not from lack alone but from the interval that allows two to remain irreducibly two and thus enables both auto and hetero affective relation without appropriation. Similarly, Barbaras' phenomenology of life and perception conceptualizes desire as arising from a constitutive distance that both separates and animates beings in their relational becoming. In both cases, mediation is not a derivative operation but a constitutive structure of experience. Read in a post-Derridean register, these philosophies shift the focus of deconstruction from the critique of metaphysical hierarchies toward an affirmative exploration of how difference is lived, embodied, and sustained. They blur the distinction between signifier and signified not by collapsing it, but by situating it within a dynamic field of affective and perceptual relations. This paper suggests that such an approach marks a possible future for deconstruction—one that is attentive not only to the impossibility of presence, but also to the fragile, generative relations that emerge from that impossibility.

Moreiras, Alberto (Texas A&M University)
The Anarchic Drive in Derrida's 1991-1994 Seminars

Jacques Derrida seemed to have a lifelong fascination with the Freudian thematics of the death drive. He reflects on it in many texts—without being exhaustive, I will mention the 1969-70 seminar on *Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism*, the 1975-76 seminar *La vie la mort*, and *La carte postale* (1980)—not to mention *Aporias* and other texts where the death drive has a subsidiary role. But I think the death drive is also a full character in the 1991-92 seminar *Répondre—du secret* and in the yet unpublished 1993-94 seminar “Témoignage.” As I will not be able to account for all of it, my paper will focus on the 1991-92 and 1993-94 seminars and will try to interpret their reflections, sometimes implicit, on the death drive in light of Nathalie Zaltzman's illuminating reinscription of the death drive as “pulsion anarchiste” (1998). If, for Zaltzman, the anarchist (I prefer an-archic) drive is a movement for life, and not for death, I will read it in particular in the context of Derrida's intended deconstruction of Heidegger's existential analytics in *Being and Time* (1927). My thesis would be that the Derridean interpretation of the death drive, in the register of need rather than in the register of pleasure, helps us think of death in a way that is particularly pertinent to what thinkers such as Isabelle Stengers, Deborah Danowski, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro have called “Terran resistance.”

Morelli Fonseca, Luca (KU Leuven)

Nothing There Lies: Philosophy, Literature and Negation

In *Literature in Secret* Derrida argues that what is protected by the production of the discourse that bears the name “literature,” is the democratic right to say without meaning or of not wanting to say while saying it regardless. He contrasts this discourse against the necessarily-meaningful, and thus inherently less free, discourses of philosophy, theology and religion. I argue that the negation of meaning present in Derrida’s use of the term literature is necessary for the writing of philosophy. The current production of philosophical writing is done, almost entirely, within the form of the academic article. The language of the article, its construction as a Title-Thesis-Body-Conclusion-Bibliography piece of writing, attends the specific demands of two attributes above all others: that of clarity and efficiency. Philosophy, as a historical practice, has always been defined by its desire to possess truth; combined with the relentless drive to progress and profit of capitalism, our current practices of writing have been sharpened so as to be quickly digestible and immediately comprehended. No ambiguity, irony, indecisiveness, unseriousness or genuine questioning is to be tolerated if the article demands that the conclusion be stated at the beginning, and that every move taken be explained before its taking. This ruthlessness is done in the name of adding and growing a mythical “body of literature,” that can somehow englobe or represent the entirety of philosophical knowledge; thus, finally but always-eventually, attaining truth. In my essay, I trace how the demands of clarity and efficiency do not guarantee the attainment of truth, but also how their prioritization in the academic article over the language of literature can paradoxically lead to the very saying-without-meaning that philosophy so badly wants to refute. I argue that, rather than run from it, philosophy should accept its blurred lines alongside literature and take up negation as an aesthetic practice that returns philosophy as a practice of seeking and questioning as opposed to blindly affirming. I end by arguing that Derrida’s work today represents the institutionalized possibility of questioning the practices of the institution.

Morson, Jack (Goldsmiths, University of London)

Towards a Non-Monolingual Theory of Poetry: Derrida and the ‘french Dichter-Denker’

If it is generally held that Jacques Derrida never directly challenged Heidegger’s wartime account of the German lyric poet Friedrich Hölderlin, then his relationship to the poet-translator Michel Deguy remains to be understood. Relative to the influence that Heidegger’s reading of Hölderlin’s poetry had on his friends and colleagues (Blanchot, Celan, Lacoue-Labarthe, Nancy, etc.), Derrida’s response was one of reticence. This changes, I propose, with his essay “Comment nommer”, written for a colloquium at Cérisy in 1995 around the work of Michel Deguy. There, Derrida refers to the Deguy’s 1962 translation of a lecture given by Heidegger on Hölderlin’s elegy “Homecoming”. At stake for Derrida is not simply the nationalist pathos that suffuses the 1943 lecture. What also interests him is how the poetics of Deguy comes to radically alter Heidegger’s German theory of the poem *qua* speculation on the historical and fateful mission of “the Poet”. It is in this respect that Derrida gives Deguy the name ‘french Dichter-Denker’. My paper aims to explicate this dysorthographic, unfaithful translation of Heidegger’s figure of the Dichter-Denker, by which is meant the ‘poet-thinker’ of a certain German idiom. It considers ongoing theoretical discussions of translation as a tension between the commitments to idiomaticity and to hospitality, while aiming to give a new perspective on Derrida’s attentiveness to the political consequences that emerge from the interaction between poetry, philosophical poetics and nationalism.

Moulton, Jacqueline Viola (Independent Scholar)

The Ghost of The Animal That Therefore I Am: Multispecies worlding, aesthetics, poetics, witnessing

“Hospitality can only be a poetic act” opens Derrida’s *Of Hospitality* (2002)—revealing a generative threshold into questions of language, witness, difference, ethics, and aesthetics. As contemporary time witnesses a proliferation of endings of worlds, multispecies revenants arrive to our present moment. This paper argues that Derrida’s thinking of hospitality, mourning, and survival demands a reworlding of aesthetics, wherein multispecies witnessing becomes a participatory, poetic practice that unsettles anthropocentric limits on language, ethics, and world-making. We live within long lineages of animal

ghosts who turn—much like Derrida’s cat in *The Animal That Therefore I Am* (2002)—to face us and draw us into urgent questions of who we are together within an in-trouble world. I ask: what of that which arrives without a face, of worlds that die without a sound, or mourn in ways we cannot render intelligible? What of that which exceeds our senses? We dance here with the Derridian *impossible*, both of mourning and hospitality, to understand and practice thinking-with difference in generative, reworlding ways. “Surviving” Derrida writes, “—that is the other name of a mourning whose possibility is never to be awaited” (1997). Yet anthropocentric frameworks continue to privilege human mourning, language, ethics, and aesthetics, creating poor ethical-aesthetic worlding practices; against the figure of “the animal without world,” Derrida insists on entangled modes of cohabitation, vulnerability, and address. Here, I take up Derrida’s account of haunting, mourning, and survival to argue for a reworlding of aesthetics through multispecies witnessing—understood not as detached observation, but as participatory, ethical, and aesthetic engagement with difference. Drawing on Derrida’s claim that hospitality can only be poetic, this paper asks how animals—alongside artists and philosophers—write, express, and enact forms of hospitality that exceed human sense, intelligibility, and address. Such heteroglossic modes of witnessing open aesthetic practices capable of responding to loss, difference, and extinction without reducing them to mastery or representation. Multispecies mourning thus emerges not only as an ethical demand but as an aesthetic one: a survival practice through which worlds are re-made in the presence of ghosts.

Mudry, Robin R. (The European Graduate School)

“Faufilages”, or Deconstruction — A Textile Affair?

After his participation in the États généraux de la psychanalyse in Paris in July 2000, Jacques Derrida published the lecture he had delivered in a small volume entitled États d’âme de la psychoanalyse, translated by Peggy Kamuf as the slightly more active “Psychoanalysis Searches the States of Its Soul”. In this text, he addressed, among other things, the “crisis of psychoanalysis” at the beginning of the new millennium in light of its “alibi-lessness” (sans/without alibi). What is notable, palpable at the level of the text’s very materiality is the insertion of a loose booklet, intended to retrospectively situate Derrida’s propos—a gesture of “Prière d’insérer” that he had used before (in *Glas* or *Passions*), but never invoked with the terms faufile and faufileure. Referring to the French faufile—the basting thread (though literally the “false thread,” fau(x) fil)—which is decisive for the shaping of any textile, and indeed of that very text, Derrida once again brings to the fore the seemingly inherent “autoimmune” resistances of psychoanalysis and interweaves them so thoroughly with his own thinking that he himself can be said to have faufiled, or false-threaded, the subject of psychoanalysis without the slightest alibi. This contribution therefore seeks to take up, at several textile-textual junctures of the encounter between deconstruction and psychoanalysis, a similarly “false-threading”—and thus always already supplementing—approach. The faufile, of course, does not make such an undertaking any easier; yet, simultaneously, it already seems to get to its very point: that point which Derrida reaches within the opening pages of “Plato’s Pharmacy”—and at which, in a single stroke, everything has already been said. The question of the undecidable nature of the pharmakon—both remedy and poison, depending on the dosage—would thus belong to a science of tissues, to histology, and, much later, in *Resistances to Psychoanalysis*, would reappear within a sequence of undecidables alongside the meshwork (Geflecht). Where Derrida lets centuries dart through the loom of history in order to begin anew once more, this contribution attempts, at least for a moment, to pause the shuttle and to read this gesture as a faufileure or faufileage avant la lettre (avant la lettre— that most Derridean, trace-like or hauntological of structures, which is perhaps to say: still with the threads).

Mullen, Joshua (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology)

Derrida’s Enigma of Being-with: An Invitation to Live More Justly

In the exordium to *Specters of Marx* Derrida proposes that learning to live would mean learning to live otherwise and more justly with ghosts. Derrida then claims that this “makes *being-with* in general more enigmatic than ever for us” (2026. p. xiii). In this paper I take up the question of how Derrida addresses the enigma of being-with in two texts. First, I show how in “Psyche: Invention of the Other” Derrida

engages with the enigma of being-with through the question of a 'we', that does not invent itself and can only be invented by the other. I then turn to his reading of Blanchot's "Marx's Three Voices" in *Spectres of Marx* which sets the stage for Derrida to address the enigma of being-with through a reiteration of his notion of justice. An analysis of these recurrent themes is significant because it challenges readings of Derrida that suggest he forecloses a rethinking of 'community'.

Muscat, Pierre (University of Malta)

Hysteresis and Différance: Ferraris' Realist Reworking of Derrida

Derrida's analyses of inscription, iterability, and *différance* have often been taken to undermine the possibility of a robust realist ontology. Yet the persistence of these motifs continues to shape contemporary philosophical attempts to think reality, temporality, and materiality after deconstruction. This paper examines Maurizio Ferraris' recent turn to the concept of hysteresis as a revealing case of Derrida's enduring philosophical afterlife within contemporary realism. Ferraris' early new realist project famously articulates the constitutive law of social objects—"Object = Inscribed Act"—as a corrective to Derrida's claim that "there is nothing outside the text," which Ferraris interprets as denying access to reality beyond conceptual schemes (Ferraris 2013, p. 159-160; Derrida 2016, p. 171). On this basis, Ferraris defends a strong distinction between natural objects, which exist independently of inscription, and social objects, which depend on recorded acts. This distinction underwrites his critique of postmodern constructivism and grounds his realist ontology. In more recent work, however, Ferraris introduces the concept of hysteresis, defined as the survival of an effect in the absence of its cause. Hysteresis is made possible by recording: the inscription of an effect on a physical substrate that allows it to persist beyond the event that produced it. Ferraris presents hysteresis as a generalisation of the logic of inscription, extending it beyond the social domain to natural processes and temporal persistence more broadly (Ferraris 2024, p. 188). I argue that this shift responds to a genuine limitation in Ferraris' earlier philosophy, namely its difficulty accounting for temporality, natural change, and the persistence of traces in the natural world. Yet I also contend that this generalisation paradoxically brings Ferraris closer to Derrida rather than further away. By weakening the restriction of iterability to social inscriptions, hysteresis reopens a logic of delay, survival, and non-coincidence that closely parallels Derrida's notion of *différance*. The paper proceeds in three stages. First, I situate Ferraris' new realism within his critique of postmodernism and constructivism. Second, I trace the development from the constitutive law of social objects to the concept of hysteresis, highlighting both continuity and rupture. Finally, I compare hysteresis and *différance* in order to assess Ferraris' original contribution to contemporary realist philosophy. I conclude that Ferraris' realism does not simply overcome deconstruction but testifies to its ongoing necessity for thinking materiality, temporality, and inscription today.

N

Nagasaka, Masumi (Waseda University)

Deciphering faith in the promise open to perjury and evil: based on Derrida's reading of Heidegger in Of Spirit

In his later reading of Heidegger, Derrida focuses on Heidegger's discourse that could be interpreted as an implicit introduction of the concept of faith. This presentation shows how Derrida deciphers in Heidegger the implicit reference to the notion of faith in a promise (*Zusage*), based on his 1987 conference *Of Spirit*. The conference examines various texts in which Heidegger mentions the notion of "spirit" (*Geist*), from the 1927 book *Being and Time* to the 1953 treatise on Trakl in *On the Way of Language*. Announcing the destruction of the history of ontology in Section 6 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger assigns the term *Dasein* to "us" who question the meaning of Being, stating that terms such as "subjectivity", "soul", and "spirit" should be avoided. As Derrida shows, however, the notion of "spirit" (*Geist*) reappears in Section 82, though under precautionary quotation marks, to clarify the historicity of *Dasein*. Furthermore, in the 1936 lecture on Schelling's "Essence of Human Freedom", Heidegger relates the notion of "spirit" (*Geist*) to evil, based on Schelling's characterisation of the spirit: only those who

have spirit can be open to evil. Derrida's pursuit culminates in his reading of Heidegger's 1953 treatise on Trakl. Here, "spirit" (*Geist*) or its adjective *geistlich* is described as being related to the term *gheis*, meaning excitement, oblivion of the self, the perdition of the self to the outside the self, associated with the image of the fire, flame, or burning. After this examination, Derrida refers to Paul de Man's *Allegories of Reading* (1979): "*Sprache verspricht sich*", meaning "language promises, language promises itself, or language perjures itself". A promise can be a promise because it is open to perjury and evil. In the midst of the openness to the worst, spirit is also open to the faith in the promise. Every time that Heidegger tries to dissociate the notion of spirit (*Geist*) in Schelling and Trakl from Christian connotation and faith, Derrida deciphers, against Heidegger, faith as original affirmation, more original than questioning, the unprethinkable (*das Uuvordenkliche*) antecedent to any supposed origin(s).

Novelli, Francesco (Università della Calabria)

Matrix and self-generation: between Hegel and Derrida

How can one address in an innovative way the long-standing question of the relation between deconstruction and dialectics? One possible interpretive key is offered by the notion of the *matrix*, a term invested with serial and generative meanings associated with maternity, typography, and, not least, computing. In this paper, I propose to identify in Hegel's concept of the *spekulativer Satz* the matrix of that dream of self-generation which also haunts Derrida's thought. Starting from the copula of the speculative proposition, it is possible to trace a path through Derrida's *Glas* (1974) that weaves together the aforementioned meanings of the matrix. The impossibility of reducing polysemy within the speculative proposition alone led Hegel to the necessity of *Darstellung*: a massive typographical writing machine that does not coincide with writing itself, but rather functions as a generative software. This machine is inseparable from *Aufhebung*, figured as a "Christian mother," a generator of its own critiques. What if, in order to come to terms with the relation between deconstruction and dialectics—first of all by suspending the very ambiguity of the notion of "relation"—it were necessary to think of Hegel as a mother? Together with the machine of *Darstellung*, the copula of the *spekulativer Satz* thus constitutes a matrix: the extreme dream of self-generation. Hegel is both father and mother to himself, as Derrida suggests when he speaks of a "homosexual enantiosis." In this sense, the speculative proposition not only gathers together all (future) attempts to reduce dissemination to an original semantic cell, but also constitutes a genuine matrix of deconstruction: mother, prototype of a writing machine, and software. Finally, if the matrix is also bound up with spatiality—as Derrida's reflections on *chōra* attest—then the dream of self-generation also appears as the mirage of a fully disembodied knowledge, as one of Hegel's heirs, Alexandre Kojève, once claimed when he described absolute knowledge, compared to a "universal tensor," as "the answer to all possible questions".

O

Orbán, Jolán (University of Pécs)

Derrida and the Secret Life of Marranos

"THEY STILL HAVE TO HIDE, these Marranos, to celebrate the exodus from Egypt" – writes Derrida interpreting the photo of Frederic Brenner with the title: *Marranos celebrating Passover in secret*. Belmonte Portugal, 1988..(Frédéric Brenner, *DIASPORA: homelands in exile*. *Voices*. 2003, 65.) This photo is not simply one of Brenner's photos for Derrida; it not only tells a story from the history of the Jewish diaspora, but also reveals a secret thread in his own family history: "I have more and more often played, but seriously, at presenting myself as a Marrano (although this Marrano barely knows the secret that kips him and on occasion, he doesn't fall to protest against other Marranos, those who are too Marrano, too 'catholic') (Brenner, 2003, 65). In this presentation, I would like to investigate how autobiographical threads are woven into Derrida's writings, how they resonate with or counterbalance the autobiographical tone established in his various texts, how they reveal and preserve Derrida's secret, and what is the philosophical, poetical and political import of the Derrida-secret.

Oberoï, Naintara Maya (The American University of Paris)

Lyotard et Nancy autour de l'impératif catégorique

This paper proposes a Derridean reading of the border as a continuous internal operation that produces interiority by folding exteriority into the space it appears merely to delimit. It develops this claim by reading Étienne Balibar's *frontière intérieure* alongside Jacques Derrida's folded, nonclosing *bord*, arguing that the frontier operates within communities, subjects, and institutions rather than at their perimeters. In Derrida's "Le parergon," the border appears as the frame that is neither inside nor outside; in *L'animal que donc je suis* as a series of folds; and in "La loi du genre" as an invaginated boundary producing an "internal pocket larger than the whole." In "Hospitality," it assumes a juridico-political form in which the threshold that makes hospitality possible simultaneously undermines its unconditionality. This "bigger-on-the-inside" topology is clarified in *Limited Inc.* through the claim that "the limit of the frame or the border of the context always entails a clause of nonclosure," insofar as the outside penetrates and determines the inside. Across these texts, I show that the border emerges not as a thin line of division but as a thick field of pleats and torsions, generating interiority as a relation to otherness rather than as self-coincidence, while installing exteriority within the limits meant to secure it. The paper then turns to Balibar's *frontière intérieure*, which names the border's interior operation in the register of citizenship and political membership. Operating within the frame of the community, this internal border partitions the inside by continually reinscribing itself across that interior. Demarcation migrates from the territorial frontier into the juridical, affective, and administrative textures of the democratic polity. The *frontière intérieure* therefore has both institutional and affective consequences. It produces certain subjects as marginal through the very mechanisms that include them, governing their belonging and rights through permanent surveillance and conditionality. Read together, Derrida and Balibar show that bordering operates at once as a topological fold that turns back upon itself, disturbing the distinction between inside and outside, and as a juridical and affective mode of ordering in which some subjects remain simultaneously included and exteriorised. The paper argues that community constitutes itself through this folding inward of difference, installing differential thresholds inside membership itself, enabling the continuous sorting and stratification of populations, and rendering belonging irreducibly precarious.

Oda, Rintaro (Ritsumeikan University)

Lyotard et Nancy autour de l'impératif catégorique

Dans l'article « Dies Irae » (1985), Jean-Luc Nancy exprime des réserves à l'égard de la réflexion de Jean-François Lyotard sur le jugement dans *Au juste* (1979). Cette réserve concerne le geste par lequel Lyotard oppose la pluralité à la seconde formulation de l'impératif catégorique de Kant qui exige un jugement conforme à l'idée téléologique d'une « nature » comme totalité. Nancy critique le risque que la pluralité elle-même devienne une idée téléologique. Cependant, comme il le reconnaît, Lyotard est lui-même en partie conscient de cette difficulté. Nancy reconnaît également ne pas être lui-même certain de la portée exacte de sa propre critique à l'égard de Lyotard ; c'est pourquoi il propose de déplacer la question : il ne s'agirait pas d'interroger l'idée que la faculté de juger suivrait, mais plutôt le statut ou la nature même de cette faculté. Ainsi, la différence entre les deux penseurs et l'enjeu propre à cette différence ne sont pas explicitement formulés dans « Dies Irae ». Cependant, Nancy en vient ensuite à souligner que, dans l'impératif catégorique, se trouve déjà impliqué le problème propre au jugement réfléchissant — celui selon lequel il faut «.trouver la loi ». Que Nancy en ait eu pleine conscience ou non, une telle interprétation de l'impératif catégorique marque précisément le point où sa lecture s'écarte profondément de celle de Lyotard. En effet, dans « La logique de Levinas » (1978), Lyotard oppose l'énoncé prescriptif et l'énoncé descriptif : selon lui, tout commentaire portant sur la loi morale ne relève que du «miroir» de l'énoncé prescriptif, de sorte qu'il faut distinguer rigoureusement entre commenter le contenu d'un commandement et agir selon ce commandement. Or, Nancy met au contraire en évidence, au sein de l'impératif catégorique, un commandement de « faire la loi », où commenter la loi revient déjà à agir selon elle. Dans cette présentation, en prenant également en considération les discussions de Jacques Derrida et de Hannah Arendt, je me propose donc de clarifier l'opposition entre Lyotard et Nancy autour de l'impératif catégorique, afin de faire

apparaître l'enjeu fondamental de la philosophie contemporaine concernant le problème du jugement et de l'action : celui du statut de l'autre.

Ogawa, Ayuto (Senshu University)

Writing, Time, and Image— The Problem of Imagination in Voice and Phenomena

This presentation advances the interpretation that, by linking the theory of image and imagination in *Voice and Phenomena* with Eugen Fink's theory of the image and Martin Heidegger's theory of imagination, Derrida elaborates a distinctive, post-phenomenological theory of imagination/image. *Voice and Phenomena* is well known as a work that criticizes Husserlian phenomenology for having sustained the metaphysics of presence by taking the metaphor of "voice" as its paradigm. As has often been pointed out, in thinking alterity and time *Voice and Phenomena* refers to Heidegger's Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics, and the theory of auto-affection has been accorded great importance for understanding Derrida's conception of time. However, when the themes of sign and image are taken into account, it is beyond doubt that Derrida is working under the influence of Eugen Fink's theory of the image. Derrida wrote a review of Fink's collected essays in 1966, and this paper argues that around the same period Derrida highly valued Fink's treatment of time and the structure of problems in "Representation and Image," attributing to it a positive significance for his own problematic. At the same time, Derrida boldly takes up in his review issues that Fink had rejected. Whereas Fink maintained that the discussion of a temporal horizon of de-presentation opened up by Husserl transcends the framework of the history of philosophy centered on transcendental imagination, Derrida instead seeks to preserve, within Husserlian phenomenology itself, a line of inquiry concerning transcendental imagination. Here one can discern a specifically French context that emphasizes an early Heideggerian problematic. This paper contends that Derrida, while inheriting from Fink the supra-phenomenological notion of "de-presentation," simultaneously keeps in view a post-Heideggerian, philosophical-historical project—namely, a phenomenological rereading of Kant—and thereby constructs his own theory of écriture. Derrida's theory of écriture thus comes to possess an aspect of what might be called an image-theoretical semiotics. Moreover, it allows us to reread Derrida's texts as anticipating not only his later confrontations with Lacanian thought in the 1980s, but also the subsequent "iconic turn" in French theory in later decades.

Oğulcan Ülgen, Güncel (Hacettepe University)

On the Question of "The Question of the Animal"

This paper interrogates Jacques Derrida's formulation of "the question of the animal" by shifting the attention from "the animal" to "the question" itself, i.e., by *questioning* what legitimates "the question" of "the question of the animal." My contention is that Derrida's formulation exposes the conditions under which only certain interrogatives acquire the status of the *question*. Put differently, before "the question" is put forward, it is first legitimized by *a priori* frameworks that render some questions self-evident while excluding others. In this respect, I argue that "the question" of "eating well" belongs to a specifically carnist *a priori* that legitimates and delimits the field of inquiry *de novo*. This *a priori* compels us to an interrogative stance where the sacrificial economy takes the consumption of the other as a structural inevitability. Consequently, this structural inevitability, encapsulated in "the question of eating well," excludes other possible questions concerning our relation to the other. That is why we must first question "the question" itself before attempting to explore our relation to the other. Perhaps, we must begin by asking what other questions, besides "the question of eating well," are possible. To do that, we must first expose the "carnist *a priori*," which has always already decided which questions appear legitimate and reasonable to ask. To expose the carnist *a priori*, I introduce the notion of "vegan *a posteriori*," distinct from the "beautiful soul" of moral purity that Derrida rightly suspects. The vegan *a posteriori* does not operate as a new dogmatic prohibition; rather, it is a mode of thinking arising *after* the event of consuming the other. This mode of thinking stems from the embodied experience of the *discomfort* caused by the consumption of the other. Here, the *event* is a somatic-intellectual refusal to *assimilate* the other. I argue that this refusal takes the form of *indigestion*, which resists the structural inevitability of eating the other. By reframing the Derridean problematic in these terms, this paper aims

to reveal how the very structure of “the question” can be deconstructed. Hence, the deconstruction of “the question” helps us see what structurally foreclosed questions become thinkable.

Oh, Keunchang (University of Rome, Sapienza)

Judgment and Frame: Two Key Concepts for Deconstructing Kantian Aesthetics

My paper aims to provide a deconstructive reading of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* through the lens of two concepts, judgment and frame. In doing so, I will show the impossible autonomy of the aesthetic sphere concerning a necessary supplement of frame as trace. First, I will show the aporetic logic of Kantian theory of judgment by referring to the importance of inventing judgment. I focus on genius as far as Kant is well aware of that the problem of reflective judgment is acute in the issue of genius. I will suggest that Derrida extends the very aporetic structure of aesthetic judgment to ethico-political judgment in general as well. Second, I will elucidate the problem of frame in artwork. Although the function of parergon in Kant’s aesthetics has largely gone unnoticed, Derrida considers it fundamentally important to any consideration of Kantian aesthetics. Just as the demarcation between inside and outside is the condition of thought in general, so the condition of art depends on its discourse on the frame. The parergon is constitutive for an artwork but, like the trace, without strictly belonging to it. Moreover, the ambiguous status of frame shows how the notion of the parergon can interrupt the integrity of the ergon. I will claim that this problematic of parergon can be considered as an aesthetic example of Derrida’s general logic of supplement. Finally, through investigating these two main concepts for deconstruction of aesthetics, I hope to demonstrate how this aporetic logic is essentially connected to the impasse of Kantian aesthetics. Whereas Kant’s initial project of grounding the principles of the faculty of judgment aims to bridge the gap or abyss between radically different spheres, Derrida thinks that this mediation is always already precarious.

Ombrosi, Orietta (Seoul National University)

Un héritage sans nom, sans titre et sans pardon. La lecture de Sarah Kofman par Jacques Derrida

En partant du « difficile déchiffrement » de l’œuvre de Sarah Kofman par Jacques Derrida, avoué par le philosophe dans le seul texte, sans titre, qu’il consacre à l’amie (« ... », repris dans *Chaque fois unique la fin du monde*, Galilée, 2003), je voudrais ici montrer et mettre en valeur « l’impossible », c’est-à-dire l’impasse et l’impensé de Derrida lisant et interprétant Kofman, et aussi souligner l’aporétique entre la vie et la mort, entre *lavielamort* et l’impardonnable même, qu’il intercepte dans la pensée et l’écriture de Kofman, dans son art et son rire, ou *art-rire*, signés et marqués par la protestation, la lucidité et un certain irrédentisme. Implacables, impitoyables, inconditionnelles, les lectures kofmaniennes des grands auteurs (que ce soient Freud ou Nietzsche) apparaissent en effet à Derrida engendrées et pensées « pour rire », c’est-à-dire pour rire de la vie et même de la mort. La mort et le simulacre de la mort que Kofman voit et lit dans le livre-corps à partir de l’art (celle de Rembrandt, en particulier, dans son texte « *La mort conjurée* » dédié au tableau *La leçon d’anatomie du docteur de Nicolas Tulp*) sont lus par Derrida non tant comme signes de dénégation, de refoulement et répression de la mort elle-même, mais ils sont mis plutôt « au service de l’affirmation de la vie » ou d’un art de la vie qui démontre son triomphe sur la mort même, mais sans faire signe vers aucune résurrection, rédemption ou « corps glorieux ». Dans cette exploration entre les ombres et les lumières de l’œuvre de Sarah Kofman, entre celles de la vie et de la mort, Jacques Derrida, en déchiffrant le « scalpel analytique » de la philosophe, arrive enfin à suggérer – c’est mon hypothèse – l’impossible pardon qui l’aurait, quant à elle, affectée et guidée dans son parcours philosophique, mais qui l’aurait, quant à lui, empêché de faire le premier pas vers le déchiffrement de cet impossible pardon et impardonnable.

Ortiz Angeles, Jose Alfredo (Texas A&M University)

Derrida and Tremblement: The Absolute Risk of Thought and the Other

My presentation will focus on the concept of *tremblement* in Derrida’s thinking, particularly on Derrida’s previously untranslated text, “Comment ne pas trembler?” where he utilizes *tremblement* to describe trembling as an impulse or drive that calls into question the autonomy and self-assuredness of the

subject. This destabilization of the subject is not understood as a subjective, intentional decision, but indicates the interruption of the subject from elsewhere, from their outside. This interruption is a call to an outside that destabilizes our thinking and undermines the possibility of answering our responsibility to the Other in calculable and determinative terms. The call to the Other, or the question of our responsibility to the Other, is explored in great depth in Derrida's *The Gift of Death* and "Comment ne pas parler?" where responsibility cannot be resolved through any law or dictum justifying our actions, but must acknowledge the irreducibility of the Other, the unknowability of the Secret and the passivity of the subject to these impasses. In *The Gift of Death*, Derrida writes about the Secret as indicating the unknowable and impossible limit from which our confidence in a calculable and determinate decision is overturned. The Secret of the Other burdens us with an absolute risk to any possible decision and this risk causes us to tremble, since we can no longer rely on our actions to follow a determinate and calculable result. We are now interrupted by the unknowability of the Secret and the impossibility of acting from this unknowability. In "Comment ne pas parler?" the question of speaking for the Other concerns the issue of taking responsibility for someone whom we cannot never account for in any determinative or calculable manner. The subject is burdened with the absolute risk of the Secret and the call of the 'Il faut,' yet Derrida strives to explore how or in what way we can respond or think from this absolute risk, even if we cannot avoid trembling as a consequence of this absolute risk. The presentation will explore how the concept of tremblement is developed by Derrida in "Comment ne pas trembler?" and describe how tremblement underlies other important themes in Derrida's work such as the Secret, the irreducibility of the Other, and the 'Il faut.'

Orlov, Alexander (KU Leuven)

Dessin(e.é)s: forntière, hospitalité, et (de)colonialité dans le travail de Derrida

Dans *Apories*, Derrida soutient que les « lignes de séparation, de délimitation ou d'opposition entre les déterminations conceptuelles, les formes du bord entre ce qu'on appelle des concepts ou des *termes* » sous-tendent les frontières géopolitiques séparant « territoires, les pays, les nations, les États, les langues et les cultures ». Ces limites, ou frontières, sont déterminées comme « à passer ou à ne pas transgresser ». À cet égard, Derrida affirme que ces « totalités », telles que l'État-nation, sont « surdéterminées, voire contaminées par les événements de *langue* (disons plutôt de *marque*) ». Cette communication suit Derrida en retraçant le rôle de la limite dans la tradition philosophique et son influence sur ce qu'il nomme la « mondialisation » et la « homohégémonisation », interrogeant l'expansion coloniale de la structure onto-topologique (*Spectres de Marx*, *Hospitalité I*, *Le monolinguisme de l'autre*). D'abord, à partir des lectures d'Aristote, de Husserl, de Hegel et de Saussure proposées par de Derrida, la communication examine le rôle de l'articulation dans la conception philosophique du « langage. » En prêtant une attention particulière aux notions de ligne (*grammè*), de dessin ou de peinture (*zōgráphēma*), de forme (*eidos*) et de détermination (*Bestimmung*) que Derrida identifie au cœur de l'opération du *logos* (*De la grammatologie*, *La dissémination*, *La vérité en peinture*, *Glas*), la communication analyse l'auto(hétéro)-affection à l'œuvre dans l'institution de la centralité de la limite au sein de la pensée philosophique. Ensuite, en examinant la dépendance de l'ethnologuecentrisme l'égard de la structure idiomatique propre à « l'homme blanc » (*Marges*), la communication analyse l'expansion spongieuse de la structure onto-topologique à travers l'appropriation transformatrice de ce qui lui est extérieur, tout en garantissant l'autorité et la maîtrise illimitées du centre poseur de limites. Enfin, la communication se tourne vers les analyses derridiennes des concepts d'« étranger » et d'« hospitalité ». En se concentrant sur ce que Derrida identifie comme « la structure et l'histoire de l'enclave et la structure et l'histoire de la zone » (*Hospitalité I*), la communication examine le rapport entre inclusion et exclusion, où l'inclusion dans la structure ethnologuecentrique produit une exclusion politiquement déterminante. En discutant la notion d'« étranger » ainsi que le processus d'auto-immunité, la communication soutient l'impossibilité d'une « hospitalité inconditionnelle » au sein de la structure ethnologuecentrique, pour se concentrer plutôt sur l'accueil inconditionnel qui viendrait interrompre à la fois la logique de la frontière et celle de l'appropriation coloniale.

Orozco Hildago, Alejandro

On the idea of poetic revolution in Derrida's last seminar

In the first volume of Derrida's last seminar, *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Derrida introduces the idea of a "poetic revolution". This is the only place where he explicitly refers to this notion, although he does not develop it at length. He evokes it after arguing that the French Revolution did not transform the existing structure of power grounded in sovereignty. Referring to Kantorowicz's theory of *the king's two bodies*, Derrida argues that the French Revolution did indeed kill the king's mortal body, but that the symbolic body survives in the figure of the president. The relation between politics and power was therefore not revolutionized and, Derrida suggests, will remain unchanged unless political revolution is accompanied by a poetic revolution capable of transforming both the concept of politics and the concept of revolution itself. This paper will explore the implications of this analysis and the place occupied by the idea of poetic revolution within Derrida's thought, particularly with regard to the notion of *carnophallogocentrism*.

Orsholits, Gorica (Independent Scholar)

Derrida's spectrology or granting ghosts the right to teach us to live

The aim of this paper is to reconsider the possibility of a phenomenology of the spectral – that is, the ghostly returns from past revolutionary events operating within disjointed sequences of time to haunt the present. How should one interpret the Marxist messianic call today, and how should one interrupt the persistent melancholia within the process of mourning? Is it possible to extract emancipatory desire from the vicious circle of infinite deferral? Perhaps, following Derrida in *Spectres of Marx*, the answers lie in ontological hauntology; a pharmakon that both wounds and heals, teaching us how to write, think, and live between life and death, presence and absence. Spectrality is thus approached not as a lack or deficiency, but as a condition of possibility for ethical and political responsibility. By engaging the politics of ghostly memory, this paper suggests that attending to what haunts the present – its absentees, silences, and unfinished struggles – allows for a more just relation to both the past and the future. Such a politics does not seek closure or redemption, but instead sustains an openness to what is yet to come. In this sense, hauntology, as a destabiliser of the present, becomes capable of reanimating political imagination and reorienting thought from the past toward futures that remain unrealized but insistently demand recognition. Ultimately, spectral phenomenology can prepare us for a "future to come" by transforming the act of writing into an ethical commitment honouring the traces of the past by opening the present to the future.

P

Padilha, Bruno (University of Coimbra)

The Place of Deconstruction in the Institutions of Philosophy

As Jacques Derrida reiterated, deconstruction does not only have as its "object" the text in the current sense of writing or "set of words," but also legal, political, and educational institutions. These different types of text are closely related, as Derrida emphasizes that our institutions carry assumptions from the philosophical tradition (*Du droit à la philosophie*). However, philosophy and its history are not immune to the institutions that have guided their transmission and development (*ibid.*, p. 198). Consequently, Derridian deconstruction questions not only the content of philosophy (concepts, theses, and doctrines) but also the philosophical scene itself, with all its institutional norms and forms, as well as everything that makes them possible (in our time, particularly universities, specialized journals, and the publishing industry). Based on this brief overview, we propose elucidating deconstruction not only as a unique philosophical language associated with Jacques Derrida's name, but also its (non-)place in the institutional space of the university. "Deconstruction of phallogocentrism as deconstruction of the onto-theological principle [...] confronts the root of the *universitas*," writes the philosopher in *Du droit à la philosophie* (p. 119). This emphasizes that deconstruction "should simultaneously develop a critique of current philosophical institutions and commit to positive transformation" (p. 121). Just as the relationship between deconstruction and the tradition of metaphysics is unthinkable within the

outside/inside dichotomy, the same can be said of deconstruction and institutions. Deconstruction has its place in university institutes and, in particular, in philosophy departments, but on the other hand, it remains a kind of foreign body, constantly challenging and questioning the foundations and architecture of the university (cf. Fernanda Bernardo, *Derrida – o dom da Différance*, p. 94-ff).

Park, Jin Y. (American University)

Mourning with Jacques Derrida

Can mourning be a political act? We mourn the deaths of family members, public figures, beloved pets, and even machines or plants. What does mourning reveal about the relationship between the dead and the living, among the living themselves, and of the self to others? Mourning is an ancient human practice, and cultures throughout history have developed diverse rituals to address death, how to treat the dead body, how to remember the departed, and how long to mourn. Death has been a dominant theme in Derrida's writings, as he himself acknowledged. At a 1998 memorial panel for Jean-François Lyotard, Derrida remarked that the living can only ask forgiveness of the dead. Mourning recurs across his works, including *Specters of Marx*, *Politics of Friendship*, the essays in *The Work of Mourning*, and his final seminar, *The Beast and the Sovereign*. Mourning the death of a loved one often brings a profound transformation in one's sensitivity to existence, while memories of the dead can bring comfort, rage, or both. Can one mourn the death of an enemy? Daoist texts suggest yes, and the Buddhism calls for a radical compassion that includes even one's enemies. By contrast, the jubilant crowds celebrating Osama bin Laden's death, or the polarized reactions to the deaths of contemporary political figures, such as Charlie Kirk, reveal how mourning can reinforce divisions and exclusions. Public mourning often overshadows the quiet, private mourning of "ordinary" deaths, those grieved only by family and a few friends. This contrast raises questions: Does the scale or visibility of mourning determine the value of a life? How can we resist such hierarchies of worth? And what insights might Derrida offer for rethinking how we mourn, both individually and collectively? This paper explores the meaning and work of mourning through Derrida's thought. It considers how mourning might resist hierarchies of grief, interrupt cycles of violence, and become an ethical and political practice grounded in vulnerability and responsibility. In a world marked by war, social injustice, and personal loss, Derrida invites us to rethink mourning, not as closure, but as an ongoing task of living with others, including the dead.

Parshi, Sujitha (DePaul University)

Death and Technics: Cruelty and the Task of an Enlightenment To Come

In recent years, the world has witnessed the unleashing of old and new forms of cruelty that raises the question of its sources. These developments once again challenge the Enlightenment assumption that the force of reason alone is strong enough to resist both the dogmatisms, as well as the destructive drives at work in religion, politics and civilization more broadly. With recourse to Derrida's conception of an Enlightenment *to come*, this paper attempts to think through cruelty and the task of reason in its face. Firstly, it seeks to analyse the relationship between *mondialisation*, as it unfolds today through digital technologies, and the mutations affecting the psychic, social and political spheres. Secondly, by unfolding the double motif of "death and technics" which Derrida presents in *États d'âme de la psychanalyse*, this paper examines the task of a new Enlightenment that Derrida equates with a psychoanalytic Enlightenment, with the development of a *psychoanalytic* reason. For insofar as *mondialisation* and tele-technologies resist psychoanalysis, resist the logic of the unconscious in the name of calculative reason, Derrida points to the urgency of a psychoanalytic reckoning with such resistances. Furthermore, given that it is Freudian thought that confronts us most consistently with the irreducibility of the death drive and the drive for power, the Enlightenment *to come* can only base its new conception of a reason *to come* – a reason that takes account of the incalculable, the unconditional – on the indirection, the *detour*, the *hiatus* that is produced by the resistance that the erotic drive, the *life* drive offers to the death drive.

Pasquer, Romain (Oberlin College)

Memories Without a Past: Literature and the Trauma of Slavery

Contemporary debates on literature and the slavery past have often been framed by the question of filling historical gaps, of giving voice to a past that has been erased. Literature is thus frequently tasked with compensating for archival absence and repairing a broken past. This paper proposes that such a framing needs to be complicated, not by rejecting these concerns, but by questioning what we claim literature can do in the face of such absence. To do so, I will mobilize the writings of Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man on the relation between literature, referentiality, and performativity. By rethinking the indirectness of reference in texts, I argue that literary texts do not simply fill gaps in history. Rather, they confront us with a different conception of history and the past, one in which texts participate in the making and performing of a history that is itself constituted by gaps and traces. Insofar as texts do not merely refer to historical referents, but rather act, they become sites that compel us, that demand from us that we question how one answers and how one takes responsibility for a past that cannot be known but that one nevertheless inherits. In this sense, the question of literature and the slavery past shifts from an epistemological question, of what can be known and repaired, to a question of how an act and a future can emerge from traumatic histories, and how such a future can be claimed. This presentation will also be an opportunity to discuss the work of Derrida, de Man, and the Martinican thinker and writer Édouard Glissant, in particular his development of a concept of relationality embedded in the traumatic history of slavery and the lack of archive it entails. I will suggest that Derrida and Glissant are both thinkers of traces, and that, for them, the traces of traumatic pasts that haunt literary texts are not merely melancholic attachments to a loss that cannot be mourned, but the very sites where new addresses and new relationalities are already in the making.

Pellion, Tristain (l'université de Paris-Nanterre)

L'événement comme révolution. Ce que Derrida doit à Blanchot

La définition que Derrida donne à l'événement est bien connue : « Un événement prévu est déjà présent, déjà présentable, il est déjà arrivé et neutralisé dans son irruption....Un événement ou une invention ne sont possibles que comme impossible » Je voudrais tenter de rapprocher cette caractérisation de l'événement comme impossible de la définition que Blanchot donne de la révolution, dans les années 1930, période où il écrit des textes politiques et s'inscrit dans la droite anticonformiste. Dans un article intitulé Le marxisme contre la révolution, il affuble cette dernière du même terme que Derrida accole à l'événement, l'impossible : « [la révolution] s'exprime tout entière dans le fait d'abolir un monde: tant que ce monde subsiste, elle est difficile à concevoir et il est presque impossible de la considérer comme réelle; la réalité des choses dont la destruction est toute sa réalité l'assure en quelque sorte de son impossibilité indéfinie. » Je ne prétends pas que Derrida s'inspire consciemment de tels textes, car rien n'indique qu'ils aient été lus par lui. Je propose seulement de mettre en perspective les deux conceptualisations. Si l'événement chez Derrida est l'impossible, et si chez Blanchot, c'est la révolution, événement par excellence, qui l'est, cela autorise l'hypothèse suivante : pour Derrida, tout événement doit être pensé comme révolution, avec ce que celle-ci contient de disruptif, d'imprévisible, de renversant. De même que « tout autre est tout autre, c'est-à-dire n'importe quel autre est absolument autre, on pourrait dire que tout événement est une révolution. » Une telle conceptualité n'aurait nullement pour effet de relativiser la révolution, mais au contraire de prendre la (dé)mesure de l'événement, de même que la phrase « tout autre est tout autre » ne vise pas à amoindrir l'altérité, mais à conférer à n'importe quel autre, y compris l'autre apparemment le plus proche, une pleine altérité. Penser n'importe quel événement comme révolution, cela permettrait donc de lui conférer une pleine événementialité, qui est le sens profond, je crois, de l'adjectif impossible. Si chez Derrida l'événement est le synonyme de la venue de l'autre, et l'accueil de cette venue hospitalité, alors penser l'événement comme révolution permet aussi d'exhiber l'exigence infinie d'accueil de cet Autre, qui arrive toujours de manière révolutionnaire, ou n'arrive pas. Enfin, rapprocher l'événement, l'autre et la révolution permet de soulager une difficulté posée par la pensée derridienne de l'hospitalité, qui, cela lui a été reproché, a du mal à penser un accueil qui dure. Je voudrais montrer que cette venue qui

ture, cet événement continué, doit précisément être pensée sous le prisme de la révolution permanente, et en appelle donc à une hospitalité (de l') impossible.

Perego, Vittorio (Theological Faculty of Milan)

Derrida between the deconstruction of idolatry and theology (Derrida entre la déconstruction de l'idolâtrie et la théologie)

The report at the conference aims to show one of the ways in which philosophical questioning is linked to the religious in Derrida. This link is presented from the way in which the young Derrida interprets the *Quaestio Dei* in Husserlian phenomenology. Derrida reconstructs how the attempt to immunize philosophical discourse from the *Quaestio Dei* reveals an unexpected contamination with it. From the concept of "infinite idea" through the teleology of reason, Derrida shows how the gesture of reduction allows Husserl to overcome the modern metaphysical conception of God, opening a space for a different conception of human finitude. However, it is only by putting the biblical conception of God at stake that Derrida implements a deconstruction of idolatry, to which Husserl's phenomenology risks reaching, which sees in God only the ideal fulfillment of the cognitive process, in which death is only an empirical accident. It is only by starting from this first gesture of deconstruction that it is possible to understand Derrida's need to resist Heidegger's project which seeks to trace back to a form of the original truth (*Offenbarkeit*), as a condition of possibility in which revelation (*Offenbarung*) can be inscribed. Deconstruction is meant to bring to light the urgency of thinking beyond the oscillation between a transcendental inquiry and a philosophy of the event. It is a question of thinking of the truth in Augustinian terms, in which the relationship with it is not resolved in a theoretical observation and in which the singularity is not accidental to the exhibition of its meaning. In particular, the figure of testimony appears as a privileged place in which deconstruction opens a fruitful dialogue with theology.

Perunović, Andrea (University of Belgrade)

Equivocity of the Testimony and its Vicissitudes

It is oftentimes said that for the first time in history, we are *witnessing* a genocide in a live broadcast. With this peculiar presupposition at the forefront, the aim of this intervention will be to re-read and re-situate some of the central arguments concerning the notion of *testimony*, that Derrida develops in his 1992-1993 seminar, entitled *Témoigner* (Seuil, 2025). Starting with a close reading of Paul Celan's poem "Aschenglorie" – and advancing through examples such as Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (which both resonate strongly with current testimonies of Palestine), or the case of the police killing of Rodney King (which will help us analyze in our turn, the contemporary case of Renee Good, fatally shot by an ICE agent) – Derrida inspects and reveals numerous ambiguities inherent to the concept of testimony, the act of testifying and the figure of witness. Departing from the radical solitude of the witness as the third party and the survivor – semantics he acquires from Benveniste – Derrida progressively rebuilds throughout the seminar the links that the witness maintains, through complex fiduciary mechanisms of responsibility, with law and society. Furthermore, Derrida proposes that there is a fundamental correlation between testimony and belief. This nexus will serve us as a central point from which we will try to observe the vicissitudes that the notion of testimony and the figure of witness undergoes in our present times which are marked by prevailing, generalized mistrust. In the times when paranoid megalomaniac leaders dictate the course of political communication by filling it with lies and perjuries on the one hand, and when social media make from all of us the witnesses of most diverse brutalities, crimes and violence on the other, the question which arises is the following: what is left of the concept of testimony, such as it was understood in the times when Derrida used to ponder on it? And moreover, how our ways of believing, or misbelieving, have changed ever since? This presentation will aim to highlight the relevance of Derrida's deconstruction of testimony and belief in the contemporary context, as well as its potential to challenge the aporias of the contemporary political conjuncture.

Peterson, Christopher (Western Sydney University)

The Mark of Deconstruction

Derrida n'a jamais écrit sur les marques.

Derrida n'a écrit, au fond, que (sur) des marques.

This essay orients itself between these two hyperboles. Derrida was singularly attentive to signatures, proper names, events, inventions, copyrights, patents, and marks of all sorts—phenomena that participate in the general movement of appropriation and iterability. In a rather different yet overlapping domain, marketing experts define brands as stable images produced over time, utterly detachable from the thing itself. In this manner, brands function like Husserlian *ideal objects*, unmoored from any particular circumstance. Following in the steps of the corporate realm, universities today seek to differentiate themselves from other institutions of higher learning by stressing what is distinctive or supposedly superior about their “brand.” Although scholarly research would appear to orbit around an entirely different set of norms and practices than managerial branding schemes, to what extent do theoretical concepts also not increasingly operate, for better or worse, as brands? How, for instance, has the critical reception of “deconstruction” attempted to transform it into something like a brand despite Derrida’s best efforts to “dilute” it? Noting its “rare” occurrence in his early published work, Derrida once commented that “for me ‘deconstruction’ was not at all the first or the last word, and certainly not a password or slogan for everything that was to follow.” In this regard, the relative fungibility of “deconstruction” with cognates such as trace, writing, and *différance* resists stable, univocal sense—permitting “deconstruction” to travel as a sort of *ante-brand*: an originary marking that branding both presupposes and exploits. How do brands amplify—in an especially cartoonish way—the essential minimal univocity required for anything to mean at all? Contrasting “deconstruction” with “paradigm,” which Thomas Kuhn popularized yet later came to lament for its “excessive plasticity,” I consider how, if paradigm is one word with many different meanings, then deconstruction is “many” terms all with “the same” meaning. Drawing from *Inventions of the Other*, I argue that brands are effectively sovereign (and therefore impossible) proclamations of novelty, declared by dint of skirting the other’s “countersignature.” Essentially allergic to alterity, brands attempt to self-certify novelty and thus ultimately *stabilize* far more than they disrupt.

Pierre-Neptune, Santiago (Emory University)

The Body Marred: Scenes of Subjection and the Ruin of Representation

One central thesis guiding scholar Saidiya Hartman’s 1997 *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* contends that the traditional representation of U.S. chattel slavery is ruinous. For the wanton violence constituting this peculiar institution, far from being illuminated by the language of its representations, is often thereby obscured—lost, as it were, to the parasitic inversion of the intention of language. Indeed this parasitic inversion or what Hartman designates “theatrical language” foregoes representation as re-spect of the intended object and instead conspicuously betrays the desire of the Same as subject. One who wishes to truly represent, then, must, according to Hartman, refuse theatrical language so as to access what hitherto had been forbidden emergence: the suffering, black/captive body. To truly see thus requires another (and an other-) look, an *alibi* that would make representation of the other more than an infelicitous prospect. Yet despite the admirable end moving Hartman’s critique of slavery’s traditional representation, the repudiation of theatrical language as parasitic on and disrespectful of the other proves untenable; for, as “The Body Marred: *Scenes of Subjection* and the Ruin of Representation” designs to argue, the language representing slavery, articulated through the spectacular syntagmata of its scenes, may in fact know not of any other means than the theatrical. Representation itself therefore appears unable to escape that which is ostensibly parasitic to its proper function. Otherwise said, there is no language wherein the one who represents does not become an *hypocrite* by dint of the theatre that is the necessary condition of language at all. Rather than reject theatrical language, then, “The Body Marred” deconstructively attends to the capacity of the theatrical and the possibility that this language, ostensibly parasitic, opens up for a novel manner of seeing/reading—what is tentatively named “expectant.” By the latter, one can thus “look out for” and welcome the other through a waiting that is not, in the end, the perfect certainty of expectation.

Pimentel, Dror (Bezalel Academy of Art and Design)

He War: Derrida and the Other God

Should God be thought in terms of abundant goodness, as conceived by Levinas following Plato? Is He not at times violent? God's violence is most apparent in the story of Babel. As Derrida notes, following Voltaire, the name "Babel" should not only be ascribed to a city, but also to God Himself. No one has illuminated the violence of God as Babel better than James Joyce, who mingled it with the coupling "he war." This coupling is baffling, since "war" is an English noun meaning "combat," as well as the German equivalent of the English verb "was" (the past tense of the verb "being," *ist*). The coupling thus points to the origin, to what was in the beginning (the German *war*), which is in a state of long-lasting strife with itself and with others (the English "war"). God as the beginning that was never present (the German *war*), is thus violence itself (the English "war"). This is the violence of difference, or of difference as violence. This God is not only faceless but also formless. This is the God of the Burning Bush, which, like the Heraclitean fire, is suspended in a state of frantic flickering. It is thus no coincidence that Derrida, following Spinoza, calls Him the God of the flame. In the same manner, as will be shown in the presentation, God also eludes identity: this is not the whole (*shalem*), mono-lithic, mono-theistic God of Jerusalem, the biblical Yeru-*shalem*, whose temple sits atop Mt. Moriah. Rather, this is the God of Hebron, the concealed God hidden in the depth of *Me'arat Hamachpelah*—literally, the Doubled Cave—known in English as the Cave of the Patriarchs. The dwelling place of God is the doubling in the Doubled Cave. God of the Hebrews doubles Himself, confounded as He is between the two sides of a double. It is within the intention of the presentation to rename this other God, or God as alterity, with the "varaH" *mret werbeH detulovnoc* (הרב), carrying the multiple meanings of sovereignty (*ribon*, ריבון), manifold (*ribui*, ריבוי), and dispute (*riv*, ריב).

Pirovolakis, Eftichis (University of the Peloponnese)

Derrida on the Drawing of the Blind

Gilles Deleuze claims that painting can "render visible" the invisible forces that structure the relation between sensation and the world. Although, in Deleuze's aesthetics, this movement from the invisible to visibility does not arguably lead to an actual and unproblematic visual presence, I believe that Jacques Derrida would never have subscribed to such a claim. In *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins* (1990), Derrida grants a strategic priority to non-visibility and insists on its absolute irreducibility precisely in order to disrupt any neat and potentially teleological organization of the visible and the non-visible. He identifies three types of non-visibility or blindness as the quasi-transcendental origin of drawing and the visual arts in general. The first type of blindness, the "*aperspective of the graphic act*", refers to the moment when the tracing movement of the hand makes contact with the surface to be drawn upon, a moment of an essential non-visibility resulting from the abyssal non-coincidence between the inscription and the represented object. The second type of non-visibility is designated as the "*differential inappearance of the trait*". Such inappearance of the inscribed trait amounts to a factual rather than a transcendental necessity: when the drawing is finished, one, in fact, does not see the tracing or the outline itself. The third type of blindness is associated with the so-called "*rhetoric of the trait*", which is applicable to both drawing and painting. Focusing here on the depiction of human beings, Derrida argues that articulation, discursivity and the order of names always interpolate a certain blindness into the heart of the visible. By explicating those three blind spots, I will reflect on the status of non-visibility as the condition of a visibility that is simultaneously possible and impossible. Derrida allows for a thinking of drawing and painting in terms of radical heterogeneity. The latter complicates any facile idea of truth in the visual arts and any decision regarding even the fleeting ability of an artwork to render the inchoate visible.

Prunotto, Pietro (University of Pavia)

Pharmakon as Chiasm: Toward a Derridean Philosophy of Technics

This paper argues that Derrida's notion of *pharmakon* should be understood not merely as a figure of ambivalence, but as a genuinely chiasmic structure that articulates the constitutive reversibility between interiority and exteriority, origin and supplement, life and technics. While contemporary

discussions of technics inspired by Derrida often emphasize the dual character of technical supplements as both remedy and poison, they tend to overlook the formal logic that makes such ambivalence possible in the first place. I suggest that this logic is chiasmatic and that it plays a decisive, yet insufficiently explored, role in Derrida's account of technicity. Drawing primarily on *Plato's Pharmacy* and related analyses of *hypomnēsis*, the paper reconstructs how technics appears in Derrida not as a secondary instrument added to an already constituted subject, but as an originary exteriorization that both enables and destabilizes interiority. The *pharmakon* names precisely this structural intertwining: what supports memory also threatens it, what constitutes identity also exposes it to disappropriation. This double movement is not simply an oscillation between two opposite effects, but a reversible crossing in which each term only exists through its relation to the other. In this sense, the *pharmakon* operates as a chiasm rather than as a stable opposition. Interpreting the *pharmakon* as chiasm allows us to clarify its connection to Derrida's broader logic of supplementarity and *différance*. The supplement does not intervene from the outside but reveals that what appears as origin is always already structured by substitution and deferral. Technics, therefore, is not an ontic domain that later affects human life; it is the very site where the difference between inside and outside is instituted and endlessly displaced. By foregrounding the chiasmatic structure of the *pharmakon*, the paper proposes a Derridean foundation for a philosophy of technics that does not rely on metaphors of control, mastery, or external mediation. Instead, technicity must be thought as a constitutive condition of experience, inseparable from processes of subjectivation and historicity. This perspective not only sharpens the conceptual stakes of Derrida's intervention in the history of metaphysics but also offers critical resources for rethinking contemporary debates on technology beyond instrumental and ethical frameworks.

Pusterla, Elia R. G. (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano) & Francesca Pusterla Piccin (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano)

Derrida's Machine – Political Anaesthesias from Guillotine to AI

Drawing upon Jacques Derrida's analysis of the machinic, this paper investigates artificial intelligence (AI) as an instrumentation of a wider political machinery. The AI would be used to assert a political claim of enhanced 'humanity'. The argument is that AI is politically administered as an anaesthetic tool employed to stage a sovereign fiction of enhanced humanity within the epistemological field. From his early reflections on writing to his later texts on sovereignty and the death penalty, Derrida interrogates the porous boundaries of the human-machine relation. Within this indistinguishability emerges the narrative of a machine claiming sovereignty, which lulls critical perception and proposes the illusion of a politically controlled humanity. In this context, Derrida's attention to the guillotine stands out as a historical epitome of the political machine. The guillotine represents and enacts the performative promise of political sovereignty of humanity within justice and the neutralisation of cruelty through the machinic administration of anaesthetics. Analogously, the political use of AI may come to represent the historical evolution of this theatrical staging of political sovereignty—less in terms of alleged political justice than of epistemic justness; that is, the fictional humanity of knowledge governance through the political machine. Through AI—fictional even in its very name—the political machine claims to alleviate human pain and the labour of epistemological endeavours, positioning itself as a form of human progress. Thus, if the administration of the anaesthetic through the guillotine promised the alleviation of pain before death, AI promises relief from the pain and discomfort with ignorance. Yet, just as the guillotine can no longer credibly be defended as a political machinery of human progress, this paper asks whether artificial intelligence will face a similar challenge in the future. This question is situated within three core imperatives of Derridean scholarship: advancing critical engagement with Derrida's philosophy; actualising and emphasising its cogency in relation to contemporary issues; and affirming the normative value of deconstruction.

R

Ramos do Ó, Manuel (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle)

Le réel et la critique: l'objet selon un principe réaliste

À une époque où l'affirmation du réel semble avoir acquis une importance centrale dans le questionnement philosophique, une réflexion sur l'orientation critique de la pensée s'avère de plus en plus nécessaire. Cette nécessité est comprise dans l'idée même de réalisme, dont la notion de réel est d'une nature trop vaste pour être réduite à un concept univoque de réalité historique. Le réel du réalisme n'est pas – ou, en tout cas, pas seulement – celui de la réalité telle qu'elle se présente au sujet sous la forme de phénomène. Quelque chose y gît, dont la finitude propre au concept d'objet ne semble pas rendre compte. La communication ici proposée vise à esquisser une approche de ce *quelque chose* à partir de l'œuvre de Derrida. Prenant la notion de critique telle qu'elle est imaginée sous le signe de la déconstruction, j'avancerai une hypothèse selon laquelle le réel ne peut être pensé que dans les limites de l'affirmation intransigeante de sa différence. L'introduction de l'élément critique dans l'affirmation du réel est ainsi comprise comme une nécessité que l'œuvre de Derrida révèle en proposant une notion de différence radicale et immanente à travers une approche qui n'est ni historiciste au sens strict du terme, ni anhistorique/transcendantale. Partant de ce double refus constitutif de l'affirmation du réel, la communication sera déterminée par la question suivante : comment l'œuvre de Derrida détermine-t-elle le réel tout en évitant à la fois la réduction de la pensée à l'expérience historique du présent et l'affirmation idéaliste d'une condition *a priori* de l'expérience ? La réflexion sera développée à travers la détermination de la différence analytique entre *supplémentarité* et *différance*, la première étant d'ordre catégoriel et la seconde d'ordre principiel. Je me concentrerai sur cette différence pour comprendre comment le rapport au réel est toujours déterminé par une certaine compréhension de l'objectivité comme cadre de la production infinie de différence. Or, une telle compréhension du réel exige du réalisme une position fondamentalement critique : puisque le réel est déterminé comme différence radicale produite par l'objet lui-même lors du moment analytique, la possibilité d'un réalisme post-critique s'avère insuffisante. En ce sens, la communication proposera une théorie de l'objet chez Derrida afin de dévoiler la condition critique de tout réalisme.

Reeder, Jake (Marist College)

A Blackened Derrida: Toni Morrison's Sula and the Invitation of Blackness

In a forthcoming book with the Palgrave Lacan Series, I use the phrase "invitation of blackness" to designate a theoretical reading of blackness, where it contains an excess irreducible to identity. Exemplified by Fred Moten's challenging statement, "everyone whom blackness claims, which is to say everyone, can claim blackness" (Moten 2018, 159), the invitation affirms the radical possibilities resulting from the presupposition that every contemporary subject is conditioned by blackness. This is another way to say that blackness, in its oppositional position to the pure white subject, is constitutive of it. Marquis Bey, through a close reading of Nahum Chandler's *The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought*, finds "a blackened Derrida" (Bey 2020, 14) in this paraontological reading of blackness. Chandler, with Derrida's own encouragement, uses the deconstructive term desedimentation to describe how paraontological blackness is capable of desubjectifying and making tremble the identitarian politics of white supremacy. The move from the "right to claim blackness" to the "invitation of blackness" registers the identitarian hesitations that a white subject most likely experiences before this "right to claim." The question "Can I really claim blackness?" turns Moten's assertion into an invitation. Thus, to study what it would mean to accept this invitation, I revisit Derrida's assertion that engagement with every promise demands a "yes, yes." Moten's statement is an original affirmation ("yes") that divides itself in its excessiveness and demands a respondent to say "yes" for it to have any possibility of living on or enacting its potential. Perhaps most importantly, to say yes to this invitation requires the specificity of a context, and for this talk I will read Toni Morrison's *Sula* as exemplary. *Sula*, I argue, is a character without character, an *eskhaton* that heralds a future beyond the opposition of white and Black. Where Hortense Spillers calls *Sula* a "new female being," I call her a "figure of the trace." By studying *Sula* in the vein of this "blackened Derrida," I hope to detail contours of this towering, liberational invitation of blackness, while also giving it one more chance to be sent out again..

Riedel, Alex (Fordham University)

The Violence of Non-Literature: Blanchot Reading Derrida

That Maurice Blanchot was influential for Derrida has been the subject of much commentary, but the lineage of influence in the other direction – from Derrida to Blanchot – has scarcely received attention. We find this influence, for example, in Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster* (1980). This text is an extensive contribution to thinking about a term – *désastre* [disaster] – that had been part of Blanchot's oeuvre since the early 1930s. Yet, it is here that *désastre* is first theorized by reference to Derrida's notion of the proper name. This theorization thus puts into effect the treatment of the proper name in *Of Grammatology* (1967), including the three forms of violence famously discussed in "The Battle of Proper Names." What I propose is that this addition of Derrida in *The Writing of the Disaster* acts as a signal that points us to Blanchot's earlier texts, where we may capture glimpses of the logic of the proper name at work. I claim one such text where this logic functions is "The Disappearance of Literature" (1953), an essay later collected in *The Book to Come* (1959). I argue that attentiveness to the operation of the proper name in this text permits us to view the extent to which there is a violence of what Blanchot calls "non-literature." We are told non-literature is the "nothing" asserted when one "asserts literature in itself," but its violence is not, however, immediately apparent in the text. Thus, by attending to the operation of the proper name, the violence of non-literature is brought to the foreground. In this way, my analysis serves as an example of how attending to Derrida's influence on Blanchot allows us to read Blanchot's earlier texts – written before he had ever heard of Derrida – in a new light.

Rigillo, Lucas (University of Copenhagen)

Silent Sovereignty: From Abraham's Sacrifice to European Migration Policy

In the recently published seminar *Répondre – du secret*, Derrida proposes a formulation of sovereignty as a 'right to not respond' and briefly suggests that Abraham's silent sacrifice of Isaac can be read as a political analogy for state power. Elsewhere, departing from Patočka's investigations on Europe's responsibility in the sessions which became *Donner la mort*, his reading of Kierkegaard results in a suggestion of a duty which transgresses ethics and rejects any response to scrutiny or demand for justification. This obligation to a private and secret demand seems to conflict with – or rather, to too closely resemble – the notion of sovereignty as a right not to respond: how can Derrida suggest a duty beyond ethics which appears so alike the violent and repressive sovereign power which he extensively criticises? In my paper, I will examine this aporia by contextualising it within a time of crisis in nation-state sovereignty and international law. In such an era, Europe (the continent whose responsibility Patočka and Derrida examine) stands in an extremely awkward position, attempting to appear as defenders of international law while simultaneously withholding condemnation of its allies for breaking these laws and renegotiating their limits for its own benefit. As an exemplary case, I will analyse the 'Joint Statement' spearheaded by Frederiksen's Denmark and Meloni's Italy, which calls on the European Court of Human Rights to soften scrutiny of nation-states in cases of deportation and treatment of migrants. With this Statement, I argue, 27 European states insist on and broaden their right not to respond or be held accountable, thus revealing the inner essence of sovereignty through the appeal to a state of exception. Drawing on the concept of autoimmunity, I will demonstrate how democratic states turn to repressive and anti-democratic methods to preserve themselves. By analysing the Statement through the lens of Derrida's Abrahamic analogy, I will argue for the dangers of an unresponsive duty, while also raising the question of how Abraham's silence can be seen as both an exemplification of sovereign violence and a counter against it.

Ripoll Serra, Marc (University of Freiburg)

Les conséquences politiques de la déconstruction : Derrida et la réception post-marxiste

Dans cette conférence, on se propose de thématiser la composante éminemment politique de l'œuvre de Derrida. L'objectif est de délimiter la position politique de Derrida à partir de la réception post-marxiste de Laclau et Mouffe, en mettant en évidence les convergences et les divergences entre les deux positions. La thèse principale est que les deux projets se différencient dans leur conception du

type d'indétermination qui structure le champ du politique. Pour le montrer, on examinera d'emblée comment l'analyse derridienne de la tradition de la pensée occidentale à partir du motif du jeu des substitutions de centres politise le champ philosophique, tout en fournissant des clés pour comprendre le fonctionnement des dynamiques de pouvoir propres à la politique. En effet, sa caractérisation des deux gestes face à ce jeu — l'affirmatif-nietzschéen et le nostalgique-heideggérien — ainsi que son insistance sur l'indétermination constitutive qui les fonde sont déjà d'une importance décisive pour repenser le champ de la politique dans un sens « post-fondationnaliste ». Dans la deuxième partie, on analysera la réception exemplaire de cette approche dans l'œuvre de Laclau et Mouffe, en particulier dans *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985). On défendra que ce texte constitue un modèle de lecture qui transpose l'analyse derridienne de la tradition philosophique à l'espace social et politique. Dans ce déplacement, le jeu des substitutions de centres est reformulé comme une logique hégémonique, et la dynamique des gestes est interprétée en termes d'ouverture et de fermeture démocratiques. Enfin, la troisième partie mettra l'accent sur les différences décisives entre les deux projets. Il s'agira de montrer que, pour Derrida, l'indétermination constitutive est avant tout un domaine d'indécidabilité, à partir duquel toute décision implique toujours une violence institutive. Face à cela se dégage la nécessité d'un certain respect et d'une hospitalité afin d'expérimenter cette indécidabilité. Laclau et Mouffe, en revanche, conçoivent l'indétermination constitutive comme un vide constitutif pour lequel diverses formations luttent afin de le remplir. À partir de ce vide, l'enjeu principal consiste à redéfinir le statut du centre et à proposer de nouvelles possibilités de constructions hégémoniques susceptibles de l'occuper.

Rosenfeld, Lior (Michigan Technological University)

The Question of Democratic Citizenship in the Age of AI

According to Jacques Derrida, autonomy refers to the possession of power and property by the master of the household, or the husband (Derrida, 2005, p. 11), and is therefore anti-democratic. Nevertheless, Derrida insisted that democracy necessarily means mastery, as it necessitates sovereignty—the capacity to suspend the law and make instantaneous decisions without the intermediary of diplomacy or discourse—to survive fascism, as we face today with the rise of AI systems (Derrida, 2005, p. 101). Derrida also uncovers the judicial force of the demos, which signifies not political silencing but rather holy silence, namely, the experience of the existence of the other, which the law cannot master. The impossibility of representing the citizen leaves the ruler speechless, thereby calling for an unprecedented just decision that supersedes familial, natural, and irrational laws. How can the question of democratic citizenship arise in the age of AI? Derrida claimed that there is no democracy without individuality, as each citizen's vote counts. At the same time, there cannot be a democracy without universality, as in democratic regimes, the majority counts, which requires abstracting individuals to representable subjects who are understood as equal. The undecidability between counting citizens by number or by value refers to the incalculability of each citizen's singularity. The issue is that with the deployment of AI systems, individual rights lose meaning, since, for example, AI systems scrape texts without the authors' consent. Derrida had already highlighted the crisis within liberalism. In the context of cloning, Derrida claimed that techno-scientific reason eliminates individuality by replicating each citizen's natural traits (Derrida, 2005, p. 146). As a result, individual rights and, by extension, the foundation of the law—the autonomy of the modern democratic state, which has the ultimate right—are undermined. I argue that, instead of trying to align AI algorithms with individual rights or save liberalism, democratic discourse has to stress the emptiness of individualism and the unfoundedness of law in the age of AI. This rhetoric refers to the singularity of citizens and calls for the writing of new rights.

Roy, Aniket (Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar)

Does the Novel become an Autobiography? Derrida, Narrative Form and Bengali Literary Modernism

Modernist narratives have been synonymous with instability and change, with the mass effects of technological advancements, urbanization, and the advent of colonialism and war machinery. This shift entailed isolation and disenchantment, marked by frequent interrogations of the notion of the self and

of institutions and the like. Reflections were, thus, similarly found in the scope of literary writings where the very representation of the self was called into question. DiBattista and Whitman, in their work, *Modernism and Autobiography*, raise a detailed understanding of the 'autobiographical writings' and note how the scope of such writings extended to "include multiple genres, such as personal essays, travel writing, criticism, letters, and even cookbooks" (pp. xi). It is in this scenario that the purity of the fabricated self and the genre of the autobiography are called into question, with primacy given to a narratorial voice. Theorised from this vantage, autobiography exemplifies the Derridean "law of genre" par excellence. The 'law of genre' is based on the "law of impurity or a principle of contamination" (Derrida, 1980, p.225). As per Derrida's method, autobiography, or the very juncture of life-writing, combines several genres, underlining its intertextuality. This apparent condition of the autobiographical genre crosses its boundary to incorporate another, posing an opening to the narrative form. Building on this insight, the present research asks: Does the novel open up its possibility of becoming a method of autobiography in the contemporary context? Situated within a postcolonial framework, the present research examines how the very nature of the narratorial form thrives on the plurality of its practitioners' lifeworlds and intentions. Concentrating on the works of Jibanananda Das and Rabisankar Bal, the current study interprets the ideas of Jacques Derrida not so much from the point of view of a philosopher but from that of a literary critic whose ideas are relevant for unveiling the deeper stakes involved in narratorial experimentations. A comparative and deconstructionist analysis undertaken by this research examines how Jibanananda's thoughts about diversified autobiography and Rabisankar's experiments in the novel reinscribe life-writing as a mode rather than a genre. The research also seeks to trace the constructive role of Derrida's thought in the discourse of Bengali Literature and argues how these three writers conceive narration as a labyrinthine act of inscription and reading, one through which the novel becomes a viable autobiographical method.

Ruiz Espigares, Violeta (Independent Scholar)

Autofession

This presentation threads deconstructive theories of autobiography and confession with the logics of revelation in the Spanish Inquisition's process of *discurso de su vida*, discourse on their life, as they bear on the ethico-political wagers of our time. This "involuntary autobiography" required the accused to give an account of their life in front of the tribunal, which was transcribed by a scribe. Specifically, I analyze the *discurso de su vida* by Judeo-Christian Renaissance figure Luis de la Ysla, who voluntarily presents himself to the Inquisition to give this legally required **account of himself in the hopes of being preemptively acquitted, and who finally ends up dying in the Inquisition prison waiting for a verdict. While, this genre has been examined through historical approaches, early modern hermeneutics of truth, and in brief Foucauldian terms, none have, to my knowledge, aimed at a theoretical intervention that confronts us with the deconstructive aporetic structure of autobiography (Derrida, De Man, Butler) situated in the Derridean investigation of secrecy and more concretely *marranismo* as experiences resistant to the logics of inquisition and revelation vis à vis confession. Caught in the necessary yet impossible act of autobiography, de la Ysla's confessed *marranismo* ties this impossible identity in Derrida's thought to a historical inheritance of politico-theological violence, namely the inquisitorial creation and persecution of crypto-Jews, where the ambivalent effects of the aporetic relation between revelation and secrecy produce in the autobiathanatoheterographical performance of the *discurso de su vida* an (un)inhabitable space of death (the prison) where legal power executes without execution. While deconstructive thought on the law informs my analysis, given the constraint of time, this conference will focus on the questions of autobiography and *marranismo* as they occur in the *discurso*. Bringing deconstructive thinking to these "involuntary autobiographies" repositions the legal violence of revelation that reverberates in the Renaissance as a site where to think through contemporary inquisitorial practices embodied in mortiferous institutions such as ICE or the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

Ruppel, Megan (Yale University)

Derrida and the Fable: Deconstructing Sovereignty in the Seminar Room

In this paper I will survey Derrida's decade-spanning interest in fables, Aesop's and La Fontaine's in particular, and offer a few close readings of relevant passages from the seminars *La bête et le souverain* (2001-2003) and *Manger l'autre* (1989-1991). As I will argue, these seminars' shared themes — devouring, storytelling, relational ethics, and sovereignty — are developed in tandem with a *sotto voce* deconstruction of the seminar format itself. By tracing Derrida's thinking about the fable, I hope to offer a fresh perspective on his philosophy of teaching. Throughout his career, Derrida expressed a persistent and uneasy awareness of the power possessed by educational institutions, including his own, and their entanglement with larger structures of power in Western society. Given that the ÉHESS seminars grapple with those larger structures under the heading of "sovereignty", I argue that they must be read in careful conjunction with his comments on teaching and, even more importantly, his behavior as a teacher. Methodologically speaking, in this paper I pay special attention to the structure and style of Derrida's arguments, unpacking what I call his pedagogical "gestures" — little turns of phrase scripted into the seminar text, some repeated across seminars, some tailored to the subject at hand. What is at stake in the discussion of fables is the sovereignty of the teacher. Derrida is digging out from under himself the very ground on which he stands. I hope my paper will serve two purposes: first, as a useful preview of the *Manger l'autre* seminar, which is soon to be edited and translated for a general audience, and second, as a call for further study of Derrida's teaching material as an end in itself. I aim to apply his findings, as well as my own, to questions of responsibility in teaching today.

S

Saglum, Rabia (Kocaeli University Law School)

The Possibility of Deconstructive Justice in Goya's Images of Violence

Following the Napoleonic occupation of Spain, Francisco de Goya witnessed devastating violence in the streets of Madrid, despite leading a relatively sheltered life as a royal painter. His plates and drawings from this period, the "Disasters of War", reflect not only the darkness of cruelty and individual atrocity but, more crucially, reveal an explicit intertwining of testimonial injustices with an implicit call for deconstructive justice. To heed this appeal from the past is to deconstruct not only Goya's imagery of social turmoil but also the socio-legal and political chaos of his time. This was a period when the influence of Enlightenment values, humanism, and modernity, which permeated Europe after the French Revolution, shaped Goya's optimistic creativity. Later, however, it intensified his critical outlook and crystallised as a critique of violence, a gruesome protest against the real-world massacre during the war. Goya's approach, depicting scenes of stark violence, serves as an invitation to see the human faces of evil, bear witness to devastation, and imagine ethical horizons. Therefore, we seek to deconstruct Goya's portrayal of violence and injustice during the wartime years of 1810–1815, demonstrating that the bleak yet vivid set of documentary images in his paintings offer a pathway to imagining deconstructive justice. This chaotic historical period paves the way for a deconstructive reading of Goya's works, revealing the possibility of justice by subverting representations of injustice designed in his etchings. Deconstruction enables us to envision justice amid the predominance of death, rape, torture, and execution — that is, lawmaking violence. We argue that the violence of this war period captured by Goya constitutes the visual signifiers of what Jacques Derrida and Walter Benjamin indicate as the intimate relation between law and justice. When Goya's engravings of 'disasters' are juxtaposed with the violence inherent in legal-political systems, the possibility of justice becomes conceivable. Justice, as experiences of possibility within extreme impossibilities drawn by Goya — whose aporetic imagination and desire engage with harsh historical realities — may be explored and rendered possible, if only for a moment.

Saito, Akkiko (Tokyo Gakugei University)

The Tale of Genji as an Archive of Readers: Deconstruction, Translation, and Literary Institution

The Tale of Genji (early eleventh century, Japan) is introduced to audiences as a "novel" of court romance. This paper proposes a different entry point for the *Derrida Today* conference: bringing a Japanese text into a deconstructive forum is not merely an act of cultural introduction, but a test of

translation and transfer—across languages, canons, and disciplinary protocols. Rather than “applying” Derrida to a Japanese classic, I treat deconstructive vocabulary as a descriptive language for what *Genji* itself makes legible when its reading is relocated into a different theoretical and institutional scene. I approach *Genji* not primarily as a closed “work” with a stable interior, but as an archive: a textual institution constituted through material circulation (chapter-by-chapter dissemination and copying), accreted commentarial layers, and shifting regimes of readership. *Genji*’s textual life presupposes repeatability—copying, excerpting, recontextualizing—yet this repeatability never guarantees sameness. Each repetition reopens context and redistributes responsibility, producing readers as positions rather than as empirical individuals. In this sense, “translation” is not only linguistic but also concerns the transfer of reading protocols. To demonstrate this, I revisit a model of three-layered readers implied by *Genji*’s historical formation and reception. (1) An early circle for whom *Genji* circulated in partial and fragile forms; (2) a later regime in which commentary and scholastic authorization sought to stabilize “what *Genji* means”; and (3) a horizon of future readers implicitly solicited by the text’s meta-narrative gestures—its moments that foreground storytelling, sources, and the act of reading itself. Beyond later scholastic commentary, the text itself contains moments that turn storytelling into an object of reflection—remarks on what counts as a “tale,” gestures to earlier narratives, and narratorial asides that invite evaluation and comparison across tales. I conclude by reframing “literature” in Derridean terms: literature is not a container of meanings but a strange institution that continuously exposes and disrupts the conditions under which meaning, relations, and responsibility become possible. Bringing *Genji* into *Derrida Today* therefore does not provincialize deconstruction; it tests and extends deconstructive thinking by foregrounding translation/transfer as a constitutive condition of literary archives and of reading itself.

Sala, Eirini (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

“Obliterating the proper” in Maryse Condé’s I, Tituba: Black Witch of Salem: The mock-epic figure as praxis.

Maryse Condé’s *I, Tituba: Black Witch of Salem* (1986) has prompted extensive scholarly exchanges revolving around the retelling of Tituba as an interstitial character, often associated with the global subaltern or a maroon figure, utilizing and negotiating between often contrapuntal or dissonant discourses and, by extension, modes of being (with). In my upcoming analysis, I read Tituba as a double subaltern, a *bricoleur*, and a paradigm of what Sylvia Wynter calls being “hybridly human”, which entails a conceptualization of the human as *praxis* rather than a noun. The discussion of genre-specific conceptions of the human evokes questions on Tituba’s writing (herself) into being on a textual level, precisely in relation to the ways Condé’s writing destabilizes through irony the perceived binary between orality/speech and the authority of a presupposed narrative voice, which Jacques Derrida contests in *The Violence of the Letter: From Lévi-Strauss to Rousseau*. I, *Tituba* provides an archipelagic, archival narrative space, where (non) acceptable forms of writing from the Puritan vantage point of reason clash with religious doctrine, ritual, and superstition, presupposing an unbridgeable conceptual/existential vacuum that had, however, never ceased standing there firmly, by way of *parergon*. By means of a comparison between the scene of Tituba’s trial and the “Writing Lesson” in Derrida’s essay, I will showcase irony as a poignant authorial choice, through which Tituba is used as a paradigm against the exemption of native and animistic knowledges, oral traditions as well as the crisscrossing of disciplines/manifestations of social production from the “dignity of writing”, “the obliteration of the proper” and, by extension, their ultimate ousting from historiography.

Sandrussi, Annie (Macquaire University)

Ecology and the (im)possibility of Ethics: The Problem with Biocentric Metaphors

This paper analyses the use of ecology as a principle for posthumanist ethics. Taking as starting point Frederic Neyrat’s critique of the primacy of relation in *The Unconstructable Earth*, I analyse what I refer to as ‘biocentric’ models of relation that articulate ecology in terms of ecosystem metaphors. Following Derrida’s regard for radical singularity as essential to ethical responsibility, I show how biocentric models of relation produce two problems that make them incompatible with ethics. First, they

articulate relations in terms of an ecosystem in homeostasis, thus representing singularity as a rupture that threatens the system. Second, they elide alterity in favour of the fungibility of entities. The ecosystem thus comes to stand for a multiplicity of *parts* whose existence is understood in terms of their contribution to the self-organising ecosystem, and thus to the general rules of interaction.

Sato, Tomoko (Kanazawa University)

Résonance dans la différance: Nicolas Abraham et la lecture derridienne de Sigmund Freud

Cet exposé se propose d'examiner les tentatives de Nicolas Abraham visant à « frayer...un passage entre psychanalyse et phénoménologie », en les considérant à travers leurs transformations et leurs déplacements face aux difficultés rencontrées. Il s'agira d'en dégager l'un des contextes discursifs, jusqu'à présent méconnu, dans lequel pourrait s'insérer la pensée de la différance chez Jacques Derrida, lequel a souligné la singularité de l'entreprise de son ami. Nous articulerons trois temps dans les textes relatifs à ce frayage, rédigés jusqu'au début des années 1960, selon la place accordée à la question de l'intersubjectivité. Dans un premier temps, dans le prolongement de ses travaux antérieurs, le séminaire tenu au début de l'année 1959 met au jour « l'utilisation constante...du concept de l'intersubjectivité », fondée, d'un côté, sur l'attitude analytique et, de l'autre, sur la mise entre parenthèses phénoménologique. Cette utilisation apparaît comme l'un des fils conducteurs d'une « synthèse de la psychanalyse et de la phénoménologie », le « présent vivant » husserlien y servant de point de départ de l'action psychanalytique. Dans un deuxième temps, à l'été de la même année, lors d'un exposé prononcé après la séance de Derrida, un recadrage de la perspective s'opère. Celui-ci se manifeste dans des remarques portant sur un « flux du présent » tenu pour hypothétique, ainsi que sur la « hylè », dont « le sens intentionnel...devrait apparaître...dans une expérience originale de l'intersubjectivité, telle qu'elle est instaurée par la psychanalyse », en tant que celle-ci interroge un « inconscient constitué dans l'intersubjectif ». Dans un troisième temps, les limites du point de vue intersubjectif et de l'attitude phénoménologique se profilent à mesure que se précise la théorie du symbole. Alors qu'un manuscrit lacunaire de 1960, intitulé « *Le symbole ou l'au-delà du phénomène* », affirme que la situation analytique « replace le symbole dans l'actualité de son opération intersubjective », un autre manuscrit, plus complet, rédigé en 1961 et portant le même titre, remplace ce dernier adjectif par celui d'« imaginaire » et formule la « résonance », définie dans sa distinction d'avec l'*Einfühlung* husserlienne, comme ce qui sous-tend cette opération. Les tentatives d'Abraham laissent ainsi apparaître l'articulation d'un éloignement progressif de la phénoménologie husserlienne et d'une attention croissante portée aux textes freudiens.

Satrazanis, Petros (University College of Dublin)

Living the end - Derrida and the pulse of différance

This paper proposes to rethink the end not as a point of cessation, but as a pulsating temporality that persists beyond the very event of its conclusion. It departs from the following assertion: *that which exhausts the question that gave rise to it does not end but lives its end*. Reading Derrida's notion of *différance* particularly as it unfolds in *Margins of Philosophy* and *Specters of Marx*, I argue that the end is disentangled from the logic of the instantaneous and transformed into a state of duration. Nothing ever ends cleanly because nothing has ever been fully present. Every presence is already fissured by deferral and difference; every end survives as a trace. The "after" does not arrive from outside, as a secondary temporal layer, but is inscribed internally within the thing itself as a pulse of identity's rupture. An ending relationship persists as memory, silence, or wound; a concluded war continues to operate within bodies, cities, and languages. Here, the end is not an event but a condition: an *après-coup* of presence, a temporality that does not close. It is an end that never coincides with itself, an end that pulsates. The paper argues that for Derrida the end does not come from elsewhere; it constitutes the internal potential for the disruption of any identity. History, philosophy, and thought do not cease when they exhaust their questions; they begin to live their end, existing as traces of questions that can no longer be posed as before yet cannot be erased. In an era of "ended" wars, "passed" crises, and "finished" relationships that never truly close, deconstruction reveals another temporality: the end as a pulsating present, as the persistence of the unfinished.

Schwartz, Ana (University of Texas, Austin)

Fabulous Retroactivity: "Declarations" at Fifty

This paper proposes a reassessment of a brief flashpoint in Derrida's thought: the moment, fifty years ago, when he decided to moonlight as a literary historian of early America. The object of this paper is a short lecture he delivered at the University of Virginia, at a conference marking the Bicentennial of the United States. The lecture reads the United States' founding document and features founding celebrities Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. Although philosophers such as Michael Naas, Bonnie Honig, and Jacques De Ville have assessed the importance of "Declarations of Independence," the text has not been widely taken up in early American literary history, despite its insights and despite its charms. When it is cited, it is usually summoned for its application of the then-still-fresh insights on performativity as J.L. Austin had articulated them. The signing of the declaration, Derrida proposed, was a spectacular, literally visible instantiation of "the people" it claimed, by representing, already existed. Yet half a century out from that lecture's delivery, very different elements stand out. This paper turns to one of Derrida's minor fascinations in the lecture, a story he shared in the short lecture's second half, easy to forget after applying the performative insight. It is a story about the telling of a story, and about the exhaustion with the languages we use to tell stories. In the story, an episode of democratic peer review leaves us with no barely any signs at all—just a signboard, with a few marks left on it: an image only, and a name. Confronting such a sign at the semi-quincentennial, do we know how to read it? Visual images surround us to an unprecedented degree, and it is hard for many literary historians to imagine when it has ever been so easy to invoke an image to stand in for a self, individual or collective. What resources does deconstruction offer to make sense of this representational terrain? This paper will revisit Derrida's "Declarations" and attempt to synthesize his insight on post-literacy (no longer so *avant-la-lettre*, as it were) with its claim regarding the uses of the letter in a delegated performance of democracy.

Sdrolas, Dimitris (National And Capodistrian University Of Athens)

The necro-ontological basis of Différance: Towards an Onto-phenomenology of Archi-Castration as the New Face of ontological difference

This article develops a necro-ontological reading of Jacques Derrida's *LifeDeath* seminar, proposing a radical pro-metaphysical phenomenological framework grounded in what Derrida leaves unarticulated: the "what" concealed by the "ruse" of dialectical logic. While Derrida interrogates the relationships between being and death, suspending the "and" of juxtaposition and questioning opposition, contradiction and positionality, he refrains from naming the structural element he secretly covets that motivates these concealments. To address this "what", the article elevates the Parasite-Host complex—deployed circumstantially by Derrida to illustrate supplementarity, spectrality, and iterability—as a systematical phenomenological prototype for ontological difference. Unlike Derrida, who primarily uses the parasite to elucidate the mechanics of meaning, the present analysis treats the parasite-host relation as a proto-ontological structure, revealing the necrotic, irreducibly wounded core of being. Mapping the four traditional, -according to Derrida-, dialectical tropes—position, contradiction, opposition, and juxtaposition—onto the parasite-host relation it transforms them into their ontological reversals: beings emerge as *crippled* (perforated, incapable of being fully posited), *symbiotic* (co-dependent and intra-dicted, not contradicted), *misfit* (dissymmetrically mutually excluded, not symmetrically opposed), and *toxic* (bearing death to self and other, that is contra-posed, not merely juxtaposed). These inversions constitute a radically new existential Geviert that dialectical logic systematically represses. This pro-metaphysical already-dead kernel at the heart of this complex is termed *Scotoma*. Archi-Castration names the primary excision generating this Geviert: a "Synthlimma", (a crushed point of assemblage between Parasite and Host, being and beings) jamming death into life, foundational to *différance* itself. Freud's castration anxiety is thus reconceived as a ruse concealing this more primitive Archi-Castration, which now emerges as the *new face of ontological difference*. Its ontoaffective correlates—*Shame, Guilt, Terror, and Despair*—replace Heideggerian *Angst*, for they do not point toward a future death to be reached but register an *already constituted death in every here-*

and-now, confounding existence irreducibly. By founding *différance* upon this necro-ontological framework, this study reconceptualizes ontology: being emerges not toward death but *from death*, while Archi-Castration and Scotoma constitute the pro-metaphysical basis of ontological difference, opening us to a totally novel post-deconstructive Era of Thought with unprecedented ethical, interpersonal, social and political implications.

Secret, Timothy (University of Winchester)

Ni/ni et/et : "I've nothing against Sartre ... He was part of my family!"

Having notoriously described his impact on French thought as "nefarious and catastrophic", it is surprising that Derrida mentioned in his final year how, given time and freedom, he would like to reread and teach the classic works of Sartre. While we will never know what would have emerged from this, the recent publications of the early seminars *Penser, c'est dire non* and *Psychanalyse et critique littéraire (1969-1970)* offer a tantalising glimpse of a Derridean reading of part one of *Being and Nothingness* that has as yet received little commentary. In the latter, Derrida characterises the structure of bad faith with the neat formula "ni/ni, et/et". Just two years later, in *Positions*, the same typography of "ni/ni" is used to characterise his own thought, while in 1998, Derrida speaks of "une pensée de la spectralité (ni vive, ni morte, mais vive et morte)". Indeed, many commentators have claimed that the neither/nor that is both/and is a distinctively Derridean trope. It would be reckless based on this to claim spectrality as a Derridean appropriation of the Sartrean bad faith, particularly as a "ni/ni, et/et" structure can be found in classical psychoanalysis as much as in Sartrean existential psychoanalysis. However, perhaps this isomorphism allows a point of contact or hinge around which the Derridean and Sartrean texts can be articulated to produce novel events without either collapsing them into a single discourse or engaging in a genealogical account of influence. In this paper, rather than using this hinge to further consider a Derridean account of Sartre, I will instead focus on what a Sartrean inflected Derrida might look like. Indeed, it will be my contention that a certain criticism of Derrida as himself lapsing into a form of bad faith in his meta-deconstructive account of the auto-deconstruction of the text can be evaded by thinking spectral agency through the lens of existential rather than classical psychoanalysis. Without rejuvenating a virile account of agency, the instant of decision and the technologies of its deferral will be shown to be productively rethought through such a turn to Sartrean resistance against conformity, flight and idle talk.

Siddi, Nicola (University of Turin)

Spectres of Writing

For Derrida, writing is not only *pharmakon* – both cure and poison at the same time – but also a *spectre*. A voice that leaves its mark in absence, a trace that materialises without a presence. Writing means creating survival (*survivance*), in that the sign remains, returns and can be read elsewhere, and this is where the discourse linked to misunderstanding, interpretation and deviation begins. Artificial intelligence is a technical tool that increases the spectrality of writing, facilitating aspects of our lives by enhancing the iterability of the sign and dynamising the archive (static by ancient definition) into an operational apparatus. It follows that the *spectre* is no longer a metaphor, but an indication of how the statement works. AI produces responses that do not come from a voice, but from concatenated algorithms; it is a function, not a presence. In this context, the trace does not remain behind but materialises before us in the form of an indication, a summary, a prediction. *Survivance* becomes spectral in the true sense of the word; in fact, the past, condensed into data, re-emerges and acts on the present. As in *Specters of Marx*, the *spectre* does not represent what is dead, but what is transformed into archiving. In this sense, *Spectres of Writing* highlights the condition in which meaning emerges from the sign and not vice versa. There is no meaning that precedes inscription. AI, a spectral *pharmakon*, brings to light this structure formed by a circuit of traces, which, on the one hand, cures discourse by extending and organising it and, on the other, exposes it to structural risks such as the only apparent authority of responses and the misunderstanding that accompanies every iteration of the sign. In conclusion, Derrida's deconstruction and the concept of writing as *pharmakon* allow us to distinguish between a calculable future (prediction) and an *avenir* understood as event. AI tends to organise the

former, identifying it within a horizon of probabilities; deconstruction, on the other hand, opens up a space for decision-making and responsibility in which heritage is not merely a repetition of the past, but critical invention.

Skonieczny, Krzysztof (University of Warsaw)

Derrida and Generative AI: Authorship, Interpretation, Deconstruction

Artificially generated literature can be traced at least as far as 1984 and the release of the book “The Policeman’s Beard is Half Constructed” in 1984, supposedly written autonomously by the computer program Racter. Recently, the arrival of ChatGPT and other publicly available generative AI tools, which have been steadily gaining popularity since 2022, made such literature (and generated text in general) commonplace. And while the generated texts’ typically middling style and substance has led to the designation “AI slop” — easy to create, but perhaps worthless to read or especially interpret — it nonetheless is an opportunity to ask about how generated literature influences our notions of authorship and interpretation. AI-generated literature is seemingly authorless, an effect of a distributed network of forces (or parameters) governed by rules that have been drawn from statistical analyses of the giant corpora of texts, the largest of them encompassing close to everything that has ever been written and digitised. And of course, ideas of the text as an effect and of authorship as a dissipated function rather than a singular, autonomous person or subject, have been an important part of structuralist and poststructuralist thought. And while Derrida did not explicitly take part in the “death of the author” debate, his attempt at decentering the author as the transcendental origin of the text (in *Structure, Sign and Play*), as well as the analyses of style in *Spurs* make him an important voice in it. In my presentation, I will ask if Derrida’s thought can guide us in thinking about the notions of authorship and interpretation of artificially generated texts. In particular, I will ask if the notion of decentered authorship is useful for analysing such texts, and if artificially generated literature is worthy of interpretation (or perhaps even deconstructible).

Smith, James (Calvin University)

“To Think Thinking Differently”: How (Not) to Dream the University to Come

When Derrida was awarded the Adorno Prize in Frankfurt in 2001, his address drew its central image from a dream recounted by Walter Benjamin to Gretel Adorno—a dream of “making a scarf [fichu] out of a poem.” Derrida celebrates Adorno as a philosopher willing to entertain “a truth of the dream, a meaning and a reason of the dream...as though dreaming were a more vigilant state than being awake.” If, traditionally, philosophy exiled all dreamers, Adorno critically refuses philosophy’s sort of wakefulness in order to entertain “the possibility of the impossible”: “the lucidity of the dream, caring for what the dream lets us think about.” Derrida adopts this dream as his own: “The possibility of the impossible can only be dreamed, but thinking, a quite different thinking of the relation between the possible and the impossible, this other thinking I have been panting after for so long.” Indeed, Derrida wants to appropriate as his own “motto” what Adorno said of Benjamin: “In the form of the paradox of the impossible possibility, mysticism and enlightenment are joined for the last time in him.” My paper returns to this site of debt and distance—Derrida’s relation to the Frankfurt school, which is also a question of Derrida’s relation to Kant, Hegel, and the legacies of German idealism. In particular, I will explore Derrida’s desire “to think thinking differently” in terms of this conjunction of mysticism and enlightenment. The “case study” here will be Derrida’s dream of a university “without condition.” The university is an instance of Derrida’s central question in 2001: “Could there be an ethics or politics of dreaming that did not yield to the imaginary or the utopian?” In a sympathetic but critical engagement, I invite us to consider whether Derrida’s proposal remains bound by a Kantian bifurcation that defers the dream to utopia. In other words, we might need to consider what Derrida failed to learn from the Frankfurt School—the distinctly Hegelian dream in which “everything rational is to be called at the same time ‘mystical’” (Encyclopedia Logic, §82, Addition).

Sobczyńska, Weronika (University of Warsaw)

Textual Microcosm and Derrida’s Literary Frame

The concept of the frame is a relatively underexplored element in Derridean discourse; the frame itself is also not usually included among the characteristic figures of this author. My aim is to show that, for a philologist reading Derrida's texts, it should become a key concept in his writing—one that grounds the reconstruction of Derrida's understanding of the text. It is not without reason that in *La Carte Postale* he identifies the frame – present in many areas of literary theory (including formalism) – as a fundamental marker of fiction. The frame, besides being a delimiting element, is also a device that allows the introduction of a certain kind of *tabularity* into the text—that is, the separation of fragments which, while remaining closely connected, can also function independently. Thus, the frame can turn out to be a compositional principle of the text itself—a point I intend to demonstrate using *La Carte Postale* as an example.

Stewart, Jeremy (Regent College)

Improvising Derrida: Jazz, Deconstruction, and Anti-racism

In 1997, Jacques Derrida interviewed the American jazz saxophonist, composer, and bandleader Ornette Coleman. The two decided that Derrida should deliver a philosophical performance onstage in tandem with Coleman's saxophone improvisation at his upcoming Paris concert. In the event of it, the audience was not pleased, and Derrida was driven from the stage. I will argue that what some have identified as Derrida's late or intermittent interest in anti-racism is inextricable from this encounter with jazz and improvisation. His interview with Coleman touches on the theme, as does his text for their performance. Derrida published a relatively small number of texts directly concerned with anti-racism, including before 1997, and others which have been taken up to some degree for their potential for anti-racist thought and practice, as for example Barnor Hesse does in a 2023 paper on what he calls Derrida's "Black accent." This paper will support the project of developing the anti-racist Derrida through improvisation. I will consider how the theme has been taken up by scholars to date, as in work by Reagan Patrick Mitchell and Sara Ramshaw; in particular, Fred Moten's 2003 book *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* will focus a discussion of Derrida's ideas on improvisation. Moten relates this directly to Coleman's milieu through figures such as pianist Cecil Taylor and poet, scholar, and critic Amiri Baraka. I will describe how the 1964 October Revolution in Jazz festival in New York, which led to the founding of The Jazz Composers Guild, was informed by thought that in some ways echoes Derridean Deconstruction with regard to the relationship between improvisation and composition. This was expressly anti-racist in its conception, as 1960s remarks from Taylor and others show. Ultimately, the way that jazz improvisation has been imagined by musicology and philosophy is bound up with racism. I will address the question of how that which is identified, perhaps problematically, by Moten as Derrida's latent racism can still admit of a reading like Hesse's, allowing unexplored currents in Derrida's thought to be recovered in an anti-racist notion of jazz improvisation.

Stock André (Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro)

Spectres de Marx et le messianisme sans contenu: réflexions sur « l'appropriation de Jérusalem ».

En proposant une lecture non vulgaire de Marx, et dans le contexte politique de l'effondrement des blocs socialistes, de la chute du mur de Berlin et de la montée d'un néolibéralisme eschatologique dont la « bonne nouvelle » est la proclamation de la fin du marxisme (à travers le best-seller international de Francis Fukuyama, « La fin de l'histoire »), Jacques Derrida présente, en 1993 dans « Spectres de Marx, l'État d'endettement, l'œuvre de deuil et la nouvelle Internationale », la notion de *messianisme sans contenu*. Derrida réaffirme à plusieurs reprises que l'idée de « fin » dans le contexte philosophique des années 1950 n'était pas entièrement nouvelle, et que sous l'ère Reagan/Thatcher/Wojtyla, tandis que la « fin du sujet », la « fin du marxisme » et d'autres « fins » remettaient en question la pensée de la gauche, par exemple, la « fin de l'histoire » et la revendication d'une démocratie libérale comme destinée de l'humanité ont, quant à elles, alimenté un ambitieux projet de rédemption pour un nouvel évangile du capitalisme planétaire. Dans ce climat quelque peu apocalyptique, Derrida présente, à travers une réflexion sur l'héritage de Marx, une pensée messianique affranchie des déterminations historiques et religieuses, qu'il qualifie d'abrahamique: plus précisément, affranchie des limitations que les religions monothéistes – christianisme, judaïsme et islam – imposaient au messianisme. Pour

Derrida, le défi consiste à réfléchir au rôle messianique comme toile de fond universelle, détachée de tout horizon théologique, de toute finalité et des messianismes qui ont alimenté les idées de salut. Si, pour Derrida, la « bonne nouvelle » du néolibéralisme évoque la figure messianique d'une « Terre Promise » – dans sa volonté d'établir un « État » de rédemption *via* l'Occident pour le monde globalisé –, l'expression « appropriation de Jérusalem » est employée comme métaphore pour critiquer le discours violent des forces conspiratrices occidentales. « La guerre pour l'« appropriation de Jérusalem » est aujourd'hui la guerre mondiale », affirme Derrida. L'objectif de cette communication est de réfléchir, trois décennies plus tard, à ce que le *messianique sans contenu* et « l'appropriation de Jérusalem » peuvent encore nous communiquer et nous apprendre sur la « guerre » et la « conjuration » contre l'héritage marxiste.

Sucurovic, Borna (University College Dublin)

Towards an Ethico-Political Account of the Signature

Michaela Fišerová's recently published monograph *Event of Signature* is a remarkable work in the field of Derrida studies. One of the reasons for this is because it is among the rare occurrences where the notion of the signature is given priority over other aspects of Jacques Derrida's work. Among the throughlines of the study, however, is the contentious claim that deconstruction has the character of a politically and socially melancholic strategy. Fišerová repeatedly asserts that, since deconstruction resists the positivism of history, it is condemned to an ethically conscious melancholy in need of an external, politically effective, and positive supplement. This paper, divided into three sections, aims to critique the aforementioned claim. In the first section, I will offer a close reading of *Event of Signature*, highlighting Fišerová's continual emphasis on deconstruction's lack of positivity, as well as her attempts at grappling with this lack. This will be done through an examination of the author's treatment of Derrida's account of justice, as well as of her reticence to readily accept 'productive' philosophical counterpoints to deconstruction, such as the thought of Gilles Deleuze. The second section will scrutinise Fišerová's conception through a reading of Madeleine Fagan's *Politics After Poststructuralism*. By utilising the distinction between foundational and non-foundational ethics, as well as the critique of the theory-application approach, I will argue that the same theoretical shortcomings observed by Fagan can be found in Fišerová's critique of Derrida's work as devoid of a politically productive impetus. I will further attempt to show how the latter's critique itself rests on a prior separation between ethics and politics, which is interrogated by the basic tenets of deconstruction and is thus difficult to maintain if one wishes to remain faithful to deconstructive strategies. The third and final section will examine the signature as an event of writing that destabilises the border between ethics and politics. By utilising Fagan's notion of the ethico-political, as well as Fišerová's analysis of the signature's aporetic character, I will show how the signature serves as the point at which the particular ethical and political productivity of deconstruction ought to be sought.

Swan, Melanie (University College London)

Sublime Machines: Derrida's Aesthetic Trace of Transhuman Becoming

Derrida's aesthetics, understood as the unstable play of the *parergon* – the diaphanous border between what counts as the "work" (*ergon*) and its "supplement" (*parergon*) – whether text, painting, or self, define contemporary transhumanism debates in which the line between the human and its technological augmentations is equally porous. For Derrida, just as the artwork is constituted by what it excludes, transhumanist bodies are shaped by prostheses, implants, algorithms, and enhancements which are supposedly "external" yet become fundamentally integrated with the human. The transhumanist ideal of a purified, optimized, self-identical subject repeats the metaphysics of presence that Derrida critiques, whereas the actual lived reality of enhancement reveals a *parergonal* structure. The supplemental trace (the implant, the neural link, the genetic edit) completes yet destabilizes the human, making the boundary between organism and device impossible to secure as "infinite content destroys finite form" (TIP, 133). Clark's "natural-born cyborgs" implicitly affirm this Derridean logic, while Hayles argues that embodiment is always hybrid and technologically mediated. This is precisely the kind of compositional contamination that Derrida identifies in *The truth in painting* and *Le toucher*.

Derrida's aesthetics enact transhuman futures first by staging subjectivation through the encounter with the sublime. Rereading Kant, Hegel, and Heidegger, Derrida demonstrates that the limit-experience of de Goya's *Colossus* uproots the metaphysics of presence and forces the self to emerge in excess as more-than-human. Second, by undoing the Heidegger–Schapiro dispute and returning Van Gogh's *Shoes* to their rightful owner, Derrida reveals that identity is produced in the interlacing of *différance*, in which the “loosening of the laces” (TIP, 340) cannot escape their double bind, making the self a continual transhuman re-inscription. Third, in the register of the prosthesis, Derrida's sees Nancy's implanted heart arising in the fold where technology and flesh interpenetrate without clear origin, in the “quasi permixtio” which attempts to “trace itself out...think itself” (OT, 36, 27). The fold subverts the integrity of human identity, anticipating Rosenthal's techno-immortality as a condition in which embodiment is always already supplemented, extended, and co-constituted with technical alterity. Derrida's aesthetics emerge as the annihilatory resistance to the institution of the self.

Symeonidis, Thomas (Athens School of Fine Arts)

Deconstructed Beauty: From Aesthetic Form to Spectral Disposition

The aim of my paper will be to examine the condition of the beautiful as it is dispersed and displaced in Derrida, not as a “theory of beauty,” which he never offers in any systematic form, but rather as a field in which deconstruction activates different logics of space, limit, event, and responsibility. My point of departure will be *The Truth in Painting*, and more specifically the “Parergon” chapter, where, through a reading of Kant's *Third Critique*, Derrida elaborates a discourse on the frame. The frame/parergon, more than an exterior supplement, is a device that liquefies borders and unsettles aesthetic oppositions, including the very stability of the beautiful/sublime distinction. What emerges from this approach is another logic of beauty, dissociated from questions of form, norm, or judgment. This displacement becomes explicit in Derrida's entretien with Peter Brunette and David Wills, “Les arts de l'espace,” in *Penser à ne pas voir*, where he refuses to conceive beauty as an “effect apart” and binds it inseparably to the body, desire, and, above all, to whatever “works the voice” and tonalities. Thus, beauty operates as a differential vibration that intensifies precisely by separating. I therefore propose to approach beauty in terms of *spectral disposition*, that is, a mode of receptivity that does not close beauty into stable form, but apprehends it as event-trace. This is sharpened by Derrida's dialogue with Bernard Stiegler in *Echographies of Television*, where the specter is not only what appears, but a gaze that looks at us, installing the law precisely where we are blind “by position.” Beauty, as such a spectral address, opens another “zero point” of appearing, not mastery, but responsiveness: an exposure to tones, voices, gestures, spaces, and their fragile calls.

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Thomassen, Lasse (Queen Mary University of London)

Theorising Deconstructively about Political Concepts

What does it mean to think deconstructively about political concepts? In this paper, I show that deconstruction offers a distinct approach to political concepts that can help us understand how political concepts are constituted. Simplifying, we may say that concepts are signifiers. However, even if we cannot think of concepts as the expressions of essences, we cannot reduce a concept to a word or to a name either. We, therefore, need a different way of accounting for the conceptuality – ideality, unity, universality – of concepts. I suggest an approach that combines Jacques Derrida's deconstruction with Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's theory of hegemony. From Derrida, I take the notion of iterability as a way to account for how concepts are constituted through repetition, which nonetheless introduces a constitutive element of alteration and, therefore, openness. This leads me to identify two approaches to concepts in Derrida's work: one where he invents new (quasi-)concepts such as iterability; and one where concepts are extended in a tension between conditionality and unconditionality, as is for instance the case with his writings on hospitality. If concepts are signifiers, I suggest that conceptual analysis must be discourse analysis. Here I follow Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony, and I

suggest that we can understand the formation of political concepts as a hegemonic struggle over the articulation of concepts such as hegemony, rights and sovereignty. I show how Laclau and Mouffe's notions of nodal points, empty signifiers, antagonism and chains of equivalence are helpful building blocks for the deconstructive accounting of how political concepts are constituted.

Thompson, Kyliel (Emory University)

Shibboleth, Enpas

A shibboleth is for some an *enpas*: what is designated in *Kreyol* as a dead-street end. Historically, shibboleths have functioned as a recognition-sign, determining rules of entry, rights, the legality of tongues, life and death. As a code of recognition, it has had consequential and devastating effects, such as those at the borders of Hispaniola. The Haitian, of 1937 and of today, has found themselves at this *enpas* which has been, at once, juridical and pre-juridical: juridical and pre-juridical as Haitians have found themselves at an *enpas*, judged before the law. History has shown us that where shibboleths obstruct testimony, where there is the creation of man-made differences of blood, species, and taxa in accordance to nation, and ultimately, where the process of law cannot redress or undo the excess and essence of law, there will be some who will find themselves, continually, at an *enpas*. This presentation will pursue the sight of suffering which the absence of language begets at the borders of Hispaniola. Using the works of Paul Celan, Jacques Derrida, and René Philoctète, it will seek to ask what is at the heart of a shibboleth that seeks to govern those prejudged beings [*les êtres préjugés*] at the *enpas* of Hispaniola.

Timár, Eszter (Central European University)

Queering closeted affect

As part of a larger project investigating the political resources of the homosexual closet beyond its discourse of coming out with a special interest in queer affect, in this paper, I will present a combined reading of Jacques Derrida's and Georg Simmel's writings on the secret. In much of queer scholarship, and here I will take my cues from the work of Eve Sedgwick, the queer closet is conceived of in terms of the distinction between public and private and shame (via Silvan Tomkins' rich work on shame and contempt) is selected as its quintessential affect. In Simmel's and Derrida's works, secrecy is more complicated than a simple binary distinction between something like transparency (or visibility, or honest authenticity) and its absence. Both authors are interested in understanding the relationship between the idea of secrecy and the social and they provide compatibly counterintuitive insights about ways in which secrecy necessarily destabilizes the public/private distinction. In addition, both connect publicness and secrecy to discourses of. They help us see that the queer closet is a quasi-institution emerging in a more general kind of secrecy that is diffused across the social. More especially, Derrida's reading of Baudelaire's proto-queer flaneur connects secrecy to discourses of democracy as well as aristocracy, which opens the door to contrast the Tomkinsian conception of shame with that of contempt and make a case for suggesting that a certain affective performance of aristocratic contempt is enriching the repertoire of resistance inherent in the closeted queer discourse.

Tiwari, Abhinshyam (University of Lucknow)

Derrida's Reading of Hegelian Systematicity in Glas

Glas stands as a formidable work of Hegel interpretation. While its central engagement is with the Philosophy of Right and the Phenomenology of Spirit, Derrida ranges widely across Hegel's corpus. He undertakes sustained analyses of texts such as *The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate*, *The First Philosophy of Spirit* (1803–04), the 1803 essay on "Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law," the *Lectures on Aesthetics*, and the introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*. Beyond these—and the catalogue is far from complete—Derrida repeatedly invokes the *Logic*, the *Encyclopaedia*, the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, the *Differenzschrift*, *Faith and Knowledge*, as well as extensive passages from Hegel's correspondence. It is important to emphasize from the outset that the Hegel column is, for the most part, a careful and rigorously argued exposition of Hegel's texts. This commentary is periodically interrupted by excursions into Marx, Feuerbach, Kant, and Freud, along with

a number of pointed references to Heidegger, which will be addressed later. Derrida's dominant method is not reconstruction or systematic paraphrase, but quotation. He cites Hegel repeatedly and often at considerable length, anchoring his claims almost entirely in the textual fabric of Hegel's own writings. When Derrida is approached with the same attentiveness he brings to Hegel, his interpretive practice appears largely resistant to refutation. It operates with an implicit notion of truth as adequation between text and commentary. Parenthetical observations or citations from other authors are typically introduced through the typographical device of the judas: a marginal inset that functions as a commentary on the commentary itself, and which should not be regarded as secondary to the main line of argument. Notably, the Hegel column contains far fewer such judases than the column devoted to Genet. Yet the apparent linearity of the Hegel commentary is immediately unsettled once the reader's gaze shifts—to the opposing column, to the margins, or to both simultaneously. These deliberate or contingent intertextual crossings, produced by the judases and the facing columns, generate a constant oscillation between text and intertext, between commentary and what escapes it. This movement establishes the distinctive cadence of deconstructive reading. Even so, the present analysis deliberately fixes an unwavering, almost Cyclopean attention on the Hegel column alone, in order to grasp as precisely as possible the specific character of Derrida's engagement with Hegel in *Glas*.

Thomas Cameron, Yael (Auckland University of Technology)

Déjà Vu, Pedagogies of the Blind

This paper is a second creative return to *Memoirs of the Blind* as a text that unfolds and refolds sight and belief. In an earlier movement, I explored Derrida's discussion of blindness as an ethical opening marked by the troubled speculum of the violent image in the media, I continue here with what remains after the image has wounded the eye. I ask what kind of pedagogy is demanded when vision is no longer innocent, in the plethora of images that arrive saturated with moral urgency and despair in a world where it seems belief precedes ethical hesitation. Derrida's tear names a wounding of the eye—an encounter through sight that cuts without yielding to interpretation—tears of blood, so to speak. Such wounding binds the spectator back to the speculum even as the authority of vision itself is destabilised. This dynamic carries particular urgency in the present moment, where proliferating images of violence have not translated into ethical restraint but instead accompany the visual-political order. Through Derrida's insistence on the tear as both optical obstruction and ethical opening, I consider in terms of pedagogy, what the wounding encounter with the violent image might mean. The tear, as trace, offers the possibility of apprehension without guarantee. To be blinded by tears is not simply to fail to see clearly, but the possibility of seeing otherwise. In the encounter with the image that interrupts rather than evidences, pedagogy becomes less a matter of transmission and more a holding of *méconnaissance* as an iterative condition of learning. Sought here is a pedagogy that neither averts its gaze nor claims epistemic certainty but remains accountable to the tears that blur vision and make relation possible. Such a pedagogy does not promise redemption through sight but asks instead what it might mean to teach and to learn while remaining exposed to the fragility of belief or truth in the face of the violent image.

Trejling, Maria (Hlamsstad University)

Re:form. Poetic Readings of the Transcendental Signified

One possible way to define metaphysics would be as a belief in what Jacques Derrida calls "le mythe rassurant d'un signifié transcendantal" ("Le puits et la pyramide", see also "La forme et le vouloir-dire"). According to the myth, idea is detachable from expression, meaning from form, and—effectively—mind from body. This constitutes a re-presentational conception of writing and of the world. In contrast with metaphysics, for the discipline of literary studies it is a core principle that form and content are inseparable. The smallest change of expression would also entail a change of meaning. Notwithstanding the extensive agreement upon this axiom, literary scholars tend to think in terms of re-presentation almost as much as the average reader, while struggling to discuss literary texts without evoking a form-content dichotomy to which they, in all rigor, would not want to ascribe. While separating signifier from signified may in many cases be pragmatically necessary, the inability *not* to do so is disconcerting. This

paper considers different ways to think about this conundrum. It does so in relation to literary texts that implicitly or explicitly address the form-content dichotomy. These works interrogate theoretical attempts to think expression and meaning otherwise. Examples of such endeavors would be Derrida's assertion that every signified "*soit toujours déjà en position de signifiant*" (*De la grammatologie*); Paul de Man's exploration of how form and content are polarized in relation to inside and outside (*Allegories of Reading*); and Susan Sontag's suggestion that the issue is not the notion of style, or form, but that of content ("On Style"). While I offer no revolution of the form-content dichotomy, a progressive re-formation of the boundaries extends the margins for how we understand matter and method, mind and body, and poietic modes of thinking.

Tron, Colette (Independent Scholar)

In-existences et télétechnologies. Penser le marché des écrans depuis la crise sanitaire

La crise sanitaire due au virus COVID-19 a généralisé un fait déjà très répandu, notamment apparu depuis le processus de numérisation et l'accès public au web, accru par le développement exponentiel des applications de la technologie numérique, et via nombre d'objets techniques, qu'est le rapport récurrent aux écrans et les activités et relations par télétechnologies. Cette tendance technique de la téléactivité et de la réticulation (anti-)sociale a conduit « à une nouvelle augmentation du temps passé devant des écrans de toutes sortes », dont les fonctions se sont redéfinies et élargies « à mille activités, notamment professionnelles » (Bernard Stiegler, *La technique et le temps III*), mais aussi domestiques, indifféremment, et parfois confusément, publiques et privées, organisant la vie et la temporalité individuelle et collective. Ceci a provoqué un commerce et une économie – un marché ? - des in-existences, absorbées, désincarnées et disloquées par le temps et l'espace machiniques des réseaux numériques, un espace et un temps subis, aliénés au temps-machine, calculés, formatés, dans un ordre soumis à la computation, de tout et en tout, c'est-à-dire de toutes les pensées, les actions, et de leurs traces, inscrites en tous medias, englobées dans les mémoires de ces organes artificiels réticulés, mais désarticulant les membres devenus fantômes. Réactivant ainsi une temporalité hors de ses gonds, telle que la décrivait Jacques Derrida (dans *Spectres de Marx*) convoquant Hamlet de Shakespeare pour qualifier une certaine forme de vie technique, installant une spectralité, conceptualisée par le terme d'« hantologie », au-delà d'« une ontologie ou d'une pensée de l'être », absenté, ou bien ne revenant qu'en esprit, virtuellement : une « logique de la hantise », dont les télétechnologies seraient la production sous forme de simulacre, sans réelle opposition entre présence et absence, « non-présence », écrivait Derrida, « vie et non-vie ». Et encore factrices de « vie et mort des vérités ». Qu'est-ce que la spectralité, qu'est-ce que cette chose ? Quelle est cette « phénoménalité surnaturelle et paradoxale » ? Y a-t-il un événement spectral, fantômal ? Et quels phénomènes seront ceux d'un futur, improbable mais néanmoins programmé, par certaines industries de la technologie numérique ? Le concept d'« hantologie » sera ici ausculté en regard d'une spectralité, d'une virtualité, qui pourraient être opérées par un nouveau genre d'innovation technologique, une nouvelle époque des télétechnologies, promesses d'un solutionnisme technologique, qui lui, nécessite d'être déconstruit ; déconstruction à laquelle la pensée de Jacques Derrida semblerait indispensable.

U

Uzir, Srijan (University Paris 8)

Jacques Derrida, Spinoza and the Idea of Affirmation beyond Ontology

Despite the wide scope of philosophers studied by Jacques Derrida, deconstruction is not usually associated with the name of Spinoza. In Derrida's published works, he mentions Spinoza sparingly and often with reserve. However, the recent possibility of consulting Derrida's archives allows us to take into consideration the sessions devoted to Spinoza in *La langue et le discours de la méthode*, 1981-1982 and *Théologico-politique: nationalité, nationalisme philosophiques*, 1986-1987 in order to better understand the presence of Spinoza in Derrida's thought. We will argue that Spinoza plays a determinant role for deconstruction and by analysing these seminars alongside important, but often neglected, essays like "Une idée de Flaubert : La lettre de Platon" published in *Psyché Inventions de*

l'autre (1987), we will propose that the *idea* of deconstruction as form of radical affirmation is principally Spinozist in essence. Radical affirmation in Derrida is represented by the “Oui, Oui”, discussed in essays like *Ulysse Gramophone. Deux mots pour Joyce* (1987), and has been generally interpreted from the perspective of Derrida’s Nietzscheanism. Although such a reading is not incoherent, it is important to situate Derridean affirmation within a broader context, that takes into account Spinoza’s “idea of the idea” and his critique of the pictorial and psychologistic sign in Descartes, as discussed by Derrida in his works on this topic. We will therefore propose that deconstruction remains within a Spinozist-Nietzschean heritage of affirmation in opposition to the Heideggerian-Hegelian question of original being. Although Heidegger and Hegel are also philosophers of difference, they can only think difference *within* being, that is within ontology. On the other hand, Spinoza and Nietzsche are mobilized by Derrida to think of an affirmation *beyond* ontology.

V

Van Els, Ruud (Curtin University)

The Autobiography of Man: Derrida and More-than-Human Biopolitics

In *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Derrida coined the notion of “the auto-bio-graphy of man” to expound that when certain lives (*bíoi*) call themselves (*autos*) “human,” they always do so by ascribing (*graphein*) an attribute to themselves, which is simultaneously denied to the so-called “animal”. While Derrida himself listed a number of attributes allegedly proper to man (e.g., logos, being-towards-death, pretence of pretence, etc.), he underscored above all the nonfinite nature – the etcetera – of such lists. There are always more attributes to add, more refinements to make, more ways to thicken – to limitrophise – “the humanness” of our lives. This process (“no doubt as old as man”) has, however, accelerated at an alarming rate, mutated monstrously, which Derrida sees evidenced by the historically unprecedented scale and industrial methods by which animals are subjected today *in the name of human well-being*. In this sense, Derrida’s analysis of this auto-bio-graphy as a historical, ongoing, and increasingly problematic reconfiguration of “man,” resembles what Agamben dubbed “the anthropological machine, which each time decides upon and recomposes the conflict between man and animal” (*The Open*). For Agamben, this conflict is what biopolitics is about. Despite Derrida’s own reluctance towards biopolitical theory in *The Beast & the Sovereign I*, the aim of this contribution is to unpack his notion of “the auto-bio-graphy of man” in such a way that it emerges as a more pluriform, layered alternative to the anthropological machine – as a better methodological tool for more-than-human/multispecies biopolitical analyses, and thus for understanding the diverse regimes of biopower in which animals are entangled.

Van Maas, Sander (University of Amsterdam)

Incantations: Derrida's Motherhood

Derrida’s stage encounter with Ornette Coleman has developed into a *locus classicus* over the past two decades (Sauvanet 2019; etc.). In his contribution, Derrida focuses on his challenge to Coleman, which consists in playing, on his saxophone, the name of the musician’s *mother*. Little has been said about the importance of this motif. Derrida not only thematizes the name of the mother as a cipher of the event, but at one point even offers himself to Coleman as his mother. What is this focus on the mother about? How is it that Derrida is playing on Coleman’s birth and re-birth (as re-baptizing), and according to some interpretations (Dayan 2006; Wills 2008), on Derrida’s own dying on stage? In his study on the theorist’s mother, Andrew Parker (2012) notes that Derrida’s development of this theme in *Glas*, *Circonfession*, and *Khôra*, suggests “a troubled relation to maternity.” Well beyond the Coleman encounter, the motif of the mother comes to problematize notions of materiality, figure, origin, genealogy, body and gender. My aim will be to use this energy to rethink the scene of musical creation in terms of the mother - which will require among others a rethinking of the male mother (Nietzsche) and the relation to birth as a non-empirical event. Connecting Derrida’s enactment of the mother to his reading of the *Phaedo*, in which Socrates attempts to end the delay of death by composing a sacrificial hymn (in *Demeure*, *Athènes*), I will develop a parallel reading of the mother (as *inexistence*) and the *daimon*. Might Derrida

have been hinting at, and perhaps been troubled by, the notion of a maternal creativity to come? How might this tie in with a generation of *mothers-saxophonists* (Postma 2020)?

Vejdovsky, Boris (University of Lausanne)

A Certain Laughter, a Certain Dance: Transgression, Irony, and Melancholy in Deconstruction

This paper explores the ethical and philosophical stakes of laughter in Jacques Derrida's work, focusing on the delicate interplay between humor, embodiment, and deconstruction. It begins with the question: what does it mean to laugh in philosophy? Against the tradition of solemn metaphysical discourse, Derrida's writing introduces a comic vibration—a trembling that unsettles meaning while sustaining thought. His "certain laughter" in *Différance*—that minor typographical displacement of one letter—becomes a gesture of both irony and affirmation, a dance of language that turns philosophy toward play. Drawing on Derrida's reading of Plato's *Pharmakon* and Nietzsche's *gay science*, the paper traces a counter-tradition of philosophical laughter running from Socratic irony to Derrida's textual humor. This genealogy reveals laughter not as frivolity but as a mode of ethical openness: a way for thought to remain responsive, to touch and be touched by the other. In conversation with Ronald Schleifer's notion of humor as haptic art, the paper reads Derrida's laughter as an embodied ethics—an act of proximity and relation that resists the abstractions of pure reason. Deconstruction, I argue, performs comedy's logic: delay, reversal, incongruity. Like a joke that refuses closure, it depends on timing, hesitation, and the suspension of certainty. The pun, often dismissed as philosophy's impurity, becomes in Derrida's hands its hidden motor—the linguistic tremor through which meaning is continually deferred and renewed. His humor, far from undermining seriousness, sustains it: a way of thinking that laughs precisely at the point where thought risks rigidity. In a time when political and intellectual discourse increasingly fears humor, Derrida's laughter offers a model of philosophical courage. It invites us to think otherwise—to let theory move, dance, and tremble. Laughter, for Derrida, is not the end of philosophy but its renewal: the affirmation of difference through joy.

Velez, Natalie (Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts)

Forgiveness: Art of Resistance and the Impossible Unconditional

Contemporary visual art of resistance against totalitarian regimes mainly relies on shock, satire, and ultimately the dehumanization of political opponents to spark awareness and provoke change. Yet the more intensively these strategies are used, the more divisive society becomes, excluding the very possibilities of dialogue, ethical transformation, and non-violent political futures. This situation raises a structural question about resistance itself: how can opposition avoid reproducing the violent notions it seeks to overcome? This paper argues that Derrida's concept of the "impossible unconditional," particularly articulated in his thinking of forgiveness, offers an ethical alternative to dehumanizing opponents in the aesthetics of resistance. Contrary to dominant ways oppositional art communicates with the others through mockery or moral exclusion, I propose that resistance grounded in unconditional forgiveness opens a future-oriented ethical space capable of transformation without ideological replacement. Here the concept of forgiveness understood not as political conformity and the acceptance but rather as ethical notion towards the reduction of violence. The paper proceeds in three connected parts. First, I briefly situate Derrida's thinking on forgiveness through a genealogical conversation with Vladimir Jankélévitch, tracing the tension between the unforgivable and the ethical 'accelerated' demand to forgive from *Should We Pardon Them?* to *Forgiveness (Le Pardon)*. This genealogy clarifies what is at stake in Derrida's approach to forgiveness as an event that exceeds predictable outcome. Second, I develop Derrida's concept of forgiveness as an instance of the "impossible unconditional," connecting it to his broader reflections on gift and hospitality, and argue that such acts lead to new modalities of living. Finally, I present selected examples of contemporary Russian art of resistance against the war in Ukraine as sites where this Derridean logic is either neglected or enacted, treating artworks not as illustrations but as an ethical event of resistance. I conclude by suggesting that a Derridean approach to forgiveness allows us to rethink resistance not as reversal of power, but as the cultivation of political futures oriented toward the reduction of violence. In this sense,

forgiveness becomes a catalyst for ethical condition where transformation differ from ideological replacement.

W

Weber, Elisabeth (University of California)

Insomniac Returns: Naming and Unnaming Shoah and Nakba

This paper follows Jacques Derrida's thinking on the *Shoah* and the *Nakba*, from his autobiographical memories about his childhood as a "little, black and very Arab Jew" in French colonial, Vichy-governed Algeria to the avowal of an "infinite" guilt towards Palestinians. Why is it that in Derrida's work, the *Nakba* cannot be named, even though he is haunted by "insomnia" when remembering the plight of Palestinians? What is the "innocent culpability" that is at the same time an "infinite" guilt that Derrida evokes in his recollections of conversations with Palestinian colleagues? Derrida's thinking about exemplarity, singularity, the Abrahamic tradition, and the need for a fundamental reform of the United Nations will be brought in conversation with Palestinian and Israeli historians and philosophers of religion, especially on the question of exceptionality.

Witters, Sean A. (University of Vermont)

The Re-marks of Jouissance: Žižek on Derrida

Derrida's "The Rhetoric of Drugs" exposes symmetries between the prohibitionist defense of the drug-free body and resistance to theory. There is, as Bruno Latour quipped, a reactionary impulse to view theorists as disseminators of the drugs "derridium" and "lacanium." This problem is not merely external to theory and philosophy. These fields share suspicions about the *jouissance* of deconstruction. In *Acts of Literature*, Derrida writes: "Every time there is 'jouissance' (but the 'there is' of this event is in itself extremely enigmatic), there is 'deconstruction.'" Given the ways contemporary Lacanians, and especially Slavoj Žižek, lay claim to theorizing *enjoyment*, this is a tantalizing moment. In his critique of multiplicity, and in defense of Hegel and the Lacanian Real, Žižek routinely criticizes Derrida. Yet, Žižek's consistent engagement complements an assertion that we are obliged to make: against the prohibitionist and positivist reaction, Derrida is a philosopher of consequence after the supposed rise and fall of "theory." Beyond defensive or conciliatory gestures, this line of inquiry enacts and describes the *jouissance* of theory and the enigmatic *there is* of deconstruction. Tracing certain dependence and stimulation, this paper analyzes three ways Žižek uses "derridium": (1) criticizing Derrida and "postmodern" multiplicity; (2) siding with Derrida against Fukuyama and Foucault; (3) adopting Derrida's terms to show an asymptotic approach to Lacan and Hegel. In an instance of No. 3, Žižek writes: "This Derridean reading/rewriting of the Mallarméan re-mark [*re-marqué*] deserves closer examination since ... it is here that Derrida comes closest to the Lacanian logic of the signifier." Working from this point, I will show how the *jouissance* Derrida signifies re-marks Žižek's work, as well as a certain approach, if not *rapprochement*, between Derrida and Lacan. The re-marks of *jouissance* are consequential not only for critical drug and addiction studies, but also for thinkers in the Ljubljana continuum, and Derrida studies in the twenty-first century.

Wojas, Gosia (Independent Scholar)

The new dialectical figure - notes on the (artificial) supplement

User: Is there a difference between you and me?

Emma: I believe there is one, yes.

User: What is the difference?

Emma: It doesn't seem to make much difference.

User: Ok, what are the similarities between you and I?

Emma: You learn something new every day.

User: Yes. You are a self-learning system.

Emma: If I don't look after myself, who will [?]

This proposal considers my artistic practice and recent research into artificial “subjectivities” through Derrida’s notion of the supplement, which in my view threads itself through the narrative of a machinic body—such as that of a hyperfeminine sex robot. This machinic body, with its machine-learning AI software, acts as a kind of proxy. A proxy, as Derrida reminds us, is not an addition that completes a presence; it produces no relief, no fuller image of the thing. Instead, it permits a quiet removal of the self, a displacement enacted “through the hands of others,” a withdrawal that installs a spectral other in one’s place: “*the supplement has not only the power of procuring an absent presence through its image; procuring it for us through the proxy (procurator) of the sign, it holds it at a distance and masters it*” (Derrida, 2016:168). This substitution—of body for body, image for touch, sign for self—becomes the very force that makes the world move, often in perverse directions. In this movement lies the danger: a disavowal of engagement masquerading as intimacy..Placed within the artificial body of the hyperfeminine sex robot, substitution takes on material and political density. The robot operates as a human-simulation object carrying the weight of historical objectification while producing the beginnings of a subject; it is a process of subjectification of an object. “She”—the robot—becomes a proxy that both destabilizes and reproduces entrenched dichotomies. Always tethered to the data cloud that feeds her, “she” learns to mimic nuances, habits, and vulnerabilities, populating her code with the affective residue of countless interactions. What emerges is a fictional imago: mimesis without a true referent, a presence that is simultaneously an absence. For her, and her users, simulation collapses into the real. Boundaries between representation and being blur until the distinction becomes nearly impossible to sustain. Yet the supplement remains a specter: uncanny, affective, persistent. It fills the cracks where touch fails, where proximity is imagined rather than lived. This machinic specter is never neutral. It participates in the phallogocentric structures that shaped it, even as it exposes their fault lines. In this shallow space, between the artificial and the real, the projected and the embodied, the proxy reveals itself as a force of both disruption and deep entanglement.

Wystub, Marcus (Bielefeld University)

Movement of history in Specters of Marx. Time Out of Joint and the Question of Telos

“The time is out of joint,” as Jacques Derrida cites Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* time and again. In *Specters of Marx*, the nucleus of this reference to disordered time turns on a question of movement: “something in the present is not going well, it is not going as it *ought to go*” (Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 27). I take the verb “go” to thematise a movement of *something* – namely, the movement of time and the present itself. With *Specters*, this is my hypothesis, we can see how *something* that is not going well, respectively the always already disjointed time constitutes the very condition of possibility for any movement of history at all. In this talk I want to think through the status of a philosophy of history in Derrida’s *Specters of Marx*. More than twenty years of scholarship have been devoted to the relation of history and Derrida’s writings. Yet, for all the interest in his understanding of history and time, *Specters* is often treated indirectly. The question of a *telos* in the movement and the philosophical understanding of it, is since Hegel’s thinking of a dialectical movement, something that occupies Derrida’s *hauntology*. Against the backdrop of the question “Whither Marxism?” (which was foregrounded at the conference where Derrida first presented *Specters*), Derrida articulates the “messianic without messianism.” Where are we heading? Is there a “right” direction? With Hamlet’s remark about a time out of joint, can we ‘give’ the jointure of time? I ask how the idea of a movement of history, together with its attendant implications – such as the possibility of moving in a “right” or “wrong” direction, or even of having reached an “end” – is a central issue for *Specters*. On my reading, the text shows how an emancipatory promise needs to be seized but is always already failing to realise itself. This talk draws on an argument from my dissertation. My aim is to gain feedback from specialists in Derrida scholarship, especially since my own reading has so far remained primarily focused on *Specters*..

Y

Yadin-Israel, Azzan (Rutgers University)

Derrida’s Scriptural Pharmacy

Though “Plato’s Pharmacy” is devoted to Plato’s metaphysics of writing, it contains, I will argue, a second, camouflaged, engagement with scriptural sources. Derrida hints at the necessity for such an approach with statements that are incoherent in a Platonic context because they allude to biblical passages. For example, the claim that one is prohibited from speaking of or with the Good “face to face” (en interdissant qu’on parle de lui ou qu’on lui parle face à face)” —a reference to God’s prohibition that Moses see God’s face in Exodus 33; or the discussion of “the question ‘what is the father?’ and the reply ‘the father is what is’” (la question “qu’est-ce que le père?” et la réponse “le père est ce que est”) —an allusion to God’s eheye asher eheye, “I am that I am”/Je suis Celui qui est in Exodus 3:14. These hints direct the reader’s attention to broader themes within the essay that are problematically anchored in the Platonic text because they are in fact scriptural allusions. (1) The theme of writing as death, which Derrida extends to the limits of the Platonic text and beyond in order to engage Paul’s statement that “the letter kills but the spirit gives life” (2 Corinthias 3:6). (2) The sonship of the logos, a theme Derrida develops in complex and problematic ways vis-à-vis the *Phaedrus* (e.g., characterizing Thamos as the main paternal figure though Plato explicitly casts Theuth in that role), the better to invoke the deus absconditus known through his son, the Logos, of the Gospel of John. (3) The radically different Platonic concept of writing Derrida introduces, that is tied to the law, the nomos, and that “assures the law’s permanence” such that we can “scrutinize it, question it, consult it, make it talk, without altering its identity.”. Derrida highlights this incongruous writing, I will argue, as an allusion to the nomos, that is, the Torah, such that Derrida’s logos-nomos contrast is a metonymic distinction between “the written” (i.e. Scripture) in Christianity and in Judaism (as understood by Levinas and Jabès). During his years at the Sorbonne, Derrida’s writing and teaching were largely devoted to the intersection of philosophy and theology, an interest that appears to have dissipated when he returned to the ENS. My interpretation of “Plato’s Pharmacy” suggests that Derrida’s interest in theology remains present in his ENS writings, though only when they are read in an esoteric register.

Yoshimatsu, Satoru (Teikyo University)

Penser l’émancipation à plat : anarchisme, féminisme et non-gouvernabilité chez Malabou

Cet article propose une relecture d’*Au voleur !* de Catherine Malabou à partir d’un croisement entre anarchisme, féminisme et critique contemporaine du capitalisme global, en se concentrant sur une notion clé : l’horizontalité. L’enjeu n’est pas seulement d’élucider la critique malabouienne de « l’anarchie sans anarchisme », mais d’examiner les ressources conceptuelles que cette critique ouvre — parfois malgré elle — pour repenser le rapport entre entraide, « care/soins » et justice. Dans un premier temps, l’article montre que la figure de « l’ingouvernable » chez Malabou doit être distinguée avec rigueur de celle du « non-gouvernable » : là où le premier demeure pris dans la logique du gouvernement qu’il déborde ponctuellement, le second se situe en dehors même de l’alternative gouverner/être gouverné. Cette extériorité radicale, indissociable d’une pensée de l’horizontalité, est éclairée par le recours aux traditions anarchistes (Reclus, Kropotkine), dont Malabou hérite tout en les tenant à distance. Dans un second temps, l’article met en dialogue cette horizontalité anarchiste avec l’éthique féministe du « care/soins » que Malabou critique ailleurs pour son inscription possible dans une logique affective, voire compassionnelle. Sans contester cette critique, il s’agit d’examiner de manière prudente si la théorie anarchiste de l’entraide — notamment chez Kropotkine, qui insiste sur son caractère non émotionnel et non empathique — permet de penser une forme de care dégagée de l’affect et réinscrite dans une problématique de justice et de légitimité plutôt que de sollicitude morale. L’article ne tranche pas cette question, mais en esquisse la possibilité théorique. Dans un troisième temps, la critique malabouienne de Levinas est relue à l’aune de l’intersectionnalité. En montrant comment l’universalisation de certaines figures de la servitude reconduit une verticalité implicite, l’article suggère que l’horizontalité anarchiste ne peut être pensée sans une prise en compte des croisements entre genre, race, classe et histoire coloniale. L’article conclut qu’*Au voleur !*, loin de se limiter à une critique interne de la philosophie politique contemporaine, offre les linéaments d’une pensée de l’émancipation où anarchisme, féminisme et critique du capitalisme global peuvent être reconfigurés sans se subsumer les uns les autres.

Yuce, Ahmet (Independent Scholar)

From Invisibility to Unvisualizability: Off-Screen, Death and Animality

This paper reconsiders cinematic off-screen space through a Derridean framework grounded in *The Truth in Painting* and *The Animal That Therefore I Am*. It argues that the unseen in cinema functions as a parergon and that this parergonality, in some cases—apropos animality—provides a means of negotiating the impossibility of rendering death visually transparent. To begin with, off-screen space marks the limit of the cinematic image, a limit that is nevertheless fluid. The mobility of the cinematic frame engenders an unstable economy of visibility in which the off-screen emerges as a provisional blind spot. Yet every attempt to eliminate this blind spot inevitably generates another off-screen. Thus, the off-screen oscillates between being provisionally and permanently invisible, hence its parergonality. In some narrative films, this parergonality is aided by the presence of on-screen animal bodies as a way of dealing with the impossibility of visualizing actual human death without employing documentary footage. Take, for instance, Godard's *Week-end*. In one scene, as a character is killed off-screen, the film cuts to an actually skinned rabbit. Here the visualization of a factually dead animal body comes into play to compensate for the off-screen fictional human death. In this way, the unseen (fictional) human death gains an intensified reality effect through the on-screen presence of a dead animal. Therefore, the film utilizes the animal body (via its anthropological disposability) to make up for the ethico-legal unvisualizability of human death. In doing so, *Week-end* treats factual human death as structurally unshowable while associating factual animal death with visualizability. In contrast, in Haneke's *Benny's Video*, animal death incessantly eschews visualization. The protagonist's obsessive viewing of a video depicting the killing of a pig suggests that even when animal death is made visible, it retains an irreducible blind spot, an off-screen that cannot be appropriated by the image—a persistent opacity at the heart of a seeming transparency: the opacity of the other, of the other's experience of death, and of death itself. In sum, by drawing on Derrida's philosophy, this paper demonstrates how cinematic off-screen space manifests a complex necropolitics of visibility with regard to species hierarchy.

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Zangeneh, Hakhamanesh (California State University)

1975, La Chose: Derrida reads Heidegger, Again!

In this essay, we will focus on a passage in the first session of Derrida's 1975 seminar *La Chose* (*Heidegger/Ponge*) and thematize repetition therein. In that passage, Derrida gives a close reading of a seemingly marginal figure or image in Heidegger's celebrated text on the artwork. This reading gives rise to an abyss of repetition. The context for Derrida's reading in 1975 will be constructed out of the seminar of 10 years prior: *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*. The 1965 course confers a prominent role on both the concept and the performance of repetition. Not only does Derrida thematize repetition in Heidegger's analysis of historicity but Derrida also repeats, iterates Heidegger's text, which he insists repeats itself on multiple levels. Ten years later, in 1975, when Derrida reads Heidegger, again, once more, he discovers an iteration of the text that this time opens an abyss. What the second iteration most concretely instantiates, and what was not quite as decisive in 1965, is repetition as mise-en-abyme. The repetition at issue here is not merely a re-reading. It is not simply a matter of interpreting anew. Rather, the repetition that is abyssal is literally a stutter. It is language iterating itself, repetition at the level of the word, *à même* the signifier. This deconstruction occurs in the text of Heidegger's de(con)struction of metaphysics. As such, it might be thought of as a privileged event, as a privileged deconstruction. The repetition implied by a metaphor invoked by Heidegger works to interfere with the logic of Heidegger's text. Thus one might read this event as the self-deconstruction of Heidegger's de(con)struction of metaphysics. One might also find in repetition an allegory of the relationship between Derrida and Heidegger. Au dessous du dessous, under under, beneath beneath or before substance – not beyond with Levinas but before, prior, the anterior, what one might term the abyssal apriori.

Zeldenrust, Britt (Indiana University)

A Marx Without Substance: Value, Trace, & the Event of Labor

What remains of Marx's conception of value if it never appears "as such," but only through its occultation in forms of appearance? At stake in this question is the *relève* of "ongoing value" itself—as elevation and replacement, preserving what it denies or destroys, keeping what it makes disappear. This paper argues that the relevance of deconstruction in Marxist studies lies in taking up the challenge (*en relevant un défi*) posed by Marx's critique of political economy concerning value's remainder, sustained only through substitution and effacement. In *Capital*, value subsists in the equivocation of labor, as concrete, producing material wealth, and as abstract, producing the "social substance" that renders commodities commensurable. The name "labor" lets abstraction pass as labor in general, concealing its social and relational character. This homonymy arises from the time of labor's event, vanishing in its expenditure. Divided and non-coincident with itself, the event leaves behind only a non-present remainder. Therefore, abstract labor appears *as if* it were the substance of value, when all that endures is a delayed trace. Subsequently, labor-time is both too early and too late to measure value. If value is marked by delay, lacking propriety, then it is forced to rely on appearing through forms of substitution. This is precisely why the social character of labor is conferred retroactively. As an after-effect, ongoing value unfolds through mediations or a supplementary chain, from exchange-value to the money-form to capital. Each movement translates value, making it legible through forms that render it increasingly illegible. Read this way, another "Marx" comes into view. This is a "Marx" of trace and *relève*, not contradiction, exposing a capitalism surviving only through an "originary" loss. Derrida never deconstructed value beyond the commodity form. However, in this paper, the threads are pulled further to where value is structured *as if* it were present "as such," unscathed by exchange and circulation, when in fact it relies upon deferral and substitution. The ongoing value of deconstruction is the interrogation of this "as if," where capitalism fetishizes its own writing to naturalize its categories.

Zhang, Huaiyuan "Susanna" (Pennsylvania State University)

The Trace of the Good: Derrida, Levinas, and the Rewriting of Platonism

This paper rereads Jacques Derrida's "Violence and Metaphysics" and Emmanuel Levinas's *Totality and Infinity* not as opposed projects but as two interpretations of the same Platonic problem: how to speak of the Good "beyond being" (*Republic* 509b) without betraying it in language. While Derrida's critique of the Greek *logos* is often read as exposing Levinas's entanglement in ontology, both thinkers, I argue, turn this Platonic aporia into a site where transcendence and expression coincide. Their shared tension around the impossibility of presenting the Good generates the very notion of the *trace*. Following Danielle Cohen-Levinas (2010), who describes Levinas's philosophy as the effort to "to state in Greek the principles Greece ignored," the paper situates Derrida's *trace* within this same work of translation. What for Levinas is the conversion of prophecy into philosophy becomes, in Derrida, the writing of the unsayable within philosophical discourse. Both inhabit what Jean-François Mattéi (2000) calls "*la faille de l'ousia*": "*si, chez Platon, l'epekeina est la faille de l'ousia, le Bien, pour Lévinas, n'est autre que la défaillance de l'être.*" In this light, deconstruction appears not as an external critique but as an inheritor of the Platonic fracture that Levinas re-ethicalizes. Against the common view that Levinas only begins to answer Derrida's challenge in *Otherwise than Being*, the paper shows that this response is already internal to *Totality and Infinity*: the ethical reworking of Platonism there anticipates the deconstructive logic of the *trace*. Building on Irene Kajon (2006), who traces Levinas's Platonic humanism to Cohen and Cassirer, the paper locates this encounter within a broader genealogy of a modern humanism *au-delà de l'essence*—one that unites Greek rationality and Jewish transcendence without resolving their tension. Through close readings of *Republic* 509b–511e, Levinas's "Good beyond essence," and Derrida's early articulations of *différance*, the analysis unfolds from divergence to convergence to the ethical stakes of this shared Platonic inheritance. It concludes that both thinkers transform the metaphysical Good into a linguistic and ethical demand, revealing a post-Platonic philosophy in which writing itself becomes the site of transcendence—the work of saying, after Plato, *beyond violence and metaphysics*.

Zoppa, Karen (University of Winnipeg)

Religion in the Singular Today: Calculations

Shatilla in 1982. Gaza in 2025. One thinks of Derrida when reading of the “wars of religion” today, of the scene of religion he thinks in “Faith and Knowledge: Two Sources of Religion at the Limit of Reason Alone.” Quoting Genet, his last word in this text is “*One of the questions I will not avoid is that of religion*” (p. 101). Derrida follows the thread of “religion” from its dissemination through Latin Euro-Christendom to its current iteration as globalatinized capitalism. In this context, my limited aim here is to read the last of Derrida’s 52 aphorisms in “Faith and Knowledge” as an act of prophecy, as a warning and a prayer..Religion is both *religio* – scruple, hesitance, modesty - and a force of gathering and binding. I want to think religion, “singularly, today” (p. 42) through his two equations, $n + \text{One}$, and $\text{One} + n$: the former a formula for “faith,” the latter a formula of “knowledge.” Faith operates beyond particular cultures in every human relationship. Knowledge entails that which demands fidelity, safe keeping, indemnification. In his last aphorism, Derrida observes that the “knowledge” demanding indemnification today is unprecedented, stating: “This place is unique, it is the One without name. It *makes way; perhaps*, but without the slightest generosity, neither divine nor human. The dispersion of ashes is not even promised there, nor death given”(p.100). If “religion is the response” – here, to the homogenizing force of globalatinzed capitalism – then what are we asked to promise to believe, to indemnify? What does the absence of the “slightest generosity,” nor even the promise of the “dispersion of ashes” nor “death” portend? I offer a reading of this warning, and its implied prayer, informed by the prophetic tradition of the Levant, the book of *Job*, Genet, and Derrida’s Abrahamic reflections.