

A POETICS OF A LITERATURE ON METAPHOR AND METAPHYSICS, BY MARTIN  
HEIDEGGER, JACQUES DERRIDA, AND PAUL RICOEUR

by

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A poetics of a literature on metaphor and metaphysics, by Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur

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Without claiming to summarize in a few pages books that must be read pen in hand, I shall show in what perspective I see them and also how I am bending their lines to meet my own reflections.

Gaston Bachelard, Lautréamont<sup>1</sup>

It is only fair to be grateful not only to those whose views we can share but also to those who have expressed rather superficial opinions. They too have contributed something; by their preliminary work they have formed our mental experience.

Aristotle, Metaphysics<sup>2</sup>

To develop the aporia - *diaporein* - as Aubenque wishes to do<sup>3</sup> is not to say nothing. For the effort that fails displays a particular structure, circumscribed by the very expression *pros hen, ad unum*. Something is required by the declaration even when it is put in the form of an aporia: 'But everywhere science deals chiefly with that which is primary, and on which the other things depend, and in virtue of which they get their names.'<sup>4</sup> Paul Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor<sup>5</sup>

### **This is a poetics on a philosophical discourse**

This is a dissertation that attempts to think about the problem of a philosophical understanding of metaphor. This is a poetics of philosophy, readings and commentary on a literature about metaphor. The poetics is circumscribed by the object of four texts and the texts' literatures, between Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur, on understanding the metaphysical position of metaphor. This is simultaneously a cosmologically large question and an expression of its place and time.

This dissertation is a poetics of a literature of 20th century continental philosophy. A poetics describes the structures of a literature. The present dissertation is a discursive engagement with the cited literature of philosophy, as a matter of scholarship and as a demonstration of thoughtful undertaking, that a plastic mind discerns the cited reckoning of view, the world. This is a poetics of a philosophical

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<sup>1</sup> Bachelard, Lautréamont, 83-4.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, Metaphysics, 993b 12-15.

<sup>3</sup> Aubenque, Le Problème de l'être chez Aristotle, 221.

<sup>4</sup> Aristote, Metaphysics, 1003 b16.

<sup>5</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 266.

discourse on metaphor and metaphysics. This dissertation hopes to demonstrate the situation of a literary positing of views of things.<sup>6</sup>

This is a poetics on a matter of modern and ancient philosophy, and literary theory. A poetics describes the structures of a literature, the object here a discourse on metaphor and metaphysics. This dissertation is a failure of scholarship, except as it offers some summary of the concepts that a literature of philosophy contends with. This dissertation leaps too quickly from too-determinative readings to too-large metaphysical claims. This dissertation understands itself as a reading of an understanding of how it is, and by what means, to see the world, generally, to have a view and be with and in the world. This is a literature that seeks to understand these mechanisms, in view of and grateful to others, and this is a poetics of such a literature. This poetics is the demonstration of what remains of a failure of scholarship.

The process of writing this dissertation has been to find a focus in the topic; that is, it has been in responding to my own readings that pertinences became apparent, particularly between Derrida and Ricoeur at the middles. The style of the readings are mutable. Language and reading necessarily reflect that of the writer approached; this is unavoidable. *Geschick* cannot be spoken to without speaking of *Geschick*. In constructing the apparatus of these readings some manner of terms are approached, regarding Heidegger's, Derrida's, and Ricoeur's thinking. And it is for this, for the sake of intellectual self-demonstration, as an understanding of the works in question, playfulness in approach is to be grateful for.

## **Method**

My method has been to read these texts with pen in hand and to record my thoughts, discerning the themes and reading them in their context, as a literature. From this I have organized the progression of thought on metaphor that the literature demonstrates, and the conclusions that Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur seem to arrive at, before and tentatively suggesting my own conclusions, and speculation as to future thought.

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<sup>6</sup> Ricoeur on facts, viz Russell and Wittgenstein, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 235.

My approach to the question of literary metaphor, as a matter of academic curiosity, has moved me between rhetoric and poetry, discourse and reading. My next book will hew more self-consciously to Ricoeur's method of thought and writing.

It is useful to define the method that I have followed in the composition of this work. Simply, I identified a progression of thought that I found fascinating and personally enlivening, as a matter of intellectual substance, and in reading those works I read in reference to the works that Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur have drawn from in arriving at their own conclusions. Four works of philosophical literature are approached (a lecture series, an essay, a study, and an essay), in some manner of discursive unfolding, and I have tried to appreciate the intellectual bases for these works by reading through and around the intellectual-historical predication underlying these works. It is in this process that I have asked of and demanded from myself clearer understanding on other thinkers. It is frustrating to spend a significant period of time reading through books that are not, and may never be, immediately applicable to a demonstration of topical knowledge and intellectual capacity. This is my own fault.

My method in composing this work has therefore been to write my readings. Each reading was composed discretely over the course of some months, and progressed according to the historical unfolding of the thought on metaphor that is the discourse between Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur. This is, perhaps, the methodology of the uninformed, that, were I to write this dissertation from the vantage of its completion, now, I might radically alter the organization, but I don't believe that my conclusions would be much different, and to read my approach, as a method of understanding through reading, lends me some happiness not dissimilar from that of reading Heidegger, and Derrida, and Ricoeur, in their own methods.

## The literature

The four principal texts that are read in this dissertation include the following:

Heidegger, Martin. The Principle of Reason, Trans. Reginald Lilly. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.

-- Der Satz vom Grund. Pfullingen: Neske, 1957.

Derrida, Jacques. "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy." Margins of Philosophy. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

-- "La mythologie blanche: la métaphore dans le texte philosophique." *Poétique* 5, 1971.

Ricoeur, Paul. The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language. Trans. Robert Czerny, with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012.

-- La métaphore vive. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1975.

Derrida, Jacques. "Le retrait de la métaphore." *Poesie*, vol. 7, 1978. Librairie Classique Eugène Belin.

-- "The *Retrait* of Metaphor." Trans. editors. *Enclitic* vol. 2, no. 2, 1978. University of Minnesota.

-- "The *Retrait* of Metaphor." Psyche: Inventions of the Other, Volume 1. Ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg. Trans. Peggy Kamuf. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.

A poetics is impossible without the work of others. In the case of this dissertation, the poetics is dependent on the translation into English of the four main texts by Reginald Lilly, Alan Bass, Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello, and the editors of *Enclitic* and Peggy Kamuf. It is on their translations that citations in this poetics are possible.

## Broad reflections

Without claiming to summarize the arguments of Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur on the philosophical position of metaphor, it is understood that each sets before the reader a train of thought whose genealogies of form and particulars demonstrate some perspectives, whose general attitudes are generally summarizable: the structure of their thought adheres a form in its saying. This is more narrowly an examination of thought about metaphor as a matter of philosophy, in reflection on it being a matter of rhetoric.

The contents of these arguments aren't superficial. And I hope that my engagement with these arguments isn't frivolous. This is a setting-in-comparison between works that are topically oriented by a

common sense of scope, and this is an act of examination that Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur are all engaged in, in their own methods and styles.

Where Heidegger walks his search towards views, Derrida takes flights between his sources and Ricoeur seeks to demonstrate a purpose in asking of his examination a manner of explanation.<sup>7</sup>

The overlap of the concerns expressed by Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, directs this inquiry. This is, perhaps, therefore, reducible in scope to being the work of a hermeneut. The discourse between Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur does not occur within the boundaries of its own contemporaneousness. This is not a discourse in a place at a time between three men about a topic in particular, with allowance for excursions of thought and scholarship. This is a philosophical conversation that carries itself beyond its own limits, extemporaneously, unfolding and in retrospect; this is a conversation that is coordinate of the topic at hand, with allowances made for the skips and hops of contributions towards the development of thought around the topic, and therefore some frivolity of choice marks the direction of thought in response to what informs it.

It is hoped that this dissertation presents itself more than as an addendum to the topic of reason, correlative with thought on metaphysics, and the question of metaphor in subsidiary, rhetorically and philosophically. This dissertation attempts to understand the topic of metaphor as it develops across the conversation between Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur. As a matter of situation, towards a temporally consistent consideration of the texts at hand, it is necessary to name and briefly describe, and to date, each of the works in question.

The first, Der Satz vom Grund, by Martin Heidegger, is summatively described in the translation by Reginald Lily, in the first paragraph of the translator's introduction:

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<sup>7</sup> Badiou, Theoretical Writings, variously referring to Heidegger's analysis as "the genuinely Socratic method of delineating the Idea [and] consists in grasping a definition"; "to a certain extent," and in direct comparison with Kierkegaard, Derrida's "disparate series of long, quasi-novelistic works"; and the "hermeneuts" who have stepped "into the breach opened up by the faithful Paul Ricoeur" in the task of exacting an "interpretation in many of the dead master's texts." (43; xiii; 129) These are encapsulations of philosophical approach by Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, and they are useful markers for orientation in the initial approach to the Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur,, and the discussion that they lay out (in pieces, and without a schematic view of the whole in their dialogue).

In 1955-56 Martin Heidegger gave a one-hour lecture course at the University of Freiburg under the title "Der Satz vom Grund." In 1957 he published the manuscript of that lecture course, together with an address having the same title that he delivered twice in 1956, as *Der Satz vom Grund*.<sup>8</sup>

The book, which contains thirteen lectures and an address that sketch in academic prose, describes Heidegger's thoughts on the principle of reason, specifically as it is addressed by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, as the principle of sufficient reason: *nihil est sine ratione*. Heidegger's thought on the matter of reason, and in particular on Leibniz, is peripatetic in nature, and is embodied in the development of Heidegger's own thought about metaphysics, the history of philosophy, etc. Though the topic of this dissertation cannot account for an adequate situating of the totality of Heidegger's thought about metaphysics, it is necessary to examine more specifically what Heidegger is speaking to at various turns in the lectures.

The second part of this conversation comes from Jacques Derrida, in the essay "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," and originally published in *Poétique* 5 (1971).<sup>9</sup> The topic of this essay is explicitly that of metaphor (Heidegger's lectures touch fleetingly on the topic of metaphor), or the place of metaphor in the philosophic text. This essay works at an analysis between the rhetorical trope of metaphor and the philosophical implications of the concept of metaphor. There is in this essay explicit, passing, reference to Heidegger's lectures in The Principle of Reason, and this at least tethers the essay to Heidegger's thought, as far as concerns Ricoeur. And the citation of Heidegger is specifically from the sixth lecture in The Principle of Reason, in which Heidegger states that "the metaphorical exists only within metaphysics."<sup>10</sup> But even were there no specific connection between Heidegger and Derrida's essay, e.g., by particular citation, the topics of discussion are intimately related, and it is by Derrida's reflections on Heidegger about metaphor that determines the direction of the conversation between Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur.

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<sup>8</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, vii.

<sup>9</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy."

<sup>10</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 48.



Derrida is a difficult writer. Derrida demonstrates an intelligence with some ideas about things. Derrida's reflection on metaphor, inclusive of Heidegger's inquiry into the principle of sufficient reason, productively generates a path of conversation about the nature of metaphor in relation to philosophy, a metaphysical question.

The third part of the conversation that this dissertation works through is of Paul Ricoeur, the book The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language.<sup>11</sup> Ricoeur's book of eight studies about topics of inquiry concerning metaphor cites both Heidegger's The Principle of Reason and actively engages and critiques Derrida's essay "White Mythology." But as with Derrida's essay, the whole of the larger conversation (i.e., Derrida's "The *Retrait* of Metaphor" in response to Ricoeur's The Rule of Metaphor, in response to Derrida's "White Mythology" in response to Heidegger's The Principle of Reason) is not exclusively dependent on explicit citation of prior parts of the dialogue, and because there is some citation between Derrida and Ricoeur of one another and in reference to Heidegger it's simple enough to identify and examine the totality of the dialogue, it should seem, even if such a totality is necessarily adumbrated by the process of reading.

Ricoeur's eighth study in The Rule of Metaphor, "Metaphor and philosophical discourse," is concerned with the question: "*what philosophy is implied in the movement that carries the investigation from rhetoric to semantics and from sense towards reference?*"<sup>12</sup> Such a question demands quick reflection on Ricoeur's thought to this point, and within the confines of the present inquiry such reflection will remain quick. The purpose of reading Ricoeur's eighth study, more specifically, is to examine reaction to Derrida's reflections on metaphor and Heidegger's thought in The Principle of Reason, and to understand the positions that Ricoeur stakes out in response to his own inquiry. Near the beginning of the eighth study, Ricoeur is quite explicit about his thought being in reaction to the prior postulates of Heidegger and Derrida, so that where Ricoeur is critical of Derrida's positions he remains nonetheless dependent on and in debt to Derrida for the form of his own inquiry.

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<sup>11</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor.

<sup>12</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 257.

It is noted above that Heidegger's manner of reflection on the topic of the principle of sufficient reason is peripatetic, an intent and inquisitive focus on different aspects of the topic in question, informed by prior, provisional conclusions about the nature of being and in relation to the prior, provisional conclusions that other thinkers have arrived at. This becomes a defined aspect of Heidegger's own inquiry, in fact: the very manner by which the human mind shapes its provisional conclusions, towards further inquiry, and further provisional conclusions. Derrida's writing is compressed, more inclusive, less immediately clear than Heidegger's, and Derrida's manner of approach may thus feel more generally claustrophobic (cf., Heidegger). And where Derrida's approach may undermine the clarity of its examination by its inclusive and discerning method, Ricoeur offers a systematic approach that attempts to piece together different aspects of the topic at hand, of metaphor in relation to philosophy. It would seem appropriate, though, that the final part of the dialogue between Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur is as a response to Ricoeur by Derrida; different methods of approach to a question lend themselves, in the larger totality of their engagement, to a broader array of perspective in such an inquiry. In this sense, the array of perspective in the conversation in question substantiates the present inquiry with a diversity of manners of approach, each contributing in some respect and each manner demarcating the boundaries of its usefulness of approach in clarifying the nature of metaphor in relation to philosophy. The hope is that my own manner of approach, in reading the conversation as a chronologically-posed multiplicity of voices, adds to the clarity of the conversation in question.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that the dissertation is not limited to Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, insofar as their own reflections and contributions to the conversation are not limited to each other. This is especially true for Heidegger, who initiates the conversation. To this end, there is reference to Aristotle, Plato, Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and others and poets. But the focus of this poetics is on Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur. This is a methodologically comparative set of readings and the foundation of an intellectual curiosity, and what may suppose a manner of superficiality in the expansion of the limits of thought. In following the list of recited thinkers I have come to Heidegger,

Derrida, and Ricoeur, and in reading Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur I have had recourse to look again at the ways that I think about the world.

### **Why this matters**

The Principle of Reason is taken up by Derrida and Ricoeur; there is a conversation that follows from this text and the conversation is not about the principle of reason, per se, and which traces a manner of thought around the matter of metaphor and metaphysics; and because Heidegger and Derrida are challenging to read and to grapple with, for their individual reasons, and because Ricoeur is an intimidating intellect for me.

These thinkers are all intellectually intimidating, and curiosity about their ideas and self-doubt in grasping their conclusions seem to be an appropriate and personally-engaging test of one's capacities for thinking philosophically.

Appreciation for their methods lends, over the course of writing a poetics of this literature, an appreciation for the development, and a more explicit practice, of the methodology of composing a poetics that diaporeins.

Of Heidegger, his philosophical perspective is patient and deeply read; he adheres to a philosophical understanding and allows for the play of association to inform his thought to the extent that topical relevance is not overshadowed by the paced walk of a thinking-through. Of Derrida, a thinker more given than Heidegger to the expression of a poetics of examination, as a play of expression that identifies and substantiates a broader perspective on the deflections of significance, the vast constellations of his reading are drawn upon and topically disgorged within a framework of argument; it often seems that Derrida has written first a clear conclusion grounded in the thought of reading, outlining playful demonstrations of intellectual capacity. Of Ricoeur, a thinker who allows thought less inclined towards the demonstration of his own intelligence, his method is straightforward and daunting - to set before his reader the topic, and to place within those topics valences of consideration and understanding that are

elaborated in the comparative readings of other thinkers on those sub-topics, towards an oftentimes incomplete but not unenlightening conclusion. And things add up between them.

In short, Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, are attractive as thinkers as much for the progression of thought that arises out of reading their works, as in the approach that they inspire to take in reading them, and the reflection of method in theirs.

On metaphysics, and why this discourse on metaphysics and metaphor matters as a literary object, the world can be difficult to understand, sometimes, and a modest and daily communion with the world and recognizing and being with other people, as a source for good, is hoped for. But beyond obvious matters, I'm largely unaware of the historical legacies that have contributed to the form of my present conditions, and I'm unsure of even the basic assumptions I hold concerning the mechanism of my engagement with the world. I find solace in Ricoeur's question, What does it mean, truth, reality, the world? How am I to understand these terms, these conceptual representations for my conditions of being? I'm unsatisfied with metaphor, and I have only metaphor as handles of explanation for my experience of being. I have borrowed and considered the watchwords, as Derrida describes them, from Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, as a manner of understanding what it means to have a perspective of the world, and as much as I have found the experience of such intellectual play to be expansive, I am, in my thought about the world, unsatisfied.

This is a task that calls into question one's own intellectual capacities, with a clear demonstration of misunderstandings. Kant exhorts, *Sapere Aude!*, courage to use one's intelligence.<sup>13</sup> Courage is independent from the demonstration of knowledge that this poetics affords.

In reading Kant, in reading around Heidegger and Derrida and Ricoeur, is found his distinction between the analytic and the dialectic, which lends a direction of thought about the works that this dissertation undertakes to read:

General logic analyzes the entire formal business of the understanding and reason into its elements, and presents these as principles of all logical assessment of our cognition. This part of logic can therefore be called an

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<sup>13</sup> Kant, "Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? [1784]," 135.

analytic, and is on that very account at least the negative touchstone of truth, since one must before all else examine and evaluate by means of these rules the form of all cognition before investigating its content in order to find out whether with regard to the object it contains positive truth.<sup>1415</sup>

Kant distinguishes, however, between the totality of the object before the eyes and cognitive wells, and the apparatus for the judgment of such, a mere "canon for judging... used as if it were an organon for the actual production of at least the semblance of objective assertions, and thus in fact it has thereby been misused. Now general logic, as a putative organon, is called dialectic."<sup>16</sup> Aristotle provides three parts to a definition of reason at the beginning of Topics, that

Reasoning is a discussion in which, certain things having been laid down, something other than these things necessarily results through them... Reasoning is dialectical which reasons from generally accepted opinions. Things are true and primary which command belief through themselves and not through anything else; for regarding the first principles of science it is unnecessary to ask any further question as to 'why,' but each principle should of itself command belief. Generally accepted opinions, on the other hand, are those which commend themselves to all or to the majority or to the wise - that is, to all of the wise or to the majority or to the most famous and distinguished of them.<sup>17</sup>

What is the conclusion of reasoning is not the truth of the matter but a vantage point from which to reason further. Heidegger makes this clear in his metaphor of the leap as a manner of cognition. Dialectic is, in this respect, the reasoning-through, via generally accepted precepts, towards a position of clarity on the matter under consideration, without the assurances of clarity as such. Despite this, *sapere aude!*; there is no certainty to clarity of thought, but there is certainty to its absence in the absence of effort towards such. And despite this, Kant regards the organon of a dialectic as

the logic of illusion - a sophistical art for giving to its ignorance, indeed even to its intentional tricks, the air of truth, by imitating the method of thoroughness, which logic describes in general, and using its topics for the embellishment of every empty pretension. Now one can take it as a certain and useful warning that general logic, considered as an organon, is always a logic of illusion, i.e., is dialectical. For since it teaches us nothing at all

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<sup>14</sup> Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 198, B84-5.

<sup>15</sup> Previous to this, Kant takes as presupposition the "nominal definition of truth, namely that it is the agreement of cognition with its object." (197, B82).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 198, B85.

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, Topics, 100a 30-100b 23, 273-5.

about the content of cognition, but only the formal conditions of agreement with the understanding, which are entirely indifferent with regard to the objects, the effrontery of using it as a tool (organon) for an expansion and extension of its information, or at least the pretension of so doing, comes down to nothing but idle chatter, asserting or impeaching whatever one wants with some plausibility.<sup>18</sup>

This calls into question the gains this poetics may tout, in undertaking this project. Kant says further "such instruction by no means befits the dignity of philosophy." The methodological apparatus that Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, have devised in order to elucidate a view of the world serve as both the demonstration of their limitations as a dialectical tool and to expand, if slightly, a clearer perspective of the world.

Such methodologies are organons towards metaphysical perspective; the poetry of their ideas, its expression, contribute to this project. Heidegger and the insufficiency of metaphysical logic; Derrida and the reschemata of figure; Ricoeur and saying between poetic and speculative; these cannot account for the world. But these demonstrate a reconciliation between the object of the world and its view, the extension of a logics, and principles for understanding. This is a poetic reflection of philosophical perspective, and it is helpful in organizing subsequent views of things.

In this sense, then, I have read Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur on the view that these are works of literature about philosophy, and I have understood the philosophy of their views within a literary reading. The question is, Why an object whose study and presentation demonstrates a basis for doubt? Because in doubt there's irony and irony connotes some company and company must demonstrate a truth to my conditions, that I'm at least not alone with things, in view of the world.

This dissertation is a poetics of a literature on reason, and concludes with a general view of the literature, and a modest gesture of thought on Heidegger's question at the end of The Principle of Reason, towards the definition of play.

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<sup>18</sup> Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 198-9, B86.

## Chapter 1. Commentary on The Principle of Reason by Martin Heidegger

### a. Introduction

#### 1. The scope of this chapter

This chapter takes into consideration Martin Heidegger's lecture series, The Principle of Reason, as the first piece in the philosophical conversation between Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, on the relationship between metaphor and metaphysics. There are several aspects of Heidegger's lectures that demand attention, and examination, but it is in paring his ideas into six subsections of thought that Heidegger's organons, towards a philosophical perspective of the world, may more fruitfully elucidate and draw out those aspects of this literature that follows, with Derrida and Ricoeur.

The second section of this chapter (section "b. The question of ground/reason, with reference to αξιωμα and παιδεία") is about the concept of "ground/reason," and details Heidegger's engagement with the philosophical history of the principle of reason, vis-à-vis Leibniz's contributions to the matter. Heidegger offers as predication to the concept of "ground/reason" the ideas of αξιωμα and παιδεία, as matters of limit-concept and self-cultivation - that is, the axiomatic basis for thought and the quantifiable/qualifiable value that adheres to thought out of axiomatic predication. This section also introduces Heidegger's thought on Angelus Silesius' Cherubinischer Wandersmann.

The third section (section "c. The scope of examination of metaphor, vis-à-vis metaphysics") concerns the distinction between metaphor and metaphysics that Heidegger draws in the sixth lecture. This section details Heidegger's understanding of metaphysics as, generally, a world-view conditioned in the inheritance of perspective. Heidegger considers metaphor as function within metaphysical thought, and it is through this that metaphor is defined according to a concept of metaphysics.

The fourth section (section "d. The concept of *Geschick*") is about *Geschick*, Heidegger's "watchword" (itself a manner of "watchword," as it becomes relevant to both Derrida and Ricoeur) for the inheritance of perspective, as a legacy of metaphysical thought, and as condition to human thought (animal rationale) more generally. Heidegger concludes, vis-à-vis *Geschick*, that reason is rendered.

The fifth section (section "e. Heidegger's hermeneutic method, vis-à-vis ground/reason and *Geschick*") details Heidegger's idea on method towards reason as a matter of hermeneutics. A contrast is drawn in this book between hermeneutics, interpretation, and a poetics, to the extent that where interpretation is a reconciled understanding of a text, and where a poetics describes the structures of a literature, hermeneutics demonstrates a syntheses of understanding across texts. The levels of operation between poetics, interpretation, and hermeneutics, in relation to the text or texts in question, serves as an adequately analogous to Heidegger's examination of ground and reason. In this section, Heidegger understands method, via Silesius, as the axiomatic difference between seeking ground and the representation of ground - in other words, as a matter of will towards reason and the logic of reason.

The sixth section of this chapter (section "f. Leaping") seeks to define the philosophical concept of "essence," and to place this concept within the larger argument that Heidegger engages about the principle of reason, together with Heidegger's ideas of the path and the leap, as metaphorically-described thoughts on the matter of the methodology of thought. Important to this section is an understanding of Heidegger's hermeneutic methodology, as it is elucidated by George Stefan's poem "Sea Song," and the distinction between "more knowable" and "more familiar," as it concerns the opening lines of Aristotle's Physics.

The seventh section (section "g. λόγος and λέγειν, difference, distinction and play") understands the distinction between λόγος and λέγειν as a matter of the representation of what is, and the event of such representation, respectively. This distinction is placed within the context of the ideas of *Geschick* and *aletheia* (that is, the simultaneous uncovering and covering of the truth of Being). Following this, the idea of play, which Heidegger ends the lectures with, is set aside an understanding of the idea of imagination, and the imaginative faculty, in Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason.

The last section of this chapter (section "h. Analytic of thought in The Principle of Reason") serves as a matter of definitional stance towards metaphysical world-view, via the concepts of reason, rendered reason (that is, *Vorstellung*), hermeneutic methodology (as per the path and the leap), and the



matter of λόγος and λέγειν. This is further winnowed with reference to Leibniz's Monadology, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, and Hegel's Science of Logic.

## 2. The scope of Heidegger's project

Heidegger's Principle of Reason is an immense work. It is 211 pages in the German - thirteen Stunde and a Vortrag in Der Satz vom Grund, and 148 pages in Reginald Lilly's translation, including the thirteen lectures and the address, bibliographic notes, translation notes, and glossaries. But the text, in its entirety, moves swiftly and abruptly between Plato and Aristotle through Kant and Hegel, focusing on Leibniz, for the obvious reason that the lecture series concerns the principle of reason that Leibniz identifies as constitutive of human relation, or working-through, or understanding-of, the world. Between Heraclitus and 20th century philosophical thought, including reference to his own work "Der ursprung des Kunstwerkes," Heidegger's lectures on the principle of reason are ruminative and progressive, in terms of building on its own work and thought towards a clearer understanding of the topic, the principle of reason, while allowing for exegetical diversions that don't necessarily undermine his trajectory of thought but distract from purely and straight-forwardly delineated philosophical conclusions, as to meaning and significance, of the principle of reason, both in its historical and philosophical context and as a matter of thoughtful reckoning. Heidegger himself acknowledges that, "As was frequently and intentionally noted, we followed detours around the principle of reason [*Satz vom Grund*]. These detours have brought us closer to the leap [*Allein diese Umwege haben uns dem Sprung näher gebracht*]." (53) The object of Heidegger's inquiry is at once the principle of reason and the notion of being, or the self-reflective quality that accompanies being in recognition and outward acknowledgment of such.

This is more than a mere supposition of a concept of irony and a definition that may apply to it: If irony is a literal significance, interpretation of what is, in contrast with its representation as such, and at odds with its figurative dimensions, there remains the question, unanswered by definition, as to the nature of reflective capacity that permits an allotment of meaning that may be cleaved between the literal and the figurative. And this is anyways an admission of perspective that the literal is separate from the figurative -

that the figurative does not already encompass the literal, or that the literal is not manufactured from the conceptual basis of the figurative. And this anyways would seem to argue that words themselves do not prefigure the basis of their own significance, and that there is no prior and self-annotative demonstration of the significance of a word held at some remove from the word itself.

Towards this, and as the demonstration of a working-through that attempts to take Heidegger's second question of the "Address," as it pertains to the rendering of reason, more literally than is presupposed in Heidegger's analysis, the following is an attempt at following the trail of Heidegger's thought, and his process of thought, throughout The Principle of Reason. Citing Leibnitz [*Philosophische Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, 7:309], as to Heidegger's first question "1. How come a reason is always a rendered reason?," "A reason is a rendered reason, *quod omnis veritatis reddi ratio potest*, "because a truth is only the truth if a reason can be rendered for it." This is not to suppose that an intellectual rendering of Heidegger's account of Leibnitz's principle might be the truth - and this is perhaps the greatest difficulty in writing on this topic: The tacit assumption towards a summative reenumeration of a truth, of whatever context concerning whatever subject, rather than as the exercise of an honest attempt to account for the nature of argument about whatever subject in whatever context. And this is not to discount the possibility of an honest attempt's illegitimacy in the fact of complete and wholesale misunderstanding. Such misunderstanding is inevitable, and though the merits of an account do not rest on the humility of such an attempt at accounting, there may be no meritable account without humility in the face of misunderstanding.

b. The question of ground/reason, with reference to αξιωμα and παιδεία

Ground/reason is a question that reflects an evolution of thinking by Heidegger, over the course of his lectures, and distilled through his work towards a definition. Heidegger attempts to define reason in these lectures on the principle of reason, and he concludes that reason per se is itself undefined by the principle of reason.

In his address following the lectures Heidegger offers this, that: "The grand Principle is the *principium reddendae rationis*, the fundamental principle of rendering reasons. We ask the second question: how come reasons must be expressly brought forward qua reasons? Because reason is *ratio*, that is, an account. If it is not given, judgment remains without justification."<sup>19</sup> There are two points that demand attention in this summary of the principle of reason. They are as follows: 1. The principle of reason is the rendering of reasons; this asks what it means to render something, and in light of reason. 2. Reason is "brought forward qua reasons" insofar as reasons are the accounting of beings, and the faculty of judgment cannot proceed without the underlying rationale that reason provides.

Before these points can be addressed it is necessary to step back in order to attain a grounded understanding of the trajectory of Heidegger's thought. Heidegger begins foremost with Leibniz's definition of the principle of reason: *nihil est sine ratione* - there is nothing without reason. This demands that everything has reason, or as Heidegger formulates it in the sixth lecture,

'Nothing is without *reason*.' Every being has a reason. The subject of the principle of reason is not reason, rather: 'Every being'; this is predicated as having reason. *The principle of reason is, according to the ordinary way of understanding it, not a statement about reason, but about beings, insofar as there are beings.* (44)

In reading Leibniz in the third lecture, Heidegger observes that "That about which the principle of reason speaks is the ground of the essence of language."<sup>20</sup> What is necessary to a definition of language is that language is the expression of reason. Heidegger goes on to argue, citing Leibniz,<sup>21</sup> that "cognition is

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<sup>19</sup> Heidegger. Principle of Reason, 119.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>21</sup> "there are two supreme Principles for all proofs, the Principle - it goes without saying - of contradiction and the Principle of *reddendae rationis*." Leibniz. Philosophical Writings, 75.

*representation*. What is encountered is presented to a cognizing I, presented back to and over against it, made present."<sup>22</sup> And then, "Cognition is a kind of representational thinking [*Vorstellen*] In *this presentation* [*Stellen*] something we encounter comes to stand [*Stehen*], to a standstill [*Stand*]. What is encountered and brought to a standstill in representational thinking is the *object* [*Gegenstand*]."<sup>23</sup> The objects that stand before our eyes as cognized representations of things are perceptually encountered and rendered within a reflective framework that produces a cognitive image of the object in a way that the mind can account for, not exclusively via language but insofar as language is the movement towards the encompassment of the expression of the represented object to the cognizing self. Language expresses the cognized object to ourselves, and the cognized object is cognizable to the extent that it is present before us and rendered cognizable.

Heidegger expands on this (topically, directly, but within the context of an examination of metaphysics) in Introduction to Metaphysics, in "The Restriction of Being," a part of the book that examines the delimitation of Being (and therefore its rendering as beings), such that

Thinking brings something before us, *represents it*. This representing always starts of our own accord, is freely at our disposal. This freedom is not arbitrary but is bound by the fact that in representing, we think upon and think through what is represented by analyzing it, by laying it out and reassembling it. But in thinking, we not only set something forth before ourselves of our own accord, and we do not just analyze it in order to cut it apart, but we think over what is represented and follow after it. We do not simply take it just as it strikes us, but we try to find the way to get behind the thing, as we say, to experience how it stands with the thing in general. We form a concept of it for ourselves. We seek the universal.<sup>24</sup>

Key to this passage is that thought upon and through the represented via analysis, that is, "laid out" or disassembled, and reassembled. An analysis is a winnowing circumscription of a figure towards a more complete definition; analysis is the process by which an object of Being is circumscribed towards the identification of its monadal qualities.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, the clear line through Heidegger's thinking on this

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<sup>22</sup> Heidegger. Principle of Reason, 22.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>24</sup> Heidegger. Introduction to Metaphysics, 118.

<sup>25</sup> It is inescapable that Aristotle's *Organon* and Leibniz's Monadology are kept in mind towards this point.

point, on the nature of thought, is that thought begins with an unqualified acceptance of being in general, and that in rendering the world through the processes of thought, by methodological approach comprised of "leaps" and encompassed by the notion of the "path," the world becomes represented before us, in thought, as an object to be analyzed.<sup>26</sup>

Errancy is course for thought, the consideration of what is cognizable and represented before us, in terms of ways of seeing: namely, bringing into view the world is to identify the objects of the world (analysis) that reflect to the cognizing self some consideration of the world - that there is a cognizable object speaks foremost to the cognition that may attend to in the representation of the world to the cognizing self. Heidegger argues of this that

Constantly renewed, that is, more and more original appropriation is needed in order for mortals to have a true beholding of something. When thinking does not bring into view what is most proper to what is seen, then thinking looks past what lies present before it.<sup>27</sup>

It is therefore that the rendering of the world towards its particulars - the saying of the world, the expression of the world insofar as the world is a represented cognition to the cognizing self, which is necessary to a definition of language - is an act bound with errancy. There is intrinsic to thought confusion and misidentification in the rendering of the world towards its cognizable objects because such rendering is the mis-saying of the world - that is, though language is the vehicle by which the world is rendered, also necessary to a definition of language is that language mis-speaks.

It is for this that Leibniz's axiom that *nihil est sine ratione*, does not, according to Heidegger, speak about reason in particular, but that in speaking there be reason. It is for this that Heidegger cites the fragment from Angelus Silesius's The Cherubinic Wanderer, that

The rose is without why; it blooms because it blooms,  
It pays no attention to itself, asks not whether it is seen.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The "leap" and the "path" are considered below, as a qualifying addendum to the nature of thought more generally and in terms of *Geschick* in particular.

<sup>27</sup> Heidegger. Principle of Reason, 46.

<sup>28</sup> Angelus Silesius. Cherubinischer Wandersmann, 289. *Die Rose*:

"Ohne Warum

Die Ros ist ohn warum; sie blühet, weil sie blühet,

Sie act nicht ihrer selbst, fragt nicht, ob man sie siehet."

Heidegger argues that the why is the pursuit of ground, the speaking and the determination of reason, and the because is the retrieval of ground and the identification of such reason. In this, the rose does not seek reason but in its blooming it identifies reason. In this, that "Nothing *is* without *reason*," the blooming of the rose is the ground for the reason of blooming without having sought ground to begin with. This is the heart of the matter: that the rose is a rose that blooms is a demonstration of itself as a ground for the expression of a reason. What the reason is is secondary; that the rose blooms because it demonstrates the retrieval of reason; the rose in bloom is the expression of a reason for the rose in bloom, in distinction with there being a cognizing subject seeking reason in asking why, and in determining that there are boundaries of appropriateness in the definition of such reason (i.e., the analysis of the object of the rose as such).

Leibniz's definition of axiom, in Opuscules, is that "Axioms are principles that are held by everyone as being obvious and - scrupulously viewed - as consisting of limit-concepts."<sup>29</sup> In other words, an axiom is the basis for the consideration of discreet ideas, common knowledge that is gathered into an exchangeable and coherent unit and which is therefore attached to some notion of value - which is precisely why Heidegger examines the semantics of αξιώματα: "The Greek αξίωμα comes from αξιῶ, 'I find something worthy,'" or, to "estimate; think worth, esteem; request, claim; suppose, take for true," to notionally accept in light of one's παιδεία<sup>30</sup> (or perhaps: out of the cultivation of one's sense of what is appropriate and inappropriate, or the sense of the limits of one's object of study) not the quantifiable value of the limit-concepts under examination but *that there is a quantifiable value* to the limit-concepts under examination. The value adhered to notions of appropriateness qualifies, in the expression of reason, that there is a ground for reason in the first place. This is to say that critical consideration is secondary to the

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<sup>29</sup> Heidegger, Principle of Reason, 15; citation of Leibniz, Opuscules, "Consilium de Encyclopaedia nova conscribenda methodo inventoria."

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 13: "the circumspect and vigilant sense for what at any time is appropriate and inappropriate." The definition comes out of reading Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1006a 6-8: "for it shows lack of education (ἀπαιδευσία) not to know of what we should require proof, and of what we should not."

enunciation of reason, and it is by this that Heidegger argues that metaphor exists only within metaphysics. Metaphor exists with the question, what is, and what are the possibilities in, being, being predicated on a grasp of the conditions for being, i.e., physis, and the question itself supported by the premise that there is a division between the sensible and the nonsensible.

c. The scope of examination of metaphor, vis-à-vis metaphysics

Heidegger's lectures, predicate to the conversation about metaphor that follows between Derrida and Ricoeur, is not explicitly concerned with the question of metaphor. The only substantive instance in which Heidegger discusses metaphor is in the sixth lecture, in which he makes the following observation:

The setting up of this partition between the sensible and the nonsensible, between the physical and nonphysical is a basic trait of what is called metaphysics and which normatively determines Western thinking. Metaphysics loses the rank of the normative mode of thinking when one gains the insight that the above-mentioned partitioning of the sensible and nonsensible is insufficient.

When one gains the insight into the limitations of metaphysics, "metaphor" as a normative conception also becomes untenable - that is to say that metaphor is the norm for our conception of the essence of language. Thus metaphor serves as a handy crutch in the interpretation of works of poetry and of artistic production in general. The metaphorical exists only within metaphysics.<sup>31</sup>

The question of the "essence of language" is to call into mind Aristotle's definition of essence, in contradistinction with "definition" and "accident," to the extent that "The essence of each thing is that which it is said to be *per se*," or "that which you are said to be of your own nature." Definition, on the other hand, the expression of essence, "cannot be *per se* true of its subject: (a) by an addition, and (b) by an omission."<sup>32</sup> This is to say that in the expression of essence, in the definition of essence, what are added to the concept of the essence of a thing, are the accidental and idiosyncratic chains of semantic associations that language applies to the definition of an essence, and it is simultaneous with this that essence is foreshadowed and elided, or omitted, with what has been concomitantly attached to the idea of an essence. With this in mind, and certainly presumably within the scope of Heidegger's considerations, the "essence of language" is a concept in which the idea of metaphor is a normative feature. Metaphor is integral to the disassociation of the concept from the thing, that is: the definitional function of language adheres to the transference of significance from one place to another, insofar as the essence of a thing is determinedly examined as a thing that exists, necessarily or possibly, following Kant, modally.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Heidegger. Principle of Reason, 48.

<sup>32</sup> Aristotle. Metaphysics, 1029b.

<sup>33</sup> Kant, on the categories of perception, in Critique of Pure Reason,



And according to Heidegger, metaphor is a part of metaphysics to the extent that metaphysics is "the setting up of this partition between the sensible and the nonsensible." Heidegger describes as *Geschick*, and which comes to play a prominent feature in his examination of reason (*Geschick* is read more closely in the following section), what is the destined (retrospectively) inheritance of philosophical thought and its connotations. The *Geschick* of being in Western thought is one that supposes a divide between the sensible and the nonsensible - what is seen and heard of the world and what is thought of the world as taken from what may be seen and heard. But Heidegger says that this is an insufficient view of the world because it's dependent on the notion of μεταφέρειν, such that there occurs a transposition between the sensible and the nonsensible, that in metaphysics what constitutes the nonsensible description of the sensible is divorced from the objective reality of being, as a concept. It is thus for Heidegger that "the metaphorical exists only within metaphysics" is dependent on the notional function of the partitioning by which μεταφέρειν operates: metaphysics is a legacy of thought about the world that figures a partition between the sensible and the nonsensible, and metaphor is a characteristic that exists essentially to metaphysics insofar as it is a process of thought that transfers what is perceived into what is conceptually grounded.

Heidegger discusses this elsewhere, and specifically in the essay "Overcoming Metaphysics":

§ IV - How does metaphysics belong to man's nature? Metaphysically represented, man is constituted with faculties as a being among others. His essence constituted in such a way, his nature, the what and how of his Being, are in themselves metaphysical: *animal* (sensuousness) and *rationale* (nonsensuous). Thus confined to what is metaphysical, man is caught in the difference of beings and Being which he never experiences. The manner of human representation which is metaphysically characterized finds everywhere only the metaphysically constructed world... Is [man] only an ego which first thoroughly fixates itself in its egoity through appealing to a thou in the I-thou relationship?<sup>34</sup>

A cognizing self is functionally determined to appeal to the world as a represented construct by virtue of those immediate and pressing connections that are established and succeeded according to circumstances.

The rational animal, who conceives of the world in reflection, presupposes a principle of reason as a

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<sup>34</sup> Heidegger. "Overcoming Metaphysics," The End of Philosophy, 87.

ground for subjectivity, in terms of a disposition towards "appealing to a thou in the I-thou relationship."<sup>35</sup>

The reason that the above-noted citation from "Overcoming Metaphysics" is important to the present discussion is that, regardless of the impossibility of conclusions that metaphysics presents for us,<sup>36</sup> there is demonstrated by Heidegger a preoccupation with the cast of humanity that distinguishes between reality and the appearance of reality. As he comes to argue his identification of its roots, it is for Heidegger the manner of μεταφέρειν, the transposition of notions within the expressive capacity of the cognizing self, that is itself a partitioning mechanism in the matter of our outlook, as reflected in the grind of thought between the sensible and the nonsensible. It appears as a sort of irony, that the function of metaphor is itself a metaphor for the processes by which metaphysics elaborates the world's distinctions before one's eyes.

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<sup>35</sup> Heidegger cites Kant's "On the Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection" in Critique of Pure Reason, but does not elaborate. A question may be asked here: How does Kant's examination of and conclusions about the nature of reflection affect our present understanding of μεταφέρειν in Heidegger's ontology in The Principle of Reason? This would require an answer more elaborate than there is space, if not topical relevance, here.

<sup>36</sup> Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," 110. Heidegger ends the essay in § XXVIII with this: "No transformation comes without an anticipatory escort. But how does an escort draw near unless Appropriation [*Ereignis*] opens out which, calling, needing, envisions human being, that is, sees and in this seeing brings mortals to the path of thinking, poetizing building."

d. The concept of *Geschick*

Lilly notes about his non-translation of *Geschick* (the only word left in the original German throughout the translated text) that where Heidegger points to use of the word *Geschick* as being generally understood "as being that which has been determined and imposed through fate... This meaning is a derivative one."<sup>37</sup> This is to say: Where *Geschick* as fate is the nominal construction of the past participle *geschickt*, of *schicken*, to send, in the transitive sense, *Geschick* is defined and employed by Heidegger in terms of ἀξίωμα, *principium*, and *Grundsatz*, which "speak from out of completely disparate conceptual domains."<sup>38</sup> These are all words that spring from their own, first linguistic, second cultural, historical contexts, but that "To all appearances, behind this harmless disparity of word-meanings is concealed the basic trait of the history of Western thinking - history not as something bygone, rather history as the still pending *Geschick* that determines us today as hardly ever before."<sup>39</sup>

The claims in this passage merit unpacking. Heidegger argues that *Geschick* (still pending) is the transmission through historical reality towards our present circumstances, yet in the process of forming our contemporary orientation towards an understanding of the world, and yet encompassing even disparities of word-meanings for the philosophical legacy (which is to say, Western thinking) along which path are found the concepts of ἀξίωμα, *principium*, and *Grundsatz*, and for residing in this historical continuity, the disparities of ἀξίωμα, *principium*, and *Grundsatz*, are nevertheless gathered in approach towards understanding being - according to the trajectories of Western thinking.

Moving through the lecture, Heidegger makes several more perambulatory remarks that recognize possible places of inconsistency in the development of his thinking about the principle of reason, and as possible points of recourse if there are obstructions encountered in such. In this is included the observation that fundamental principles are adhered to without reflection, that fundamental principles aren't explicitly thought in the development or process of quotidian cognition that makes clear the

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<sup>37</sup> Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, 61.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

question as to the agency of the principle of reason: "About what does the fundamental principle of reason speak? To what does it belong? From where does it speak?"<sup>40</sup> There is the apparent equivalence between the principle of reason and the principle of causality, "*Nihil est sine ratione seu nullus effectus sine causa*," which Heidegger objects to, saying that "Reason and consequence are not equivalent to cause and effect," though about which Heidegger does not go further into, except to say that "This much becomes clear: the Principle of causality belongs within the orbit of the principle of reason," which is to suggest that "we have at most only determined the range of the dominion of the mighty principle."<sup>41</sup>

But then there is the question of Leibniz's definition of the principle of reason, as the "*principium reddendae rationis*," [Leibniz, *Philosophische Schriften*, ed. Gerhard, 7:309] or "*principium reddendae rationis: vel ut vulgo ajunt, quod nihil fit sine cause*."<sup>42</sup> The *vel ut vulgo ajunt* is the issue of common knowledge, or the degeneration of a concept in its most pure and least heard distillation (as newly stated descriptions of the world may exist) before common knowledge is established as part of the ground of everyday experience. This is to say that the principle of reason is one that is reflected back for the person articulating reason to view and consider as it rests before them, and which appears as or belonging or pertaining significantly to the principle of causality, because the reflection, or the rendering of reason - the articulation of a descriptive conceptualization of the world - lies before the articulating person, and the appearance of a sequentiality between the speaking and the reflecting would seem to denote a cause and an effect. This is the confusion between the substance of whatever is valued with the value itself - but this is an easy confusion: Commodity is its equivalence of value that is invested into it or discovered as presumably inherent to it; the commodity (that, vis-à-vis Heidegger, the gathering of conceptualization about the world through logos) is what can be made of it, and dependent on its value in exchange, and the consequentiality of exchange entails the appearance of value caused and value effected.

Moreover, Heidegger argues that "the *principium rationis* in its ordinary formulation is valid for

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 22.

everything which in any manner *is*," and that

something 'is,' which means, can be identified as being a being, only if it is stated in a sentence that satisfies the fundamental principle of founding. What is mighty about the principle of reason displays its power in that the *principium reddendae rationis* - to all appearances only a Principle of cognition - also counts, precisely in being the fundamental principle of cognition, as the Principle for everything that *is*.<sup>43</sup>

Heidegger summarizes, "*Ratio is ratio reddenda*. This means that reason is what must be rendered to the representing, thinking person."<sup>44</sup> The principle of reason is explicitly concerned with the object of reason, the articulation of such, as a rendered reason: a value that is through its process and use an object that is therefore measurable against others in comparison, or a thing of value in its exchange against others in comparison.

There is one other note to make about this lecture, which, following Heidegger's example, is pointed to and clarified: Where Heidegger says that "the history of Western thinking - history not as something bygone, rather history as the still pending *Geschick*"<sup>45</sup> he is describing the nature of description, or as Being, what it, gathered within the notional limits of a logos, which is at once arrived at in our present moment - description adequate to our daily conceptual reckoning of the world - and which nevertheless connotes the delayed arrival of perhaps a better description of the world. The implication of this is that a fully adequate description of the world is never actually arrived at (or, the representation of the world that is rendered between experience and cognition) if it is that "still pending" is constituent to the notion of *Geschick*. But this idea is difficult to fully separate from common sense (maybe a shared intuitive perspective permits a facility in adopting common knowledge), particularly that no description is adequate to the task of describing. This is easily understood in the inadequacies that sprout of translations between languages, or of translations of experience into the articulations of representation, a demonstration of the inadequacy of transference.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 23-4.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 19.

e. Heidegger's hermeneutic method, vis-à-vis ground/reason and *Geschick*

The thread that Heidegger follows on ground/reason runs through extended meditation on Angelus Silesius' poetic fragment from Cherubinischer Wandersmann, Sinnliche Beschreibung der Vier Letzten Dinge. Heidegger demonstrates by citation of a letter to Paccius of 28 January 1695 that Leibniz is concerned with Silesius, and that Hegel speaks of Silesius in Lectures on Aesthetics, stating of this that "The judgments of Leibniz and Hegel about Angelus Silesius are only intended to briefly allude to the fact that the words cited from 'Without Why' stem from an influential source."<sup>46</sup> This is moreover, Heidegger explains, not an attempt to trace the conclusions of Leibniz and Hegel through their respective examinations of Silesius towards the origins of their thinking - this is speculative. Rather, citation of Leibniz and Hegel in this respect indicates that an examination of Silesius with regard to the principle of reason, insofar as the manner of examination by Heidegger, with his own concerns, is not unwarranted, is not historically disinclusive.

There is moreover a jump that Heidegger seems to be making in lecture five as to the characterization of his (our) present *Geschick* of being as the atomic age, in terms of the capacity for modern art to be objectless. The train of this logic is followed in the fifth lecture, in which examination of Silesius' *Ohne warum* commences. Heidegger's logic is as follows: A brief historical description of the evolution of the principle of reason in Leibniz's thinking, about which Heidegger explains:

Reason, which insists on its being rendered, at the same time requires that it, as a reason, be sufficient, which means, completely satisfactory. For what? In order to securely establish an object [*Gegenstand*] in its stance [*Stand*].<sup>47</sup>

This is to say that the idea of perfection, [*Voll-ständigkeit*] resides in the substrate of "Leibnizian thinking," an object in its completeness, as a thing represented back towards the thinking, representing subject, is sufficient in its reason insofar as it renders the object in consideration to the thinking,

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<sup>46</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 35.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 33. Heidegger ascribes *voll-ständigkeit* as integral to Leibniz's thought; Kant addresses this in "On the amphiboly of the concepts of reflection through the confusion of the empirical use of the understanding with the transcendental" in Critique of Pure Reason, 366-83.

representing subject. Towards this Heidegger says:

Only in the completeness of the conditions for its possibility, only in the completeness of its reasons is the status [*Ständigkeit*] of an object through and through securely established, perfect. Reason (*ratio*) is related to the effect (*efficere*) as cause (*causa*): *reason* must itself be sufficient (*sufficiens*, *sufficere*). This sufficiency is required and determined by the *perfectio* (*perficere*) of the object. It is certainly no accident that within the province of the principle of reason language seems to spontaneously speak of an *efficere*, *sufficere*, *perficere*, that is, of a manifold *facere*, of a making, of a producing and rendering. For Leibniz, the title of the principle or reason reads, when thought strictly and completely: *principium reddendae rationis sufficientis*, the fundamental principle of rendering sufficient reasons. We could also say: the principle of adequate reasons.<sup>48</sup>

Such "producing and rendering" effects the literary substance that a poetics describes. A bibliographic note makes clear that "(vlg. *Monadologie* § 32)" is redacted from the end of "*principium reddendae rationis sufficientis*," *vergleich*, compared (with) § 32 of Leibniz's *Monadology*, which reads

32. The second [of two great principles] is the Principle of Sufficient Reason. By virtue of this we think that no fact can be real or existent, and no statement true, unless it have a sufficient reason why it should be thus and not otherwise, notwithstanding that in most cases these reasons cannot be known by us.<sup>49</sup>

There is a break between the conclusions that Heidegger draws from § 32 and the thrust of the significance of § 32 for Leibniz. It is this: That for Leibniz the question of sufficient reason qualifies the counter-claims that may be made against the fact of existence; That a thing is real or exists (a monad, in the case that Leibniz pursues) demands that sufficient grounds be shown for such not being true. That for Heidegger *in reading Leibniz* the question of sufficient reason concerns the processes of thought wherein such grounds are taken unconsidered, as a matter of course; That a thing is real or exists (why there is something rather than nothing, as Heidegger pursues) escapes the capacity for thought to gather into a sufficient explanation. The crux of the difference is this: Where Leibniz argues that the principle of reason obviates our capacity to explain our ontological circumstances otherwise than as they are, Heidegger points out that such a demand for perfection of explanation yields "the strict interpretation, [that] the

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>49</sup> Leibniz, *Monadology*, § 32, page 87.

principle of reason says that there is no truth, which according to Leibniz means there is no correct principle or sentence, without reasons being rendered that are necessary for the sentence or principle."<sup>50</sup> The effect of Heidegger's thought on this, therefore, is to call into question the notional capacity for a cognizing self to determine the definitional aspect of the presupposition of the essence of truth, that first there is truth, and that then it may be determined. This is a matter of grounding (so to speak) as to the definition of *aletheia* that Heidegger describes in Introduction to Metaphysics.

On this basis Heidegger claims previously "That in such an age [as Heidegger's/ours] art becomes objectless testifies to its historical appropriateness, and this above all when nonrepresentational [*gegenstandlose*] art conceives of its own productions as no longer being able to be works, rather as being something for which the suitable word is lacking." (34) The sufficiency of the representation as a testament to the principle of reason is called into question; or, that there is reason which must be rendered, becoming object-full in view of the subject, grounding the subject in subjectness, is a question of sufficiency, and therefore one of propriety or balance, according to circumstance and adherent of conditions from which such object arises. That art becomes objectless is the rendered expression, the representation, of a subject that takes for granted, perhaps without thinking about it, the grounds of the cognizing self's existence as a subject.

Of this, Heidegger reads the poetic fragment "Ohne Warum" towards an examination of the difference between seeking grounds and the representation of grounds. This is essentially a reading of the discursiveness of coming into grounds, most essentially a useful place for Heidegger to question the distinction between wanting grounds, or desire for grounds, and having grounds, or what it means to have grounds.

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<sup>50</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 34.



#### f. Leaping

The seventh lecture is the inflection point for the work. It is convenient to a symmetry of thought around the principle of reason, or as a note towards the gathering cohesiveness of Heidegger's reflections on the principle of reason, that the seventh lecture is also the middle of thirteen. In this sense, the first six lectures function as a sort of perambulatory and open examination of the principle of reason as a concept. This is obviously grounded in the philosophical touchstones and vocabulary that Heidegger is engaged with in his work - this cannot be avoided.

A larger observation that can be made about The Principle of Reason, as about the idea of the principle of reason, its historical valences, inheritances and philosophical heredities, is that to the extent that the work arrives at conclusions, it is an open-ended argument about the nature of human cognition, and relation to the world vis-à-vis experience.

Towards this, the seventh lecture opens with the observation that the principle of reason is not especially self-evident, and that Leibniz's genius in recognizing the principle of reason as a fundamental principle stems from the principle's "unremarkably common" position "in the life of human cognition," which is to say that the principle of reason, as a basis for the organization of a coherent and thoughtful relationship between the individual and the world, is so essential to a human outlook that it passes unrecognized in daily life.<sup>51</sup> Following this Heidegger summarizes the principle of reason as a tonally-shifting (shifted under the peripatetic analysis by which Heidegger renders the principle) fundamental principle, such that where "nothing is without reason" reckons that everything therefore has a reason, "*nothing is without reason*," in which there is a thing that exists as nothing - or nothing is a thing, the absence of something - and that nothing has no reason: Reason is absent from nothing.<sup>52</sup> The basis of Heidegger's analysis about the principle of reason therefore becomes a metaphysical question, concerning the nature of being and nothingness, adherent to and building on the question at the beginning of

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<sup>51</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 50.

<sup>52</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, as per analysis of Heidegger's concept of tonality, harmony, *Einklang*, between seeing and hearing, 281.

Heidegger's Introduction to Metaphysics: "Why is there beings at all rather than nothing?"<sup>53</sup>

The principle of reason is established in the seventh lecture, midway through the course of the thirteen-lecture argument, as being a question about being. The principle of reason describes the structure of ground/reason, and Heidegger argues towards the importance of distinguishing between being and ground/reason, that

It may now be worthwhile to bring into view the fact that, and in which sense, something like ground/reason belongs to the essence of being. Ground/reason receives its essence from its belonging together with being qua being. Put in the reverse, being reigns qua being from out of the essence of ground/reason. Ground/reason and being ("are") the same - not equivalent - which already conveys the difference between the names "being" and "ground/reason." Being "is" in essence: ground/reason.<sup>54</sup>

This is a question of essence, between essence as a quality of being and Being. Ground/reason structures world, with Being, and is thus a presumptive question as to the essence, or the quality of character, of what ground/reason describes: Being. It is for this that Being and ground/reason belong together - there can be no conceptual basis for engagement with Being, the question of "Is," without prior description by means of ground/reason, to the effect that Being "is" ground/reason, as Heidegger puts it, and that though they are the same, Being is not equivalent to ground/reason.

What is the point of such a fine distinction? As a matter of definition of the subject at hand, namely, metaphysics, and the question of Being, the distinction between Being and ground/reason is warranted. But what does this say, beyond that the structure of engagement with the world is notionally the same, but categorically different from the question of Being. Heidegger moves his line of argument not towards the sole intention of demonstrating the limits of metaphysics as a manner of reckoning the world. There is a more practical aspect to Heidegger's argument; life is consumed with the experience of engagement with Being in terms of ground/reason. The world is most immediately reckoned in terms of what is sensible.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Heidegger, Principle of Reason, 51.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 68, Heidegger's definition of the leap, as per a comparative notion that arises from the conjunctive events of "seeing" and "hearing," namely, judgment following a klanging of sense: "The leap leaps off of and out of a

There are two aspects that Heidegger argues in the seventh lecture that are essential to the transformative nature of thought - thinking about the world that transforms our relationship with the world, or thought that moves perspective in relation to the world according to the partition of sensible/nonsensible. These are the path and the leap.

The path is not "an exacting theory," nor are "Discussions of the path... mere considerations of methodology... [nor] merely the preparations of a drawing pencil that is never put to paper" - the path may be inclusive but is not summative of these qualities.<sup>56</sup> The path is the way by which thought has traveled, inclusive of which is the manner of our transformative relationship with the world, and the path assumes in retrospect the structure of thought and engagement with the world vis-à-vis thought, as the historical arrangement of a *Geschick* of outlook and perspective. Heidegger points to the first six lectures as an example of a path that describes a transformation of thought, that the arrival at examination about the tonality of the principle of reason (a grammatics of the principle as opening towards the question of the substance and the meaning of the principle) is described in retrospect. The structure of thought along path becomes clearer.

The leap is a transformation of thinking, a movement towards conclusions (conclusions considered subsequent to arguments laid out on the path). This points to perhaps a more important note that Heidegger passes over, as a manner of indicating the direction of the remaining lectures, before summarizing the six lectures prior to the present: Heidegger says that

The principle of reason is not only a principle in the sense of a supreme fundamental principle. The principle [*Satz*] of reason is a *Satz* in the eminent sense of being a leap. [The German] language knows a form of speech: With a vault, that is, with a sudden leap he was out the door. The principle of reason is a vault into the essence of being in the sense of such a leap. We really ought not any longer say the principle of reason is a principle of being; rather, we should say that the principle of reason is a

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leaping-off realm. The leap relinquishes this realm and nevertheless does not leave it behind. Through this relinquishing the leap regains the leaping-off realm in a new manner, and indeed not just incidentally, but necessarily. The leap is essentially a backward-glancing leap. What we bring into view in the glance back is, according to the main points, what we are trying to grasp in a unified way when we characterize the chief trait of the realm from which one leaps. This realm showed itself to us as a history of Western thinking."

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 52.

leap into being qua being, that is, qua ground/reason.<sup>57</sup>

What is the principle of reason?, that the principle of reason describes the path on which the transformative nature of thought is surmounted and the leap by which conclusions<sup>58</sup> are gained, and that simultaneously the examination of what the principle of reason is along these lines proposes an example of such a leap. The lectures have become, in these lines, the object of an examination as to the nature of the principle of reason, i.e., the principle of reason describes the process of the path and the leap in transformation of thought, and its examination demonstrates its own example.

The remainder of the seventh lecture functions as a summary of the steps towards this thought. The summary is as follows: "The first of the five main points" concerns the "incubation period of the principle of reason"; the second point regards Leibniz and the *principium reddendae rationis sufficientis*; the third point is a reflection on the "*principium reddendae rationis sufficientis* as the '*principium grande, magnum et nobilissimum*'"; the fourth point served as a reflection on the fragment from Angelus Silsius' poem Der Cherubinischer Wandersmann and the relationship between "why" and "because" that the fragment is concerned with; and the fifth point has to do with the tonality with which the principle of reason is spoken.<sup>59</sup> The path, in retrospect, is as follows: In light of Leibniz's identification of the principle of reason as a foundational principle in human outlook and engagement with the world there is reflection on the historical descent of such an idea before an examination is undertaken, of what Leibniz says about the principle of reason. These are the first two points along the path.

The third point introduces questions about the function and role of the principle of reason, as a rhetorical analysis that begins with basic questions that are speculative, e.g. "From where does reason's demand to be rendered speak? Does this demand lie in the essence of reason itself?"<sup>60</sup> This adopts the distinctions of a rhetorical inquiry, as a matter of critical thought: Who to whom what which, etc.

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>58</sup> "Conclusion" does not mean a conclusive sense of ending; conclusion indicates the result of a leap along a path, and is potentially and entirely precedent to further leaps on paths.

<sup>59</sup> See, Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 281.

<sup>60</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 56.

The fourth point is reflection on Angelus Silesius' poem, between what has been examined already and an object of inquiry (in this case, "The Rose") that may help to clarify the examination, and which simultaneously may addend further paths of reflection to the object of inquiry. The comparative function of "The Rose" in Der Cherubinischer Wandersmann with or to the question of the principle of reason reflects as a metaphor does of its aspects. The framework that Heidegger proposes in using "The Rose" as a tool to assist in the examination of the principle of reason is relevant as a notional metaphorism: "The Rose" demonstrates certain aspects of the principle of reason, as Heidegger is thinking it, in conscious engagement.

The final point is on the differences between references of significance that tonalities of meaning vis-à-vis interpretation may mark. This points at the inherent uncertainty of grammar, which relies on indistinction<sup>61</sup>, but at the possibilities of following those paths as a plotting of the whole, an idea of the terrain of a forest in picturing the paths through it and in relation to one another.

Heidegger begins the eighth lecture with a sweeping and brief definition of what constitutes, "What effects and is effected, what grounds and is grounded is, in our eyes, the whole of what is real," tucked within the introductory paragraph that is otherwise speaking to the idea of what is graspable to us - concluding that "the principle of reason holds nothing ungraspable."<sup>62</sup> In the performance of a rhetorical analysis, the question of what the principle of reason holds as graspable (namely, nothing) comes out of the articulation of the principle of reason. By this reasoning, everything that is graspable is graspable because whatever predicate that the principle of reason posits necessarily lies within the bounds of intelligibility. Heidegger states this as "Everything rests on the path."<sup>63</sup> The principle of reason sets

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<sup>61</sup> This is not to suggest that a grammar lies outside the bounds of reason, but that the possibilities of meaning that ambiguity suggests constructs a framework for an understanding of the whole. Heidegger approaches this in Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. 91-3, as part of his thought towards the definition of "Being," that "The word 'Being,' in every one of its inflections, relates to the Being itself that is said, in a way that is essentially different from the relation of all other nouns and verbs in language to the beings that are said in them." (93) It is not that indistinction marks incomprehension, but the possibility for comprehension otherwise and within an appropriate framework of intelligibility. This does not suggest that all interpretations are equally valid; only that interpretation carries within itself a degree of lassitude that makes clear an ambiguity that pertains to significance.

<sup>62</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 59.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

everything within the bounds of human cognition on the path, and the path is inclusive of everything that is intelligible.<sup>64</sup>

Heidegger goes on to argue that his claim, "that everything rests on the path," suggests "it means that it all comes down to the path, to our finding it and remaining on it," that the continuation of human intelligibility of the world, to human cognition about the world, is dependent on finding the path, or finding oneself on the path, and remaining on the path thereafter. Moreover, finding oneself on a path of thinking has "the peculiar character that when we are under way on [paths of thinking] we are nearer to the site than when, in order to become ensconced there, we convince ourselves that we have reached the site."<sup>65</sup> The site, Heidegger describes, is "what assembles what comes to be essential of a matter," or that the nature of the principle of reason that articulates an intelligibility between the world and its thought sets out on the path what is in view as intelligible to human cognition.

Heidegger claims that his argument raises a the second suggestion, that "everything we must bring into view shows itself only under way on the path."<sup>66</sup> The world as it is intelligible to us is only so because it is intelligible to us, insofar as intelligibility is bound by the constraints of our objects of inquiry as they are set in view.

It is from this suggestion that the question of the leap returns to the discussion. The difference between what the principle of reason means, or what is brought into intelligible view by the predicating stance that nothing is without reason, and what the principle of reason says, which is a question as to the being of things and not to the reason that pertains to beings, is a difference that must be leapt. The leap has already been described as understanding a transformation of thought towards conclusions (conclusions which are not conclusive of themselves, but which conclude a transformation of thinking that may be further leapt from). A striking thing about Heidegger's idea of the leap is that

The leap is always a leap from... That from which the leap of thinking

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<sup>64</sup> A productive reading may be made between Heidegger's comment that "What is ungraspable in general principles is normally due to the fact that we neglect to apply them" and Kant's assessment of enlightenment as "man's exit from self-incurred minority" in "Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment? [1784]."

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

leaps is not abandoned in such a leap; rather, the realm from which one leaps first becomes surveyable when one makes the leap - surveyable in a different way than before. The leap of thinking does not leave behind it that from which it leaps; rather, it assimilates it in a more original fashion.<sup>67</sup>

The leap is a transformation of thought that depends first of all from what is leaped from, an original (but not originary) place from which thought might first become transformed in terms of an imaginative grasp towards different perspective. And the leap is dependent on what is transformative about thought, or which performs a transformative function on thought, i.e., the methodology inherent to the critical analysis of rhetorical inquiry.

Heidegger's five points can be condensed as such:

Retrospective (inasmuch as what is viewed has been viewed before) engagement with the subject at hand, e.g., initial reactions to the principle of reason; familiarization with the engagement by others with the subject at hand, e.g., Leibniz's thought on the principle of reason; methodically parsed distinctions about the subject at hand, e.g., rhetorical examination of conclusions about the principle of reason; relationship between the subject at hand and prior, not specifically related, thought, e.g., the principle of reason and the question of because/why, by example of Silesius' "The Rose," a remark upon the utility of the second point; and questions as to tonality, distinction in meaning, that arise from engagement with the subject, what's at hand in terms of prior engagement (Leibniz and Silesius) and direct and inventive engagement with what's at hand.

What follows in the lecture, from the definition of leap, is concerned with a more detailed examination of *Geschick*, through the lens of Stefan George's poem "Sea Song," and Aristotle's *Physics*, which touches ultimately on what Heidegger meant by "incubation" - the first of his five main points from the seventh lecture. The lecture ends with the promise of an examination in the next lecture of "a second characteristic of the history of being," and that "what is meant by 'the *Geschick* of being,'" such that "Seen in the light of the history of modern thought, it concerns the relation of Kant to Leibniz" to the extent that

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

"the thinking of philosophy stands under the bidding that speaks out of the demand to provide sufficient reasons."<sup>68</sup> The thrust of this argument, as a line of thought, is that the terms of "modern science in the form of mathematical physics" are the same as those for the thinking of philosophy: both as a methodological recourse are founded in the demand that there be sufficient reason for their causes and their explanations. In this sense, the shape of their methodologies are the same to the extent that both modern science and philosophical thought assume the principle of reason at the outset, and that on these separate methodological paths what lies in view is as a matter of course presumed to adhere to the principle of reason.

The question of methodology has been raised, then, as an ancillary definition for what Heidegger means by "the path." The point that is drawn between the idea of the methodological course that is the function of the principle of reason as it is enacted and the *Geschick* of an understanding of Being is this: the fifth main point that Heidegger made in the seventh lecture concerns the tonalities that are heard in the principle of reason. Tonality is understood to mean that shades of meaning emerge in the critical and engaged perspective that thought settles into, in an examination of a subject at hand. Tonalities and shades of meaning become clear as distinctive possibilities for the pursuit of thought, and the subject at hand becomes simultaneously more discursive and more ambiguous. These tonalities and shades of meaning become apparent as distinctions through the four previous points that Heidegger identifies about his process: incubation, recourse to prior definition, critical inquiry on a rhetorical model, and what relationships can be drawn between conclusions (from incubation, prior definition and critical inquiry) to what is extant but not immediately and clearly connected to the subject at hand, but which may aid in distinguishing hitherto unrecognized aspects about the subject at hand, i.e., tonalities.

The steps to Heidegger's process can be summarized like this:

1. Incubation, or confrontation with the subject at hand;
2. Explanation through prior definition, or what others have observed and thought of the subject at hand;

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 66.



3. Critical inquiry, or the model of rhetorical examination that questions the basic movements and contents of the subject at hand: origins, destinations, contents and modes and manners of;
4. Relationship to other objects at hand, cultural objects that shed light on the subject at hand (and which are conversely shed upon by the subject at hand);
5. Tonality, and the distinction of shades of meaning, and ambiguities.

The "*Geschick* of being," and Heidegger's characterization of the history of Western thought as such, is in view retrospectively, and is a path to be surveyed, and which takes the principle of reason as its introductory assumption in its inquiry into "being *qua* being." The history of Western thought is therefore tied to the principle of reason as a foundational assumption and in survey of such becomes clear as a "*Geschick* of being," a path of inquiry that is shaped by its methodology as an investigation into "being *qua* being."<sup>69</sup>

Before Heidegger defines *μεθοδος* as "the path upon which we pursue a matter: the method," there is first a (point four) examination of the idea of *Geschick* in terms of Stefan George's poem "Sea Song." This concerns the directionality of *Geschick*. By directionality is meant the examination of a physics of subjectivity that an individual may experience. Heidegger argues that in the imaginative examination of the conditions of place, a leap on the path, there comes into view "even if in a veiled way - something of what we here call the history of being." The history of Western thought is a recounting of the work of examining prior positions, and questioning prior stances, concerned with the question of being, hence, a "*Geschick* of being." (61) This is not to say that a "*Geschick* of being" is a strategically-plotted course oriented towards an affirmatively and destined revelation about the truth of Being. It is a veiled question that, "wenngleich verhüllt," is also pointed to by the history of Western thought.<sup>70</sup> It is a question of destiny, of a *Geschick* in this sense, insofar as present conditions (inclusive of which are political and economic conditions, and the material basis on which a cognizing self is capable of examining the history of Western thinking on being *qua* being) are determined according to the

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>70</sup> Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 108: "albeit veiled."

uncountable and incomprehensible means of arrival towards present conditions. *Geschick*, then, is not in Heidegger's use a preordained determination of condition so much as the present condition of an inheritance of a past participial path that has led to present place and condition, and individual conditions (because the individual share of collective inheritance is uncountably different between everyone, and such experience of conditions).

The example of Stefan George's poem "Sea Song" is a (point four) examination of the question of *Geschick*, a relational clarification of the distinctions that are drawn in the semantic outline that Heidegger states in terms of the word *Geschick*:

We usually understand *Geschick* [destiny] as being that which has been determined and imposed through fate: a sorrowful, an evil, a fortunate *Geschick*. This meaning is a derivative one. For *schicken* ["sending"] originally denotes: "preparing," "ordering," "bringing each thing to that place where it belongs"; consequently it also means to "furnish" and "admit"; "to appoint" [*beschicken*] a house, a room, means: "to keep in good order," "straightened up and tidied."<sup>71</sup>

That Heidegger dwells on the question of *Geschick*, the reason that he dwells on *Geschick* as he uses the word, becomes clear in terms of the directionality of Being that he arrives at in analysis of Aristotle, and the opening line of Aristotle's book *Physics*. Heidegger offers "A clarifying translation," but it is worthwhile to reproduce the lines that Heidegger cites from a more straightforward translation, by R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye,<sup>72</sup>

The natural way of doing this [determining what relates to the principles of Nature] is to start from the things which are **more knowable** and obvious to us and proceed towards those which are clearer and more knowable by nature; for the same things are not 'knowable relatively to us' and 'knowable' without qualification.<sup>73</sup>

Heidegger offers his translation,

However, the path (to the being of beings) is by its essence so fashioned and directed that it leads forth from what is **more familiar** [*Vertrauteren*] to us, namely because for us it is what is more overt, to that which, because it emerges on its own, is in itself more overt and in this sense what is

<sup>71</sup> Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, 60.

<sup>72</sup> Aristotle. *Physics*. From *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Ed. Richard McKeon. Trans. R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.

<sup>73</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, 218, 184a.

always already taken for granted. [*Zugetraute*].<sup>74 75 76</sup>

What is clear between these transactions of Aristotle is that familiarity and knowingness are, according to Aristotle, proceeded from what is most accountably unqualified towards what must be rendered familiar, or made to be familiar, or known. What is rendered as familiar is not, therefore, accountably unqualified - what is rendered, what is thought, according to the limits of its methodological approach, is not what is in evidence *prima facie*. This is not to suggest that anything is of itself accountably unqualified; Heidegger translates as "more familiar" what Hardie and Gaye translate as "more knowable." What is known or familiar is not self-evident, but taken as self-evident "without qualification," or "always already taken for granted." In other words, there needs to be a starting point on the path of reason that accepts what is, or that there is being, in an unqualified account.

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<sup>74</sup> Heidegger, *Principle of Reason*, 63-4.

<sup>75</sup> Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 112: "Der Weg (auf das Sein des Seienden zu) aber ist aus seinem Wesen so geartet und geleitet, daß er von dem uns **Vertrauteren**, weil nämlich für uns Offenkundigeren aus auf daß zuführt, was, weil von ihm selbst her aufgehend, das an ihm selbst Offenkundigere und in solchem Sinne das zuvor schon Zugetraute ist."

<sup>76</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*. Trans. P.H. Wicksteed and F.M. Cornford. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957. 184a 17-22: "Now the path of investigation must lie from what is **more immediately cognizable** and clear to us, to what is clearer and more intimately cognizable in its own nature; for it is not the same thing to be directly accessible to our cognition and to be intrinsically intelligible. Hence, in advancing to that which is intrinsically more luminous and by its nature accessible to deeper knowledge, we must needs start from what is more immediately within our cognition, though in its own nature less fully accessible to understanding."

g. λόγος and λέγειν, difference, distinction and play

The end of the lectures is left at an open question - not aporial in the sense of an impossibility of examination, but a path forwards for further examination.

As a summative exercise, the thirteenth lecture begins with a cursory look at the relationship between *grund* and *ratio* in terms of translation and *Geschick*, as Heidegger has proposed an understanding of *Geschick*. Following this is an examination of the double sense of *ratio*, "namely, 'ground' as footing and earth and 'Reason' as perception and hearing"<sup>77</sup>, with clarifying remarks about this with regard to Friedrich Hölderlin's "Remarks" on Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*.<sup>78</sup> Examination of Hölderlin serves to question the idea of calculus; this is the balance between the distinctive significances of *grund* and *ratio*. This necessarily draws into the conversation Leibniz's *principium reddendae rationis* and what Heidegger observes as Leibniz's use of Latin without "thereby speak[ing] the language of the ancient Romans" in explanation of his ontology (Monadology being translated into Latin from French by Christian Wolff) and Nova Methodus pro Maximis et Minimis, which lays out the subject of calculus.<sup>79</sup>

Heidegger concludes, on the differentiation between *grund* and *ratio*, that "neither *Grund* ['grounds'] nor "Reason" immediately name being," and that the question that comes of this, therefore, is "to what extent 'are' being and *ratio* the same? To what extent do ground and Reason (*ratio*) on the one side, and being on the other belong?"<sup>80</sup> There follows from this the distinction of being as speaking, that "being speaks to us, even if in various manners, as φύσις - emerging-on-its-own - as οὐσία - presencing - as objectness."<sup>81</sup> What follows φύσις and οὐσία for Heidegger is logically, so to speak, λόγος: that the distinction between presence and movement, essentially, is thereby encapsulation in the representative

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>78</sup> Hölderlin, Friedrich. Essays and Letters on Theory. Trans. and ed. by Thomas Pfau. New York: State University of New York Press, 1988.

<sup>79</sup> Refer to Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," The End of Philosophy, vis-à-vis Kant, "Amphiboly," Critique of Pure Reason.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 105.

rationalization, the symbolically-described reckoning of such a distinction as that between φύσις and οὐσία. The question that follows this for Heidegger asks, "To what extent 'are' λόγος and 'coming to be present' [the *Geschick*-ly derivation of φύσις and οὐσία within the amalgamating Latin *esse* and the German *sein*] the same? What does λόγος mean?"<sup>82</sup>

The answer is provided in the above cursory notes, that representative explanation is produced within the framework of reckoning. An examination of λόγος belongs to the verb λέγειν, and the difference between suggested significances between λόγος and λέγειν, compared with what the German says with *sagen*. There is in this *Geschick* of "the historical legacy of bifurcated *ratio*... the historical legacy of λόγος."<sup>83</sup> To hear the principle of reason and to understand it more completely in the tonality with which it speaks, as Heidegger maintains, it is necessary to trace the *Geschick* of such a legacy and stand it in comparison with the present world-historical age. Towards this, λόγος belongs to λέγειν meaning "'to gather, to lay one beside the other.' In this case it can happen that the one is laid beside the other such that the one is oriented towards the other, conforming to it."<sup>84</sup> λέγειν presents the actualization of a comparative, one set beside another towards the purposes of distinction and clarification, and towards the purposes of definition and speaking difference, in the sense that the Latin "*reor* and *ratio* represent the sort of orienting and conforming that is a reckoning," and as such "suited to translate the Greek word λόγος into Roman thinking."<sup>85</sup> And in this, too, Heidegger maintains, orienting one towards the other is a manner of reckoning, so that λόγος carries within it the production of reason by virtue of relation, beyond its dictionary definition of "statement" and "legend," and the meaning of λέγειν being "to say."<sup>86</sup>

Heidegger continues to his point:

"Saying" means, when thought in a Greek manner, "to bring to light," "to let something appear in its look," "to show the way in which it regards us," which is why a saying clarifies things for us. But then how come a saying for the Greeks is a λέγειν, λόγος? Because λέγειν means "to gather," "to lay-next-to-each-other." But such a laying is, as a laying that gathers, raises

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

up, keeps and preserves, an allowing-to-lie-present that brings something to shine forth, namely that which lies present. However, that which lies present is what comes-to-presence-on-its-own; λέγειν and λόγος allow what comes to presence to lie present in its presencing.<sup>87</sup>

This is all to argue that "saying" in the Greek sense, which is to the present world-historical age an inheritance, a *Geschick* of the metaphysics that partitions the sensible from the nonsensible<sup>88</sup> in the naming of being, the grounding of being allowing being to become present before the eyes. Or, "λόγος names this belonging-together of being and ground. It names them insofar as it, in one breath, says: 'allowing to lie present as allowing to arise,'" so that λόγος is the enunciation of the being of world that simultaneously brings to light and clarifies what is the being of the world, the naming of being and ground/reason.<sup>89</sup>

The distinction that Heidegger draws here, however, between the naming of being and ground/reason, and that being and ground/reason are brought to light and clarified, is that "λόγος is at the same time a word that conceals. It doesn't allow the belong-together of being and ground/reason *as such* to come to the fore."<sup>90</sup> By speaking being and ground/reason, there is a distinction made between being and ground/reason, such that ground/reason is related to and connected with being, and provides the basis for an examination, or unconcealment, of being, but with λόγος, or the summative representational movement of naming being and ground/reason, both being and ground/reason are brought together and their distinctions (namely, being predicating ground/reason, and ground/reason predicating the basis by which being is approached and made understandable) are gathered together and obviated within the framework of being and ground/reason having been spoken. Heidegger argues that

It is in this way that the belonging-together of being and ground/reason reigns in what is concealed. This belonging-together never came to light - much less was it taken up by conceptual thinking - neither in terms of its *Geschick*-configuration, nor in terms of ground/reason and its forms. Instead, something obvious monopolizes things in the history of thinking, namely what was mentioned at the beginning of the first lecture: every

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 108.

being has a ground/reason.<sup>91</sup>

The result of this is that representational thought, in Heidegger's words, "has being in sight" and therefore also ground/reason in sight, because representational thinking as a mode by which being is named is dependent on ground/reason for positing being in the first place, within a representational framework.<sup>92</sup> λόγος is not itself ground/reason, but the enunciation of both being and ground/reason to the effect that the distinction between both, which λόγος speaks to, is bound between being and ground/reason in the very speaking of λόγος.

It is therefore, as Heidegger argues, that the principle of reason "counts as an immediately intuitive law of thinking [because] it comes from the fact that being and ground/reason 'are' the same, yet their belonging-together is forgotten, which means, if understood in a Greek way: concealed."<sup>93</sup> Distinction between *rationem reddere* and λόγον διδόναι renders a reason and gives a word, in a basic translation. Where *rationem reddere* functions as the enactment of method towards the principle of reason, or the movement of the principle of reason in rendering being into an intelligible world, Heidegger translates λόγον διδόναι as meaning "'to tender something present in whatever way it is presencing and lying present,' namely to tender it to an assembling perception."<sup>94</sup>

An extensive side-note that together what can be pointed to as a basis in Western thinking for the relationship between λόγος and φύσις, and the modern age if in which "being is transcendently determined as objectness and this as the condition for the possibility of objects, then being disappears, as it were, in favor of what is called 'the condition for the possibility' and is a kind of Rational ground and grounding."<sup>95</sup> λόγος follows being insofar as being is, in Heidegger's words, "an allowing to arise that also assembles and harbors," and it is λόγος that simultaneously summarizes and encapsulates the being that is "allowing to arise" and which therefore also lies before being, in the sense that being becomes hidden

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 109-10.

behind the representational summarization of λόγος in the process of thinking φύσις according to principles giving rise to methodological approach. The first among these principles is thus the principle of reason, insofar as the reckoning of being takes for granted that being, the "essence [of which is] λόγος and φύσις," consists of the representationable movement of the manifestations of being, that is, the phenomenal aspect of being, that is, beings. Further, Heidegger argues that both causes and principles, "αίτιον in Greek... the Romans transl[ate] it with the word *causa*; [in German] one says: *Ursache*," "have the character of being grounds; because they stem from the essence of ground/reason, they belong, along with this essence, with being."<sup>96</sup> Being, in being reckoned as representational in λόγος, in which the φύσις of being becomes recognizable as the movement and manifestation of being, is reckoned in terms of causes and principles because these flow from the essence of λόγος and φύσις and therefore belong also to the essence of being, insofar as being is thought.

What does this mean? Heidegger says that "Principles and causes determine beings on into the future and link all representations of being."<sup>97</sup> This is nothing short of the legacy of having thought being in the first place; our inheritance of thought about being *insofar as it is a representational thinking of being* is the legacy of having thought being in the first place, an irony, perhaps, of cause: We are as we are in some part for the fault of Heraclitus. In this telling, Aristotle serves as a wayside along the path that the legacy of representational thought about being has led, an important, in retrospect (always in retrospect), place of reorganization of thought about being. And in this telling Heraclitus is himself the inheritor of his own formulations of being within the framework of λόγος and φύσις, but this becomes too lost to the woods that line paths of reckoning to see much clearly beyond, for the material reasons of loss and the vagueries of transmission. In this sense, therefore, causes must be delineated between the causes of novelty and the causes of change in the movement of λόγος (the φύσις of λόγος, so to speak). Heidegger's point seems to be that cause must be considered in terms of the path, and in consideration of the present age, that, essentially and as Heidegger describes in a manner that he works through in Introduction to

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.



Metaphysics,

it is in withdrawing that being proffers itself to humans in a manner that conceals its essential provenance behind the thick veil of Rationally understood grounds, causes, and their shapes.<sup>98</sup>

The world as a sensible thing, the beings of the world in their being-understood, is the product of being as it is reckoned and understood in a manner that makes being sensible, and therefore understandable and approachable, and which simultaneously obscures being, and the nature of being. Moreover, Heidegger argues that

in terms of the commencement of the *Geschick* of being, being and ground/reason "are" the same, and they remain the same, but in a belonging-together that diverges into a difference that varies historically.<sup>99</sup>

*Geschick* describes the historical nature of a reckoning of being but is not itself historical per se; *Geschick* is the forward momentum of a reckoning of being as beings in terms of ground/reason and causes, and which is thought in terms of the historical divergences that individual and social turns have added to or reformed as the notion of being.

There is no direct connection with being, insofar as being is thought. Heidegger draws the notion of the leap into his discussion at this point. If the leap is thought of as the movement in the path of reckoning the world and making being sensible (and therefore obscure as being *qua* being), or as the imaginative and purposefully alienating movement of the individual according to his or her perspective of the world, which re-perspectives the world, and notions thereof, Heidegger asks whether when

we notice that we have leaped off from the realm of previous thinking and are in the leap... do we not fall into the fathomless with this leap? Yes and no.<sup>100</sup>

Being cannot be thought as being *qua* being because in terms of thinking being is representationally laid out before the self as beings, so being without its ground/reason is "now being [that] can no longer be given a basis in the sense of beings and explained in terms of beings" but also that "being is now finally to

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 111.

be thought *qua* being."<sup>101</sup> The leap, in this instance, in thinking about the groundlessness/reasonlessness of being, is at once fathomless because there is nothing sensible that can reckon being into beings, and it is not fathomless because being is thought *qua* being - the question is itself and necessarily representational in order to be approached. This is an aporia to being human: that to think being, a person is closed off from being, such that there is no way to think being without mis-reckoning being, so to speak. And it is into this question that Heidegger moves in the final pages of his lectures, namely, the "leap that brings thinking into a play with that wherein being *qua* being finds its repose; that wherein being finds its repose is not the sort of thing upon which it depends for its ground/reason."<sup>102</sup> The question at the end of the lectures is therefore and disconcertingly not the question of the principle of reason and being, the question of metaphysics and the *Geschick* of being - the transference between thinkers and across social and theoretical discourses about the idea of being, and specifically the division between the sensible and the non-sensible - and the question λόγος and φύσις, the relationship of reason/ground and cause to λόγος and φύσις within the question of being, the impossibility of thinking being *qua* being apart from a representational mode of thinking, and the question of the path and the leap, and the steps outlined in the seventh lecture concerning the sketch towards the coherent and organized world picture that informs a representational mode of thought. The question that Heidegger proposes in the final pages of The Principle of Reason is about play. Heidegger asks, "Is it not merely a playful act if now, at the close of the lecture course on the principle of reason, we almost violently haul in thoughts about play and about the belonging-together of being and ground/reason with play?"<sup>103</sup> **It is worthwhile placing this within the context of Kant's discussion on the imaginative faculty in Critique of Pure Reason.**

On the one hand, this seems a reasonable conclusion for Heidegger to take - his lectures have already been described in these notes as peripatetic, as a kind of walk around the topic of the principle of reason, informed by scholarship and taken up within a framework of both free and constrained discursive

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 112.

thought that inspires the shape of a coherent system of thought about the topic in the progress of its examination. This is a manner of thinking that Heidegger describes stylistically as a self-same example: the lectures provide the theoretical basis for such an endeavor and which is itself brought to a manner of coherent organization according to the precepts of a discursive kind of topical wandering that Heidegger propounds in the text - within the framework, of course, of a lecture series.<sup>104</sup> It seems eminently reasonable, according to the logic of discursive examination that Heidegger sets forth in his lectures, both as a method and as an example of that method, that the conclusion finds Heidegger turning to a new topic, namely, play. This is a conclusion that concedes the impossibility of conclusion, but it is nonetheless jarring, and it runs counter to the expectations of a narrative gait. It must be acknowledged, of course, that The Principle of Reason is read separate from its delivery, and in this sense some amount of leeway should be given to the text. But it is not unreasonable to expect conclusive remarks for the topic at hand regardless of its method of delivery, rather than an abrupt turn to a topic that seems at its face apparently and at best corollary to the examination of the principle of reason, and which is itself a new topic, apart and distinct from the principle of reason as it has been brought, in Heidegger's examination, to a manner of coherent and organized thinking.

On the other hand, there is no reason that the lectures should not, in their closing remarks, turn to the topic of play. It may be topically corollary to the principle of reason, but according to Heidegger's method of thinking through the topic of the principle of reason, in which pieces are placed within their intellectual context, it is not unreasonable that play is thematically relevant to the topic of the principle of reason. Heidegger runs through the matters under discussion in the lectures: There is the principle of reason, examination of which underscores a tonality, or manner of understanding the principle, such that

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<sup>104</sup> And this is perhaps important to note, insofar as the peripatetic method of topical examination is constrained at the outset by the form of a lecture series, a seeming acknowledgement that thoughts do not begin formlessly; that there is a historical and material *Geschick* even in the framework within which a topic is pursued discursively; that a peripatetic walk through the topic of the principle of reason is informed not only by thinkers and ideas that have come before Heidegger but according to the paths that have been set out already, the grass trampled by innumerable feet before his own; that the inheritance of rational thought about the idea of rational thought itself is one that extends beyond the precepts of thinking on the principle of reason to include the manners and methods by which such thought is framed.

being "is" reason/ground, explicable through recourse to λόγος, what for Heraclitus, Heidegger argues, "simultaneously names being and ground/reason, naming both in terms of their belonging-together."<sup>105</sup> φύσις is relevant to λόγος insofar as φύσις, "the emerging-on-its-own, which at the same time essentially comes to be as a self-concealing," is the description of being, the reckoned understanding of being, à propos the reckoning nature of λόγος. Being *qua* being is confronted and made to be understood, reckoned, in terms of λόγος describing φύσις according to the necessity for thought, itself necessarily representational thought, to the effect that being *qua* being is concealed from representational thought by virtue of being posited in representational thought. Thinking on this topic, moreover, is what Heidegger calls the *Geschick* of being, the descent and inheritance of thought on the topic of being *qua* being, speaking, thinking, representational thought, the speaking of such thought and the description of being as φύσις. Heidegger traces this *Geschick* through the lineage of thought that traverses earliest inheritances of thought as metaphysical, as of division between the sensible and the non-sensible, through to the modern age, the atomic age, to the extent that the *Geschick* of being in retrospect resembles a path of human thought on the topic of being *qua* being and in the manner that an individual reckons the world in his or her lived and daily experience, making the world a coherent and organized thing and in some sense understood. In this sense, the personal, individual path of a reckoning person is the visceral and daily continuity of the human path of understanding, our *Geschick*, to the extent that a *Geschick* on whatever topic informs the path of the individual in his or her waking, thinking life. Memorable and noteworthy, subsequently informative leaps in the *Geschick* of thought on being *qua* being are encompassed in the thought of Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Leibniz, Kant, Nietzsche (unmentioned in The Principle of Reason, but always at hand), and Heidegger, among others.

The quotidian interaction of the individual with the world in a manner of leap-like reckoning, towards the retrospective coherence of thought, is itself informed by the notion of play - this is the place that Heidegger's reflections have arrived at. If the leap is the movement between individual and

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

noteworthy thinkers in the *Geschick* of being *qua* being, and the leap is the manner by which perspective is gained and changed in the individual's reckoning of the world under the rubric to representational thought, the question at the end of the lectures is therefore to what extent the notions of "leap" and "play" are contingent with one another. This question is implicit to Heidegger's final question: "whether and how we, hearing the movements of this play, play along and accommodate ourselves to the play."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 113.

#### h. Analytic of thought in The Principle of Reason

Of Heidegger's position, as a critical framework for perspective of the world, it is important to note several things and to elaborate on them. The first of these is the metaphysical distinction that Heidegger casts between the sensible and the nonsensible, and that this is insufficient as an explanation. The second concerns the distinction between judgment and expression. The third demonstrates the idea of a "leap," as the metaphorical coming-into of a conceptual understanding of the world, and that a hermeneutic process is entailed. And the fourth element, largely unremarked upon, concerns play.

In the oft-cited passage from the sixth lecture, as to the "partition between the sensible and the nonsensible," Heidegger describes this as "a basic trait of what is called metaphysics and which normatively determines Western thinking."<sup>107</sup> This must be understood in the context of his discussion of *Geschick*, simply, the inheritance of an unfolding of thought about the rational representation for the world, towards some conceptual topoi. However, Heidegger calls the metaphysical partition "insufficient," *unzureichend*, in obvious contrast with discussion of Leibniz's § 32 of the Monadology regarding the *principle of sufficient reason*, where Heidegger states that "Der Grund, der seine Zustellung beansprucht, verlangt zugleich, daß er als Grund zureiche, d.h. vollständig genüge."<sup>108</sup> But Heidegger argues that such a metaphysical perspective is insufficient as bringing into view what is, that Being remains concealed in its unconcealment, that is, to express Being, to articulate Being, is to simultaneously defer to what is not being, and that therefore the partition of expression, the Reason that grounds conception for Being, is insufficient as a matter of substance. This entails the discussion of *saying* in the thirteenth lecture, as a matter of "bringing to light," as per λόγος and λέγειν.<sup>109</sup> It is moreover that, as Heidegger argues, metaphor, which is "the norm for our conception of the essence of language" (see discussion of essence, description, accident, ).<sup>110</sup> For Heidegger, the idea of metaphor is referred to

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<sup>107</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 48.

<sup>108</sup> Der Satz vom Grund, 64. "Reason, which insists on its being rendered, at the same time requires that it, as a reason, be sufficient, which means, completely satisfactory." (33)

<sup>109</sup> The Principle of Reason, 107.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

towards its poetic and rhetorical application, and as a matter of reference within a metaphysical framework, as per the transfer between the sensible and the nonsensible.

The distinction between judgment and expression, which is encapsulated in §§ 31 and 32 of Leibniz's Monadology,<sup>111</sup> determines the significance of a cognitive process that "is a kind of representational thinking,"<sup>112</sup> the comparative basis on which identity and difference is discerned and thereby conceptually, that is, representationally, expressed. Obvious valences for this are apparent in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, and in fact Heidegger refers to Hegel's Science of Logic as a demonstration that "contradiction and conflict are not reasons against something being real. Rather, contradiction is the inner life of the reality of the real."<sup>113</sup> That is, the reckoning of contradiction through the *Vorstellung* of conceptual thought (that is, Reason), renders what understanding is gained through the figuring of tonality that Heidegger describes between seeing and hearing (seeing and hearing not meaning such, per se, but as manners of perception about the world).

The "leap" constitutes Heidegger's conceptual representation of the manner by which a thinking person comes to an understanding of the world according to the basis on which identity and difference are brought into some view, as per contradiction, and the leap encompasses the process by which a person in experience with the world demonstrates the *Vorstellung* of conceptual thought in reference with Being *qua* Being, that is, "The leap is the vault out of the fundamental principle of reason as a principle of beings in the saying of being *qua* being."<sup>114</sup> Where *saying* is to "bring into light" a view of the world,<sup>115</sup> the leap is a representation for the human method of thought out of which such *saying* may arise.

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<sup>111</sup> Leibniz writes in the Monadology, in § 31, "Our reasonings are based on *two great principles*: first, *the principle of contradiction*, in virtue of which we judge *false* that which includes a contradiction, and *true* that which is opposed or contradictory to the false," and in § 32, "and second, *the principle of sufficient reason*, in virtue of which we consider that there can be found no fact that is true or existent, or any true assertion, unless there is a sufficient reason why it is thus and not otherwise, even though most often these reasons cannot be known to us." (20)

<sup>112</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 23.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

Towards this, then, the methodological approach to a conception of the world in human thought moves from a confrontation with the object at hand, to recourse towards prior definition, that is, with reference to the inheritances of thought-about, or as *Geschick* of ground/reason; towards the critical inquiry of general rhetorical models, that is, stated in 1.f of the present chapter, in the third point that details Heidegger's schematic characterization of method towards hermeneutics, what "origins, destinations, contents and modes and manners of" the conditions of the object in question (the "facts" of existence, which Ricoeur defines through Russell and Wittgenstein as "not to be confused with a given but understood as a state of affairs, that is, as the correlate of a predicative act," the basis for conceptual reckoning, adherent to Kant's a prioris, etc.)<sup>116</sup>; towards relationship with known objects at hand, including what is culturally and philosophically inherited as understood of objects at hand in relation to the object in question; and finally towards tonality, that is, what may be understood through the distinctions that drawn from the comparative basis of the sensible, and thereafter what is conceptual may be reflective of a nonsensible state of affairs, concerning approach to an understanding of the world.

Heidegger's critical framework, as a matter of perspective towards the world, is one that seeks to determine the constitution of human perception and thought about the world within a manner of expression of Being. This becomes in his thinking, at the end of The Principle of Reason, a matter of play, that where Leibniz expresses the statement *Cum Deus calculat fit mundus*, Heidegger understands this as *Während Gott spielt, wird Welt*, that as for Leibniz God calculates there comes to be a world for Heidegger while God plays there would be a world.<sup>117</sup> The question of play is associated, therefore, with the question of reckoning, that play is the enactment of reckoning in the event of a world in its conception. For Heidegger this becomes a question not of thought for the sake of its value in calculation, but within the constellatory association of movement in play, and especially of reckoning and of figuring, what is worthy of thought, as a matter of extending a view towards the world, is more than "calculative thinking." How can death be calculated? How can the abrupt limits to our imagination be thought about, if

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<sup>116</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 235.

<sup>117</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 112.



not adequately in calculation? It is the imagination that synthesizes the manifold of the world in its presentation to human cognition, and whatever logical apparati are scaffolded towards a view of the world, and it is with this, and a return to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, in which the faculty of imagination moves play, which Heidegger associates with calculation but which demonstrates a more inclusive view towards the processes of reckoning that his discussion of ground/reason has opened up, towards the event of the figuration of the world in its representation. This is not a matter of abrogating the stark limits that are established at the outset of existence, foremost among these death, but rather functions as a manner of delineating and figuring such limits towards a clearer view of the world.

The connection between play for Heidegger and imagination for Kant is explored more intimately in the conclusion of this book.

## Chapter 2. Commentary on "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" by Jacques Derrida

### a. Introduction

#### 1. The scope of this chapter

This chapter takes into account Jacques Derrida's essay "White Mythology: Metaphor in the text of philosophy," as the second piece in the philosophical conversation between Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur, on the relationship between metaphor and metaphysics, and on the philosophical position of metaphor vis-à-vis rhetoric. There are several aspects of Derrida's essay that demand attention, and examination, and it is in circumscribing Derrida's thought into five subsections of thought that Derrida's ideas, towards a philosophical view of the world and of metaphor's place in such view, may more helpfully distinguish the position that Ricoeur takes in response to Derrida and Heidegger.

The second section of this chapter (section "b. Metaphor and metaphysics") provides a provisional definition of metaphor as contingent with usage, vis-à-vis the notional relationship that metaphor holds with the idea of supplementarity. These ideas are elaborated on by Derrida through a reading of Anatole France's The Garden of Epicurus, towards a distinction between words in their mechanical use and words in their particular use, towards the conclusions that, 1. Propositions contain gaps that remain to be determined; 2. Interpretation necessarily privileges certain analogical necessities over others; 3. *Usure* is an interpretive gesture; and 4. Representation denotes possibility and possibility otherwise, thereby raising the question of identity and difference.

The third section (section "c. Method in synthesis of Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel" is concerned with Derrida's concern with classes of metaphor, as a matter of tropology, and provides an argument towards definition of Derrida's methodology as a critical framework (amended after further thought, in the analytic to "The *Retrait* of Metaphor", chapter 4.f). This section works through Kant's Critique of Judgment and Hegel's Aesthetics, towards Derrida's classification of metaphors according to "regions of phenomena," and the argument that metaphor demonstrates philosopheme, which is itself the intersection of philosophy and rhetoric.

The fourth section of this chapter (section "d. Abstract and substantive verbs; metaphor, mimesis and homoiosis") adopts a structural commentary on Derrida's arguments, towards the characterization of Derrida's argument that the basic ontological expression of logos is onoma, towards the event of mimesis. This section works through Aristotle's On Interpretation and Nietzsche's The Gay Science, in addition to continued thought on Kant's Critique of Judgment. This constitutes a chain of thought towards Derrida's conclusions, that mimesis is the propriety of analogy in the reflection of physis to itself.

The fifth section (section "e. kurion and idion, and the question of propriety") continues in the previous style of structural commentary, following Derrida's arguments in examination of Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric, towards a discussion of the philosophical question of essence, and the requirement of transcendence in the delimitation of such essence (e.g., in the expression of essence). This section examines what Derrida means with his discussion of the "proper," and its relationship to (and *Geschick* of) univocity (as per Aristotle's Categories), and situates this discussion in the context of supplementarity.

The sixth section of this chapter (section "f. Supplementarity, metaphoricity, and uncertainty") asks after Derrida's conclusions on the previous sections and with regard to supplementarity, with poetic return to France's characters Aristos and Polyphilos, and the consumption of uncertainty in the extension of logos through its articulation and praxis. This section works through Gaston Bachelard's poetics Lautréamont, and demonstrates inherent uncertainty in human perspective towards the world, as through the metaphoricity of expression and the supplementarity of significance that undergirds such perspective.

The seventh section (section "g. Analytic of thought in "White Mythology: Metaphor in the text of philosophy") summarizes the philosophical position that Derrida describes of metaphor, vis-à-vis the relationship between philosophy and rhetoric, through a chain of thought that moves from philosophy/rhetoric and through the issue of perspective and expression, the distinction between noun and verb, and kurion and idion, towards the view of propriety and expression of essence, to the extent that the example of metaphor (in its tropic instance) is the demonstration of a species of supplementarity.

## 2. The scope of Derrida's project

The following is a reading of Alan Bass's translation in the collection Margins of Philosophy. These notes serve as a systematic examination of Derrida's thought on metaphor and particularly as basis for examination of the essay's relationship with Heidegger's Der Satz vom Grund, which Derrida responds to in his investigation of metaphor. Apart from the original publication in French, in *Poétique* 5 (1971) and F.C.T. Moore's translation of the essay into English for the journal *New Literary History* 6, no. 1 (1974), the principle reading is from Alan Bass' translation, which cites Moore's translation in connection with the original, in Margins of Philosophy.

As a brief explanation for the summary and examination of Derrida's essay: each section of the essay is approached individually, from which are extracted and organized broad arguments. The effect of this is to produce in circumscribed form the general arguments that Derrida engages in the essay, with an appropriate and reasonable eye towards the references that Derrida works with.

The arguments that Derrida works through in this essay are an important expansion on Heidegger's work in Der Satz vom Grund, insofar as Derrida is concerned with metaphysics and its relationship to metaphor. However, Derrida's style of writing is not amenable as is to a ready summary. It is for this that it easiest to read Derrida through a distillate lens. Nonetheless, his argument can be summarized as follows: Words themselves, as part of the expression of language, and especially of the language of philosophy, are metaphorical turns that dialectically rise out of perception, and such words, what become token to the text of philosophy, become affected by and affect the outgrowth of conceptual thought that arises from perception, in expression. The result of this is that

Metaphor... is determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular appropriation of the literal, proper meaning.<sup>118</sup>

To argue then that "Metaphor... always carries its death within itself," Derrida advances the notion that, in the separation between the sensible and the nonsensible, metaphor is the turn on which what is perceived

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<sup>118</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 270.

in an unqualified manner is dialectically drawn out of its initial constellations, and that the examination of the basis for this turn and subsequent movement of meaning is to cloak metaphor, and the work that metaphor performs (within an economy of significances under constant reevaluation), within a description that is itself metaphor. It is towards this significance that Derrida dwells on abyme (from Nietzsche, "On Truth and Falsity in Their Ultramoral Sense") and *rèleve*, Derrida's translation of Hegel's *Aufhebung*.

The essay is composed of five sections, the first two of which are set apart from the remaining three insofar as the last three sections contain paratextual commentary by Derrida next to the title of the sections. The sense that this lends to the essay as a whole is that the first two sections are introductory in nature, and the last three sections function as specific examinations of the problem that Derrida states near the end of the second section of the essay, specifically, that

...there is no properly philosophical category to qualify a certain number of tropes that have conditioned the so-called "fundamental," "structuring," "original" philosophical oppositions: they are so many "metaphors" that would constitute the rubrics of such a tropology, the words "turn" or "trope" or "metaphor" being no exception to the rule.<sup>119</sup>

The first section is titled "Exergue," and the second section, correlative to the first, is titled "Plus de métaphore." The third section is titled "The Ellipsis of the Sun: Enigmatic, Incomprehensible, Ungraspable." The fourth section is titled "The Flowers of Rhetoric: The Heliotrope." And the last section of the essay, the fifth, is titled "La métaphysique - relève de la métaphore."<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 229.

<sup>120</sup> Just as the lack of paratextual commentary placed against the titles of the first and second sections of the essay sets those sections apart from the last three, essentially distinguishing between two blocks of text, that the titles of the second and fifth sections of the essay are untranslated suggests a relationship between the two sections, internal to the essay as a whole and bridging the two blocks of text. Footnotes that Bass provides explain that the titles of the second and fifth sections are untranslatable because they each carry significances that sets the titles in opposition to themselves. This is a question that will not be examined further in this dissertation, though it merits as an idea to consider, along with the question of the relationship between the second and fifth sections.

## b. Metaphor and metaphysics

As a summative review of the topics that come into play in the introductory section of Derrida's essay:

"Exergue" begins "From philosophy, rhetoric."<sup>121</sup> This is more than a simple declaration of priorities, in terms of philosophy's primacy over rhetoric, or than of rhetoric as the study of the form of expression that transmits significance and meaning, flowing from philosophy, or the existential basis of rhetoric as being dependent on philosophy. It is certainly this, and it functions moreover as an orienting first principle that will guide the examination that the essay traverses. Where the essay orients the field of its examination with the first principle that rhetoric arrives out of philosophy, the essay is concerned with "Metaphor in the text of philosophy."<sup>122</sup> The question arises: What does Derrida mean by the "text of philosophy?" As a preliminary answer, the "text of philosophy" will be taken to mean the communicated form of philosophy, principally, in Derrida's examination, as the written communication of philosophy, or as the inscription of philosophy.

Derrida continues, "metaphor seems to involve the usage of philosophical language in its entirety, nothing less than the usage of so-called natural language in philosophical discourse, that is, the usage of nature language as philosophical language."<sup>123</sup> Rhetoric is the study and application, in whichever order, of the forms of expression of philosophy, to which the trope of metaphor belongs, as an aspect of rhetorical usage. But this is also to say that, as rhetoric arrives out of philosophy, or that it is the usage of expression in the discourse of philosophy, metaphor encompasses the very expression of the discourse of philosophy. Derrida is arguing that metaphor would appear to be the sum of philosophy as a matter of its expression, or that philosophy is in total expressed through metaphor, and that metaphor indeed encompasses the "usage of so-called natural language" in the expression of philosophy, to the extent that "the usage of natural language as philosophical language" constitutes a manner of transference of significance to which metaphor is doubled. In this reading metaphor is the operating principle for the

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

expression of philosophical language, i.e., the expression of such is wholly dependent on the transference of significance that metaphor produces, and that philosophy in its expression is therefore an expression of metaphor metaphorizing significance - or, the rhetoric of metaphor expresses the metaphorizing nature of philosophy.

This is of course dependent on the question of identity, and it is in this that Derrida's essay is partially dependent on and read more deeply through the lens of Heidegger's thought and scholarship on the principle of identity. And it is indeed through this that the nexus of the foundational principles of reason and identity come into play.

Alan Bass explains in a footnote on the introductory page of the essay Derrida's play with the word "Exergue" as the title under which the essay is headed. Bass states: "Exergue derives from the Greek *ex-ergon*, literally 'outside the work.' In French and English it has a specifically numismatic sense, referring to the space on a coin or medal reserved from an inscription. In French it also has the sense of an epigraph."<sup>124</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary doesn't disagree with Bass but provides more context: "Etymology: < French *exergue* (used frequently by De Bie 1634), apparently < Greek *ἐξ* out + *ἔργον* work; probably intended as a quasi-Greek rendering of French *hors-d'œuvre*, something lying outside the work."<sup>125</sup> The play that Derrida puts in motion with "exergue" is explicitly one of money, or the circulation and exchange of the material substitute for exchange-value, citing in a few pages Louis Althusser's For Marx and Althusser's and Etienne Balibar's Reading Capital, but there is attached to this also the notion of consumption, the alignment between the ideas of *œuvre* and *ἔργον* as work in the sense of tasks or jobs or chores, and the subsumption of such work as a remove from the idea of such work. This is to say that the work is translated outside of itself and is in a sense consumed by its telling - work is no longer work in the telling of work; in the incorporation of such telling, in the inscription that describes a coin on the very face of the coin, the work that the coin performs is explicitly the potential of its value

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> "exergue, n." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, March 2018, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/66111](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/66111). Accessed 19 April 2018.

in exchange, rather than as the work of itself.

In this sense Derrida moves towards a description of an important facet of the essay that he will be dwelling on, namely, usage, or usure. Bass notes in a footnote that "Usure in French means both usury, the acquisition of too much interest, and using up, deterioration through usage."<sup>126</sup> Bass goes on to note that "this essay inscribes the concept of metaphor in the general economy" and that reference must be made to the essay "From Restricted to General Economy" in Writing and Difference.<sup>127</sup> But the broad purpose of introducing the idea of usure is to use (so to speak) the metaphor of a coin in its usage (and later in its wearing-down with usage, having passed through and been rubbed by countless fingers in matters of exchange) to describe the relationship of metaphor to philosophy. This argues moreover, according to Derrida, that "Usure does not overtake a tropic energy otherwise destined to remain intact; on the contrary, it constitutes the very history and structure of the philosophical metaphor."<sup>128</sup> The philosophical statement, encompassed in a metaphorical expression, is dulled and becomes commonplace (as per the dead metaphor that Ricoeur comes to dwell on in the following chapter) in its very expression, distilled in its significance and dispersive in its reception.

Derrida then takes up the "risk of unearthing an example" by dwelling on his topic through examination of Anatole France's The Garden of Epicurus, but before this Derrida offers a final note: that "there is no access to the usure of a linguistic phenomenon without giving it some figurative representation. What could be the properly named usure of a word, a statement, a meaning, a text?"<sup>129</sup> There is a thread to be followed in Derrida's logic: usure describes the process and work itself in removing the work from itself, or drawing the significance of value and exchange out of the material figure that represents such. In this sense the coin is a metaphor for the material deposit of the idea of value and exchange, and the metaphor that the coin describes is itself metaphorized in being put to work, in its usure, so that usure describes the work of philosophy in being described wholly within the

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<sup>126</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 209.

<sup>127</sup> Cite "From Restricted to General Economy." Writing and Difference.

<sup>128</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 209.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.



expressive constraints of the function of metaphor in its purely rhetorical sense, namely: the question of philosophy cannot be separated from its figurative representation, and that the use to which such figurative representation is examined (so to speak) pertains to the questions that philosophy articulates.<sup>130</sup> This is to argue that the transmission of the intelligibility of philosophy, its figurative representation, is as valuably examined as the questions of philosophy itself; this is not a disagreement with Heidegger's observation that metaphor belongs to the metaphysical, but that they must be examined in conjunction with one another in order to obtain a clearer view of either. To that end, though Derrida posits from the outset that "from philosophy, rhetoric," without rhetoric there can be no intelligible philosophy.

Moving from the introduction in the Exergue, about the broad parameters that define the conundrum of metaphor that Derrida confronts in the essay, Anatole France's The Garden of Epicurus is taken as a point of departure in examination of the relationship between metaphor and metaphysics. Towards this, Derrida reads the exchange between Aristos and Polyphilos near the end of France's book. This exchange is titled: "Aristos and Polyphilos on the Language of Metaphysics," which Derrida summarizes like this:

The two interlocutors are exchanging views, indeed, on the sensory figure which is sheltered and used (up), to the point of appearing imperceptible, in every metaphysical concept. Abstract notions always hide a sensory figure. And the history of metaphysical language is said to be confused with the erasure of the efficacy (l'effacement de son efficace) of the sensory figure and the usure of its effigy.<sup>131</sup>

Derrida cites the text near the beginning, in which Polyphilos describes the work and language of metaphysicians as like knife-grinders who put medals and coins to the grindstone. Derrida remarks on this that "The issue here is not to capitalize on this reverie but to watch the configuration of our problem, along with its theoretical and historical conditions, take shape by means of the logic implicit in this text."<sup>132</sup> Derrida attaches to limits this reading, as a manner of definition. The first limit is that "Polyphilos

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<sup>130</sup> For the sake of *for the sake of ease in argument, the discussion of metaphysics through the lens of Heidegger will be transferred into the catch-all of "philosophy" in describing Derrida's work on the figurative representation of philosophy - a nod to my own inclinations in examination of the conversation between Heidegger and Derrida.*

<sup>131</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 210.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

seems anxious to save the integrity of the capital, or rather, before the accumulation of capital, to save the natural wealth and original virtue of the sensory image," and the second is that such an "etymologism interprets degradation as the passage from the physical to the metaphysical."<sup>133</sup>

To explain: Derrida reads Polyphilos' words along two axes. There is, as Derrida notes, by the first limit the idea ("a commonplace of the eighteenth century") that there is an original "purity of sensory language" that unifies the signified and the signifier, in which there is no credible distinction - a Platonic form for an idea in its expression in language, and that the loss incurred in speech, in the turn from the sensory figure to expression (insofar as metaphysical expression is summatively described in its words), summarizes within itself the absence and loss of what is as only what it is posited to be. Derrida then encapsulates the rest of the dialogue like this, before turning to more specific textual examples in France's dialogue:

[The dialogue] examines, precisely, the possibility of restoring or reactivating, beneath the metaphor which simultaneously hides and is hidden, the "original figure" of the coin which has been worn away (usé), effaced, and polished in the circulation of the philosophical concept.<sup>134</sup>

There are a couple of things to comment about this - about the play that Derrida is engaged in, in terms of the essay, and the language that the essay marshals towards examination of metaphor and metaphysics.

The first point to consider is the title of this section of the essay: Exergue. The exergue not only describes the nature of itself, as a preparatory introduction to the work of the final three sections, but as a matter of clarity the exergue establishes an axiomatic basis that predicates later conclusions. This is itself unremarkable. Clarity of thought is benefited by limits imposed on it, even if those limits are found later to be too restrictive. A second aspect of the exergue is that it describes its project through the lens of Anatole France's (here, Derrida's predicating reading of) the dialogue between Aristos and Polyphilos. It is useful to Derrida's purposes that France's dialogue is in many senses perfectly clear in its observation, argument, and conclusion: That there is a distinction between words and what they relate to; that

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 211.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

metaphysicians construct their philosophies according to fragmentary and insufficiently-summative expressions that are divorced from their purity of meaning, or their (more absolute) value; and that metaphysics is therefore the production of mythologies, that "A sorry sort of poets, they dim the colours of the ancient fables, and are themselves but gatherers of fables. Their output is mythology, an anæmic mythology without body or blood."<sup>135</sup> <sup>136</sup> Apart from the connotation of the inheritance of western philosophy as a metaphysical endeavor, a philosophy of dead metaphor (that is, watchwords - commented on in the last chapter, in Derrida's response to Ricoeur) that means too schematically to allow a more unadulterated view of the world, following the threads of new significances.

There is finally the exergue of metaphor itself, in terms of metaphysics; metaphor resides outside of the work of metaphysics insofar as metaphysics, described by Polyphilos as white mythology, collected by "gatherers of fables," cannot possibly describe through metaphor the totality of being, and what is. Metaphor, intrinsic to the description of the world as such, as it is confronted and made sense of, stands apart from the world in its actuality. Derrida speaks to this in describing the statement by Polyphilos to Aristos, an axiomatic given that predicates basis for further argument ("Grant me one thing, Aristos..."). Polyphilos argues, as Derrida cites, that

The vocabulary of mankind was framed from sensuous images, and this sensuousness is so bound up with its constitution that it is still to be found even in those words to which common consent has assigned subsequently a vague, spiritual connotation, and even in the technical terms specially concocted by Metaphysicians to express the abstract at its highest possible power of abstraction. Even these cannot escape the fatal materialism inherent in the vocabulary; they still cling by some rootlet or fibre to the world-old imagery of human speech.<sup>137</sup>

Derrida summarizes the thrust of Polyphilos' argument like this:

The primitive meaning, the original, and always sensory and material, figure... is not exactly a metaphor. It is a kind of transparent figure, equivalent to a literal meaning (sens propre). It becomes a metaphor when philosophical discourse puts it into circulation. Simultaneously the first meaning and the first displacement are then forgotten. The metaphor is no

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>136</sup> The last sentence in the French reads "Ils font de la mythologie blanche." (223) Allinson's translation is amended by Bass on page 213 to read "They produce white mythology."

<sup>137</sup> France, The Garden of Epicurus, 214-15.

longer noticed, and it is taken for the proper meaning. A double effacement. Philosophy would be this process of metaphORIZATION which gets carried away in and of itself. Constitutionally, philosophical culture will always have been an obliterating one.<sup>138</sup>

To expand on Derrida's reading, "philosophical culture will always have been an obliterating one" insofar as philosophical culture is expansive and contributes to a gain of perspective and understanding. To be clear, this is not to argue that a gain is an unalloyed good, but that in gain what was is in some sense lost; the product of capital overtakes and replaces the original capital outlay, regardless of similarity of form and matter. And this is the basis on which Derrida examines the concept of metaphor: there is a transformation of an original stake into a new and newly "original" stake, itself at stake (so to speak) for continued and expanding transformation and displacement of what was ever "original." The presumption of Polyphilos is that there was, originally, an original stake - an un-disjointed speech that did not reflect the sensuous figure that it describes but was, in whatever sense this can be understood, the original sensuous figure. The direction of Derrida's thought doesn't seem to wish to quibble with this perspective. Whether or not this can in any sense be true, it is an unrecoverable position, too much like Walter Benjamin's pottery shards to be of much use in detailing the historical basis for speech in the present age.

There arises from this the question: What is "philosophical culture?" In Derrida's essay it would seem to mark only that culture, which is to say community, bound by common recourse to generally-accepted and -understood speech, that is philosophical inasmuch as a community engages with the world according to the intelligibility of metaphorical substantiation, which is to say: people speak to one another, and they therefore belong to a "philosophical culture." Abstracted from this, however, is the culture that specifically moves towards an obliterative basis of perspective and understanding. The example that Polyphilos musters, and which becomes the title of Derrida's essay, is that of white mythology, the lifeless fables that account for being.

This is complicated, because there are a couple of degrees of remove from this position that may be examined towards clearer perspective on Derrida's thinking. Polyphilos states that a

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<sup>138</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 211.

phrase has acquired quite the ring of some fragment of a Vedic hymn, and smacks of ancient Oriental mythology. I cannot answer for having restored this primitive myth in full accordance with the strict laws governing language. But no matter for that. Enough if we are seen to have found symbols and a myth in a sentence that was essentially symbolical and mythical, inasmuch as it was metaphysical... By an odd fate, the very metaphysicians who think to escape the world of appearances, are constrained to live perpetually in allegory. A sorry sort of poets, they dim the colours of ancient fables, and are themselves but gatherers of fables.<sup>139</sup>

The last part of this citation is already reproduced above, but in its fuller context the trajectory of Derrida's argument vis-à-vis France's dialogue begins to demonstrate the layering of significances between the perspectives of the individual, that gatherer of fables living in allegory, and the production of such perspective at the level of culture, that therefore distinction between the individual and culture lends rise to questions of appropriation and the inherent transformation of such fables and mythology, in the parlance of Polyphilos, adopted by Derrida, into the allegorical notions that frame perspective and understanding in what is called here "white mythology." And it is important to note that questions of power and coercion, and questions of justice and understanding (or, more precisely, misunderstanding) between cultures, is secondary in Derrida's examination to the actual process of such a transference of notions and ideas between cultures, and the obliterative transformations that such a transference entails. This is Derrida's larger point, aside from all aspects of cultural studies (however important they may be in their own right, whose value resides in communicating essential perspectives about oneself and one's place, and cultural milieu, in the world): that whatever else and apart from notions of appropriation and abrogation of perspective and thought, the mythology of the West, that of metaphysics, is that of Reason, that "the white man takes his own mythology, Indo-European mythology, his own logos, that is, the mythos of his idiom, for the universal form of that he must still wish to call Reason."<sup>140</sup> And to be clear, this is not to argue that the white mythology of the West is sole heir to some authentic mythology of Reason - the point of this argument is to demonstrate the basis for examining the self-obliterative perspective of culture in its very explanation. In the case of the West, at least in part, reason provides the

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 213.

foundation by which to obscure and forget the bases of a capitalistic stake of perspective and understanding.

As Derrida notes, Aristos ends the dialogue by saying goodbye to Polyphilos in essentially conceding all argument without acknowledging as such: "I leave you unconvinced. If only you had reasoned by the rules, I could have rebutted your arguments quite easily."<sup>141</sup> It seems a short step to point out that Aristos' dismissiveness of Polyphilos' arguments about the nature of metaphysics as a self-obliterative process (i.e., capitalistic) is the very pronouncement of the difficulties that arise in transference of perspective and understanding, and perhaps because this is a short step Derrida feels no need to make it clear. But for clarity, Aristos' dismissiveness is this: At about the middle of the dialogue Aristos asks Polyphilos whether "any conclusions of importance are to be drawn from this rigmarole," to which Polyphilos responds "that the Metaphysicians construct their systems with the fragments, now all but unrecognizable, of the signs whereby savages once expressed their joys and wants and fears."<sup>142</sup> The question cannot be avoided: What are joys, wants, and fears? Not particularly - the specificity of joies, désirs, and craintes are circumstantial to the conditions of les sauvages; but as a matter of relation in the subjectivity by which les sauvages negotiate their position within and according to the prerogatives of their world, what Polyphilos must imagine is the authentic experience of les sauvages, the primal experience of a human mind arriving at the distinction between self and world and expressing as much, and permitting themselves distance in gaining perspective and understanding of such a world, joys, wants, and fears demonstrate and mark, in their telling, the individuality of les sauvages, their personhood.<sup>143</sup> Joys, wants, and fears are a modality of relation, and their expression as an authentic reaction against the world is unrecoverable, and it belies the entirety of the unrecoverable nature in imagining the authenticity of experience and its expression. It is to this that Aristos remarks that, "In this, [les sauvages] only submit to the necessary conditions of language."<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>142</sup> France, The Garden of Epicurus, 216-17.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 208.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 203.

According to Aristos the recovery of such an ideal as the original expression of the relationship between the individual and the world is to "make metaphysical speculation the slave of its own phraseology and liable to all the hereditary defects of the terms it employs."<sup>145</sup> Words, being ground down with usage and polished, abstracted from their authentic significance, if condemned "in the philosopher, to be consistent... must [be] the same with the rest of mankind."<sup>146</sup> This is the distinction between words as a mechanism for use and words in their particular use.

There is nothing that Polyphilos may propose to ameliorate the conundrum that his logic identifies: If there is an authentic significance to the words that are first muttered as an abreactive discrimination between the individual and the world, according to the basic prerequisites of experience (i.e., the primal moment of alienation, of subject consciousness), and such significance is unrecoverable - as unrecoverable as prior experience - except in its retelling, and that therefore metaphysicians' "output is mythology, and anæmic mythology without body or blood (Ils font de la mythologie blanche)," there is little to be done about this. There can be no recovery of significance because there can be no significance that is recoverable without reference, analogy, analogia entis. Aristos, then, both affirms and contradicts Polyphilos' stance in breaking off the conversation, when he says "Good-bye, dear Polyphilos. I leave you unconvinced. If only you had reasoned by the rules, I could have rebutted your arguments quite easily."<sup>147</sup> There can be no conviction towards what cannot be demonstrated, and the original significance of authentic experience is speculative only insofar as the vaguery of language can be presently surmised. Polyphilos is picking at the ground for reason and the basis for reflection and thought, in response to such a ground, and Polyphilos is doing so in language that is abrogated of its ground by the conclusions that he arrives at. And to be clear, if Polyphilos' axiomatic conditions are that recourse to original experience is unrecoverable and can anyways only be expressed in language, the basis for the reason that language assumes is irrelevant, and Aristos is asked by Polyphilos to accommodate the requisite preconditions of

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 215.

reason, i.e., that for there to be reason there exists the assumption that there is reason, and that there is a trajectory that is followed (the rules that Aristos refers to) in tracing reason from its present circumstances to its source, which is to say: the assumption that there is reason. Beyond this, there is thought.

Derrida neatly summarizes his own trajectory of thought in relation to France's dialogue between Polyphilos and Aristos, with four conclusions that look towards the later work of the essay. The first is that "Polyphilos' propositions seem to belong to a configuration whose historical and theoretical distribution, whose limits, interior divisions, and gaps remain to be determined."<sup>148</sup> There is therefore in this, and with reference to Renan, Nietzsche, Freud, Bergson, and Lenin, the question of the interpretive work that belongs to thought, and which is inherent to reflective consciousness in parsing the rhetorical properties of expression. The second conclusion is that

To read within a concept the hidden history of a metaphor is to privilege diachrony at the expense of system, and is also to invest in the symbolist conception of language that we have pointed out in passing: no matter how deeply buried, the link of a signifier to the signified has had both to be and to remain a link of natural necessity, of analogical participation, or resemblance.<sup>149</sup>

To trace the historical connotations of resemblance lends primacy of interpretation to the original significance of such, and loses sight of the "link of natural necessity" or "analogical participation, or resemblance." The circumstances of a metaphor in its present usage demonstrate and make clear a mutual participation between two distinct notions that perform by both on the other the work of interpretation, or the thought that follows reflection in the acceptance of ground/reason.

The third conclusion that Derrida draws from France's dialogue is that "The value of usure also has to be subjected to interpretation."<sup>150</sup> This follows logically from the second conclusion, such that though the historicity of metaphor privileges diachrony, the fact of usage makes clear that such a historicity exists and insists on coloring the interpretive work of metaphor. Derrida's fourth conclusion is that representation itself (e.g., the economy of significance analogized according to the usage, and

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<sup>148</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 215.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.



concomitant degradation that arises of exchange) "opens the wider space of a discourse on figuration," that is, the represented figure denotes possibility towards expansion of thought, towards the opening of discourse, as a matter of analogical supplementarity.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

c. Method in synthesis of Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel

First thought on the relationship between metaphysics and metaphor, and the basis of its theoretical unpacking, is more precisely questioned, beginning with the "attempt to recognize in principle the condition for the impossibility" of the project of "decipher[ing] figures of speech, and singularly metaphor, in the philosophic text."<sup>152</sup> There is a circularity to this proposition, which Derrida acknowledges: "Metaphor has been issued from a network of philosophemes which themselves correspond to tropes or to figures, and these philosophemes are contemporaneous to or in systematic solidarity with these tropes or figures." Here, summatively, it is laid out. Metaphor is "issued from" a network, a mutative system, of bases of propositional argument, and is understood in terms of the energetic mechanics of its production (i.e., trope) and the content of its expression (i.e., figure), and understood in terms of temporal flow or by atemporal examination. It is a self-regenerative process of metaphorization, which Derrida describes as getting "'carried away' each time that [metaphor] attempts in vain to include under its own law the totality of the field to which [metaphor, individually] belongs."<sup>153</sup>

This begs the question: What are the classes of metaphor? What are the categories of descriptive value that can be assigned to groups of metaphor, according to similarity. Undertaking this would be useful, insofar as it would lend a clearer view of the field to which metaphor adheres, but this amounts too easily to rhetorical coat-checking, and fails to examine the root of the production of such within a system of such checking, etc.

What Derrida argues cannot never be fully brought into such a rhetorical coat-check (whereby the categorical field of examination that is laid atop the reality, so to speak, of broadly-distinct modes of expression that metaphor can be described as inhabiting) is the metaphor of the metaphor.

The metaphor of metaphor and the excess of words obfuscates, rather than clarifies. Metaphor, in light of Derrida's thought, is a self-regenerative process of tropic energy combined with nodes of value within a mutative system, and as such, metaphorical generation delimits the field of its expression. This is

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

to say that metaphor constantly moves the boundary of its field of semantics and the horizon of its conceptualization. New metaphor builds on old metaphor; regularity of such is an archeological question. This would seem to be a more genetic question of metaphor that carries the baggage of conditions conceived for and carried over from another field entirely; in other words, it is perhaps a genuinely intuitive way to think about metaphor or, more likely, an end of thought that elicits confusion, before leaving the conceptual for the quotidian. The point is Derrida's, though: "The field is never saturated." There is never too much metaphor, because metaphor creates its own space.<sup>154</sup>

Derrida argues that the sublimative movement in Hegel's thought is essentially the result of the process of usure, that the work of existing within the expressive framework of the inheritance of language, compels the grist of language through the sublimative process of sensuous/spiritual/literal. To this effect, the work of metaphor is the process by which expression is sublimated between the poles of recognition and consideration, expression and reflection. It should be clear that sublimation of expression through metaphor does not constitute the sublime, either as a rhetorical trope or as a description of a fundamental characteristic of judgment, e.g., in Kant's definition of the faculty of judgment of the sublime, that it

is the name given to what is absolutely great. But to be great and to be a magnitude are entirely different concepts (*magnitudo* and *quantitas*)... The sublime is that, the mere capacity of thinking which evidences a faculty of mind transcending every standard of the senses.<sup>155</sup>

Derrida is making a distinction, therefore, towards the service of his examination of sublimative movement: that where Hegel describes the process of the sublime, and where Kant describes the capacity for and the objects of sublime thinking, Derrida correlates usure with the mechanism of the sublime, and it is the mechanism that encompasses the whole of process, capacity, and object. The usure is, then, and

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<sup>154</sup> This is reminiscent of Nietzsche's definition of existence as bearable, insofar as it is an aesthetic phenomenon, as a matter of gratitude towards art, in *The Gay Science*, II.107, "Our ultimate gratitude to art."

<sup>155</sup> Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Judgment*. Trans. James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. §25, 78-81.

essentially, a will or desire towards the employment of the mechanism of the sublime, i.e., metaphor, i.e., expression.

These are conclusions to preliminary questions: What is metaphor? What is metaphor in relation to philosophy? What is philosophy? Etc. Out of these questions, and through the tropic example that Derrida reads in Anatole France's dialogue between Polyphilos and Aristos, and in obvious light of Heidegger's thought on the principle of reason, as a foundational examination of metaphysics, Derrida proposes to examine the limit of [metaphor's] plasticity" with the law of supplementarity taken provisionally as a hypothesis. This is most directly addressed in Of Grammatology, "From/Of the Supplement to the Source; The History and System of Scripts," that

If supplementarity is a necessarily indefinite process, writing is the supplement par excellence since it marks the point where the supplement proposes itself as supplement of supplement, sign of sign, taking the place of a speech already significant: it displaces the proper place of the sentence, the unique time of the sentence pronounced hic et nunc by an irreplaceable subject, and in return enervates the voice. It marks the place of the initial doubling.<sup>156</sup>

Where supplementarity in terms of writing is the this-for-that exchange between the written word and the spoken word in the larger sense of expression, a law of supplementarity that guides the hypothesis for continued examination of metaphor is a description of the processes of metaphor in its tropic work, schematically thus:

Experience --> Expression --> Figure --> Argument --> Metaphor

This digresses from Derrida's argument and seems to be a misreading, but The problem with this is that it presumes an originary moment - experience - and a summative figure - metaphor - where in fact there is a constant interplay and exchange between metaphor and histories of metaphor (Geschicks of metaphor) and figures proposed in new expressions borne of experiences that are ongoing and never, in fact, originary in any sense, other than functioning as the turn on which a new branch of expression is grounded.

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<sup>156</sup> Derrida, "From/Of the Supplement to the Source," 281.

Is this the general thesis question that Derrida is proposing, that the very mechanism of metaphor, as a device that abbreviates the explanation for ideas, presupposes a methodology, or a categoricity, an authorship, and thus an ideality, a Platonic separation between ideal and practice, heaven and world?

Following this there is the observation that "The difficulties we have just pointed out are accentuated with respect to the 'archaic' tropes which have given the determinations of a 'natural' language to the 'founding' concepts (theoria, eidos, logos, etc.). And the signs (words/concepts) from which this proposition is made, beginning with those of trope and arkhe, already have their own metaphorical charge."

Derrida goes on with reference to Heidegger: "What is fundamental corresponds to the desire for a firm and ultimate ground, a terrain to build on, the earth as the support of an artificial structure. This value has a history, is a history, of which Heidegger has proposed an interpretation."<sup>157</sup> A question that is raised here is Derrida's assignation of desire as corresponding to what is fundamental. This would seem to be a turn on Heidegger's proposals for understanding reason/ground. Heidegger doesn't seem to indicate desire in the apparent inevitability of an assumption of ground/reason in the processes of making sensible the world. Rather, Heidegger examines the question of necessity as it relates to a metaphysics that takes as its basis the separation of the sensible from the non-sensible. This is to say that the history of thought, and especially in terms of being but also more broadly, as the method of thought, is to assume a distinction between the sensible and the non-sensible. Derrida implicates desire in this. What is the operation of this desire?

There is then a footnote about hypotyposis in Kant's Critique of Judgment, in which Derrida summarizes: "Hypotyposis can be schematic (direct presentation of an intuition to a purely rational concept) or symbolic (indirect presentation of an intuition to a purely rational concept)."<sup>158</sup>

In this there is first the question of what Kant is talking about specifically, and then there is the question of what Derrida will be doing with this citation, and how it fits into his larger argument. To this

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<sup>157</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 224.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

there should be brief analysis of Kant's Critique of Judgment, and of § 59 Beauty as the symbol of morality. This section is found in the second book of the Critique of Judgment, the "Analytic of the Sublime," and in the second section of the second book, "Dialectic of aesthetic judgment."

Preliminarily, the Critique of Judgment follows Critique of Pure Reason and Critique of Practical Reason, and the question that it seeks to understand is to the relationship between understanding and reason. Kant begins this project by outlining the "The Realm of Philosophy in General," that is, the "entire faculty of cognition has two realms, that of natural concepts and that of the concept of freedom."<sup>159</sup> It is over these domains that understanding and reason operate, respectively: "The function of prescribing laws by means of concepts of nature is discharged by understanding, and is theoretical. That of prescribing laws by means of the concept of freedom is discharged by reason and is merely practical."<sup>160</sup> It is by this that understanding and reason "have two distinct jurisdictions over one and the same territory of experience," which is to say that both operate within the context of "the complex of the objects of all possible experience, taken as no more than mere phenomena."<sup>161</sup> Kant maintains that it is the faculty of judgment that bridges understanding and reason, the two domains of philosophy in general, and that "Judgment in general is the faculty of thinking the particular as contained under the universal," or that what is experienced in particular, as a particularity of phenomena, is cognizable under the umbrella of universal reckoning. Moreover, "If the universal (the rule, principle, or law) is given, then the judgment which subsumes the particular is determining."<sup>162</sup> Where the prior Critiques were towards the question of determining judgment, which "determines under universal transcendental laws furnished by understanding and [which] is subsumptive only," the faculty of judgment, between the principal philosophical positions of understanding and reason, is one of "Reflective judgment[,] which is compelled to ascend from the particular in nature to the universal."<sup>163</sup> Kant goes on to argue that the principle of

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<sup>159</sup> Kant, Critique of Judgment, 10.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 11, 10.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

reflective judgment is that

as universal laws of nature have their ground in our understanding, which prescribes them to nature (though only according to the universal concept of it as nature), particular empirical laws must be regarded, in respect of that which is left undetermined in them by these universal laws, according to a unity such as they would have if an understanding (though it be not ours) had supplied them for the benefit of our cognitive faculties, so as to render possible a system of experience according to particular natural laws.<sup>164</sup>

The work that reflective judgment performs is more than the reconciliation of situating the individual between the universal and the particular perspectives of the world, but coordinates what is particularly perceived and experienced with expectations towards manner by which the world is experienceable. Of this there are four aspects of reflective judgment that Kant identifies. The first is that of the agreeable: (§ 3 Delight in the agreeable is coupled with interest), "That is agreeable which the senses find pleasing in sensation."<sup>165</sup> The second is that of the good: (§ 4 Delight in the good is couple with interest), "That is good which by means of reason commends itself by its mere concept."<sup>166</sup> This is more complicated than what is simply agreeable - agreeableness is carried by reaction to the sensuous, so that "agreeableness belongs to subjective sensation."<sup>167</sup> But in order "To deem something good, I must always know what sort of a thing the object is intended to be, i.e., I must have a concept of it."<sup>168</sup> This places reflective judgment of the good within the organizing principle of a reason and prior idea of the object that is or isn't good, so that an objective perspective of the object requires some manner of a communal reckoning, which is to say that ethics is implicated in the good. Both the agreeable and the good are distinct from the beautiful and the sublime, which are defined in § 29 Modality of the judgement on the sublime in nature:

The beautiful is what pleases in the mere judging of it (consequently not by intervention of any feeling of sense in accordance with a concept of the understanding). From this it follows at once that it must please apart from all interest.

The sublime is what pleases immediately through its resistance to the

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 39.

interest of the senses.<sup>169</sup>

The beautiful is perhaps easier to get a handle on: If interest in "the delight which we connect with the representation of the existence of an object,"<sup>170</sup> the phenomenon of the object represented in some respect and before some faculty of judgment, the beautiful is what is agreeable prior to being of interest to us; the beautiful stands apart from our delight in the representation of the existence of an object simply because the beautiful stands before our faculty of judgment. What, then, is the sublime? In Kant's reckoning, "It is an object (of nature) the representation of which determines the mind to regard the elevation of nature beyond our reach as equivalent to a presentation of ideas." (98) Kant explains:

In a literal sense and according to their logical import, ideas cannot be present. But if we enlarge our empirical faculty of representation (mathematical or dynamical) with a view to the intuition of nature, reason inevitably steps forward, as the faculty concerned with the independence of the absolute totality, and calls forth the effort of the mind, unavailing though it be, to make the representation of sense adequate to this totality. This effort, and the feeling of the unattainability of the idea by means of imagination, is itself a presentation of the subjective purposiveness of our mind in the employment of the imagination in the interests of the mind's supersensible vocation, and compels us subjectively to think nature itself in its totality as a presentation of something supersensible, without our being able to produce this presentation objectively.<sup>171</sup>

The sublime is therefore the presentation of what is not otherwise presentable, the coordination of imaginative faculties in the production of thinking nature apart from what is sensible in terms of what is sensible. The sublime is the imagining of a bridge between the non-sensible and the sensible, making the non-sensible objectively real and present to the view of sensible faculties without actually and objectively being real and present to the view of sensible faculties.

There are parallels between this definition of the sublime and the matter of metaphor, in the schematics of metaphysics that Heidegger describes in the sixth lecture of The Principle of Reason, that of the sensible and the non-sensible:

Because our hearing and seeing is never a mere sensible registering, it is therefore also off the mark to insist that thinking as listening and bringing-

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 98.



into-view are only meant as a transposition of meaning, namely as transposing the supposedly sensible into the nonsensible. The idea of "transposing" and of metaphor is based upon the distinguishing, if not complete separation, of the sensible and the nonsensible as two realms that subsist on their own.<sup>172</sup>

A couple of clarifying remarks: The first is that in this telling of a metaphysics the separation of the sensible and the nonsensible, in the registering of sensibility, is not only the "transposition of meaning." This repeats Heidegger's claim, but it is important: To assume that registration of sensibility is the transposition of meaning is to also assume that meaning is an inherent matter of the world, that meaning carries with it some manner of substance, and that meaning is, despite its mutability, in a sense indestructible. This cannot be the case; in metaphysics meaning is drawn in the crossing of thresholds between the sensible and the nonsensible, and it is this very partition between the two that allows for the transference of significance, and for meaning to come to be understood.

But it isn't with the sublime that Derrida is concerned, precisely, in his footnote on page 224 in "Plus de métaphore," where he states that "What is fundamental corresponds to the desire for a firm and ultimate ground, a terrain to build on, the earth as the support of an artificial structure. This value has a history, is a history, of which Heidegger has proposed an interpretation."<sup>173</sup> At the end of the second sentence is a footnote to citation of Kant's Critique of Judgement about hypotyposis in § 59 Beauty as the symbol of morality, not, as could be expected, of Heidegger, and The Principle of Reason. It is apparent that Derrida is thinking about The Principle of Reason here, insofar as approach, for Heidegger, to meaning is based on the assumption of ground/reason, and that the historical nature of such a *Geschick* of being and reason arrives to us, in the present age, as an intellectual inheritance. Derrida remarks that "What is fundamental corresponds to the desire for a firm and ultimate ground," that what is fundamental is the assumption of a foundationalism of significance, and a desire to understand or to retrieve such foundational significance (re: Polyphilos). Kant seems to approach Derrida's link between reason and desire in § 59 where he writes that "judgement does not find itself subjected to a heteronomy of laws of

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>173</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 224.

experience as it does in the empirical judging of things - in respect of the objects of such a pure delight it gives the law to itself, just as reason does in respect of the faculty of desire."<sup>174</sup> Pure reason, "the faculty of judging on a priori principles,"<sup>175</sup> and understanding (in Critique of Pure Reason) "in general can be represented as a faculty for judging." Further, "Judgment is ... the mediate cognition of an object."<sup>176</sup> Objects adhere to the descriptive possibilities of the concepts of categories, the twelve valences that Kant argues summarizes the actuality of experience. The faculty of judgment is the capacity for determining and distinguishing the categorical basis for an object, and out of such capacity and practice of judgment understanding - "making no other use of these concepts than that of judging by means of them" (Pure Reason, 205) - "afford[s] constitutive a priori principles of knowledge."<sup>177</sup>

The question that Kant approaches in the Critique of Judgment asks how judgement organizes and mediates understanding and reason, towards the purposes of knowing the world and being engaged in such. In the first section of the Judgment Kant begins with the argument that "The judgment of taste is aesthetic," and that "If we wish to discern whether anything is beautiful or not, we do not refer the representation of it to the object by means of the understanding with a view to cognition, but by means of the imagination (acting perhaps in conjunction with the understanding) we refer the representation of the subject and its feeling of pleasure and displeasure."<sup>178</sup>

The use to which Derrida puts Kant's work in the Critique of Judgement concerns the question of beauty, insofar as beauty is one of what Kant understands are the four reflections on which judgement is based, and that beauty "pleases apart from all interest," that an object that is beautiful is objectively beautiful and objectively pleasing, and in the section that Derrida cites, § 59 Beauty as the symbol of morality, what is objectively pleasing is inarguably pleasing were it a matter of relation between individuals, and that therefore, in that beauty is such, a clarity of structure is discerned in terms of the

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<sup>174</sup> Kant, Critique of Judgment, 181.

<sup>175</sup> Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 4.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

<sup>177</sup> Kant, Critique of Judgment, 3.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

difference between what the symbolic describes and what the schematic describes. The extent to which something can be described as right or wrong (morality, or as truth) is measured against the objective standard of beauty, because what is objectively pleasing must be objectively right. That beauty is, as Kant argues, therefore the symbol of morality, we are aided in understanding the concept of symbol, insofar as a symbol is an "indirect presentation of [a] concept," a reference to a concept (of understanding) that "effect ... presentation ... by aid of an analogy."<sup>179</sup>

Derrida moves on from his footnote towards citation of Hegel's Aesthetics:

Metaphor has its principal application in linguistic expressions which in this connection we may treat under the following aspects:

- a) In the first place, every language already contains a mass of metaphors...
- b) But gradually the metaphorical element in the use (im Gebrauche) of such a word disappears and by custom (durch die Gewohnheit) the word changes from a metaphorical (uneigentliche, non propre) to a literary expression (eigentlichen Ausdruck, expression propre), because owing to readiness to grasp in the image only the meaning, image and meaning are no longer distinguished, and the image directly affords only the abstract meaning instead of a concrete picture... The question does not depend on the first origin of a word or on linguistic development generally; on the contrary, the question above all is whether a word which looks entirely pictorial, deceptive, and illustrative has not already, in the life of the language, lost this its first sensuous meaning, and the memory of it, in the course of its use in a spiritual sense and been relevé (AUFGEHOBEN HATTE) into a spiritual meaning.<sup>180</sup>

A couple of clarifying remarks may be added to this citation - specifically a definition of the term image, and a description of the manner in which Hegel envisions the meaning of such and its place in this context.

The use to which Derrida puts Hegel's observation is as buttress to the distinction that Derrida draws between "actual, effective metaphors and inactive, effaced metaphors correspond[ing] to the value of use."<sup>181</sup> Derrida points out that the inactive, effaced metaphors are traditionally without much significance to the reader because the author did not think of the metaphor him or herself - they are merely the inherited means of expression at hand. But Derrida argues that the process of metaphorization,

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>180</sup> Bass's translation of Derrida's citation of Hegel, Aesthetics.

<sup>181</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 225.

its "movement... (origin and then erasure of the metaphor, transition from the proper sensory meaning to the proper spiritual meaning by means of the detour of figures) is nothing other than a movement of idealization."<sup>182</sup> The meaning of such a metaphor is interior to the metaphor itself through its usure, and its "sensory exterior," its figurative expression, is in each such inactive metaphor the embodiment of the possibility of transposition. Derrida says that "this framework sets to work the oppositions nature/spirit, nature/history, or nature/freedom, which are linked by genealogy to the opposition of physis to its others."<sup>183</sup> This is no less than the same manner of framework out of which Heidegger describes the basis of metaphysics, as "the distinction, not to say the separation, of the sensory and the non-sensory as two domains each subsisting for itself."<sup>184</sup>

A question arises here as to the distinction between the sensory and the non-sensory, the critical basis for an investigation of metaphysics and the assumption inherent to Western philosophy, and what Heidegger calls the *Geschick* of being: Is this distinction more than the framework for the work of metaphor in bridging these domains? Does the distinction of sensory/non-sensory, or of being/non-being, produce a kind of inevitability towards the work of metaphor in process of understanding the world? This would seem to be asking, in the case of Heidegger's lectures, whether the work of thinking along what he calls the path (of understanding, or reckoning of the world) is carried under its own momentum, once it has been set into motion, which is to say, once representative thought has occurred.

Derrida is concerned with another question, however, which is that of the possibility of a classification of metaphors according to their "regions of phenomena," an impossibility if such regional phenomenism is drawn back to the "(natural) original metaphors," and by the "receptive zones, the regions of sensibility" of metaphor, which is to say, how metaphors are perceived, and understood accordingly. This is all to say that "Thus one does actually speak of visual, auditory, and tactile metaphors, (where the problem of knowledge is in its element), and even, more rarely, which is not

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., with citation by Derrida of Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, lecture 6.

insignificant, olfactory or gustatory ones."<sup>185</sup> As Derrida continues, however, these regions of sensibility reside in space and time, and that "there must be, in correspondence to this empirical aesthetics of sensory contents, as the very condition of its possibility, a transcendental and formal aesthetics of metaphor. It would lead us back to the a priori forms of space and time."<sup>186</sup> This is to say that the question of regional sensibilities of metaphor are at root questions of "a priori forms of space and time," after which are mentioned Plato, Husserl, Nietzsche and Bergson, but not Kant, interestingly, who outlines the a priori conditions of space and time in opening pages of The Critique of Pure Reason.<sup>187</sup>

The problem that Derrida is concerned with is this:

How are we to know what the temporalization and spatialization of a meaning, of an ideal object, of an intelligible tenor, are, if we have not clarified what "space" and "time" mean? But how are we to do this before knowing what might be a logos or a meaning that in and of themselves spatial-temporalize everything they state? What logos as metaphor might be?<sup>188</sup>

The world is presented to our thoughtful selves by our cognizing selves as an idea, or as a series or concatenation or cacophony of ideas, expressive of something other than themselves, expressive of the object of logos in the manners and forms of logos, and the world as a coordination of space and time and defined according to and through our usage of logos, our *usage de metaphore* - but if space and time coordinate logos how can logos truly define space and time?

This work is done constantly and incompletely, dialectically, in the *relève* of sense, "permitting to be called sense that which should be foreign to the senses."<sup>189</sup> In this sense, so to speak, every act of metaphor, of metaphorization, of merely speaking, of reacting in presence to the world as it is presented before us in its idea, is an endless series of miniature sublimities, that which, according to Kant, pleases of its own account, "found in an object devoid of form... a representation of limitlessness, yet with a super-

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 227.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Refer to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, 174-78, B37-45, for the metaphysical expositions of the a priori concepts of space and time.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 227-8.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 228.

added thought of its totality," or as the making sensible of what is non-sensible.<sup>190</sup> Derrida goes on: "the opposition of meaning (the atemporal or nonspatial signified as meaning, as content) to its metaphorical signifier (an opposition that plays itself out within the element of meaning to which metaphor belongs in its entirety) is sedimented - another metaphor - by the entire history of philosophy."<sup>191</sup> The work of metaphor is the encapsulation, the drawing of boundaries around, the open-ended and indistinct relationship between the signified and the signifier, the sense and the enunciation and description of sense, impossible to corral in its historical connotations and indeterminate in the possibilities to which meaning might ultimately seep away.

A general taxonomy of metaphor is the question of classification of metaphor by type and variety, according to its efficacy or presumptive nature and understood according to its use or its reception, and its type adherent to kind of reception - and this, a general taxonomy of metaphor, is in Derrida's train of thought in *Plus de métaphore* both the assumption of a circumscribed analysis of the concept of metaphor and a demonstration of discourse, "taking as its rule the explicit consciousness of the philosopher or the systematic and objective structure of his text."<sup>192</sup> The title of this section of the essay comes into force here, as a pun, inasmuch as there is no metaphor capable of summatively describing the basis of expression and there is nothing other than metaphor that can be employed in summatively describing the basis of expression. Derrida goes on:

The concept of metaphor, along with all the predicates that permit its ordered extension and comprehension, is a philosopheme. The consequences of this are double and contradictory. On the one hand it is impossible to dominate philosophical metaphors as such, from the exterior, by using a concept of metaphor which remains a philosophical concept... But, on the other hand, for the same reason philosophy is deprived of what it provides itself. Its instruments belonging to its field, philosophy is incapable of dominating its general topology and metaphors.<sup>193</sup>

What is a philosopheme? This is the first time in the essay that Derrida describes something as a

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<sup>190</sup> Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 75.

<sup>191</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 228.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

philosopheme, and this seems to be a major point for Derrida, in what feels like a passing comment. A philosopheme is the propositional content to a syllogistic line of reasoning, a basic and axiomatic assertion of fact that is set in work towards an inference gained through deduction of propositions. So according to Derrida, the concept of metaphor - not metaphor itself, presumably, the thing in the world that's metaphor, if there is such a thing, but the concept of which - is a philosopheme.

At the end of the citation above appears tropology ("general[ly]"), that is a fairly constant notional companion in this essay. A trope in rhetoric is a figure of speech, the expression of something not literal in place of what is understood in a literal sense - the object of a metaphor, in other words. As a matter of literature a trope is a motif that occurs across literary references - a touchstone that assumes a cultural valence as an expression of type, a manner of shorthand that accounts for thing without the need for describing such thing in particular at each occurrence. A trope in classical rhetoric describes a manner of style or a figure of speech, but it is a turn. It is the hinge on which meaning swings; a trope is definitive more for the action it engenders than as a thing itself; a trope is the place of movement at which form is understood as meaning something. This begs the question: Why is Derrida concerned so deeply with trope, and tropic energy (what is tropic energy but a will towards meaning?), without actually defining *τρόπος*?

Metaphor is a philosopheme, a syllogistic proposition, the basis of an argument or the basic structure of what becomes an understanding of the world - in terms of metaphor, a manner of reckoning the divide between the sensible and the non-sensible, according to Kant's definition of the sublime and Heidegger's basic description of the form of metaphysics. Derrida comments on this:

On the one hand it is impossible to dominate philosophical metaphors as such, from the exterior, by using a concept of metaphor which remains a philosophical product.<sup>194</sup>

This is to say that examination of metaphor requires the use of metaphor in describing conclusions; this is a bit like defining a word with itself - metaphor as a subject of inquiry ultimately summarizes its

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

distinctions with recourse to its own mechanism. This is akin to the problem that Polyphilos has in terms of the impossibility of metaphysical conclusions based on abstracted modes of definition, i.e., metaphor.

Derrida continues:

But, on the other hand, for the same reason philosophy is deprived of what it provides itself. Its instruments belonging to its field, philosophy is incapable of dominating its general tropology and metaphoricity.<sup>195</sup>

Philosophical discourse lends to itself the means of its own expression, and this is the conundrum, because such a discourse, uncovering an understanding of bridges between the sensible and the non-sensible, is subject to its own definition; philosophy, in Derrida's rendering here, describes its field of understanding only according to what philosophy decants into its description. It is towards this that

Derrida concludes

(1) The philosopher will never find in this concept [metaphor] anything but what he has put into it, or at least what he believes he has put into it as a philosopher. (2) The constitution of the fundamental oppositions of the metaphorology (physis/tekhne, physis/nomos, sensible/intelligible; space/time, signifier/signified, etc.) has occurred by means of the history of a metaphorical language, or rather by means of "tropic" movements which, no longer capable of being called by a philosophical name - i.e. metaphors - nevertheless, and for the same reason, do not make up a "proper" language.<sup>196</sup>

The "history of a metaphorical language" includes the history of metaphysics in its expression, the same *Geschick* of being that Heidegger describes and in which Heidegger metaphorologically expresses such a history, a historicity of metaphor. That the philosopher finds only what is put into the concept is itself the sublime movement of thought, the bridge between what is sensible (metaphor) and what is not sensible (what metaphor describes). The question that Derrida approaches is an appreciation of the function of thought, by its mechanism of "'tropic' movements" and prepositional designation with "metaphor" - not what Polyphilos strives for, as a clear understanding of principle significance, the linguistic moment at which the sensible is expressible and therefore intelligible. Derrida's general effort in the essay is therefore to describe the limits of metaphor, with reference to Bachelard's "metaphilosophy," a "material

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 228-9.



imagination" of "meta-poetics," that defines the boundaries of metaphor according to "several 'examples'" and towards an understanding of "the limit of [metaphor's] plasticity."<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 229.

d. Abstract and substantive verbs; metaphor, mimesis and homoiosis

Before beginning this section of my reading of Derrida's "White Mythology," it is important to note that the essay has been read with the perspective that each paragraph of the section constitutes some specific aspect and progression of Derrida's larger argument, and that therefore it is easiest to read, and to understand, the arguments that Derrida is moving forwards with particular attention to the constitutive aspect of individual paragraphs.

Paragraph 14 and 15 in this section are substantive and are not specific towards a continued train of argument, if it can be granted that the format of Derrida's thinking follows a path of discreet sub-arguments that examine a topic before providing some conclusion. It is jarring and antithetical in terms of format to insist that paragraph 14 is independent from the previous stone of argument and correlated to the following (paragraphs 15 and 16) without necessarily providing the introductory basis for an argument.

**Paragraph 14**<sup>198</sup> | Derrida argues that a verb can be an "abstract verb" or a "substantive verb." Again, the question of distinction between abstract and substantive needs to be teased out.

The case is made that, in terms of metaphor, ideas of object are superior (in what sense is the word superior meant?) to ideas of relation, "and the correlative superiority of the substantive." This is vague, and clarification is in order:

Ideas of an Object

Active participles | or, substantive ideas of object

Passive participles | or, concrete ideas of object

Ideas of Relationship

Verb | to be, which is the abstract verb or substantive verb.

Concrete verbs are dependent on the verb to be, and so are "improperly named verbs."

In terms of metaphor, ideas of an object takes descriptive precedence over ideas of relationship,

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<sup>198</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 235-6

and within the field of ideas of an object substantive ideas take descriptive precedence over concrete ideas of object.

**Paragraph 15**<sup>199</sup> | Derrida goes on to argue that "Everything, in the theory of metaphor, that is coordinate to this system of distinctions or at least to its principle, seems to belong to the great immobile chain of Aristotelian ontology, with its theory of the analogy of Being, its logic, its epistemology, and more precisely its poetics and its rhetoric. In effect, let us consider the Aristotelian definition of the noun, that is, the element of metaphor." The noun is "the smallest signifying element" and is distinguished from the verb "only by its atemporality," though the question of temporality is inherent to the question of the verb insofar as the verb demands the comparative relationship of change, thus distinction between before and after, therefore passing and temporality. It is therefore that the distinction that Derrida makes here is obvious to the qualities that describe the noun and the verb.

**Paragraph 16**<sup>200</sup> | Correlative to the argument that he is working through, Derrida then points to the difference that Aristotle proposes between animals and men (Poetics, 1456b22-25), that "it is only on the basis of the signifying phonic composition, on the basis of meaning and reference, that the human voice should be distinguished from the call of an animal."

Meaning and reference, therefore, and according to Derrida's understanding of Aristotle, is "the possibility of signifying by means of a noun. What is proper to nouns is to signify something (*Ta de onomata semainei ti*; Rhetoric III, 10, 1410b11), an independent being identical to itself, conceived as such."<sup>201</sup>

This broaches on the theme of identity that Heidegger is concerned with in his reading of Leibniz, and the conclusion that

One often formulates [the principle of identity] as  $A = A$ . But equality is something other than identity. What identity really means is by no means univocally and unanimously determined. Identity can mean that something is the same and nothing more than the same: the same itself, the self-same. Instead of this, one often says, imprecisely, that 'identical'

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 236.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 236-8.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 237.

means 'being equal to itself.' But something is equal only where there is a multitude. However, every individual, every single thing, can be self-same with itself, for itself. On the other hand, others define identity in another way: Identity may mean the belonging-together of distinct things in the same. More clearly: the belonging-together of distinct things on the basis [Grund] of the same. On the basis? Here the same plays the role of a reason or basis for belonging-together. In identity, reason shows itself to be the basis upon which and in which the belonging-together of distinct things rest.<sup>202</sup>

There is in this the distinction between a thing as it is and a thing as it is in belonging-together with its basis of same, which is to say, the reason that it is attached to the thing. This is the saying of the thing, the understanding that the thing is in some sense inseparable from the saying of itself; this is the concept of the thing, the thing together with its reason.

It is important to keep this thread in mind while Derrida moves on from discussion of metaphor, and the linguistic basis for such (which is the articulation of reason adherent to the thing that is named, or being said), and what Derrida describes as

a certain systematic indissociability of the value of metaphor and the metaphysical chain holding together the values of discourse, voice, noun, signification, meaning, imitative representation, resemblance; or, in order to reduce what these translations import or deport, the values of logos, phone semantike, semainnein, onoma, mimesis, homoiosis... Mimesis is never without the theoretical perception of resemblance or similarity, that is, of that which always will be posited as the condition for metaphor. Homoiosis is not only constitutive of the value of truth (aletheia) which governs the entire chain; it is that without which the metaphorical operation is impossible: 'To produce a good metaphor is to see a likeness' (To gar eu metapherein to to homoion theorein estin. 1459a7-8).

A note before moving on: the "theoretical perception of resemblance or similarity" is the matter of seeing and understanding as being seen in resemblance or similarity, the recognition of possibility of resemblance of similarity in first distinguishing difference between the things of the world, put simply. But what is "seeing likeness" than first the distinction of identity, and the separation of things based on the perception of difference? Mimesis, as Derrida points out of Aristotle, "belongs to logos, and is not animalistic aping, or gesticular mimicry; it is tied to the possibility of meaning and truth in discourse," and

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<sup>202</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 8.

that "At the beginning of the *Poetics* mimesis in a way is posited as a possibility proper to physis. Physis is reveal in mimesis, or in the poetry which is a species of mimesis, by virtue of the hardly apparent structure which constrains mimesis from carrying to the exterior the fold of its redoubling."

Physis, in this sense, contains both the possibility of mimesis and, where there is mimesis, the conscious reflection of physis to itself. Such is the emphasis that Aristotle makes of mimesis, that, in Derrida's summation "Mimesis is proper to man," that mimesis is the consciousness of reflective engagement. This is quite near the question of judgement that Kant is concerned with in his third critique, and which I have already summarized (here I cite myself, for the sake of expanded clarity vis-à-vis thought about Derrida and his discussion of mimesis): "The work that reflective judgment performs is more than the reconciliation of situating the individual between the universal and the particular perspectives of the world, but coordinates what is particularly perceived and experienced with the expectations that are borne of universal perspective of the manner in which the world is experienceable."

Mimesis, according to Derrida's reading to Aristotle, belongs to physis, or, if you will, physis includes its own exteriority and its double. In this sense, mimesis is therefore a "natural" movement. This naturality is reduced and restricted to man's speech by Aristotle. But rather than a reduction, this constitutive gesture of metaphysics and of humanism is a teleological determination: naturality is general says itself, reassembles itself, knows itself, appears to itself, reflects itself, and "mimics" itself par excellence and in truth in human nature.<sup>203</sup>

This is therefore the origin of poetry and the origin of metaphor, where metaphor is the proper transference of named things, of onomata, and poetry is the expression of such within a field of stylistic and communal expectation of what is "proper," with a mind in reflective judgement of the critical apparatus of rhetorical exposition.

Citing Aristotle's *Poetics*, Derrida describes the "natural origin of poetry" as two parts, first for the natural capacity for humans in practicing imitation, and second for the natural delight that humans

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<sup>203</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 237.

take in works of imitation.<sup>204</sup>

**Commentary** | The scope of these paragraphs is broad, and it marks the place in the essay where the issues of identity and perception, and physis and logos begin to collaborate towards mimesis. Derrida argues à propos Aristotle (Rhetoric III, 10, 1410b11) in the 16th paragraph that "What is proper to nouns is to signify something, an independent being identical to itself, conceived as such."<sup>205</sup> This is, as Derrida states, the disposition of a named ontology, the identification and expression of a being in its individual, or at least self-identical, physis.

A summary: mimesis is proper to man (Aristotle, et al); everything that is belongs to physis; mimesis belongs to logos; mimesis belongs "as possibility proper to physis." In other words, within physis, as perhaps a mechanics of being, mimesis reflects upon physis the mechanics of physis in part according to the kind of expression that logos employs, namely, naming.

What follows on this argument, then, is the place of metaphor in relation to the schema of being that has been laid out in these paragraphs.

**Paragraph 17**<sup>206</sup> | Derrida argues from this that as "these two sources of poetry confirm, logos, mimesis, and aletheia here are one and the same possibility." This is to say that speech and imitative expression and what such imitative expression reflects to the speaker as meaning, or as the manner of the world, participate within the same manifold of understanding, and thus to a coherent view of the world and knowledge about the world. Metaphor, in other words, as "an effect of mimesis and homoiosis, the manifestation of analogy, will be a means of knowledge."

**Paragraph 18**<sup>207</sup> | Mimesis is a difficult word to grapple with. It is imitation, but it is more than imitation. A mirror imitates - a mirror reflects the world to the viewer. But a mirror does not embody mimesis insofar as a mirror does not consciously and within a rhetorical framework (i.e., with regard to a critical separation of elements constituting expression) reflect the world back on upon itself. Mimesis is

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<sup>204</sup> Aristotle, Poetics, 1448b4-9.

<sup>205</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 237.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

in part an interpretive gesture towards some objective, thus teleologically determinative inasmuch as meaning, understood as the result of mimesis, is backwards-looking and rationalizes understanding according to that path that mimesis has taken in arriving at such understanding.

Derrida writes that, according to Aristotle,

One may say of [metaphor] what is said of poetry: it is more philosophical and more serious (philosophoteron kai spoudaioteron) than history (Poetics 1451b5-6), since it recounts not only the particular, but also states the general, the probably and the necessary. However, it is not as serious as philosophy itself, and apparently will conserve this intermediary status throughout the history of philosophy.<sup>208</sup>

It is worth remembering Aristotle's distinctions between the terms that Derrida cites here, from chapter ix or the Poetics:

It is also evident from what has been said that it is not the poet's function to relate actual events, but the kinds of things that might occur and are possible in terms of probability or necessity. The difference between the historian and the poet is not that between using verse or prose; Herodotus' work could be versified and would be just as much a kind of history in verse as in prose. No, the difference is this: that the one relates actual events, the other the kinds of things that might occur. Consequently, poetry is more philosophical and more elevated than history, since poetry relates more of the universal, while history relates particulars. "Universal" means the kinds of things which it suits a certain kind of person to say or do, in terms of probability or necessity: poetry aims for this, even though attaching names to the agents. A "particular" means, say, what Alcibiades did or experienced.<sup>209</sup>

The distinction between verse and prose is one of rhetoric, which is to say, a difference of form in expression, taking into account the necessities of manners of relation vis-à-vis the objective of the expression. The broad difference that Aristotle is drawing in this passage is that of relating what is universal and what is particular. What is particular is a thing that has happened, the relation of an event as it may be reasonably described to have occurred, thus, historical - not necessarily factual, but in consideration of the actuality of events in an effort towards the distinction of the truth of events, or of an event. Poetry "aims" to describe the universal, which is in consideration of the probability of necessity of

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Aristotle, Poetics, 1451b-1-10.

an event in its happening. Poetry is therefore the imaginative expression of what may be according to an idea of what is; poetry is the translation of knowledge of the world into the possibility that such knowledge may entail. In its rhetorical expression poetry enacts the relation that history enacts in its own expression. Poetry is not merely speculative, but it encompasses the possibility that speculation entails in a way that history does not.

**Paragraph 19**<sup>210</sup> | To bring this question back to metaphor, Derrida draws a parallel between the functions of metaphor and of poetry. To begin with, metaphor is "an effect of mimesis and homoiosis, the manifestation of analogy, will be a means of knowledge, a means that is subordinate, but certain." This definition of metaphor is then stood in comparison with the function of poetry. Metaphor is a translative process founded in mimesis and homoiosis; mimesis is the human work of representing the world to themselves, and homoiosis is simultaneously the intrinsic likeness of thought distinct from the world and which inspires the representation of the world, and the likeness that is seen in reflection of such representation. Metaphor, in this instance for Derrida, as an effect of mimesis and homoiosis, is the result of the world being perceived and represented, and reflected in judgement. It is metaphor as effect that aligns it definitionally with poetry, according to Derrida. Metaphor as cause, or as the tool by which expression is summoned, which is to say the rhetorical trope of a manner of expression, is the metaphor that generally compares one thing to another; metaphor as effect is the likeness that is understood as a basis for reckoning the world. Metaphor as effect is not a mode of expression that slots somewhere between history, the relation of facts, and poetry, the relation of possibility, and philosophy, the relation of being; but metaphor most closely aligns as an effect of the production of likeness (mimesis) and the perception of likeness (homoiosis, preceding or in reflection on such likeness) with the concept of poetry, insofar as poetry and metaphor express the possibility of likeness and reflection on such.

Derrida goes on to describe Aristotle's reflection (so to speak) on metaphor in Rhetoric as not stating "outright that 'this' is 'that,'" (Rhetoric III, 10, 1410b10-19) but what "sets before us, vivaciously,

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<sup>210</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 238-9.



what the comparison [the work of the likeness, or the mimesis of homoiosis] more haltingly reconstitutes indirectly." Metaphor as both trope and as effect of mimesis and homoiosis is a bridge between the use and manipulation of language (taking for example verbal expression) towards the production of likeness that may be reflected on, a sublating manner of the production of resemblance towards a definition of identity. Indeed, Derrida argues à propos Aristotle that "metaphor, the theoretical perception of resemblance" is based upon the energy of a mind in perceptive poetic work that "supposes, nevertheless, that the resemblance is not an identity."<sup>211</sup>

**Paragraph 20**<sup>212</sup> | This may be clarified with recourse to Aristotle's definitions of nouns and verbs in On Interpretation. A noun is "a sound significant by convention," meaning that there is a communal and historical acceptance of the relation of particular significance of a sound, "which has no reference to time, and of which no part is significant apart from the rest."<sup>213</sup> A verb, on the other hand, "in addition to its proper meaning," again, communal and historical significance, "carries with it the notion of time. No part of it has any independent meaning, and it is a sign of something said of something else."<sup>214</sup> A noun means in its entirety; a noun names a thing. A verb describes some aspect of the temporal activity of a noun; a verb activates the possibility of change in a thing that is named, and in this does not speak to what is particular but which describes some particular aspect about a thing that is spoken of in particular. The notion of metaphor, in light of the basic distinction between nouns and verbs in On Interpretation and the activity of metaphor in terms of mimesis and homoiosis, as it relates to modes of expression (i.e., history, poetry, philosophy), is such that metaphor describes the mutative possibility of a thing without actually either describing the historical fact of change (in verbalizing) or the particularity of the thing as it has become (the historical expression of a thing between its present and its prior being). Derrida says of mimesis that it "yields pleasure only on the condition of giving us to see in action that which nonetheless

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Aristotle, On Interpretation, 16a2, 19-21.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 16b3, 6-8.

is not to be seen in action, but only in its very resembling double, its mimema."<sup>215</sup> An effect of mimesis and homoiosis is metaphor, and it is thus that metaphor describes the process by which likeness is perceived and produced, and the effective result of such perception and production; metaphor makes present in perception what is possible in the application of mimetic energy and is simultaneously the image that becomes present to perception of the possibility of likeness. As metaphor is both (and therefore neither wholly) the production and the result of the perception of likeness, metaphor functions as both noun and verb, to the effect that it describes the possibility of identity without actually naming identity as such. A verb is undergirded by the definition that a noun lends to it, both substantively and ephemerally (that is, in Aristotle's example of health, "being healthy" is the temporalization of the noun "health" and relies on the definition of the noun to inform the verb, but of which the verb describes not "health" per se but the temporal possibility of health, that is, the mutative potential between likenesses of "health").

**Paragraph 21**<sup>216</sup> | The beginning of this page marks a separation from the preceding remarks, except that an extensive footnote continues from the previous paragraph on the prior page. The previous paragraph ends with a brief discussion, already noted, about "A dividend of pleasure," the interior joy that Aristotle speaks about in Poetics, of note:

It can be seen that poetry was broadly engendered by a pair of causes, both natural. For it is an instinct of human beings, from childhood, to engage in mimesis (indeed, this distinguishes them from other animals: man is the most mimetic of all, and it is through mimesis that he develops his earliest understanding); and equally natural that everyone enjoys mimetic objects. A common occurrence indicates this: we enjoy contemplating the most precise images of things whose actual sight is painful to us, such as the forms of the vilest animals and of corpses. The explanation of this too is that understanding gives great pleasure not only to philosophers but likewise to others too, though the latter have a smaller share of it. This is why people enjoy looking at images, because through contemplating them it comes about that they understand and infer what each element means, for instance that "this person is so-and-so." For, if one happens not to have seen the subject before, the image will not give pleasure qua mimesis but because of its execution or colour, or for some other such reason.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 239.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 240-1.

<sup>217</sup> Aristotle, Poetics, 1448b3-18.

It is important to remember that Derrida has framed this discussion in Marxist terms, as a manner of facility of explanation rather than as a matter of ideological adherence. This is clear from the context of the original proposition of the essay, that language in giving voice to expression is like a coin that has been rubbed down, effaced, in its use. It would be scholastically remiss to fail to make reference to such an obvious point of reference in the examination of the topic of metaphor, and questions of value and exchange. In this section of the essay, though, "The Ellipsis of the Sun," there is allusion to the effect of usure and concomitant notions of value and exchange, inasmuch as the definition of a coin's usage is inscribed in the effacement of its image, and the Kantian separation of the concept from the thing that precedes the notion of such, in the case of the title of the essay, the sun that is missing - despite the overwhelming evidence of the sun's continued existence.

There are a couple of clarifying points that Derrida makes in this paragraph, and into the following. The first is a brief run-down of the parts of speech that Aristotle defines in Poetics, or the identifiable particulars of diction (lexis), and whether these hold meaning individually. This is part of book xix in Poetics, which begins "it remains to speak about diction and thought." Thought is at first blush quite easy to grasp: "Thought," according to Aristotle, "covers all effects which need to be created by speech: their elements are proof, refutation, the conveying of emotions (pity, fear, anger, etc.), as well as enhancement and belittlement."<sup>218</sup> Thought is an architecture that is structurally engendered by speech. Derrida states that "The semantic system... is not separated from its other by a simple and continuous line," which is to say that the defining order of the semantic system, both what it articulates and the definition that it lends to the field of the articulator, is not an issue of either/or because language, elementally, is not, as Derrida says, homogeneous. It is a question of what parts have or impart meaning, more meaning than other parts and meaning of themselves. In this "The noun still remains the determining criterion;" this is the argument that Aristotle makes in the third part of On Interpretation, alluded to above - that even though verbs impart significance, especially as per the nominally descriptive

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 1456a 35-7.

nature of its meaning and the temporal aspect that it lends to the nominal, the verb is still undergirded by the definition of the noun that it describes (as in, "being healthy" depends on a notion of "health").

**Commentary** | Derrida is moving through distinctions between the world and its being, and its appearances, and the world and its expressions, and manners of expression, and the world as it is perceived and considered in the mind of humans - this is to say, thought. There is the world, and it is reflected in human expression, a part of which is logos; and it is logos that structures thought, the active consideration of the world and the reflection of the world. The basic ontological expression of logos is onoma, the name of a thing as it is perceived in its local identity; this means that thought is structured by the action of ontological consideration, and that such consideration affects the structure of thought which in turn affects expression of the world, which is to say, mimesis.

But it is not simply that naming something that coordinates a semantic system; it is the jostle between names (as a matter of temporal consideration) and the constant and critical separation and engagement between names that give a sense to the scope of the structure of thought, and its limitations as a mode towards self-identity. This cannot be purely arbitrary - identification of things as separate and coherent beings within the sweep of physis connotes a particular energy towards identification, and a capacity for tropic movement. Thus the human mind is not simply a naming machine, and thought does not function like a Frankenstein's monster because it is thrown together of disparate and discreet parts that somehow operate as a whole; no. As thought is dependent on names, names are dependent for their functioning on a thought that is capable of moving such names between themselves, and establishing in their movement relations between them and an interplay of identity and abrogation of form and significance. Thought applies the tropic energy of critical determinacy towards what has been identified as being part of what is, to the effect of perceiving relationships between what is, and such a jostling of the parts of what is in thought is the transference of conditions between discreet identities, namely, metaphor, and the function of metaphor.

**Paragraph 30**<sup>219</sup> | In his analysis of Aristotle's description of analogy, Derrida is here moving towards the thought that analogy ("metaphor par excellence," a phrase that Derrida repeats several times) is a combination of metaphors within a larger metaphor towards the result, if not the purposes, of a narrative construction about the objects (purportedly) in contention. In the case of the sun and its rays, and the sower and the seeds, the analogy is between the sun casting its rays and the sower casting his seeds, but inherent to this analogy (again, metaphor par excellence) are the metaphors of the sun, i.e., the root of Polyphilos' complaint - the speaking of sun as "sun" already elides the object itself of the sun, or, the metaphorization that is born or the speech act, or the metaphor of lexis. There are four names here: the sun; the rays; the sower; the seeds. These are all metaphors themselves. But the analogy occurs between the action of one to another and the other to its corollary, i.e., the sun casting rays and the sower casting seeds. In the sense that this analogy functions as a simple metaphor, it is the action of the sower on the seeds that stands in comparison with the action of the sun on its rays. What significance is imparted is due to the relationship of the sun to the sower and each to its ancillary, more fundamentally onomic, metaphor, i.e., rays and seeds. The problem with this is that the proper name is the conceptual basis for metaphor - it is not metaphor in the strictly rhetorical sense because it relies on one aspect of its comparative function being the thing that is being named; that is, the function of naming is metaphorical when it is understood as the mimetic reproduction of the thing being named.

**Paragraph 31**<sup>220</sup> | Derrida goes on to cite of Aristotle the "invocat[ion of] the case of a lexis that would be metaphorical in all aspects," that

This type of metaphor can further be used by predicating the borrowed term while denying one of its attributes: suppose one were to call the shield not "Ares' wine bowl" but "a wineless wine bowl."<sup>221</sup>

This example is of metaphor that has shuffled off its referent; there is only the presumption that the wine bowl is stood in place of Ares' shield. At face value, "Ares' wine bowl" describes the possession

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<sup>219</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 243.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Aristotle, Poetics, 1457b29-32.

by Ares of a wine bowl, with the implication being that this must be in addition to the possession by Ares of a shield. It is with the explicit abnegation of such a qualifier, the wifelessness of a wine bowl, that the metaphor of the shield is more clearly implied, but even here there is the problem of a multiplicity of possible referents: i.e., Ares holds a wine bowl that is empty of wine, perhaps because he waits for it to be filled, or because he has drunk the wine already, or that the wine bowl cannot hold wine because it has a hole in it or because it isn't a wine bowl at all but a shield. Derrida says of this that, because "no reference [is] properly being named in such a metaphor, the figure is carried off into the adventure of a long, implicit sentence, a secret narrative which nothing assures us will lead us back to the proper name."

**Paragraph 32**<sup>222</sup> | Derrida then has this to say:

As soon as one admits that all the terms in an analogical relation already are caught up, one by one, in a metaphorical relation, everything begins to function no longer as a sun, but as a star, the punctual source of truth or properness remaining invisible or nocturnal.<sup>223</sup>

This is obviously a pun, as it is the stars that are seen at night, and it is at night that what's hidden seems most proper as being hidden. This is all to say that, à propos of Nietzsche's declaration that god is dead in The Gay Science<sup>224</sup>, insofar as the yardstick of truth that god is considered to be, or as lantern lit by a madman in the bright morning (as Nietzsche puts it?)<sup>225</sup>, cannot encompass the horizon of the world as it may be known, and understood. It is not god per se who is dead - god is beside the point. It is god who functions as the light-bearer of truth, the stake in the ground around which understanding orbits, that is no longer centrally pertinent to a person who accepts that an ontological ground is provided by something as mobile as significance expressed through metaphor. This is to say that a person's being is mutable, to the extent that metaphor supplies the definition of a horizon of understanding. And this is why perhaps metaphor is such a fraught object for consideration.

**Paragraph 33**<sup>226</sup> | Derrida goes on, stating that analogical relations caught in metaphorical

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<sup>222</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 243-4.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Nietzsche, The Gay Science, § 108, pp. 109.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., § 125, pp. 119.

<sup>226</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 244.

relations "refers, in any case, in Aristotle's text, to the problem of the proper name or the analogy of Being."<sup>227</sup> Derrida dismisses this path of inquiry in a footnote, but refers his readers to Pierre Aubenque's Le problème de l'être chez Aristotle (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966) and J. Vuillemin's De la logique à la théologie (Paris: Flammarion, 1967).

But Derrida makes the point, salient to his discussion, that the sun "sowing" is a name "inscribed in a system of relations that constitutes it. This name is no longer the proper name of a unique thing which metaphor would overtake; it already has begun to say the multiple, divided origin of all seed, of the eye, of invisibility, death, the father, the 'proper name,' etc." This is a readily understood commonplace of literary theory, that the meaning of words and especially of words in their relations with and between one another is one of constant slippage, or as a continual redefinition of boundaries and limitations of significance whose play-with by mimestheticians is a source of delight and pleasure for them.

**Paragraph 34**<sup>228</sup> | Beginning from the prior page and continuing onto the present, Derrida concludes that "The genius of mimesis, thus, can give rise to a language, a code of regulated substitutions, the talent and procedures of rhetoric, the imitation of genius, the mastery of the ungraspable."<sup>229</sup>

To summarize, mimesis is the willful making-doing facsimilation of the world, through human genius the reflection of physis to itself, and with regard to making-understood, and especially through language (indeed, principally through language, as Derrida seems to imply as much and in line with Heidegger's argument that language is the place of human dwelling), the analogistic metaphory of names in place of names not only obscures (i.e., the ellipsis) of the world and its objects, as they have been reduced to their names, but builds on top of such play the facsimile of the world as a concept. The world is a metaphor of the world, so to speak.

This seems banal, and doesn't quite approach a more clear-minded explanation of what Derrida is

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 244-45.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

driving at in the essay. Hopefully my reading of Derrida's essay will become more clearly articulated as I progress, and as I approach my reading more conscientiously, and systematically. This would seem to be a more appropriate approach to Derrida. It is obvious that he is adherent to the rhetoric of a carefully constructed essay, i.e., two broad introductory sections followed by three sections of analysis. It wouldn't surprise me if the writing of the essay is of a different order than its final composition, e.g., the three sections of analysis were undertaken in moments of curiosity, and the conclusions that Derrida could draw from them are posited in the second section of the essay (the specificity of the problematic) followed by the *Exergue* at the beginning of the work, which functions as a summative introduction to the general ideas that had been first explored and analyzed and from which then were drawn conclusions.

Were this the case, that Derrida's essay comes to me as a package out of order from the chronology of its composition, it is not dissimilar to my own method, which is to say: the identification of a general problem, and the examination of four works towards my own informed stance on the topic (these are my readings in the appendices), before I compose conclusions.

**Commentary** | The larger point of this section of the essay is summarized in the closing paragraph.<sup>230</sup> Mimesis is the resemblance of nature to itself, a propriety of analogy that physis reflects upon itself. That "Nature gives itself in metaphor" is a manner of saying that physis reveals its interior truth and presence in the analogical outlay of comparison, and that the human propensity for finding such pleasure as is found in mimesis is (although according to variance of skill and aptitude in whatever aspect of mimesis) a human characteristic of genius.

Kant defines genius succinctly in § 49 of Critique of Judgment, that is:

1. genius is a talent for art, not science;
2. genius presupposes ends;
3. genius displays itself as an expression of aesthetic ideas; and

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<sup>230</sup> The question of Derrida's methodology of analysis and writing will be commented upon prior to my reading of the next section. I am unsatisfied with *how* I am reading Derrida - this should already have been apparent in the wildly different principles of organization of my readings between the *Exergue* and *Plus de métaphore*, and *Ellipsis of the Sun*.



4. genius is the presupposition of proportion and accord, "produced by the nature of the subject."<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Kant, Critique of Judgment, 146.

e. Kurion and idion, and the question of propriety

Derrida summarizes the argument he has laid out in the epigraphs:<sup>232</sup> Metaphor, the transference of meaning between two conceptual objects, from one to the other and, by implication, back to the first, is the basis of human reckoning of the world.

**Paragraph 6**<sup>233</sup> | If the mind is organized around the precepts of comparison, and everything that the mind produces in terms of its sense of the world is direct result from the very apparatus by which the mind produces, then the mind, as an organ of comparison in the production of perspective grounded in comparison, is both the function for human perspective and the path by which the mind engages with the world. The human condition is categorically denominated by its function, and it is proper to the mind to reckon by comparison. Reason is fundamentally comparative. To this end, Derrida proposes that the question of "properness," "an immense task" in examining, can be read according to three meanings in "the Aristotelian text."

**Paragraph 7**<sup>234</sup> | The Aristotelian text is metonym for the specific texts of Rhetoric and Poetics. Derrida identifies three shades of "proper" in Aristotle's definitions of metaphor, which, he maintains, "does not recur to a very simple, very clear, i.e. central, opposition of what will be called proper, literal meaning/figurative meaning," that is, metaphor being the difference between the representative expression of a thing by its name, and the representative expression of the expression of the thing. The words that Derrida is concerned with, regarding "proper," are *propon*, *kurion*, and *idion*. Of *propon*, this is "appropriate, suitable, decent, proportionate, becoming, in relation to the subject, situation, things."<sup>235</sup> Moreover, it is remarked that "this value of properness remains rather exterior to the form - metaphorical or not - of discourse." *Propon* is considered in relation to discourse, it is not of the discourse itself; *propon* does not describe what is appropriate to the expression of the discourse, but discourse in relation to

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<sup>232</sup> Diderot, Letter on the Deaf and Dumb; Diderot, D'Alembert's Dream; Nietzsche, The Dawn of Day; Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams.

<sup>233</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 246.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, 246-7.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

context.

With *kurion* and *idion* this is different. Derrida remarks that "*kurion*, more frequent in both the Poetics and Rhetoric, designates the propriety of a name utilized in its dominant, master, capital sense."<sup>236</sup> Between the two, "*kurion* is interpreted as the primitive (as opposed to derivative) sense, and sometimes is used as the equivalent of the usual, literal, familiar sense... (Rhetoric III, II 1404b6): 'By the ordinary word (*kurion*) I mean that in general use in a country (Poetics 1457b3-4)." Derrida summarizes by remarking that *kurion* indicates neither an unusual word nor a metaphorical word; clearly, *kurion* lies more to the side of basic onomastic expression than it does to figurative speech. *Idion* "participate(s) in the two other meanings," that is, *idion* is the expression of propriety in terms of unusual or metaphorical words. Derrida finds few instances of *idion* in Poetics and Rhetoric (I am taking his word on this) and summarizes an instance from Rhetoric (III, V, 1407a31): "to employ the proper name is to avoid the detour of periphrasis (*tois idiois onomasi legein, kai me tois periekhousin*), which is the correct thing to do." To speak periphrastically is to speak around the topic, indirectly (a sound example of the periphrastic comes from Latin grammar, of the passive periphrastic, the gerundive [of obligation], or the passive verbal adjective described by a conjugation of *sum*, "is to be doing something," in which obligation describes the inevitability of what is about to be done. Within the context of Rhetoric, though, what is "the correct thing to do" in terms of critically understanding the components of argument, and in constructing argument, is to speak more straightforwardly.

Derrida ends this paragraph, and the argument more broadly, with the summarization that "The contamination of these three values seems already accomplished in the Ciceronian notion of *verba propria* as opposed to *verba translata* (*De oratore* 2.4)," which is to say that the significant differences between the distinctions of "proper" is leveled to mean nothing more than the primitive and derivative senses of expression.

**Commentary on the initial remarks following the epigraphs** | The first argument in this section of the

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

essay makes the claim that metaphor is proper to man. A ground for expression in human discourse is the operational use of metaphor: discourse is grounded in the transference of significance between distinct identities. The question then, is: What is proper? Derrida supplies us with three variations from Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric: the proper in relation to discourse (prepon), the proper in a primitive (i.e., not figurative) sense (kurion), and the proper in a figurative (i.e., derivative) sense (idion). Finally, these gradations of significance are flattened in classical rhetorical study, to the extent that a word is either a word for a thing or it's not, though it's applied to the thing, therefore translata, moved around. For the purposes of clear argumentation, verba translata is unnecessarily complicating.

**Paragraph 8**<sup>237</sup> | This marks the beginning of a nicely-structured set of arguments: an initial assertion that predicates three conclusions and corollary examinations. Derrida begins this set of arguments with an observation about idion: "the value of idion seems to support this entire metaphorology, without occupying center stage."<sup>238</sup> The concept of idion, that which is proper to expression outside of the purposes of clarity for the sake of argument, that is, poetic derivation of significance on the level of the word: idion in contrast with kurion (and both of these in contrast with prepon) establishes the capacity of derivative thought to express significance. In other words, impropriety is proper to new perspective.

There is reference to Aristotle's Topics, in which "(idion) is at the center of a theory of the proper, of essence, of accident." Because metaphor "aims at an effect of cognition," it is relevant to knowledge about definitions: "on what the thing of which one speaks is, properly, essentially, or accidentally." To this, Derrida examines idion in terms of knowledge that deals with definition.

**Paragraph 9**<sup>239</sup> | "A noun is proper when it has but a single sense. Better, it is only in this case that it is properly a noun. Univocity is the essence, of better, the telos of language." Derrida then goes on to cite Aristotle's Metaphysics (4, 1006a34-b13). Alan Bass also recommends in a footnote to read Aristotle's Topics (I, 18) and cites De Marsais and Fontanier, cited by Tzvetan Todorov in Littérature et

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 247-8

signification (Paris: Larouse, 1967), to the effect that reason is dependent on the assumption of univocity of language. Aristotle remarks in Topics that "It is useful to have examined the various meanings of a term both with a view to clarity... and also in order that his reasonings may be directed to the actual thing and not to the name by which it is called." (XVIII, 108a.) Aristotle then goes on to argue that "The discovery of differences is useful both for reasonings about sameness and difference, and also for the recognition of what some particular thing is." (XVIII, 108a37-108b1)

**Paragraph 10**<sup>240</sup> | Derrida argues, à propos the propriety of language in the reduction of the name of the thing to the thing itself, rather than as its name, that "Each time that polysemia is irreducible, when no unity of meaning is even promised to it, one is outside language. And consequently, outside humanity. What is proper to man is doubtless the capacity to make metaphors, but in order to mean some thing, and only one." What is proper to being human is the reductive force of metaphor, as a collation of significance between differences, the univocity of language, to mean a single thing out of semantic multitudes. Citing Aristotle's Metaphysics (1006a12-15), Derrida goes on to point out that "a metaphorical vegetable no longer belongs completely to physis to the extent that it is presented, in truth, by mimesis, logos, and the voice of man." Metaphor is proper to humans insofar as it defers significance to the essence of the thing that it names, and such a significance stands apart from physis inasmuch as it is human mimesis of physis to the view of physis, the willful reflection of physis to physis.

The naming of the essence of the thing in view is the univocity of metaphor as the reduction of a constellation of significances into a coherent and organized significance. The univocity of metaphor organizes the ground of human reason to the extent that it is capable of gathering significance into a single and coherent mimesis of physis. For this it is not physis, but it names physis.

**Paragraph 11**<sup>241</sup> | What is proper to humans is metaphor, and what is proper to metaphor is the naming of essence. However, Derrida says that "Although inseparable from essence, the proper is not to be confused with it. Doubtless this division is what permits the play of metaphor." (249) This is

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 248-9.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 249.

significant because Derrida is arguing that the boundaries of metaphorical expression are mutable and which mutability allows for play, and this is to suggest the question that Heidegger asks at the end of the thirteenth lecture in The Principle of Reason, and which Heidegger doesn't provide an answer: "The question remains whether and how we, hearing the movements of this play [Being plays the play of *Geschick* and "passes being and ground/reason to us"], play along and accommodate ourselves to the play."<sup>242</sup> In light of Derrida, Heidegger's observation makes more sense. Heidegger is asking after the imperative of play in expanding the horizons of significance, whose mutable boundaries are dependent on the play of human cognition and the univocity of metaphor in naming essence. Heidegger's question is not a question towards the definition of play, but the looking-forward to the expansion and movement of human ground/reason.

However, what is most significant in this point is the distinction that Derrida draws and makes clear, concerning what is proper to metaphor and the essence that metaphorical univocity names: that is, though metaphor is proper to naming essence, it is not essence.

**Paragraph 12**<sup>243</sup> | Univocity names what is proper to essence, what is distinguishable about essence: "The transported significations are those of attributed properties, not those of the thing itself, as subject or substance." (249) Aristotle says of univocity that "things are said to be named 'univocally' which have both the name and the definition answering to the name in common." (Categories, 1a7-9) We are approaching a basis for knowledge about a thing. Aristotle argues in Metaphysics:

It is clear that we must obtain knowledge of the primary causes, because it is when we think that we understand its primary cause that we claim to know each particular thing. Now there are four recognized kinds of cause. Of these we hold that one is the essence or essential nature of the thing (since the "reason why" of a thing is ultimately reducible to its formula, and the ultimate "reason why" is a cause and principle); another is the matter or substrate the third is the source of motion and the fourth is the cause which is opposite to this, namely the purpose or "good."<sup>244</sup>

And Aristotle defines essence more closely in Metaphysics:

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<sup>242</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 113.

<sup>243</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 249-50.

<sup>244</sup> Aristotle, Metaphysics, I.iii 983a-24-983b4.

The essence of each thing is that which it is said to be per se. "To be you" is not "to be cultured," because you are not of your own nature cultured. Your essence, then, is that which you are said to be of your own nature. But not even all of this is the essence; for the essence is not that which is said to be per se in the sense that whiteness is said to belong to a surface, because "being a surface" is not "being white." Nor is the essence the combination of both, "being a white surface." Why? Because the word itself is repeated, Hence the formula of the essence of each thing is that which defines the term but does not contain it.<sup>245</sup>

Essence is thus a primary cause for a thing, and the basis within the thing for which the thing can be described, in the Greek *to ti en einai* (1029b), the what it was to be, or its whatness.<sup>246</sup>

But Derrida is speaking to the difference between the proper and the essence. If essence is the thing's whatness, for Aristotle the cause for descriptive univocal capacity in the thing (in contrast with Plato, for whom essence is manifested in relation to ideal forms, as with holiness - an attribute of being loved by the gods, in *Euthyphro*) is its essence. Derrida cites Aristotle's *Topics* towards a definition of the proper: "A property [the predicate of the proper] is something which does not show the essence of a thing, but belongs to it alone, and is predicated convertibly (*antikategoreitai*) of it."<sup>247</sup> What is proper is what can be described of the essence of the thing, thus that metaphor is proper to being human, i.e., that humans are described according to their metaphoric capacity, metaphor is essential to being human, thus what makes humans human, our what it was to be, our whatness, is our capacity for metaphor.

Thus we have a capacity for metaphor, an essence, and thus what is proper to our essence, what can be described of us as essential (the genus of being human, reading *Topics* I.xviii, 108b23-4 loosely, "that which falls most definitely in the category of essence must be the genus") is our capacity for metaphor - speaking metaphor, expression grounded in the distinctions between similarity and difference. To speak metaphor is not to describe the essence of being human, but to express in accidental terms what is proper to essence. Aristotle defines accident as "that which is... neither definition, nor property, nor genus.- but still belongs to the thing."<sup>248</sup> A thing cannot be the thing that it is without the distinction that

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid., VII.iv 1029b15-24.

<sup>246</sup> Refer to Aristotle on cause, *Metaphysics*, V.ii.1013a-b.

<sup>247</sup> Aristotle, *Topics*, I.v 102a18-19.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., I.v 102b5.

its essence confers to it, while an accident may or may not be characteristic to a thing, but on which the essence of the thing is not dependent. Metaphor in any particular instance, the expression of a metaphor, is accidental to being human; capacity of expression of metaphor is proper to being human, because this is a description of the essence of being human; and the essence of being human is categorically summarized by the definition of what's proper, namely, metaphor. The proper functions as the mimetic basis for knowledge about the essence of a thing. The proper is representative of essence, and describes essence, but it is not essence insofar as expression is, in its instances of expression, accidental, apart from the essence of the thing, neither truly nor falsely what it is of the thing that makes the thing the thing.

**Paragraph 13**<sup>249</sup> | Turning towards the third point, Derrida asks "What is proper to the sun?" There is the name for the sun, the accident of its onoma as the expression of its essence (Polyphilos' concern for metaphor in philosophy), but this does not describe what is proper to the sun. Derrida cites Aristotle's Topics without providing citational evidence, for which Alan Bass fills in: Topics, V.iii, 131b20-37. In this part of Topics, Aristotle is speaking to the evidence of property to the senses, and he argues that "for destructive criticism, you should see whether the property which he has assigned is of such a kind that its presence is manifest only to sensation." The question is relevant to the sun, to a stated property of the sun, insofar as such a stated property of the sun "is comprehensible only by sensation." What is proper to the sun is therefore what is directly and manifestly sensible of the sun - what is proper therefore belongs to a category of experience.

The proper is the definition of essence in terms of experience with essence, and the basis of such expression is accidental inasmuch as expression of name is at base the metaphorical sublimation of the essence of the thing towards the mimesis of the thing.

**Paragraph 14**<sup>250</sup> | It is to this that Derrida argues in the fourteenth paragraph, in relation to the third point (paragraph 13) about the distinctions between essence, the proper, and accident, that "it is difficult to know what is proper to the sun properly, literally named: the sensory sun. It follows that every

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<sup>249</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 250.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.



metaphor which implies the sun (as tenor or vehicle) does not bring clear and certain knowledge: [citing Aristotle, Topics V.iii, 131b] "Every object of sensation, when it passes outside the range of sensation, becomes obscure; for it is not clear whether it still exists, because it is comprehended only by sensation." This is to say that experience of essence does not lend itself to an adequate definition of what's proper, in part because the accident of expression in metaphor is only contingent to the whatness of a thing, and in part because experience itself is unreliable, and does not give rise of itself to access the essence of a thing. The proper, then, what can be properly said of the essence of a thing, is bound between the accident of its expression and the experience of essence, and expression and experience do not lend themselves to a clear view of the truth of the thing, the truth of nature. It is for this that the "flowers of rhetoric" are the pretty and individually one-of-many outgrowths on the turn from the sun, the thing of the sun, the sun's thingness, towards the expression of the sun, the countless pretty and individually expressive examples of the sun in description of the sun, the essence of the sun.

#### **Commentary on the preliminary and logical premises about essence, the proper, and accident |**

There is a thing.

The essence of the thing is that whatness of the thing without which the thing is no longer the thing itself. The proper is the true description of the whatness of the thing. The proper is known through experience with the thing, and the recognition of the whatness that constitutes the thing.

The accident is the individual expression of what is proper to the thing. The accident is the arbitrary and only-contingent saying of the proper, where the proper is knowledge of the essence of the thing via experience with the thing.

What is proper to the thing is therefore alienated from the thing for the unreliability of experience in demonstrating what it is of the thing that makes the thing the thing itself, and what is proper - even were experience reliably and directly relational with essence - is expressed with what is only-contingent in the accident of name.

What is it to say that what is proper to being human is that we experience the world and express such experience in metaphor? This is to say that the very nature of our experience with the world, the

definitional stance to being human in relation with the world, is the mediation of unreliable experience on one hand (the obscurity of sensation) and the accident and mere contingency of expression on the other hand. This is to say that being human is to stand uncertainly between obscurity of sensation and contingency of expression. To be human is to stand in uncertainty.

**Paragraph 15**<sup>251</sup> | According to Derrida, the preceding set of arguments "give rise, apparently, to two consequences which might appear contradictory, but whose opposition in a way constructs the philosophical concept of metaphor, dividing it according to a law of ambiguity confirmed ceaselessly." What follows, then, are two propositions that Derrida draws from the preceding conclusion - essentially, so to speak, that human beings stand in uncertainty. This is moreover tightly bound by Aristotle's conception of ambiguity, and what Derrida makes of ambiguity.

**Paragraph 16**<sup>252</sup> | Definition of the first consequence: "Heliotropic metaphors are always imperfect metaphors." The substitution of the sensory for the conceptual "cannot be known in what is proper to it." This is not to say that a metaphor may always more neatly capture the definition of the essence of the sun with words (i.e., description of the thing of the sun in the accidents of words predicating what is proper to the sun), but that a person can never adequately stand in the presence of the thing of the sun itself and fully and coordinately understand what Derrida refers to as the aistheton - simply, that thing present to sensible reception.

Moreover, Derrida argues that the presence of the sun and its definition by route of metaphor, which is to say: expression of significance in accident, "is the paradigm of the sensory and the metaphor: it regularly turns (itself) and hides (itself). The metaphoric trope always implies a sensory kernel," but such a kernel is unplumbable within an organized conceptualization of the thing except by route of expression in accident. This discussion is self-evidently contingent with Heidegger's discussion of *aletheia* and *phusis* in Introduction to Metaphysics, especially in the section "The Restriction of Being":

Being essentially unfolds as *phusis*. The emerging sway is an appearing.  
As such, it makes manifest. This already implies that Being, appearing, is

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 250-1

a letting-step-forth from concealment. Insofar as a being as such is, it places itself into and stands in unconcealment, aletheia. We thoughtlessly translate, and this means at the same time misinterpret, this word as "truth." To be sure, one is now gradually beginning to translate the Greek word aletheia literally. But this is not much use if immediately afterward one again understands "truth" in an entirely different, un-Greek sense and reads this other sense into the Greek word. For the Greek essence of truth is possible only together with the Greek essence of being as phusis [phusis being the appearing of Being as Being unfolds into beings]. On the grounds of the unique essential relation between phusis and aletheia, the Greeks could say: beings as beings are true. The true as such is in being. This says that what shows itself in its sway stands in the unconcealed. The unconcealed as such comes to stand in showing itself. Truth, as unconcealment, is not an addendum to Being.<sup>253</sup>

This is worth working through, in order to understand more clearly what Derrida is getting at. Heidegger is arguing that aletheia is not the demonstration of the truth of Being per se, but the revelation of Being as phusis (spelling is adapted from the present text, and phusis is equivalent with previous spelling of phusis as physis) is the appearance of Being as a being. Out of what is, there exists what is particular to itself, and the demonstration of what is particular to itself consists most obviously of what appears as the particular thing. What is revelatory to the senses as the appearance of the thing is on one hand the perfect encapsulation of the thing that is apparent to the senses, but on the other hand it cannot be assumed that what appears to be is, in fact, the summation of the existence of the thing. Briefly, and as a run-down through the question of metaphysical phenomenology, as it pertains to this dissertation: Plato reckons with appearances in The Republic, with the metaphor of the cave; Aristotle examines causes of appearance in Metaphysics; Leibniz questions the nature of substance in the Monadology, and its composition, vis-à-vis form; Kant lends an eye towards the basis for the conception of appearances in Critique of Pure Reason; Heidegger walks through his understanding of the basis for reason in conceptualizing the world, in The Principle of Reason; and at this point in the dissertation Derrida examines the basis for the conceptualization of the world in metaphor, the functional machinery for giving critical voice to philosophical perception.

What Heidegger lends to Derrida's argument here, that the sensory sun as substitutory basis for

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<sup>253</sup> Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, 107.

semantic conceptualization of the sun is given over only to a false sense of safety in significance, i.e., that ambiguity about knowledge of the sun is excised in naming the sun, is that what is sensory is what is named (Aristotle begins the Metaphysics with the axiom that "All men desire knowledge," and thus that knowledge is the naming of what arises from the senses - what is proper to being human is to want to know, e.g., to sense the world in its appearances), and that what is sensory is merely the coordination of the received appearances of the thing spoken of. In other words, the sun cannot be known but by the route of sense, and sense cannot account for the totality of the sun; ergo, the sun, in being named, is necessarily ambiguous as a concept, and therefore tenuous with relation to the thing of the sun.

**Paragraph 17**<sup>254</sup> | Then Derrida says, quite simply: "But let us not hasten to make this a truth of metaphor. Are you sure that you know what the heliotrope is?" This would seem to be a reasonable stance, especially in light of previous conclusions: that being human is to stand in uncertainty.

**Paragraph 18**<sup>255</sup> | The heliotrope should not be taken as the truth of metaphor most remarkably because the question of the heliotrope, as metaphor of the division between a sense of the appearances of the sun and as a description of what is proper to the sun in already-accidental onoma, is merely a metaphor - certainly an important metaphor, as Derrida argues, insofar as the sun contains multitudes of perceptions about appearances, what can be seen and what can't be seen of what's seen, etc. But the heliotrope is nonetheless a metaphor, and therefore a conceptualization of the world that is the product of having stood in uncertainty, namely, being human living (if living can be summatively described as the sense of experience, or at least accidental to experience, to the extent that it's correlatively suspected).

**Paragraph 19**<sup>256</sup> | Definition of the second consequence: "... the literally, properly named sun, the sensory sun, does not furnish poor knowledge solely because it furnishes poor metaphors, it is itself solely metaphorical." This second consequence flows from the first: heliotropic metaphors are always imperfect metaphors, and they are anyways always metaphors. This gives rise to the question of ambiguity, about

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<sup>254</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 251.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

which Aristotle is deeply concerned in the Topics. Towards this, the entirety of the following paragraph in Derrida's essay is an excerpt from Topics, specifically VI, 2, 139b19-140a23.

**Paragraph 20**<sup>257</sup> | Without reciting Aristotle, it suffices to summarize Derrida's place of argument in this paragraph:

Reconciliation of obscurity (i.e., description is mis-aligned with reality) takes the shape of investigation into equivalence and metaphor, objections concerning minor aspects of propriety, or of description. Aristotle then goes on to demonstrate the metaphorical non-equivalence of laws and justice through the use of the descriptive terms (i.e., metaphor) "measure" and "image." This lends itself to the question of what equivalence lends to knowledge: knowledge of the thing itself, under examination, or knowledge of similarities posed in light of the examination of the thing. Aristotle then states that "if anyone says that the law is a 'measure' or an 'image' in the proper sense of these words, he is lying." This is to say, certainty ascertained through equivalence is a demonstration of obscurity, and an unwillingness to stand in uncertainty, or an unwillingness to accept the ambiguity of what is stated with certainty.

**Paragraph 21**<sup>258</sup> | Derrida ends this argument by asking, in light of a "philosophical delimitation of metaphor... constructed and worked by 'metaphors'": "How could a piece of knowledge or a language be properly clear or obscure?" This is to say: If what is proper to essence is summarized with what is inescapably improper, i.e., mis-defined, what is proper to proper is impropriety. The essence of the world, and the essences of the things in the world, cannot be properly stated, and that such impropriety of definition is further "not a reducible contingency," namely, following the traces of the words that we employ in the mis-firings of our proprieties will not lend us a clear idea as to the basis of impropriety - it is not words in particular that misdirect propriety, but that the proper is expressed at all demonstrates impropriety.

**Paragraph 22**<sup>259</sup> | Conclusion to the previous argument: that metaphor as a vehicle of expression

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 251-2.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 252-3

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., 253.

demonstrates an endless capacity to obscure the essence of things in the mis-attributions of what is proper to essence; and that metaphor as a vehicle for expression is the delimitation of significance. Therefore metaphor is expansive in its meaning, and limiting in its meaning, and without grappling directly with the essence of things.

**Paragraph 23**<sup>260</sup> | Citation of Du Marsais. When one speaks of the light of the spirit, the word light is taken metaphorically; for, just as light in the literal, proper sense makes us see corporal objects, so the faculty of knowing and perceiving enlightens the spirit, and puts it in a condition to bear sound judgments. Metaphor is therefore a species of Trope; the word which one uses in metaphor is taken in another than the literal, proper sense: it is, so to speak, in a borrowed dwelling, as one of the ancients says; which is common to and essential for all Tropes."<sup>261</sup>

The implication of this is clear: if metaphor constitutes the basis for conception and expression, and that the use of metaphor constitutes being in a borrowed dwelling, which is to say, expression (rhetoric) and conception (philosophy) deviate what is always improper to the description of the essence of things, then the stance of being human towards the world is only relational, and contingent. This is similarly stated to what is understood as Derrida's thesis: that metaphor (demonstratively in rhetoric, inherently in philosophy) is the ground on which humans stand uncertainly. And Du Marsais' argument is self-evidently reflective of Heidegger's argument in "Letter on Humanism," that language is the dwelling place of humans, except that this is modified in Du Marsais to the extent that being only ever in a borrowed dwelling speaks directly to the alienation of a person within his or her dwelling - it is never a person's own dwelling, language is always, in some sense, an experience with impropriety and uncertainty, but that it remains nonetheless the place of our dwelling speaks to the inescapable nature of an unfamiliar dwelling not left.

**Paragraph 24**<sup>262</sup> | Derrida argues with Du Marsais' metaphors, directly: "the light and the house,"

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 253.

to the extent that the metaphor of light demonstrates the capacity of metaphor to illuminate aspects of essence in its description and the metaphor of dwelling metaphorizes the vehicle between perception and conception, namely, metaphor. Derrida describes this as "The metaphorical trajectory from the Platonic eidos to the Hegelian Idea," an obscure summary of Du Marsais' argument about the inherent alienation of the individual in uncertain relation to the world vis-à-vis the historical inheritance and differentiation from Plato's concept of the idea forms (by which all objects are contingently, thus accidentally, related) and Hegel's definition of idea in terms of Notion, and what is experienced in a lived and daily life, from Phenomenology of Spirit: "It might seem as if the term Species or Kind is too commonplace, too inadequate, for Ideas such as the Beautiful, the Holy, and the Eternal that are currently in fashion. But as a matter of fact Idea expresses neither more nor less than Species or Kind. But nowadays an expression which exactly designates a Notion is often spurned in favour of one which, if only because it is of foreign extraction, shrouds the Notion in a fog, and hence sounds more edifying."<sup>263</sup> In other words, "the metaphorical trajectory" (that is, the path of significance that may be traced (and is predictable) in following the course of study about metaphor) between what stands ideally and certainly in relation to uncertain human stance, and what can be objectively and viscerally experienced amongst humans standing uncertainly, is a movement that describes its totality. Between the metaphors of light (about the revelation of significance) and of dwelling (about the intractable alienation of being in language) Du Marsais holds together Platonic and Hegelian views of what it means to be human and to stand, though this remains unclear.

**Paragraph 25**<sup>264</sup> | To define metaphor with a metaphor is to side-step the propriety of definition. But this does not mean that the particular instances of such metaphors does not lend some steps towards productive significance, but that such significance of metaphor about metaphor is, at large, too inspecific for such significance to be qualitatively useful in examining the concept of metaphor. Here Derrida continues to play with an idea that was raised in the last paragraph (and which is uncommented on

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<sup>263</sup> Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, 34.

<sup>264</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 253-54.

above): the process of metaphorization as a movement between idealization and appropriation, that is, metaphor relates something to something else in an ideal sense, such that the things being compared exist not truly as their own and according to the definitions of their own essences, and that metaphor makes a thing to stand certainly in its own significance, apart from its essence. Or, a holistic and non-specific understanding of the thing (idealization, vis-à-vis comparison with another thing), and a simultaneous specificity of concept (appropriation, again vis-à-vis comparison with another thing). Or, to make a thing mean something, to define it, is to take the thing as one's own and to disavow the essence of the thing. To take a thing as one's own concept is to hold a concept that is divorced from the reality of its essence.

Derrida proceeds with another definitional thesis, along the lines of "humans stand in uncertainty": that "Philosophy, as a theory of metaphor, first will have been a metaphor of theory." This is not to say precisely that philosophy is a theory of metaphor, that is, what is in view of the sense that metaphor articulates is philosophy, but that were this the case, that philosophy is the articulation of the view of metaphor, the horizons that metaphor delimits in its expression, there must first be a concept of the function of metaphor that articulates what is possible in terms of the view that metaphor predicates - a circular view of things.

**Paragraph 26**<sup>265</sup> | Derrida now turns to the idea of the "idealizing" metaphor that Fontanier discusses in Figures of Discourse, citing Fontanier to the effect of summarizing one of Fontanier's main ideas, that metaphor in and through lexis, that is, the representative, or the signifier, of thought, idealizes the "objects seen by the spirit." This is to say that, through metaphor, objects of the senses are translated into non-sensory ideations of what is held in sense. Fontanier describes it like this, in defining the terms "Idea": "The word Idea (from the Greek eido, to see) signifies relative to the objects seen by the spirit the same thing as image; and relative to the spirit which sees the same things as seen or perception. But the objects seen by our spirit are either physical and material objects that affect our senses, or metaphysical and purely intellectual objects completely above our senses."<sup>266</sup> The idealizing metaphor is more,

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<sup>265</sup> Ibid., 254.

<sup>266</sup> Fontanier, Figures of Discourse, 41.



therefore, than a metaphor that translates from the senses to the idea, but one that translates what is conceptually apart from (or above) the senses towards what can be grasped as a manner of sense. Derrida summarizes Fontanier's position in a kind of pithiness: "An entire stratification of metaphors and of philosophical interpretations therefore supports the concept... as meaning is to expressing, the represented to representation, *dianoia* to *lexis*. A metaphorical *lexis*, if you will, has intervened in the definition of *dianoia*. It has given the idea."<sup>267</sup> The point that Derrida is making here is that in *dianoia*, that is, the capacity for rational thought, metaphorical *lexis* (which is *lexis* that operates as a metaphorizing agent) sublates objects of the senses into the space of thought but also sublating thoughts into relation with objects of the senses. Derrida describes this as "a metaphorical *lexis*... interven(ing) in the definition of *dianoia*... giv(ing) the idea." That is, the boundaries of a space of rational thought, and that capacity for such, is given its contours by the *lexis* that metaphorizes the ideas in such a space (*dianoia* meaning the through-space of mind, the site of the possibility of directionality and admixture of thought).

**Paragraph 27**<sup>268</sup> | Derrida reminds himself not to take too seriously the etymology of a term; that no revelatory truth, as such, becomes apparent in the excavation of a term's historical unfolding. Derrida makes his point: "Doubtless, Hegel's Idea, for example, is not Plato's idea; doubtless the effects of the system are irreducible and must be read as such. But the word Idea is not an arbitrary X, and it bears a traditional burden that continues Plato's system in Hegel's system. It must be examined as such, by means of a stratified reading: neither pure etymology nor pure origin, neither a homogenous continuum nor an absolute synchronism or a simple interiority of a system to itself." This is nothing short of the proposal, within a theoretical framework for a history of philosophy as part of an examination of metaphor, and of metaphor pertaining to philosophical dialectics, for a *Geschick* of metaphor (albeit provided by the example of Idea between Hegel and Plato). This is to say that what is unearthed in scientific examination of prior ideas is neither a *de facto* philosophical truth, nor that is it contemporaneously more or less truthful than what ideas are built upon the precedence of readings and misreadings of prior philosophical

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<sup>267</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 254.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 254-5.

analyses. Rather, Derrida is arguing that there are continuums of thought (for example, Idea) that is bounded by and theoretically defined by metaphorical lexis, and that such Geschicks, borrowing from Heidegger's terminology, are inclusive of questions about metaphor itself, and are concerned with metaphor and even to the extent that other such Geschicks may be examined through the critical perspective of metaphor even though they may not be directly and precisely concerned with metaphor - as with the lineage of thought Idea between Hegel and Plato. Derrida's larger point here would be, therefore, that there are simultaneous and co-mingling Geschicks that are concurrently unrelated to and directly bearing on one another.

This, however, seems to be an argument made towards the basis of and within the context of examining the question of the philosophical function of metaphor, because in the following paragraph (paragraph 28) Derrida returns to Fontanier, and the question of what metaphorical lexis defines.

**Paragraph 28**<sup>269</sup> | Derrida asks the question: "Can these defining tropes that are prior to all philosophical rhetoric and that produce philosophemes still be called metaphors?" The defining tropes here are those, as example, of the Idea(s) that Plato and Hegel name.<sup>270</sup> Philosophical rhetoric is the dialectic of philosophy, that is, the stated argumentation over notions. Philosophemes are the conclusions that are drawn from such dialectic. Derrida is therefore asking whether the conclusions that are drawn in discussion of philosophy, based on the prior and defining tropes that guide such a discussion, is at the point of conclusion still metaphorical. Derrida proposes, à propos Fontanier and Supplement to the Theory of Tropes, that what conclusions that may be called metaphors are, regardless of metaphorical status, at the least secondary signifiers, "the irruptive extension of a sign proper to an idea."

**Paragraph 29**<sup>271</sup> | Quoting Fontanier, to the effect that "catachresis," i.e., displacement of meaning in the abuse of the signifier, several observations:

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<sup>269</sup> Ibid., 255.

<sup>270</sup> In Plato, Republic 507b, the metaphor of the sun, "Also that there is actual beauty, and actual good, and so concerning everything which we then classes as many, conversely we classed them in terms of a single Form of each of them on the grounds of there being one real one in each case: 'that which is,'" and the allegory of the cave, beginning at 514a, to the effect that humans can only struggle, mostly in vain, to understand the Forms.

<sup>271</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 255.

**Paragraph 30**<sup>272</sup> | From Fontanier, Supplement, 1. "Catachresis, in general, consists in a sign already affected with a first idea also being affected with a new idea, which itself had no sign at all, or no longer properly has any other in language."<sup>273</sup> 2. Catachresis extends the primitive sense of the meaning to a figurative sense, and those tropes that result from catachresis are the basis for an extensive meaning, separate from the primitive and figurative. 3. These three meanings are "determined by the same relationships... : correspondence, connection, or resemblance." 4. The three meanings "occur in the same fashion: by metonymy, synecdoche, or metaphor."

**Paragraph 31**<sup>274</sup> | Derrida argues that what Fontanier does with catachresis, the displacement of meaning in the abuse of a signifier, is a theoretical classification of tropes understood as a "phenomenon of usage (of abuse) rather than as a phenomenon of a code."

**Paragraph 32**<sup>275</sup> | This is all divisible according to parts of speech. Namely, Derrida, through Fontanier, assigns adverbs to the trope of metaphor-figure, and in metaphor-catachresis is "included in its extent even interjections," which is to say that metaphor-catachresis accounts for accidents of speech and slips of tongue.

**Paragraph 33**<sup>276</sup> | Continuing to work with Fontanier's Supplement, there is the question of the living body "furnishing the vehicle" for "nominal examples in the physical order," which is inclusive of nouns and verbs in the discussion of metaphor-catachresis. Thus a discussion about light and blindness by Fontanier (i.e., light being the name for a thing that affects living bodies, and blindness an adjectival noun describing the condition of the body in relation to what may potentially affect it).

**Paragraph 34**<sup>277</sup> **and minor commentary** | Derrida ends his discussion of the productive output of rhetoric in terms of metaphor, and his discussion of Fontanier's analysis of the tropes that catachresis describes, by citing Fontanier's question "And how, without these forced metaphors, without these

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<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Fontanier, Supplement to the Theory of Tropes, 207.

<sup>274</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 256.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 256-7.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 257.

catachreses, could one have come to retrace these ideas?" And Derrida answers blithely, "These 'ideas' already existed, Fontanier seems to think, were already in the mind like a grid without a word; but they could not have been retraced, tracked down, brought to daylight<sup>278</sup> without the force of a twisting which goes against usage, without the infraction of a catachresis." In other words, Derrida accuses Fontanier of assuming a framework in the mind for reasoning through usage, misuse, and abuse of language. But this is moreover an indication, Derrida argues, of the assumption on the part of philosophy, or within the historical scope of philosophy, that philosophy is "the twisting return toward the already-there of a meaning, production (of signs, or rather of values), but as revelation, unveiling, bringing to light, truth." Reading Fontanier, Derrida argues that Fontanier expresses in analysis of catachresis an assumption at the heart of philosophy, or at least within the established scope of Anatole France's characters of Polyphilos and Aristos, that philosophy is the expression of a truth that is already present and awaits uncovering, or recovery, and is the productive expression of a framework for thinking that already exists and encompasses all manners of expression - even through catachresis, and by everything accidental to the thing, the signified.

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<sup>278</sup> This is an odd reversal by Derrida of the subjects of the allegory of the cave; Plato posits that the man would be brought to the ideas in daylight.

f. Supplementarity, metaphoricity, and uncertainty

It is here worthwhile to circumscribe the scope of Derrida's arguments, at least according to the broad categories that the sections of the essay make apparent. The thrust at the outset of the final section of Derrida's essay is that, 1. "Classical rhetoric, then, cannot dominate, being enmeshed within it, the mass out of which the philosophical text takes shape. Metaphor is less in the philosophical text... than the philosophical text is within metaphor," and that, 2. "[The] epistemological ambivalence of metaphor... always provokes, retards, follows the movement of the concept."<sup>279</sup> Derrida then continues with an examination of what he considers the chosen field of metaphorical expression, vis-à-vis concept, that is, "the life sciences," and a reading of Bachelard's Lautréamont.

Of importance, however, are the axioms that Derrida proceeds from. To the first point, Derrida is reiterating the stance that he has developed throughout the essay on the relationship between rhetoric, metaphor, and philosophy, to the effect that rhetoric pertains to the vehicle by which philosophical discourse (the text, where such discourse is preserved) is articulated, and that through metaphor, or the relational basis by which two conceptual objects may be viewed simultaneously and in terms of one another, that a concept enters into the dialectic of philosophical exchange. It is to this that Derrida argues that metaphor follows concepts.<sup>280</sup> Where Kant argues that the concept is distinguished in that it pertains to a mark, and that a concept is mediate between perception and objective perception (i.e., cognition), Derrida argues that the epistemological ambivalence of metaphor, i.e., the capacity of metaphor, in circumscribing a field of cognition according to a general precept on the basis of knowledge towards

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<sup>279</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 258, 261.

<sup>280</sup> Clarity is added in the consideration of Kant's first edition of Critique of Pure Reason, Section II, part 2, "On the synthesis of recognition in the concept," in which the "concept [of the cognition of a number, in Kant's example] consists solely in the consciousness of this unity of the synthesis. The word 'concept' itself could already lead us to this remark. For it is this one consciousness that unifies the manifold that has been successively intuited, and then also reproduced, into one representation." (231) In other words, towards the possibility of a representation of a concept there must be some thread of consciousness that may hold, moment by moment, the idea of a thing. Further clarity is added the second division of the work, on the transcendental dialectic, and more specifically on transcendental ideas, in which Kant argues that cognition is "either an intuition or a concept. The former is immediately related to the object and is singular; the latter is mediate, by means of a mark, which can be common to several things. A concept is either an empirical or a pure concept, and the pure concept, insofar as it has its origin solely in the understanding (not in a pure image of sensibility), is called *notio*. A concept made up of notions, which goes beyond the possibility of experience, is an idea or a concept of reason." (399)

cognition, to define the object is limited and functional, that metaphor as a function by which thought progresses (dialectically) is attendant to the matter of the concept.

Derrida then argues that, following Nietzsche's understanding of metaphor in "On Truth and Falsity in Their Ultramoral Sense," that where first language and then science "work[s]... at the construction of ideas,"<sup>281</sup> and in following Georges Canguilhem,<sup>282</sup> the "redistribution" of the relationship between metaphor and concept as continuous (where in Kant continuity pertains to a consciousness that delimits the concept according to an objective sensation) and which requires the articulation of a concept of metaphor, in place of the classical rhetorical trope of metaphor. Citing Canguilhem, Derrida argues that "Such a redistribution would have to permit the definition of the 'figure' which necessarily continues to give its 'sign' to a 'concept' after rectification, after abandoning a given model [citing Canguilhem, Etudes d'histoire] "which perhaps, after all, was only a metaphor."<sup>283</sup>

By this, then, Derrida establishes a theoretical basis for a "concept of metaphor," to the effect that the philosophical position of metaphor is itself metaphorical (i.e., that metaphor as a function works upon the conceptualization of the function itself) that exists within philosophical discourse, and which is apart from the rhetorical tropology of metaphor. Derrida then returns to the question of Gaston Bachelard's "metapoetics," the necessity for "undertak[ing] a classification of metaphors and sooner or later adopt[ing] only the procedure essential for classification: the identifying of groups,"<sup>284</sup> and by diagrams.<sup>285</sup>

Bachelard's projects in Lautréamont and The Psychoanalysis of Fire are, respectively, as an examination of "the astonishing unity and the overwhelming energy with which things meet in time through [Lautréamont's] Maldoror... [and] to pinpoint a complex that is particularly complex,"<sup>286</sup> and "the

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<sup>281</sup> Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense."

<sup>282</sup> La connaissance de la vie and Etudes d'histoire et de philosophie des sciences.

<sup>283</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 263.

<sup>284</sup> Bachelard, Lautréamont, 30.

<sup>285</sup> Bachelard, Psychoanalysis of Fire, 109-110.

<sup>286</sup> Bachelard, Lautréamont, 1-2.

psychological problem posed by our convictions about fire."<sup>287</sup> Framing the question in the second, Bachelard remarks that "scientific objectivity is possible only if one has broken first with the immediate object, if one has refused to yield to the seduction of the initial choice, if one has checked and contradicted the thoughts which arise from one's first observation."<sup>288</sup>

There are a couple of things going on here. The first to consider is Derrida's turn towards Bachelard and the program of metapoetics in moving towards his (Derrida's) concluding remarks, which is approximately that metaphor functions towards the effect of advancing epistemological ground in the same movement and at the same moment that metaphor reinscribes significances - that is, metaphor simultaneously threads a continuity of conceptual engagement as it both appropriates significances and erases significances. The second to consider is Bachelard's program of metapoetics, and what Derrida understands by it, and how this is foundationally useful in understanding Derrida's position on metaphor.

Towards the first, Derrida cites Bachelard in reference to groups and diagrams of metaphors; by groups (from Lautréamont, 54-55) for the purposes of a categorical system of classification that would make clear the underlying and common thread among metaphors about an object, that the limits of understanding about the object come more clearly into focus, and by diagrams (from The Psychoanalysis of Fire, 109-110) in order to make clear the coordination of thought that composes groups of metaphors about an object. As Derrida makes clear, such a categorical system of classification is not for the undertaking of a chart by which to guide understanding of metaphors in usage, which would amount to a rhetoric of literature, but towards understanding the general human outlook that would think to group metaphors according to objects; likewise, the issue of diagrams is not for the purposes of plotting usages of speech and significances but of reckoning with the underlying structure of thought that coordinates the objects of thought, that is, concepts. Bachelard's metapoetics is therefore about the structure of poetic

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<sup>287</sup> Bachelard, Psychoanalysis of Fire, 2.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

discourse insofar as it brings to more clarity the orientation of human perspective that finds use in the poetic function.<sup>289</sup>

The question, therefore, is why this is important towards understanding the philosophical function of metaphor. Derrida begins the essay wondering whether metaphor is found in the text of philosophy, that is, whether metaphor is more than the articulation of philosophical limits, and whether metaphor is in the text of philosophy (that is, its articulation) insofar as philosophy is dependent on the function of metaphor, or the metaphorization that thought engages in sublimating perception towards the objects of perception. This is to ask, as Derrida arrives from Bachelard's metapoetics to Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy: Does not metaphor, as a function of thought, and predicate to philosophical articulation, demonstrate more than just philosophical articulation, insofar as it describes the conditions by which such articulation is perspectively grounded?

Derrida's reading of Descartes' third meditation points to Descartes' placement for his proof of the existence of God outside of limited possibilities for understanding that is offered in the examination of metaphor, simply.<sup>290</sup> It is therefore that metaphor, as a function, is the production of representations that seek to expand the horizons of conceptual understanding, and to mark the limits of thought, and its capabilities, and importantly that metaphors are encountered not as a singular metaphor that concedes and illuminates truth but in the constant specificities of singular metaphors in their plurality, of which Derrida states

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<sup>289</sup> Of this, Paul Ricoeur usefully distinguishes between the poetic function and the rhetorical function as "the conjunction between fiction and redescription," that is, between the redescription of reality (fiction) and persuasion vis-à-vis reality "adorning discourse with pleasing ornaments" (rhetoric). Moreover, Ricoeur argues that metaphor, "in service to the poetic function... is that strategy of discourse by which language divests itself of its function of direct description in order to reach the mythic level where its function of discovery is set free." (The Rule of Metaphor, 247.) The significance of Ricoeur's remarks, in relation to Derrida's working-through of Bachelard's "metapoetics," is this: that a systematic undertaking towards examining the structure of thought that produces metaphor, via groups and diagrams of metaphor itself, should demonstrate the perspectival orientation of thought that would produce such systems of redescriptions of reality.

<sup>290</sup> It is worth noting that, as concerns Descartes' philosophical discourse, Derrida offers a handy definition for theological discourse as that "of someone who is satisfied with metaphors." (267) The significance of this is the suggestion that the discourse of theology accepts as prima facie evidence of truth the specificity of retellings of such truth, or the examinations of truth thereof. This is also to suggest that a theological discourse is circumscribed by its own willingness to accept as truth what remains the product of the basic function of thought, that is, metaphor.



If there were only one possible metaphor, the dream at the heart of philosophy, if one could reduce their play to the circle of a family or a group of metaphors, that is, to one "central," "fundamental," "principal" metaphor, there would be no more true metaphor, but only, through the one true metaphor, the assured legibility of the proper.<sup>291</sup>

"The assured legibility of the proper" must be read within the context of Derrida's examination of Aristotle's evaluation of the "proper" in the section "The Flowers of Rhetoric." Aristotle defines the property of something, or that which is proper to a thing, as "something which does not show the essence of a thing but belongs to it alone and is predicated convertibly by it."<sup>292</sup> The proper stands in relation to the other predicates to a thing, that permit a view towards the essence of a thing, such that the definition is the description of essence (the articulation of a concept, or a statement concerning the object of perception, if Aristotle may be read through Kant explicitly), the genus organizes the understanding of essences of objects according to groups of categorical relations, and an accident pertains to what may be articulated that is "neither definition, nor property, nor genus - but still belongs to the thing."<sup>293</sup> What Derrida understands by this is that the articulation of a property as a predicate to the essence of the thing is not the articulation of essence but of the proper,<sup>294</sup> that therefore articulation does not speak essence and that metaphors are incomplete,<sup>295</sup> and that speech aims towards and fails to determine the truth about which it speaks, namely, essence.<sup>296</sup> In terms of Descartes, then, metaphor is a necessary and improper approach towards truth, or God, or the proof of God, insofar as it can't but be by which function that essence is understood and that it can't but be in its product, namely, metaphors, that fail to articulate essence, whether or not what metaphor articulates in terms of what is proper is, or is not, adequate to the truth of essence. This is all to say that metaphor cannot be elided and that metaphor cannot sufficiently describe the nature of essence, and as the question of essence resides firmly within the broader

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<sup>291</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 268.

<sup>292</sup> Aristote, *Topica*, 102a18-20.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., 102b5-6.

<sup>294</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 249.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid., 250.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., 251.

examination of being and not-being, that is, metaphysics, and that the articulation of a metaphysical perspective as philosophy is dependent on metaphor, the function of thought elaborates some syntax by which the relations of the predicates of essence are more fully understood. Derrida says of this that "Metaphor then is included by metaphysics as that which must be carried off to a horizon or a proper ground, and which must finish by rediscovering the origin of truth,"<sup>297</sup> to the effect that metaphor is the function by which perspective is established in seeking to describe essence, and that in improperly describing such it is looked backwards at the object of its description (truth) and must therefore, and constantly, dialectically-speaking, "rediscover" such.

Derrida's conclusions about metaphor are this:

Philosophical discourse - as such - describes a metaphor which is displaced and reabsorbed between two suns. This end of metaphor is not interpreted as a death or dislocation, but as an interiorizing anamnesis (Erinnerung), a recollection of meaning, a relève of living metaphoricity into a state of properness.<sup>298</sup>

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Metaphor, therefore, is determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular appropriation of literal, proper meaning.<sup>299</sup>

And to the effect, then, that metaphor "always carries its death within itself," the abyme of a representation in relation with the thing that it speaks to.<sup>300</sup>

Towards this end, and beginning with the "Exergue," it is enough to describe these introductory remarks as a setting-in-place of the problematic: The question of metaphor and philosophy, the distinction of "metaphor in the text of philosophy" (209), the use of metaphor in terms of "tropic energy," that is, what

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., 269.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 270.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 271.

potentiality turns from what is actual.<sup>301</sup> From this, discursive example in Anatole France's dialogue between Polyphilos and Aristos, in which Polyphilos laments the abyme of metaphorical recursion in philosophy - that is, language is predicated on a metaphoric turn from perception to conception. Out of this, and Aristos' disinclination to engage with Polyphilos in a matter of unending recursion, Aristos calls Polyphilos unreasonable and ends the conversation, to which a further description of metaphysics may be added, beyond being the partition between the sensible and the nonsensible, and beyond being reflections on cause that arise out of examination of physics: a mythos towards an explanation of Reason, a description of what may properly be said to underlie substance, what things there are or what is. And within this examination there is the inimitable human, mimetician, a human himself energetically turning perception towards conception in imitation of nature turning what is potential into actual. And from this, Plus de métaphor: too much metaphor to account for, not enough metaphor to make proper sense of the world.

Derrida says,

Above all, the movement of metaphorization (origin and then erasure of the metaphor, transition from the proper sensory meaning to the proper spiritual meaning by means of the detour of figures) is nothing other than a movement of idealization. Which is included under the master category of dialectical idealism, to wit, the relève (Aufhebung), that is, the memory (Erinnerung) that produces signs, interiorizes them in elevating, suppressing, and conserving the sensory exterior. And in order to think and resolve them, this framework sets to work the oppositions nature/spirit, nature/history, or nature/freedom, which are linked by genealogy to the opposition of physis to its others, and by the same token to the oppositions sensual/spiritual, sensible/intelligible, sensory/sense (sinnlich/Sinn). Nowhere is this system as explicit as it is in Hegel. It describes the space of the possibility of metaphysics, and the concept of metaphor thus defined belongs to it.<sup>302</sup>

The space of the possibility of metaphysics is that in which the question about what is, and what could be (and therefore attendant questions, also, as in: what is not, and what cannot be, etc.), may be asked in light

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<sup>301</sup> With reference to Aristotle, *Metaphysics* V, 1017a-b, esp., 1017b1-3: "Again, 'to be' <or 'is'> means that some of these statements [from above, in Aristotle, true or false statements] can be made in virtue of a potentiality and others in virtue of an actuality. For we say that both that which sees potentially and that which sees actually *is* 'a seeing thing.'" *Energeia*, it may be surmised, underlies the turn of actuality towards potentiality.

<sup>302</sup> Derrida. "White Mythology," 226.

of that partition between the sensible and the nonsensible; that the energetic turn from perception and conception not only stands between these poles but that such a turn exists within a framework of dialectical idealization and recollection of prior positions, that is, the sublimating movement from sense to more sense, and never absolute and proper sense, and in irretrievable recollection of a primary sense, that is, perception of what is nonsensible; this is to say, prior to reason.

The section called "The Ellipsis of the Sun" employs the figure of the sun to examine the rhetorical basis for metaphor, and its extraneous turn from the purely philosophical. In this, the question of metaphor in the rhetorical register is one that both obscures and illuminates the question of metaphor in philosophy (in the text of philosophy, insofar as philosophy is textual, that is, a description of the essence of Being). On one hand, the rhetoric of metaphor is accidental to philosophy inasmuch as its basis for sense is arbitrary; on the other hand, the rhetoric of metaphor lends perspective into the human relation with the world, and habitation in reason is thus grounded and unexcisable. Towards this, rhetoric, and rhetoric of metaphor (as per the discussion of the essay), is essential to human relation in perception of the world and its conception (the turn on which conception is grounded).

The Flowers of Rhetoric are the ends of rhetoric. Circling throughout Derrida's discussion, and in the final section explicit concern with Bachelard's concern in Lautréamont, namely, vivaciousness of metaphor, and metaphors about living, there is concern for metaphors about living things. Living things are self-reproductive, a dialectic between what is potential with what is forth-coming, according to the conditions of the actual. Being human is to live a dialectic of circumscribed potential; limitations, assuredly, but unknowns within such constraints. This is all obvious, but it illuminates Derrida's concern with abyme and relève and the proper.

Derrida begins "The Flowers of Rhetoric" with his previous conclusions: "Metaphor then is what is proper to man." (246) To be human is to live dialectically; to speak, to live the partition between sense

and nonsense is to turn from perception to conception. Therefore abyme, therefore relève, the metaphor of metaphor - this is what Derrida is speaking to at the end of *La métaphysique*.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> This is a question that would ask, *à propos* Heidegger's of atomics and poetry, when is it appropriate to turn from perception to conception in what manner.

g. Analytic of thought in "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," towards a view of "The *Retrait* of Metaphor"

In "The *Retrait* of Metaphor" Derrida arrives at a (provisional) conclusion about metaphysics as to watchwords, significantly, that a metaphysical view of the world (that is, pertaining to those questions that demand inclusion of cause, mediation, and reckoning, broadly, and which remain outside of the purview of a demonstration of knowledge - that is, a scientificism) can only be adequately expressed within the framework of a philosophically-charged rhetorical enunciation. The effect of this is to corroborate Derrida's view of supplementarity, that significance can be alluded to as a matter of historical examination or *Geschick*-tory inheritance, but which ultimately rests atop a conceptual frame, in which the world as seen-as is most explicitly seen-through the logical extension and fabrication of the syntheses of world manifolds. The watchword is therefore iconic of a constellation of thought about the world, and its view, as a matter of summative *Risse*, that provisional perspective has been gained of the world but that such perspective is fundamentally uncertain. The human position vis-à-vis the world is therefore a one of inherent uncertainty, and irreducible to its expression despite being, for the sake of human cognition, entirely dependent on expression of such. It is towards this that the distinction between philosophy and rhetoric may be more clearly understood. This is not dissimilar from Heidegger's broad distinction between ontology and theology in Identity and Difference, in which a view of the world is distributed between the view of what is (ontology) and the figuration of what is (theology); this is semiotically understood as the view of the signified/signifier relationship, and this would seem to argue against Heidegger's express wish to move beyond metaphysics, to the effect that such is impossible, insofar as the extension of our logical apparati over the field of what is in view of the world can become disassociated from such logic.

This is the conundrum of the split between philosophy and rhetoric, and it is essentially this that Derrida works through in his discussion of metaphor, as an aspect of philosophy and rhetoric, in the essay "White Mythology." The movements of thought that are identified and examined of this essay, in this

chapter, includes the questions of metaphor and metaphysics, methods of synthesis (e.g., in Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel), the basis for expression as a matter of critical delineation in the difference between nouns and verbs (as per Aristotle) and the question of metaphor in relation to mimesis and homoiosis, the issues of kurion and idion and propriety, and finally conclusions on supplementarity, metaphoricity, and uncertainty.

From the first, Derrida understands within the philosophical/rhetorical manifold the use-value of expression, and the consequences of such expression, as a simultaneous matter of distillation and abstraction of significance, to the effect that a metaphorical expression both expands the conceptual horizon of thought and delimits it, and that within the historical unfolding of such use the conceptual touchstone of specific metaphorical expression adopts a the perspective of a literal/figurative gesture - that in its figurative thrust a metaphorical rendering of perspective of the world becomes valuable for its properties of exchange-value, that is, the figurative becomes literal. Towards this, Derrida meditates on Anatole France's dialogue between Aristos and Polyphilos, and Aristos' disinclination to argue with Polyphilos where Polyphilos is unwilling to adhere to philosophical precepts. In this, Aristos does not engage with Polyphilos where Polyphilos does not extend the logic of their conversation. The use-value of metaphor in expression is therefore conceived as an extension of the polysemic field of understanding.

As per method of synthesis in Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel, with special emphasis on Kant's Critique of Judgment and Hegel's Aesthetics, the philosopheme is the philosophical concept as it is rendered (vis-à-vis Leibnizian "sufficient reason") as a matter of judgment and based on the mechanism of *Aufhebung*, that is, as Derrida translates it, a *relève* of speculative rearticulation that conceptually translates the world as-seen and through the logical processes of conceptual thought towards a redescription of such - the concept is the figure of the literal, insofar as the literal has been extended over it the field of reinscriptive logic. Via supplementarity, Derrida argues that such a field is never saturated, though the extent to which it speaks anew is a separate question.

The basis for the argument of method of synthesis is grounded in the distinction between the noun and the verb, where the noun names what is via simple metaphorical sublimation and the verb describes

the event of the identification of this sublimation and reflects an awareness of the event of the appropriation of this sublimation towards the descriptive field of the figurative. It is via this mechanism of expression, the legacy of a logical system of appropriative sublimation (that is, human speech), that the world demonstrates itself to itself, both within a separate and figurative stance (mimesis) and its identification as its likeness (homoiosis). It is through mimesis that the world is rendered in its figure and it is by homoiosis that the world in its figure is accepted as such. This demonstrates the critical issues of kurion, idion, and propriety, in which and as Derrida argues the primitive sense of the world is substantiated in its ideational, conceptual, sense of the world, and is understood within a matrix of intelligibility and acceptance as such, respectively kurion, idion, and propriety. It is through this that the rhetorical impulse to categorize metaphorical tropes arises: to distinguish as matters of philosophemic exposition would seem to demonstrate an elucidation as to matters of perspective via modes of expression, but Derrida's argument is simpler, that metaphorical trope resides within the valuations inherent in the processes of kurion, idion, and propriety, and are not, therefore, demonstrative aspects of mimesis, nor of the distinction between philosophy and rhetoric. Rather, abundances of metaphorical trope is the outgrowth of polysemic and continuous evaluation and reevaluation, description and redescription, etc.

Of this, then, and in light of the ultimately supplementary, that is, groundless, attribution of appropriative designation, human perspective and expression of such, all logical extensions over unsaturated fields of metaphorical usage, is the simultaneous grounding of significance and the "provisional loss of meaning," as Derrida describes it.



### Chapter 3. Commentary on The Rule of Metaphor by Paul Ricoeur

#### a. Introduction

##### 1. The scope of this chapter

This chapter examines several important aspects of Paul Ricoeur book The Rule of Metaphor, as a matter of Ricoeur's thought on metaphor at various registers of study. The commentary in this chapter broadly follows Ricoeur's approach in the examination of metaphor along rhetorical/poetic, tropological, and semantic delineations, towards thought on resemblance, reference, and philosophical discourse. Where the book enters the conversation between Derrida and Heidegger, on the philosophical position of metaphor, Ricoeur's contributions to the conversation are constructed through his methodical examination of thought on metaphor according to the aforementioned registers of consideration.

The second section of this chapter (section "b. Dead and living metaphor") discusses Ricoeur's assignation of four characteristics to the concept of metaphor, and in conversation with cognitivist thought on metaphor, and which perspective on metaphorical function cannot be followed as a tropological system of categorization - in other words, a break with cognitivist theory as per the notions of dead and living metaphor.

The third section (section "c. Poetic and speculative modes of discourse"), is concerned with the predicates to and examination of metaphor and philosophical discourse, and is summarized in four parts. The first part defines the intersection between poetic and speculative modes of discourse, and offers definitions for such. The second part concerns Heidegger and Derrida, and the question of the relationship between metaphor and metaphysics, towards the conclusion that metaphor is the function by which thought is come to able to be thought. The third section examines more closely the idea of Heidegger's *Einklang*, as a matter of the disposition of meaning, with recourse to Silesius and further definitions of dead and living metaphor. And the fourth part of the third section is concerned with Derrida and the discontinuity between poetic and speculative modes of discourse, and a reversal of the Heideggerian/Derridian perspective that metaphor exists within metaphysics, to the effect that

metaphysics seizes the function of metaphor, with recourse to a definition of the postulates of reference and towards the conclusion that metaphor introduces the "spark of imagination."

The fourth section ("d. Metaphor and spheres of discourse") examines the matter of "spheres of discourse," as between the poetic and the speculative, as a matter of distinction between the modes of interpretation and hermeneutics, wherein the metaphysical perspective is one of striving towards significance, rather than as a clear distinction between the sensible and the non-sensible. With recourse to Anatole France, language is the mimetic articulation of experience of the world, and words are at once the vehicle for poetic and speculative distantiation in the framing of perspective. This section concludes with the observation that language demonstrates the self-reflective knowledge of mimetic capacity in being.

The fifth section of this chapter (section "e. An expository commentary on Ricoeur's line of thought") is written as an expository commentary in two parts on Ricoeur's thought about and path of reason on the speculative and poetic modes of discourse, in the eighth study of The Rule of Metaphor, concluding with an extended analysis of Heidegger's On the Way to Language (and the essay, "The Nature of Language"). The first part of this section engages with the concepts of *Ereignis* and *Erörterung*, defined (respectively and paraphrastically) as the gathering of circumstances in the unfolding of an object in consideration of its actuality and its potentiality, and as the critical observation and definition of such. The second part of this section offers final thoughts towards the definition of speculative and poetic modes of discourse.

The sixth section of this chapter (section "f. Analytic of thought in The Rule of Metaphor") is preoccupied with the notions of poetic and speculative modes of discourse, with an extensive and paraphrastic summary of Ricoeur's definition of discourse, towards a discussion of identity and difference and interpretation and hermeneutics.

## 2. The scope of Ricoeur's project

Paul Ricoeur's project, *La métaphore vive*, is translated by Robert Czerny as *The Rule of Metaphor* "because of its metaphorical suggestiveness. The primary reference is to Aristotle's assertion, quoted often by Ricoeur, that 'the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars.'"<sup>304</sup> What Czerny's title elides is direct reference to the ideas of "dead" and "living" metaphor that Ricoeur is concerned with throughout the book, and which are returned to and examined in particular, as in the third study on "Metaphor and the semantics of discourse" and the eighth study on "Metaphor and philosophical discourse."

In the third study Ricoeur clarifies that the rhetorical reproducibility of an instance of metaphorical usage describes how "the innovation of an emergent meaning can be taken as a linguistic creation. And if it is adopted by a significant part of the linguistic community, it in turn can become a common meaning and add to the polysemy of lexical entities, thus contributing to the history of the language as code or system."<sup>305</sup> And in the eighth study Ricoeur discusses the revivification of dead metaphor, that is, the significance of a metaphor that has adopted the specificity of conceptual expression. Where what was first a metaphor that expands conceptual horizons and has settled into an identifiable specificity of concept is, within the sphere of philosophical discourse, reinvigorated as a matter of conceptual reevaluation (that is, the perspectives of thought in consideration of the world, which is to say, philosophical discourse). Ricoeur points to Hegel's *Wahrnehmung* and Heidegger's *a-lêtheia* as examples of this.<sup>306</sup>

Ricoeur's method in the examination of metaphor is to read a number of texts within the purview of specific topics of inquiry, and to critically examine the texts under consideration in light of their claims and in comparison with one another. There are conclusive remarks; Ricoeur arrives at points of judgment

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<sup>304</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, vii. Citation by Czerny of Aristotle, *Poetics* 1459 a 5-8, Ingram Bywater, trans. in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.

throughout the work. But the work avoids grand statements, and the conclusions that Ricoeur arrives at are often set within the context of predicative examination. Examples of this abound: consider the tentative conclusions about definitions for living and dead metaphors cited above, in which the definition of such is speculatively determined by the study's perspective (of the third study, the semantics of discourse; or the eighth, on the discourse of philosophy). An important part of the book comes in the seventh study, on "Metaphor and reference," in which the fourth part about *muthos* and *mimesis* (via Max Black's Models and Metaphors) concludes in part that "The paradox of the poetic [in which "*mimesis* constitutes the 'denotative' dimension of *muthos*"] can be summed up entirely in this, that the elevation of feeling to fiction is the condition of its mimetic use. Only a feeling transformed into myth can open and discover the world."<sup>307</sup> In the following section Ricoeur expands on the contrast between *muthos* and *mimesis*, in terms of "the concept of metaphorical truth,"<sup>308</sup> in terms of poetic and rhetorical function and "the conjunction between fiction and redescription," such that "In service to the poetic function, metaphor is that strategy of discourse by which language divests itself of its function of direct description in order to reach the mythic level where its function of discovery is set free."<sup>309</sup> Earlier in the seventh study Ricoeur offers a conclusion as to the distinctions between "fact" and "figure," arguing in light of Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein that "fact is not to be confused with a given but understood as a state of affairs, that is, as the correlate of a predicative act," that "'figure' is not the ornament of a word but a predicative usage in a reversed denotation, that is, in a possession-exemplification. 'Fact' and 'figure,' therefore, are different ways of applying predicates, of using labels as samples."<sup>310</sup>

The purpose of citing these examples is not to inundate a critical reading of Ricoeur's studies with a profusion of qualifications, in order to give the impression of erudition at the expense of clarity. The point is rather that, by reading Ricoeur's studies on metaphor, the avenues of inquiry are demonstrated as

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<sup>307</sup> Ibid., 245.

<sup>308</sup> That is, the idea that the denotation of significance in the transposition of meaning (i.e., metaphor) can point towards some truth about the world, which is to say, reality.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 235.

both circumscribed and expansive. Within eight broad and interrelated categories of examination of metaphor, across disciplines of rhetoric, philosophy, literary theory, linguistics, semiotics, semantics, etc., etc., Ricoeur sets authors and thinkers in conversation with one another and slowly builds on small conclusions, but not necessarily (at least, it isn't given as a necessary condition) with regard to larger "truths" about the stakes and composition of metaphor (the focus of the work, topically oriented) in terms of the manners of approach to the world, and perspectives on reality. The examples that have been listed above are simply notable as interesting and potentially and importantly relevant to the discursive analysis of metaphor and philosophy that originally carried this dissertation towards an examination of Ricoeur's book: namely, Ricoeur's commentary on the use of Heidegger's discussion of metaphor and metaphysics by Derrida in "White Mythology."

But just as it is important to summarize the methodological approach that Heidegger and Derrida employ, the manner of study that is, to some large extent and necessarily idiosyncratic, Ricoeur's methodology in The Rule of Metaphor is predicated on the composition of a series of smaller conclusions that are winnowed through the speculative judgment of the author (that is, Ricoeur), and dependent on the critical reception of the reader in following Ricoeur through what amounts to a comprehensive and not concise demonstration of the significances of metaphor, vis-à-vis the interested topics of inquiry. Ricoeur's work is otherwise too massive and unwieldy for even him to arrive at a moment of truth, where one is permitted to state that "metaphor is, therefore, such and such." The structure of Ricoeur's work sidesteps easy distinctions like this. But this is not, however, to say that the book is not useful in elucidating paths of thought that are already underway: as stated, this dissertation arrives at Ricoeur in terms of remarks on Derrida's understanding of metaphor via Heidegger, and the philosophical conversation continues in Derrida's response to Ricoeur in "The *retrait* of metaphor."

b. Dead and living metaphor

In the first study of Ricoeur's work the distinction between poetics and rhetoric is examined, with particular attention paid to a careful reading of Aristotle (Poetics and Rhetoric, obviously, but also with reference to Aristotle's *Organon*, including, importantly, On Interpretation), to the effect of a delineation of the topic at hand (metaphor) according to the intersections between poetics and rhetoric via the idea of *epiphora*, which Aristotle uses in the principle definition of *metaphor* in Poetics: "A metaphor is the application of a word that belongs to another thing: either from genus to species, species to genus, species to species, or by analogy."<sup>311</sup> In contrast with Stephen Halliwell's translation (Cambridge: Harvard, 1999), Ingram Bywater (New York: Modern Library, 2001) offers this: "Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being..."<sup>312</sup>

Ricoeur assigns four characteristics to an understanding of metaphor, which are denotative of Aristotle's original assessment: 1. that "metaphor is something that happens to the noun"; 2. that "metaphor is defined in terms of movement"; 3. that "metaphor is the transposition of a name"; and 4. that "a typology of metaphor is outlined in the continuation of the definition."<sup>313</sup> The fourth characteristic, as a more salient matter to a delineation of categories of usage, is important to note but does not directly concern, or only indirectly points to, the conceptual function of metaphor, in terms of thought, that Ricoeur arrives at in the last study of the work. The first characteristic defines the area of study, the second defines the broad mechanism by which metaphor operates, and the third specifies the unity between the first and the second characteristics. Ricoeur briefly meditates on the apparatus of transposition (that is, metaphor is concerned with names, and metaphor is a manner of movement between names), to the effect that "transposition operates between logical poles" that conceptually frame the distinction of beings (that is, names), and that "metaphor consists in a violation of this order and this

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<sup>311</sup> Aristotle, Poetics, 1457b 7-9.

<sup>312</sup> Halliwell, 105; Bywater, 1476. Original, from the Tufts Perseus collection:  
"μεταφορὰ δὲ ἐστὶν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ"

<sup>313</sup> Ricoeur, Rule of Metaphor, 16, 17, 18, 20.

game."<sup>314</sup> <sup>315</sup> Ricoeur concludes from this that *metaphor* describes not the word whose significance has been transferred but "*the pair* of terms or relationships between which the transposition operates," the suggestion of "categorical transgression... a deviation in relation to a pre-existing logical order," and the postulate that "the process [of metaphor] that disturbs and displaces a certain logical order, a certain conceptual hierarchy, a certain classification scheme, is the same as that from which all classification proceeds."<sup>316</sup> This last point is significant, insofar as it designates the idea that *metaphor* is a function at the root of thought and conceptual definition that permits a hermeneutics to arise out of a comparative process. Though Ricoeur hedges the specificity of his claim by placing it at the margins of his second conclusion (that metaphor "disturbs a logical order"), it is nonetheless a provocative marker for the following studies that dispense with a purely rhetorical perspective of metaphor (study 2, remarkable for its brevity) and the non-uncategorical but usefully designatory appellations of "living" and "dead" metaphors.

The place that such a distinction occurs has been remarked upon above, as belonging to the third study ("Metaphor and the semantics of discourse") in the fourth part of the study ("Literary criticism and semantics"), taking into consideration Monroe Beardsley's *Aesthetics* in light of Max Black's article "Metaphor" in *Models and Metaphor* and I.A. Richards' *Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Speaking to "*semantic*

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>315</sup> In endnote 21 from the first chapter, Ricoeur takes occasion to briefly introduce and discuss Derrida's "La mythologie blanche" and cites Derrida, to the effect that "the theory of metaphor 'seems to belong to the great unmoving chain of Aristotelian ontology,'" (36) and that "In every definition of metaphor is implied not just a philosophical position, but a conceptual network within which philosophy as such is constituted." (30) To this, Ricoeur addends four provisions: 1. "The name is never so tightly bound to the being of thing, in Aristotle, that things could not be named differently"; 2. "Analogy of being... is strictly peaking a medieval doctrine"; 3. there is not link between the notion of 'current' (*kurion*) meaning and 'proper' meaning, if by the latter one understands a primitive, original, indigenous meaning"; and 4. "The ontology of metaphor which seems to suggest the definition of art in terms of *mimēsis* and its subordination to the concept of *phusis* is not necessarily 'metaphysica;,' in the sense that Heidegger has given to this word." (326) The most immediately salient aspect of these provisions is the first, that the name is at base an expression of being that is contingent to its own history and understanding, and tangential to an intention of significance, and that the name is, in relation to being, most concretely an ambivalent assignation of what may best be thought of as an accident founded in the arbitrariness of first philosophies and inheritances of reason.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 21-2.

*innovation, or semantic event, as something that can be identified and reidentified," Ricoeur remarks of event and meaning that*

In the metaphorical statement (we will not speak any longer of metaphor as word, but of metaphor as statement), the contextual action creates a new meaning, which truly has the status of event since it exists only in the present context. At the same time, however, it can be reidentified as the same, since its construction can be repeated. In this way, the innovation of an emergent meaning can be taken as a linguistic creation. And if it is adopted by a significant part of the linguistic community, it in turn can become a common meaning and add to the polysemy of lexical entities, thus contributing to the history of the language as code or system. But at this final stage, where the meaning effect we call metaphor has become this shift of meaning that increases polysemy, the metaphor is then no longer living, but a dead metaphor. Only authentic metaphors, that is, living metaphors, are at once meaning and event.<sup>317</sup>

The significance of Ricoeur's reading on the relationship between the practical effect of the function of metaphor on the social communicability of thought is this: that two extremes in the definition of metaphor may be defined. Where metaphor, or the experience of metaphor as an object of conceptual framing, locates both meaning and event, that is the significance of a diachronic thing in relation to its contemporaries, metaphor entails the capacity to express an expansion of an understanding of the world. This comprises the idea of a living metaphor. A dead metaphor, at the other end of this model, is therefore the communication of significance at critical and reflective remove from the point of creation of meaning: that is, a dead metaphor names, and denotes significance, without and no longer implying capacity to transport a person further afield in an understanding of the world.

It should be noted that, to collapse all metaphors (that is, those expressions that are the result of the function of metaphor, that is, what precedes thought) into the categories of either living or dead too stringently narrows the possibilities of meaning. A metaphor may mean something specific but is not in common circulation and thus retains the effects of conceptual transposition.<sup>318</sup> There is moreover the

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<sup>317</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>318</sup> An example off the top of my head is of Mao Zedong's description of China and North Korea as being "as close as lips and teeth," a poetically visceral expansion of the significance of international relationships *in contrast with* other, third- and fourth-party nations, etc. This is a clever metaphor insofar as its meaning becomes immediately apparent within the context of its expression, but it is quite arguably not a metaphor in common circulation and does not serve to denote a specific significance as to the expression of the naming of a being. This is perhaps because the



difficulty that arises of the apparent powerlessness of "dead" metaphor, which Statkiewicz points to in his critique of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's essay "Metaphors we live by," to the effect that, "On the contrary, the more obvious, the more natural ["dead" metaphors] appear - or better, the less they *appear* - the more 'deadly' the power of ideological indoctrination they perform."<sup>319 320</sup>

The usefulness of "living" and "dead" metaphors as a model of perspective about the semantics of expression, grounded in the metaphorizing function at the root of thought, is therefore as a model that demonstrates perspective, and cannot be followed as a tropological system of categorization. This is not to say that the model is not effective in elucidating the complexity with which the concept of metaphor is intertwined as a function and as a product of thought, and in the creation and demonstration of significances.

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metaphor of "lips and teeth" connotes an analogy that rests atop an understanding of the relationship between China and North Korea, a comparison that itself invites analogy and which cross-polyseminates in the metaphorical analogy - in short, that the analogy of "China and North Korea" are metaphorized in their pairing with the expressive pairing that "lips and teeth" denotes.

<sup>319</sup> Statkiewicz, "Live Metaphor," 551.

<sup>320</sup> A closer example, in light of Statkiewicz's observation on the failures of cognitive science to grapple with the implications of its semantic leveling, pertains to Donald Trump's Twitter feed and frequent ontological copulae that whose intentions are towards the marginalizations of entire groups of people.

c. Poetic and speculative modes of discourse

Ricoeur's eighth study, under the title of "Metaphor and philosophical discourse, proposes two questions as a manner of introduction: "*what philosophy is implied in the movement that carries the investigation from rhetoric to semantics and from sense towards reference?*" and the second

requires a global decision concerning the collective unity of modes of discourse as modes of use, such as poetic discourse, scientific discourse, religious discourse, speculative discourse, and so on... Without going as far as the notion, suggested by Wittgenstein, of a radical heterogeneity of language games - which would exclude the very cases of interaction with which the closing part of this Study will be concerned - it is important to recognize in principle the *discontinuity* that assures the autonomy of speculative discourse.<sup>321 322</sup>

Ricoeur goes on to say that "the first three sections [of the eighth study] argue for discontinuity between speculative discourse and poetic discourse, and are a refutation of some of the ways in which, in our opinion, the implication binding metaphorical and speculative discourse is misunderstood."<sup>323</sup>

As for Ricoeur's discussion of Heidegger's The Principle of Reason, and Derrida's "White Mythology," it begins with a summary of the postulatory ramifications of Heidegger's statement, that "the metaphorical exists only within the metaphysical," such that

This saying suggests that the transgression of meta-phor and that of meta-physics are but one and the same transfer. Several things are implied here: first, that the ontology implicit in the entire rhetorical tradition is that of Western 'metaphysics' of the Platonic or neo-Platonic type, where the soul is transported from the visible world to the invisible world; second, that meta-phorical means transfer from the proper sense to the figurative sense; finally, that both transfers constitute one and the same *Über-tragung*.<sup>324</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Ibid., 257-8.

<sup>322</sup> Wittgenstein, Ludwig. The Blue and Brown Books: Preliminary Studies for the 'Philosophical Investigations'. New York: Harper & Row, 1958. Wittgenstein writes of language games: "These are ways of using signs simpler than those in which a child begins to make use of words... games form a *family* the members of which have family likenesses." (17) According to Wittgenstein, modes of discourse that are thought of as more simple examples of the complexity of language as a whole are representative of such, in terms of the give and take of a shared communication around a specific act. It is this mutative capacity that Ricoeur calls a "radical heterogeneity." In effect, Ricoeur is proposing to follow Wittgenstein in examining language and thought as generalities, in terms made clear by its constituent parts (examples of "language games"), without acceding to the innumerable possibilities that are raised by the concept of "language games," such that any mode of discourse is at root informed by an activity out of which communication arises.

<sup>323</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 258.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid., 280.

1. It is important to note what Ricoeur means by poetic and speculative discourse, as these become important in the question of intersecting spheres of discourse towards a basis in thought on ontology. Of poetic discourse, Ricoeur first cites Roman Jakobson from "The work of resemblance," that "The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination."<sup>325</sup> Of this, Ricoeur remarks that "In ordinary language, the language of prose, the principle of equivalence plays no part in constituting the sequence but only in the choice of appropriate words within a sphere of resemblance. The anomaly of poetry is precisely that equivalence plays a part in connection as well as selection. In other words, the principle of equivalence serves to constitute the sequence."<sup>326</sup> Ricoeur remarks later that "Poetic discourse... is that in which the *epoché* [the suspension of judgment] of ordinary reference is the negative condition allowing a second-order reference to unfold. Furthermore, this unfolding is governed by the power of redescription belonging to certain heuristic fictions [the possibility of discovery of truth through speculative thought], in the manner of scientific models."<sup>327</sup> And finally, Ricoeur offers that poetry, the material qualification of poetic discourse, "in itself and by itself, sketches a 'tensional' conception of truth for thought... [Such tensions] come to completion finally in the paradox of the copula, where being-as signifies being and not being. By this *turn* of expression, poetry, in combination with other modes of discourse, articulates and preserves the experience of belonging that places man in discourse and discourse in being."<sup>328</sup>

Poetic discourse, according to Ricoeur, is therefore the use of the suspension of judgment, that is, meaning according to reference (as in ordinary discourse), towards the purposes of "allowing second-order reference to unfold," and that the tensional description of the truth of the world that results constructs an edifice for thought that determines some equivalence between being-as (that is, the quality of being, as opposed to being/not being) and being/not being. This is, in effect, a stance towards the disequilibrium of significance, and meaning. Speculative discourse, on the other hand, can be traced

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<sup>325</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 223. Citation of Roman Jakobson, "The work of resemblance."

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid., 313.

through Kant and Hegel, and according to Ricoeur is that "discourse that establishes the primary notions, the principles, that articulate primordially the space of the concept... that the speculative is the condition of the possibility of the conceptual."<sup>329 330</sup> Speculative thought, like poetry in relation to poetic discourse,

bases its work upon the dynamism of metaphorical utterance, which it construes according to its own sphere of meaning. Speculative discourse can respond in this way only because the *distanciation*, which constitutes the critical moment, is contemporaneous with the experience of belonging that is opened or recovered by poetic discourse, and because poetic discourse, as text and as work, prefigures the distanciation that speculative thought carries to its highest point or reflection. Finally, the splitting of reference and redescription of reality submitted to the imaginative variations of fiction strike us as specific figures of distanciation, when they are reflected and rearticulated by speculative discourse.<sup>331</sup>

The distinction between poetic and speculative discourse is therefore the conceptualization of a notion that is given, in the poetic register, as tentative and interpretively sketched, an equivalence that lends for its example second-order reference and which therefore expands the horizon of conceptual thought in ordinary language and discourse; whereas speculative discourse is a basis for reason that recognizes the critical distance that is drawn between the world as it is and the world as it is conceived according to the postulates and principles that guide the distinction of the world as it is conceived.

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<sup>329</sup> In Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, "The grounds of proof of speculative reason for inferring the existence of a highest being": "In spite of its urgent need to presuppose something that the understanding could take as the complete ground for the thoroughgoing determination of its concepts, reason notices the ideal and merely fictive character of such a presupposition much too easily to allow itself to be persuaded by this alone straightway to assume a mere creature of its own thinking to be an actual being, were it not urged from another source to seek somewhere for a resting place in the repress from the conditioned, which is given, the unconditioned, which in itself and as regards its mere concept is not indeed actually given, but which alone can complete series of conditions carried out to their ground." (559-60) In Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§ 9, 10: "In so far as the will's determinations are *its own* - that is, its *internally* reflected particularization in general - they are its *content*... This content, or the distinct determination of the will, is primarily *immediate*. Thus, the will is *free* or *in itself* or *for us*, or it is in general the will in *its concept*. Only when the will has itself as its object [*Gegenstand*] is it *for itself* what it is *in itself*... Finitude, according to this determination, consists in the fact that what something is *in itself* or in accordance with its concept is different in its existence [*Existenz*] or appearance from what it is *for itself*; thus, for example, *in itself* that abstract mutual externality of nature is space, *for itself* it is time." (43-4) Thus, according to Kant the speculative faculty is based in the need for reason to be grounded and which simultaneously recognizes the perils of presupposition in affording a speculatively determinative denotation, that is, holding the ideal as equivalent to the actual; for Hegel the speculative faculty is the capacity for the recognition of finitude, that is, that "what something is *in itself* or in accordance with its concept is difference in its existence or appearance from what it is *for itself*."

<sup>330</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 300.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, 313.

2. Ricoeur begins his discussion of Heidegger and Derrida with a brief analysis of the context in which metaphor is mentioned in Der Satz vom Grund. According to Ricoeur, this context is two-fold:

The first context is formed by the very framework of the discussion, which refers back to an earlier analysis of the 'principle of sufficient reason... Heidegger notes that one can *see* (*sehen*) a situation clearly and yet not *grasp* (*er-blicken*) what is at issue... *Seeing* (*Sicht*) is not of the same order of penetration as insight (*Erblick*). Now, drawing nearer to what can be grasped means hearing (*hören*) more distinctly and retaining in the ear (*in Gehör behalten*) a certain determining emphasis (*Betonung*). This emphasis makes us perceive a harmony (*Einklang*) between 'is' and 'reason,' between *est* and *ratio*.<sup>332</sup>

Ricoeur concludes his summary for the first context of metaphor in Der Satz vom Grund, in terms of metaphysics: it is "thus formed by the network of the terms *seeing, hearing, thinking, and harmony*, which underlies thought as it meditates on the connection between *ist* and *Grund* in the formulation of the Principle of Sufficient Reason."<sup>333</sup>

The second context for metaphor in Heidegger's lectures "is formed by introducing an interpretation in the form of an objection." Ricoeur then cites Heidegger from the German text [translated into French by Ricoeur, translated into English by Robert Czerny, that thus it differs in the English from Reginald Lilly's translation of Heidegger's The Principle of Reason]:

Hearing and seeing can only (*nur*) be called thinking in a transposed sense (*übertragenen*)... [that] sensible hearing and seeing were taken over and transferred (*hinübergenommen*) to the domain of non-sensible perception, that is thought. Such transference is *μεταφέρειν* in Greek; a transposition like this is called metaphor in scholarly language... [and] it is only in a metaphorical, transferred sense that throuth may (*darf*) be called a hearing and a grasping by the ear, a looking and a grasping by the sight.<sup>334</sup>

Ricoeur's summary of Heidegger's position on the making-intelligible of the world, built atop the perceptions that inform such intelligibility is this: There are the senses, such as seeing and hearing, of which certain aspects are noted especially and which collapses some degree of harmony between what is,

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<sup>332</sup> Ibid., 281.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.; Ricoeur's translation of Heidegger, Der Satz vom Grund, 86-7.

according to sense, and the reason by which such perception is understood as such in relation to what is.<sup>335</sup> The *seeing* and *hearing* are in this respect sensory inputs for perception, *thinking* is the determination of emphasis of what is being perceived, and *harmony* is the speculative conclusion (suspended or not) as to what is in relation with what is as it is perceived. This is, according to Ricoeur, the basis of Heidegger's claim as to the character of thought in general.

The second context to metaphor, in terms of metaphysics, is the objection (which Ricoeur attributes to "the philosopher," generally) that there is no such thing as purely sensible seeing and hearing, that the description of perception as such is figurative and that seeing and hearing are already mediating perception in accordance with the structural precepts of perspective already established, that thus "As soon as we call thought a listening and a seeing, we do not mean this only as (*nur als*) metaphorical transposition, 'but rather as (*nämlich als*) a transposition of the allegedly (*vermeintlich*) sensible into the non-sensible."<sup>336</sup> Continuing the citation of Heidegger, Ricoeur remarks that the process by which the first context is thought is "determinative for Western thought," and the process by which the second context is thought "gives the standard for our representation of the nature of language."<sup>337</sup>

There is a distinction in what Heidegger is making here, according to Ricoeur, in terms of the question of the products of thought, (e.g., language, and rhetorical expression), and the attempt to discern the mechanism by which the process of thought is come to be elaborated, and this bears upon the question of Heidegger's position of the poet in relation to philosophy. According to Ricoeur,

Instead of being presented with a discourse other than his own, a discourse functioning in a manner different from his own, the philosophy straightaway confronts metaphors produced by philosophical discourse itself. In this respect, what Heidegger does when he interprets poets as philosophers is infinitely more important than what he says polemically, not against metaphor, but against a manner of casting metaphors as particular philosophical statements.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> It does not appear to be remarked upon, though it certainly may be read as implied, and it remains an open question, as to the distinction of what is according to a comparative demonstration between modes of perception.

<sup>336</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 281; citing (and translating) Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 88.

<sup>337</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 281-2; 89.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

It is then noted that an objection to this two-stepped process in the reception of sense and the formation for the basis of thought is such: that metaphor "remains a mere transposition of meaning," for which an example of metaphor (that is, the expression of metaphor) is the restriction of the sensible to the non-sensible by means of further delineations of propriety, between the proper and the figurative. Ricoeur suggests that this is what amounts to Platonism, that is: accepting the basis of thought (the process of metaphor) as the example of thought as it is given (that is, metaphor). It is in this that Ricoeur suggests that "the metaphorical becomes 'merely' metaphorical."<sup>339</sup> Ricoeur goes on to conclude about this, citing Heidegger, that "True metaphor is not the 'learned theory' of metaphor; it is rather the very uttering of the objection reduced to mere metaphor, namely that 'thought looks in hearing and hears in looking,'" to the effect that "true metaphor" is the function on which thought is capable of being thought, and from which examples of metaphor (that is, metaphors, in the expression of thought) are produced.<sup>340</sup> And it is from this that Ricoeur determines that Heidegger's characterization of metaphor, according to and within the terms of metaphysics, comes to be "identified with representative thought," the leap (citing Jean Greisch), which "places language under the sign of the gift, connoted in the expression *es gibt*."<sup>341</sup>

3. Ricoeur continues the examination of Heidegger's Der Satz vom Grund by elaborating on the harmony (*Einklang*) that is, as Heidegger observes in the fifth lecture, "not a peaceful consonance" but "instead that it is born of an earlier dissonance," as Ricoeur summarizes.<sup>342</sup> The fifth lecture is that in which Heidegger discusses Angelus Silesius' poetic statement that "The rose is without a why," from which Heidegger produces the comparative discourse between what he calls tone, articulated in the principle of sufficient reason, such that, in Ricoeur's summary, the first "stressing *nothing* and *without*, the other stressing *is* and *reason*. The second, given priority in lecture 6, which was my starting point, must therefore be contrasted

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<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid., 283; 89.

<sup>341</sup> Ricoeur, 283; Jean Greisch, "Les mots et les roses. La métaphore chez Martin Heidegger."

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.; Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 32-40.

with the first emphasis, which is that of representative thought."<sup>343</sup> There is then recourse to discussion of Heidegger's essay "Unterwegs zur Sprache," in which, as Ricoeur notes, "Heidegger is attempting to break away from the concept of language formed by representative thought, when it treats language as *Ausdruck*, 'expression' - that is as the exteriorization of the interior, and hence as the domination of the outside by the inside, instrumental mastery attained by a subjectivity."<sup>344 345</sup> Ricoeur concludes his reading of Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin's poetry, and the line "die Blume des Mundes," in stating that "Poetry indeed seems rather to climb back up the slope that language descends when dead metaphors are laid to rest in herbaria. What then is true poetry? It is, Heidegger says, that which awakens 'the largest view'; here 'the word is brought forth from its interception,' and it 'makes World appear in all things' (100, 101). Now, is this not what *living* metaphor does?"<sup>346</sup>

The analysis has come full circle, to some extent, insofar as Ricoeur recognizes in Heidegger's analysis of metaphor in relation to metaphysics, and the basis by which the expression of a metaphysical perspective may be elaborated. The neat division that Ricoeur has used to critically sort the processes of metaphor, metaphor as an expression rather than metaphor as the function for which thought sublimates perception into concept, according to the basic usage of metaphor, that is, between living and dead metaphor (bearing in mind that this critical division is a proposal towards a conceptualization of metaphor itself, and recognizing that not all examples, or any, perhaps, of metaphorical expression can neatly fit Ricoeur's division). Where dead metaphor becomes the basis of ordinary language, the expressive demonstration of conceptual corollaries, and living metaphor plays with what the idea of dead metaphor proposes, namely of the proper and the figurative, and transgresses boundaries of expectation that are delimited by dead metaphor, thus allowing for the expansion of conceptual horizons about the world, as per the material effect of the function of metaphor at the root of thought.

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<sup>343</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 283.

<sup>344</sup> Heidegger, "Unterwegs zur Sprach," "On the way to Language."

<sup>345</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 284.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.



4. From this, Ricoeur turns to Derrida and his essay "White Mythology," contrasting Heidegger with Derrida as, respectively, a thinking of "restrained criticism" with one of "unbounded 'deconstruction,'" arguing of Derrida that "The claim to keep semantic analysis within a metaphysically neutral area only expresses ignorance of the simultaneous play of unacknowledged metaphysics and worn-out metaphor."<sup>347</sup> In other words, Ricoeur accuses Derrida of overlooking the interplay and exchange between the metaphysics that Heidegger points to, and which places metaphor as the basis for the conceptualization of perception, and of Derrida's metaphor for the concept of metaphor, in terms of "the worn-out metaphor" and the currency of exchange and re-evaluation that Derrida points to. (It should be noted that Ricoeur's critique of Derrida is not so much about Derrida's metaphor for the concept of metaphor so much as it's a critique of Derrida for having had Heidegger's metaphysical metaphors in mind, implicitly throughout "White Mythology," if only briefly explicitly, without actually engaging what Ricoeur sees as Heidegger's main contribution: that is, that in the contrast between hearing and seeing, as metaphorizations of the process of perception, the function of metaphor demonstrates a degree of harmony between what is subsequently conceptualized with what is taken as the ground/reason for the perspective that accommodates perception.) That Ricoeur understands himself as focused, thoughtfully, on the basis for division between sense and concept, and whereas Derrida is intent on looking at the circular arbitrariness, and its effects, and boundaries, limitations, etc., nihilisms, perhaps, Derrida may argue that, c.f. Ricoeur, his perspective examines paths that ask after what makes humans human

Briefly, it should be held in mind that Ricoeur introduces the five sections of his study on "Metaphor and philosophical discourse" with the caveat that "The first three sections argue for discontinuity between speculative discourse and poetic discourse, and are a refutation of some on the ways in which, in our opinion, the implication binding metaphorical and speculative discourse is misunderstood."<sup>348</sup> To the first section, on Aristotle and the question of analogy, through readings of Categories and Metaphysics, Ricoeur states that "the Aristotelian doctrine of the analogical unity of the

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 258.

multiple meanings of being... will provide the occasion for showing that there is no direct passage from the semantic functioning of metaphorical expression to the transcendental doctrine of analogy," and that "On the contrary, the latter furnishes a particularly striking example of the autonomy of philosophical discourse."<sup>349</sup> This is to say that analogy, borne of the "semantic functioning of metaphorical expression,"<sup>350</sup> exists within the significances that are permitted by such function and expression without bearing on the actuality of the world, that is, analogies are fundamentally constructions of the conceptualization of perception.<sup>351</sup>

For Ricoeur this leads to the second question, in the second section of the study, as to *analogia entis*, the analogy of being, or the problem of onto-theology, which Ricoeur defines as a doctrine "born of [the] desire to encompass in a single doctrine the horizontal relation of the categories of substance and the

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<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

<sup>351</sup> Regarding Ricoeur on Aristotle, his guiding question is this: "whenever philosophy tries to introduce an intermediate modality between *univocity* and *equivocalness*, is speculative discourse not forced to reproduce, on its own level, the semantic functioning of poetic discourse?" (259) To the extent that poetic discourse expresses "being-as" as "being and not being," and "articulates and preserves the experience of belonging that places man in discourse and discourse in being," the question of analogy is at the root of a discourse that both destabilizes conceptualizations of being and at the same moment firmly places a person within the boundaries of a hermeneutics. What Ricoeur points to, however, is that Aristotle's *Categories* and *Metaphysics* are at once deeply concerned with the question of analogy and are in turn examples of a speculative discourse on the nature of being. (313) Indeed, Ricoeur says of the *Categories* that its "act of ordering [perception of and conceptualization of the world]... has remained the perennial signal task of speculative discourse." Ricoeur works through Pierre Aubenque (*Le problème de l'être chez Aristotle*) and Jules Vuillemin (*De la logique à la théologie*), and summarizes of Aubenque that "*rapprochement* between ontology and dialectic, which the aporetic character of the doctrine of being seems to impose (Aubenque 251-302), cannot, in the author's own opinion, be pursued very far" insofar as, according to Aubenque, "Dialectic provides us with a universal technique of questioning, without concern for man's ability to answer," (Aubenque, 301; Ricoeur, 266) and summarizes of Vuillemin "that primary attribution - that of a secondary substance to a primary substance - since it cannot be interpreted as the relation of element to set or as the relation of part to whole, is therefore 'an ultimate intuitive given, the meaning of which moves from inherence to proportion and from proportion to proportionality.'" (Vuillemin, 229; Ricoeur, 265) Moreover, Ricoeur says of Kant's work on the categories of being (*Critique of Pure Reason*) that "the table of categories cannot form a system but remains in a state of 'rhapsody,'" towards the conclusion that analogy is an aporetic manner of approach towards the question of being, and thinks of "the problem of analogy in terms of the intersection of discourse," concluding that "by entering the sphere of the problematic of being, analogy at once retains its own conceptual structure and receives a transcendental aspect from the field to which it is applied... [and] assumes a transcendental function." (269-70) This argument is an attempt at clarity of the function of analogy, to the effect that the function of analogy in speculative discourse is a movement towards the critical reckoning of species of being and is separate from poetic discourse. In continuity with the second section of the study, on onto-theology (already commented on above) and the third (between metaphor and metaphysics, in process), the first section suffices a working-through of the distinction between analogy and metaphor, beyond a simple subsumption of metaphor to simile or vice versa according to the precepts of the functions of analogy.

vertical relation of created things to the Creator," which is a manner of arguing that all the things that belong to being and according to the manners through which they may be perceived are inextricably linked to the possibility of an unmovable point of reference, and that the project of delineating such linkage is onto-theological. Ricoeur argues that such a movement of thought towards the possibility of an concept of analogy "adequate" to the task of demonstrating the relationship between what is and the ideal of an immovable point of reference "remains telling on one count: the refusal to compromise in any way with poetic discourse."<sup>352</sup> This is, argues Ricoeur, a manner in which speculative discourse remains distinct from poetic discourse and according to which demonstrates a misunderstanding of the relationship between the speculative and the poetic, what Ricoeur calls "the distinctive feature of the semantic aim of speculative discourse," that is, where the speculative is a movement towards the non-sensible reasoning of perception, of what is in relation with what could be, and which is disrupted by the semantic collapse and re-evaluation that poetic discourse affords, the aim of an onto-theological telling of the world is to discharge the poetic towards the articulation of the ideal utterance of analogy.

Ricoeur's analysis of the work to which Derrida puts Heidegger's The Principle of Reason in "White Mythology" is a continuation of what amounts to a rhapsody on the nature of the formation of a conceptual framework that demands and permits a basis for a telling about being, and which Ricoeur understands as a point of reference towards an explanation of the distinction between speculative and poetic discourses. Of Derrida's analysis of metaphor, vis-à-vis Heidegger, Ricoeur summarizes Derrida's position like this: "there is no discourse on metaphor that is not stated within a metaphorically engendered conceptual network. There is no non-metaphorical standpoint from which to perceive the order and the demarcation of the metaphorical field. Metaphor is metaphorically stated... The effort to decipher figures in philosophical texts is self-defeating."<sup>353</sup> Ricoeur describes Derrida's thought as a "tactic... in a much vaster strategy of deconstruction," and that such a "movement of elevation and absorption or 'raising' by which worn-out metaphor is concealed in the figure of the concept is not just some fact of language. It is

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<sup>352</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 277.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 287.

the pre-eminent philosophical gesture that, in a 'metaphysical' orientation, sights the invisible beyond the visible, the intelligible beyond the sensible, after having first separated them. There is thus only one such movement: the metaphorical 'raising' is also a metaphysical 'raising.'<sup>354</sup> [Derrida's work with Hegel's *Aesthetics*, the *Aufhebung* or *relève* of metaphor and, in Ricoeur's summary of such, describes Derrida's thought as an efficacy of metaphor that "establishes the connection between the *wearing away* that affects metaphor and the ascending movement that constitutes the formation of the concept."<sup>355</sup>]

What Ricoeur characterizes as Derrida's insistence on the effacement of metaphor (metaphorical deadening, so to speak) that constrains and revitalizes, uplifts and reinvigorates, the concept that is the basis for such metaphor, the self-speaking emergence of perception into the figurative, is that "by reason of their stability, their perdurance, the dominant metaphors ensure the epochal unity of metaphysics... the paradox of metaphor's self-implication ceases to appear as a purely formal paradox. It is expressed materially by the self-implication of the dominant metaphors of light and home, where metaphysics signifies itself in its primordial metaphoricity."<sup>356</sup> That is, metaphysics is the critical clarity of the invisible through the figurative visibility of metaphor.

Ricoeur answers his characterization of Derrida with this:

The hypothesis to the effect that worn-out metaphor possesses a specific fecundity is strongly contested by the semantic analysis developed in the preceding Studies. This analysis leans towards the position that dead metaphors are no longer metaphors, but instead are associated with literal meanings, extending its polysemy.<sup>357</sup>

Ricoeur characterizes Derrida's position, then, as a question of a "metaphorical sense of a word, presuppos[ing] contrast with a literal sense," and further, "The effectiveness of dead metaphor can be inflated, it seems to me, only in semiotic conceptions that impose the primacy of denomination, and hence of substitution of meaning. These conceptions thereby condemn the analysis to overlook the real

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<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid., 285

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., 289.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 290.

problems of metaphoricity, which, as we know, are related to the play of semantic pertinence and impertinence."<sup>358</sup>

Ricoeur concludes that

it is not metaphor that carries the structure of Platonic metaphysics; metaphysics instead seizes the metaphorical process to make it work to the benefit of metaphysics. The metaphors of the sun and the home reign only to the extent that they are selected by philosophical discourse. The metaphorical field in its entirety is open to all the figures that play on the relations between the similar and the dissimilar in any region of the thinkable whatsoever.<sup>359</sup>

What Ricoeur is essentially distinguishing between his sense of metaphor and Derrida's, to the extent that Derrida locates the thrust of the metaphorical process in the name, or as the naming of a thing in the fabrication of a whole cloth of conceptual interdependencies that is ultimately reducible, and in all instances, to the arbitrariness, albeit culturally, linguistically, socially, semantically, semiotically, etc., based on some manner of precedence.<sup>360</sup>

As per the footnote above, in which Ricoeur alludes to the model of deductive syllogism and the inductive demonstration in Aristotle's Prior Analytics and Posterior Analytics, the problem that Ricoeur finds in Derrida's description of the metaphor is that "the rejuvenation of all dead metaphors and the invention of new living metaphors that redescribe metaphor allow a new conceptual production to be

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<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid., 294-5.

<sup>360</sup> It is perhaps interesting to note that where Ricoeur speaks of Aristotle's *epiphora*, or metaphor as the movement of semantic sense around the word, or as the conceptual wandering around the determination of such, as it is spoken, Ricoeur notes that "The subsequent determination of the concept of metaphor contributes to this conceptual conversion of dead metaphor underlying the expression *epiphora*. It does so either by the method of differentiation, which allows one to distinguish among various stages of *lexis*, or by exemplification, which provides an inductive basis for the concept of the operation indicated." (293) The reason that this appears to be of interest is that of the processes by which such conceptual conversion occurs, as by differentiation or by exemplification, would seem to mirror the process of deductive and inductive logic that Aristotle outlines in the Prior Analytics and the Posterior Analytics, insofar as syllogistic production (Prior Analytics) is determined through a practiced critical differentiation, and the apodeictic certainty and dialectic uncertainty of such a syllogistic unfolding constitutes the demonstration of knowledge - the example of such. It is by this manner, in following the logic of Aristotle, that Ricoeur proceeds in his response to what he characterizes as Derrida's insistence on "the concept of the metaphor to be only the idealization of its own worn-out metaphor." (294)

grafted onto the metaphorical production itself."<sup>361</sup> The metaphorical process is in this view the constancy of a dialectical reworking.

There is finally to note that Ricoeur considers "the theoretical core common to Heidegger and Derrida... [that] the supposed collusion between the metaphorical pair of the proper and the figurative and the metaphysical pair of the visible and the invisible" as a "connection not... necessary," that is, the distinction between the proper and the figurative, or as definition and demonstration, in terms of what is apodeictical and dialectical, is not contingently necessary to the distinction between the visible and the invisible. Ricoeur turns to Fontanier's definition of metaphor, that of "'presenting an idea under the sign of another idea more striking or better known,' [which] in no way implies the division into species that [Fontanier] subsequently infers from the consideration of object."<sup>362</sup> The result of this, in Ricoeur's view, is that Fontanier's view of metaphor can "be interpreted in terms of tenor and vehicle, focus and frame," and that

The shift from a definition of metaphor drawn from the operation to a definition drawn from the kind of objects results in part from studying metaphor within the framework of the word (the kinds of object then serving as guide in identifying kinds of word), and in part from the substitution theory, which continually sacrifices the predicative (hence syntagmatic) aspect to the paradigmatic aspect (and so to classes of objects). This shift can be avoided if we carry the theory of metaphor from the level of the word back to the level of the sentence.<sup>363</sup>

Ricoeur continues his argument, to the effect that where the substitution theory of metaphor, that of replacement, at the level of the word, "presents a certain affinity to the 'raising' of the sensible into the intelligible," that is, the epiphoric movement of the visible to the invisible, "the tension theory eliminates every advantage that accrues to this latter notion," such that the indeterminacy of relation evacuates the apodeictic certainty of a metaphysical grasp of the world, and to which indeterminacy the dialectical demonstration of knowledge about the thing (in the case of metaphor, in terms of the connection between two substantive and differentiated things, or ideas) is predominant.

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<sup>361</sup> Ibid., 294.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.; Fontanier, *Les Figures du discours*, 95.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 294.

Ricoeur's line of reasoning therefore concludes that "metaphysics... seizes the metaphorical process in order to make it work to the benefit of metaphysics. The metaphors of the sun and the home reign only to the extent that they are selected by philosophical discourse."<sup>364</sup> In this, Ricoeur argues against Heidegger's assertion that "the metaphorical exists only within metaphysics," such that metaphysics employs the metaphorical process, that such a process is the definitional foundation for the manner in which thought, or as the impetus to prior and posterior reason, is the engine to a metaphysical world-view that determines profound division between the visible and the invisible, and a dependence (as per the example of the sun, in arguing contra Derrida) on the precedence of selection by philosophical discourse, that such-and-such thing aligns with such-and-such conceptual node and, more extensively, frame. Ricoeur argues, therefore, that "The metaphorical field in its entirety is open to all the figures that play on the relations between the similar and the dissimilar in any region of the thinkable whatsoever," that metaphor is not the hinge on which the function of the name turns and that metaphor is not observed as merely the process by which the metaphysical translates the sensible into the conceptual, that therefore metaphor as a function is understood within the tensional frame of uncertainty in the dialectical.<sup>365</sup>

Following his critique of Derrida and Heidegger, and their proposals towards the philosophical position of metaphor, Ricoeur then asks "*what* sort of philosophy is *implied* in the movement that carries our inquiry from rhetoric to semantics and from sense towards reference?"<sup>366</sup> He goes on to state that his discussion has "revealed the close connection between the question of the *content* of the implicit ontology and that of the *mode* of implication between poetic discourse and speculative discourse."<sup>367</sup> Ricoeur then proceeds to "undertake two tasks at once: to erect a general theory of the intersections between spheres of discourse upon the difference we have recognized between modalities of discourse, *and* to propose an interpretation of the ontology implicit in the postulates of metaphorical reference that will fit this dialectic

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<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 294-5.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 295.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

of modalities of discourse."<sup>368</sup> This is to say that Ricoeur's aim is to take a general view at which places poetic and speculative discourse meet, and from this to elaborate an understanding of the ontological ramifications consistent with such a dialectic - that is, of unresolved possibility.

Where poetic discourse is girded, according to Ricoeur, by the tension of split reference that permits expression to unfold in meaning, and where speculative discourse opens the space for distanced observation of possibility, or as the critical formulation of a manner of reason, the object for Ricoeur in this fourth part of the eighth study, "The Intersection of Spheres of Discourse," is to understand by what means and measure a semantics may become elaborated where these discourses coincide. Preliminarily, the speculative "extends the semantic aim of the [poetic] at the cost of a transmutation resulting from its transfer into another zone of meaning," that is, speculative discourse, providing critical space for the expression of poetic discourse to mean, sublimates the discursive significance of the poetic into a manifold of reason that is explicable, and significant in its own right, and about which discerns its own necessity.<sup>369</sup> The difference, then, between the speculative and poetic is that the speculative "extends the semantic aim of the [poetic] at the cost of a transmutation resulting from its transfer into another zone of meaning."<sup>370</sup> Towards this, Ricoeur draws attention to the postulate of reference (examined in the seventh study), in which the "meaning of being" may be reflected on, in the intersection between the poetic and the speculative. Of reference, Ricoeur states that there are two levels - that of semantics and that of hermeneutics. Reference "as a postulate of semantics, the requirement of reference takes as given the distinction between semiotics and semantics... [that] Whereas the sign points back only to other signs immanent within a system, discourse is about things."<sup>371</sup> This is to say that the postulates of reference, or the assumed facts concerning the referral of significances between things, are to be viewed from the level of the significances that are found in such reference and from the level of the mode by which such significances are taken as meaning, that is, as the interpretive thrust that understands such significances.

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<sup>368</sup> Ibid.

<sup>369</sup> Ibid., 296.

<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid., 216.



Ricoeur is arguing, in the fourth part of the eighth study, that the postulate of reference is a division of reference (encapsulated within the modality of metaphor) between the significances that are produced by such reference and the manner by which such production is approached - that is: the difference between what a reference means and how a reference is asked to mean.

The argument is then divided into three parts. The first, that "the conceptual articulation proper to the speculative mode of discourse finds its condition of *possibility* in the semantic functioning of metaphorical utterance."<sup>372</sup> The second, that "The *necessity* of [speculative] discourse is not the extension of its possibility, inscribed in the dynamism of the metaphorical. Its necessity proceeds instead from the very structures of the mind, which it is the task of transcendental philosophy to articulate. One can pass from one discourse to the other only by an *epoché*."<sup>373</sup> The third, that "The attraction that speculative discourse exerts on metaphorical discourse is expressed in the very process of interpretation. Interpretation is the work of concepts. It cannot help but be a work of elucidation, in the Husserlian sense of the word, and consequently a struggle for univocity."<sup>374</sup>

To break this down, Ricoeur's postulates of reference understand reference, or the processional work of metaphor, to be guided on one hand by the significances that reference facilitates to unfold, and on the other hand to be guided by the methods of interpretation that are brought to bear on the understanding of such unfolding. This is correlative to the functions of poetic and speculative discourses to the extent that the poetic is the expression of the possibility of meaning within the framework of reference, and the speculative critically distanciates such meaning from its possibility within the interpretive examination of meaning, according to its possibilities. The implications of this, according to Ricoeur, are threefold, as cited above. The first is that the condition of possibility that speculative discourse maintains is found first in poetic discourse - it is the possibility that is expressed through the poetic that permits the speculative its own possibility, or: the possibility of significance is the foundation

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<sup>372</sup> Ibid., 296.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid., 300.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid., 302.

for the possibility of interpretation, and conceptualization. The second is that what is necessary of the speculative, or of speculative discourse, is not possibility, as the possibility of speculative discourse adheres principally from the poetic, but out of "the very structures of the mind," and whatever many manner of influences are brought to bear on the structural formation of the mind in its interpretive work. Moreover, it is for the work of such conditions for the possibility of expression that the field of possibility opened by poetic discourse (that is, the expression of the possibility of reference coincident with the possibility of significance) may be articulated - that is, critically interpreted. And this critical interpretation is marked by the *epoché* of transfer between the poetic and the speculative; a self-reflective understanding of critical interpretation is defined as much by the possibility inherent to poetic discourse of semantic reference as it is by the determination of such significance vis-à-vis the passage from expression to articulation that separates fields of possibility from what is possible. That is, where poetic discourse demonstrates the possibility of significance, speculative discourse is dependent on such possibility for the demonstration of the conceptual understanding of such significance.

The third point that Ricoeur makes, regarding the relationship between the postulates of reference and the poetic and speculative discourses, is that "interpretation is necessarily a rationalization that at its limit eliminates the experience that comes to language through the metaphorical process."<sup>375</sup> Ricoeur calls the product of speculative discourse, as the work of interpretation, a reductive interpretation, insofar as the possibilities of meaning in poetic postulates of reference maintain the field of possibility that the speculative operates in, but which the speculative adumbrates into a concise and interpretive gesture of significance, as an example of significance. It is thus that the speculative circumvents possibility as an articulation of reason in terms of poetic expression, that is, possibilities of significance vis-à-vis reference. It is for this that Ricoeur describes speculative discourse as the struggle for univocity, drawing together Aristotle's introductory gambit of critical distance in Categories, such that things are named homonymously, synonymously, and paronymously (it is the paronymous that Ricoeur arrives at, with his

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<sup>375</sup> Ibid.

intentions in the eighth study), such that a thing may be understood as many things according to one name (homonymous), as where things are understood as same things according to the same name (synonymous), and where a thing is derivatively understood in reference to some other, and categorically distinct, thing, under the heading of its name (paronymous).<sup>376</sup> In Ricoeur's view, speculative discourse is the rationalizing attempt to draw an interpretive thread between things according to a singularity of significance - that is, reference denotes a uniformity of substance within a conceptual and interpreting framework; that is, to articulate oneself speculatively is to strive towards the foreclosure of possibility, or as the ontological certainty that the evacuation of possibility may lay bare.

Ricoeur concludes that "Interpretation is then a mode of discourse that functions at the intersection of two domains, metaphorical and speculative. It is a composite discourse, therefore, and as such cannot but feel the opposite pull of two rival demands."<sup>377</sup> With recourse to §49 in Kant's Critique of Judgment, such that the mind alive moves what is imagined into what is understood, and in which field the capacity for imagination still holds open its presentation of Idea to the rationalization of understanding, Ricoeur ends by arguing that, concerning "our own notion of living metaphor... Metaphor is living not only to the extent that it vivifies a constituted language. Metaphor is living by virtue of the fact that it introduces the spark of imagination into a 'thinking more' at the conceptual level," that imagination holds open the field of possibility expressed in the poetic and struggled to foreclose in the speculative, and that the work of interpretation towards such foreclosure is at tension with the demand that the interpretive work maintains the condition of possibility that poetic reference entails.<sup>378</sup>

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<sup>376</sup> Aristotle, Categories. 1a 1-15.

<sup>377</sup> Ricoeur, Rule of Metaphor, 303.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

#### d. Metaphor and spheres of discourse

As a matter of summary, Ricoeur understands Heidegger's examination of metaphor in relation to metaphysics, in which metaphor exists entirely within metaphysics - that is, metaphor is the function at the root of metaphysical reckoning, or as the translational movement from the sensible/visible to the non-sensible/invisible. And Ricoeur understands Derrida's examination of metaphor in similar terms, insofar as Derrida is generally aligned with Heidegger in the presupposition that metaphor is a function of metaphysical sublimation, the expression of the transcendent capacity of the mind in the production of reason. Ricoeur's problem, however, is the qualitative differences that he understands in the expression of metaphor; that is, of the imaginative capacity of the mind in the fabrication of new modes of understanding in relation to the postulates of reference, such that the network of interrelations that reference entails operates at the level of semiotics/semantics and at the level of hermeneutics, and the implications that such entail.

Where the postulates of reference understand the semiotic/semantic work of reference as a metaphorical gesture that operates within a field of possibility, that such reference itself opens and maintains, and in which resides an inherent capacity for arbitrariness in the location and usage of reference, the hermeneutic work of interpretation both takes advantage of the field of possibility opened in the poetic utterance towards a determination of significance, and it is such determination that attempts to foreclose possibility and to make meaning a determinate thing - a dead metaphor, so to speak.

What this means is that Ricoeur takes Heidegger's position as incomplete - that "metaphor exists only within metaphysics" insofar as a metaphysical perspective of the world (which it may be fairly maintained of Heidegger as the presumably dominating operation of thought in human perspective) is dependent on the sublimation of reference towards the conceptualization of sense. Ricoeur takes the position that the metaphysical perspective is not so cut and dry, that there isn't in one instance sensible and in the next, by virtue of the function of metaphor, as a matter of reference, non-sensible. It is rather that the metaphysical perspective is one of constant striving towards, that certainly the determination of the significance of reference marks the foreclosure of possibility that the sensible opens before a person's

eyes, but that such striving, and such determination, mark as distinct the functions of the poetic endeavor and the speculative endeavor.

What this means in terms of the reductive quality of Derrida's understanding of metaphor, as located apparently exclusively at the level of the word, that is, as a postulate of reference entirely within the semiotic/semantic gesture, is that Ricoeur dismisses Derrida's position on the philosophical relevance of metaphor as grounded in a process of constant deferral. My opinion of this is that Ricoeur is both correct and unfair in his characterization of Derrida's thought. Ricoeur objects to both Derrida and Heidegger for "the supposed collusion between the metaphorical pair of the proper and the figurative and the metaphysical pair of the visible and the invisible," that where Heidegger locates the proper and figurative as expressive of significance entirely within the framework of the visible and the invisible, and that where Derrida accepts this function as a matter of course in the larger project of deconstruction; that is, following the deferrals at the heart of reference towards a more systematic understanding of the processes and paths that inform a perspective of the world.<sup>379</sup>

The problem with Ricoeur's critique of Derrida is that Derrida's project, however annoying it may be to work through, and as a product of Derrida's logorrheal analysis, is not ultimately about the philosophical position of metaphor, per se, though it moderates an understanding of such towards its purposes - the laying-bare of presuppositions built on ultimately arbitrary semantic reference and deferral, towards a clarification of authorial and social predicates of thought, that is, the paths and manners by which conclusions are arrived at. This is certainly an endeavor worth undertaking. Ricoeur doesn't seem to dismiss this so much as the starting point that Derrida marks, namely, so to speak, the referential capacity of the name in opening semantic fields.

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<sup>379</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 294.

As to the fifth section of Ricoeur's eighth study, an "Ontological clarification of the postulate of reference," the question that Ricoeur asks is: "How will speculative discourse reply, given its resources, to the semantic aim of poetic discourse?"<sup>380</sup> A few predicating remarks by Ricoeur guide this question:

This clarification is not a linguistic but a philosophical task. The relation of language to its counterpart, reality, concerns the conditions for reference in general, and thus the meaning of language as a whole. Now, semantics can only allege the relation of language to reality but cannot *think* this relation as such...

Language... appears as that which raises the experience of the world to its articulation in discourse, that which founds communication and brings about the advent of man as speaking subject... semantics takes as its own thesis of 'the philosophy of language' inherited from von Humboldt.<sup>381 382</sup>

The thrust of this (with reference to the footnote, regarding von Humboldt, and which Ricoeur acknowledges without questioning) is two-fold: that semantics, the significance that arises from reference, is understood in terms of the infinite capacity of language to mean regardless of its more or less material limitations - that is, out of a circumscribed and defined set, a multiplicity of possibility; and that language functions as the critical distantiation of the world and its experience towards an object of understanding. It is at this the Ricoeur's objection becomes clear, to Derrida's focus on the word, as the metaphorical function that separates oneself from the world and experience, and as basis for the matter of linguistic critical distantiation.

Ricoeur notes the object that "it is not possible to speak of a relation like this [as of language and critical distantiation from experience and the world] because there is no standpoint outside language and because it is and has always been *in* language that men claim to speak *about* language."<sup>383</sup> This is essentially Polyphilos' problem with the nature of language and philosophy, and metaphor - that

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<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid., 303-4.

<sup>382</sup> Ricoeur is recalling his characterization of discourse from Wilhelm von Humboldt's Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die Geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts. Bonn: Dümmler, 1960. Near the end of the second study, on tropology, Ricoeur very briefly references von Humboldt, in the midst of a discussion on Fontanier and tropes, such that "In the same way that von Humboldt defines discourse as an infinite use of finite means, Fontanier attributes to memory a fairly restricted number of words [which] furnish the means to express an infinite number of ideas." Of Fontanier, Les Figures du discours, p. 158.

<sup>383</sup> Ricoeur, Rule of Metaphor, 304.

expression is ultimately a profoundly dissociative experience itself, of the world, and indicative of the metaphysical impasse of speaking at all.

So it is to this objection that Ricoeur responds that "speculative discourse is possible, because language possesses the *reflective* capacity to place itself at a distance and to consider itself, as such and in its entirety, as related to the totality of what is."<sup>384</sup> It is the articulation of oneself and another, as an inherent process of language, and the linguistic function, that with the matter of reference, and its modes of expression, such as poetic and speculative, "the knowledge that accompanies the referential function itself [is] *the knowledge of its being-related to being*."<sup>385</sup> This is to say, and which Ricoeur goes on to clarify, that language carries within itself the "reflective knowledge" of its relationship with being, and as a matter of presupposition about being, that there is being, or that because there is being there exists what is something rather than nothing. Ricoeur says: "Far from locking language up inside itself, this reflective consciousness is the very consciousness of its openness."<sup>386</sup> Language carries as its necessary condition the possibility that is opened and expressed in a dialectics, that is, not the inability to discern and move towards positions of inherent truth-value but to have at its disposal the capacity for such movement.

Ricoeur finishes his objection with this:

This knowledge [that accompanies language, of its being-related to being] articulates the reference postulates in a discourse other than semantics, even when the latter is distinguished from semiotics. When I speak, I know that something is brought to language. This knowledge is no longer intra-linguistic but extra-linguistic; it moves from being to being-said, at the very time that language itself moves from sense to reference. Kant wrote: 'Something must be for something to appear.' We are saying: 'Something must be for something to be said.'<sup>387</sup>

It is to this that Ricoeur addends his ontological clarification, as a matter of the last section of his last study in The Rule of Metaphor. His "general thesis," that language is the expression of being-said, of which is necessary the knowledge that there is being, implies, he argues, not only the postulates of

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<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid.

reference<sup>388</sup> but also points to the level at which the postulates of reference operate, that is, even where "[semantics] is distinguished from semiotics," where the possibility of meaning is separate from the metonymic deferral of the sign vis-à-vis its object (that is, signifier/signified).

Ricoeur concludes of the reflective knowledge of language that "This proposition makes reality the final category upon which the whole of language can be thought, although not known, as the being-said of reality," that is, the mimetic capacity for the self-reflection of being.<sup>389</sup> The remainder of the section is then devoted to an ontological clarification, in terms of the relationship between the thesis that Ricoeur has arrived at, and the postulates of reference and "the postulate of *split* reference in accordance with the semantic aim of poetic discourse."<sup>390 391</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> The postulates of reference argue that reference is predicated on the basis of a semantics on the order of the sentence, and on the order of discourse - that is, the distinction between the limits of the metaphorical function of utterance within an economy of expression, in an immediate sense, and the boundaries of intent and purpose that encapsulate expression, which Ricoeur identifies as poetic and speculative; the poetic "is that in which the *epoché* of ordinary reference is the negative condition allowing a second-order reference to unfold... [and the] unfolding is governed by the power of redescription belonging to certain heuristic fictions, in the manner of scientific models," (305) and the speculative is a basis for reason that recognizes the critical distance that is drawn between the world as it is and the world as it is conceived according to the postulates and principles that guide the distinction of the world as it is experienced.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid.

<sup>391</sup> The thesis may be paraphrased as this: The postulates of reference indicate semantic and discursive distinctions, and that language is the articulation of a reflective knowledge of being, insofar as language itself acknowledges its "being-related to being." It is therefore that to speak is to affirmatively express a being-related to being and the being of being, that is, as a principle of sufficient reason language is the expression (at the distinctions of semantics and discourse) of the reflective knowledge of being, that is, language speaks sufficient reason out of the mimesis of being.



e. An expository commentary on Ricoeur's thought about reference and ontology

What follows here is a condensed reading of Ricoeur's conclusions. It is worth reading this from paragraph to paragraph, in order to follow Ricoeur's thought more closely. This is a rough outline of the course of thought that Ricoeur works through:

I. An ontological clarification

A. The postulates of reference and the postulate of *split* reference vis-à-vis semantic aim of poetic discourse.

1. That is, the postulates of reference operate at the levels of semantics and hermeneutics, to the effect that semantics is distinguished from semiotics and demonstrates "the essentially synthetic character of predication," that discursive intention is "irreducible to what semiotics calls the signified," and the demonstration of an "extra-linguistic reality," apart from the semantic/semiotic representation of such. As to the hermeneutic, this concerns what is stated, or what can properly be understood of the discursive intent.<sup>392</sup>

2. Towards the postulate of *split* reference, this "signifies that the tension charactering metaphorical utterance is carried ultimately by the copula *is*. Being-as means being *and* not being."<sup>393</sup> Analogies of being demonstrate not only what is the relationship between things, as a matter of definition towards specificities, but demonstrates what is also, in fact, not. A semiotic/semantic point of departure cannot account for this, and it is from this that the *epoché* of poetic discourse, as a matter of metaphorical utterance, and the redescriptive method of speculative discourse, demonstrate the split in reference between what is and what is not.

1. Question: "Do we know what is meant by world, truth, reality?"

A. Poetic discourse, *epoché* or ordinary reference, unfolding of second-order reference

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<sup>392</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 216-18.

<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

B. Unfolding governed (as a function) by redescription

2. "The critical scope of the notions of secondary reference"

A. Second-order reference "seems to mark the invasion of language by the ante-predicative and the pre-categorial, and to require a concept of truth other than the concept of truth-verification, the correlative of our ordinary concept of reality."<sup>394</sup>

B. Citation of Nelson Goodman, nominalism [Languages of Art, an Approach to a Theory of Symbols], and the notions of appropriateness and accuracy, "that the appropriate character of certain verbal and non-verbal predicates can be assumed by speculative discourse only at the price of remaking the correlative concepts of truth and reality."<sup>395</sup>

C. "Poetic discourse brings to language a pre-objective world in which we find ourselves already rooted, but in which we must also project our innermost possibilities."<sup>396</sup>

3. An apparent "plea for the irrational," and the split reference

A. The split reference "signifies that the tension characterizing metaphorical utterance is carried ultimately by the copula *is*. Being-as means being *and* not being."<sup>397</sup>

B. "Within the framework of a semantics of reference," or the postulate of reference at the semantic level, "'to be' operated there only as an affirmative copula, as being/apophansis."<sup>398</sup>

C. The distinction between the apophantic and the dialectic is thus the semantic relationship between two concepted objects, marked by the copula *is*, and it is via speculative discourse that the apophansis is redescribed, and possibly recovered as a dialectic of being

4. Question: "By what feature will the speculative discourse on being answer to the paradox of the copula, to the apophantic *is/is not*?"

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<sup>394</sup> Ibid., 305.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid., 306.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

A. Clarification: The apophantic *is/is not* demonstrates a paradox in terms of truth, such that an apophantic assertion speaks to a truth-value that is not necessarily cogent of truth and in fact suggests its opposite, via the explicit comparison of *is* and the implicit concatenation of *is not*.

B. Citation of Aristotle, Rhetoric 3, and the question: "What does it mean for living metaphor 'to set (something) before the eyes'? Setting before the eyes... is to 'represent as in a state of activity' (1411 b 24-5)." I.e., "when the poet infuses life into inanimate things, his verse 'represents everything as moving and living; and activity is movement' (1412 a 8)."<sup>399</sup>

C. Ricoeur argues that Aristotle offers an ontological clarification of reference "by reconsidering the meanings of being on the level of speculative thought." I understand this to be the reinscription of what is offered in poetic discourse, that is, the conceptualization and (re)description of the apophantic *is/is not*.

1. To clarify, Aristotle is speaking, at 1412 a 8, of Homer's Iliad, as with "Arched, foam-crested, some in front, others behind," which Aristotle describes of Homer as "giv[ing] movement and life to all, and actuality is movement."<sup>400</sup>

D. Ricoeur describes this of Aristotle as an "exten[sion of] the field of the polysemy of being ... [that] signifies, first of all, that the ultimate meaning of the reference of the poetic discourse is articulated in speculative discourse: indeed, actuality has meaning only in the discourse on being," and that this "signifies as well that the semantic aim of metaphorical utterance does intersect most decisively with the aim of ontological discourse, not at the point where metaphor by analogy and categorial analogy meet, but at the point where the reference of the metaphorical utterance brings being as actuality and potentiality into play."<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> Ibid., 307.

<sup>400</sup> Aristotle, Rhetoric III.xi.4, 1412 a, citation of Homer, Iliad, xv.541.

<sup>401</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 307.

E. The final significance of this for Ricoeur is that the "intersection of the poetic and the ontological does not concern tragic poetry alone ... it applies to lyrical *mimêsis* as well ... the power 'to represent things as in a state of activity.'"<sup>402</sup>

5. Ricoeur then asks: "But what indeed can this be interpreted to mean?"

A. Question as to Aristotle's definition of ontology as the circular analogism of potentiality and actuality, and movement thereof, and expression, or mimesis, thereof: Do not these "same difficulties ... arise at the level of poetry as well?"<sup>403</sup>

B. Ricoeur argues that this question cannot be examined via assertion but as the question of "signifying things in act," an interpretation that is "inseparable from the ontological clarification of the postulate of metaphorical reference."<sup>404</sup>

1. It is therefore that mimesis of ontological conditions, as per the movement borne of potentiality and actuality, is "the ontological clarification of the postulate of metaphorical reference," that is, metaphorical reference is the means by which the movement between potentiality and actuality, that is, being, is expressed and made to mean, either at the level of semantics or the level of discourse. In other words, mimesis of being is metaphorical reference and operates at both the semantic and discursive level, and between the poetic and the speculative.

6. Question: "What, then, are we to understand by 'signifying things in act'?"<sup>405</sup>

A. Citation of Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1048 b 25-6, "At the same time we are living well and have lived well, and are happy and have been happy," Ricoeur argues, "this vision of the world as a grand *gesture*."

1. Clarification: Where tragedy "shows men 'as acting, as in act,'" and with later reference to Nietzsche's Human, All Too Human, to the effect that the completion of an

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<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid., 308.

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

act is "to accord an improper prerogative to man himself," to be human and the express the world mimetically, i.e., via metaphorical reference, is to exist with action, as opposed to existing outside of the act itself.<sup>406</sup>

B. Ricoeur asks whether "seeing all things in act [is] seeing them in the manner of a work of art, a result of technical production?" That is, is to see the world within the act itself to necessarily see the world inescapably through metaphorical reference, as mimesis?

1. Ricoeur cites Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1015a 18-9, that "he who reaches this 'source of the movement of natural objects, being present in them somehow, either potentially or in complete reality,' ... which the Greeks called *phusis*," is to "see as whole and complete what is sketchy and in process, [and to] perceive every form attained as a promise of newness."<sup>407</sup>

2. Poetic discourse requires speculative discourse to "seek after the place where appearance signifies 'generating what grows'" within the non-physical and speculative understanding and expression, as the determinative restriction that concept bears regarding the "signifying [of] the blossoming or appearing."<sup>408</sup>

3. Where "living expression states living existence, it is where our movement up the entropic slope of language encounters the movement by which we come back this side of the distinctions between actuality, action, production, motion," that is, the intersection between poetic discourse and speculative discourse, the primary metaphorical reference conceptually reinscripted and understood retrospectively.<sup>409</sup> The question then becomes how the poetic can be more closely understood as poetic within a speculative framework.

7. Ricoeur argues that "the task of speculative discourse is to seek after the place where appearing means

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<sup>406</sup> Ibid.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

'generating what grows.'"

A. Reference to Heidegger, On the Way to Language, that "the final stages of his philosophy attempt to make speculative thought resonate with the poet's utterance."<sup>410</sup>

B. "The core of [Heidegger's] thought in its last stage is the belonging-together of *Erörterung* and *Ereignis*.

1. *Erörterung* "designates both the search for the 'place' and also the 'commentary' on this search."

2. *Ereignis* "designates the 'thing itself' that is to be thought."

3. *Erörterung* and *Ereignis*, "as the 'topology of being' is what typifies speculative thought in its 'constitutive gesture."<sup>411</sup>

C. Ricoeur states that *Ereignis* is the object in which actuality and potentiality are found present together, a thing given (*es gibt*) to thought towards the speculative, or as the appearance of what is and could be mimetically uttered and stood back from, and critically observed.

D. Ricoeur offers a manner of conclusion, such that "*Erörterung* in its turn marks the difficulty of saying that corresponds to the difficulty of being ... When the philosopher fights on two fronts, against the seduction of the ineffable and against the power of 'ordinary speech' (*Sprechen*), in order to arrive at a 'saying' (*Sagen*) that would be the triumph neither of inarticulateness nor of the signs available to the speaker and manipulated by him ... [this is the] path between the powerlessness of discourse given over to the dissemination of meanings and the mastery of univocity through the logic of genera."<sup>412</sup>

A. As a matter of rearticulation and explanation, Ricoeur argues here that the compromise between a conceptual obscurantism of philosophical language is balanced against the incapacity of ordinary language, for its polysemic possibilities and

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<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., 310.

"dissemination of meanings," the naming of and definition of a thing in itself "through the logic of genera," that is, Aristotle's contribution regarding the distinction between the essence of the thing and the definition of the thing, and what is thus necessary and accidental, as per critical analysis of the thing.

8. Ricoeur holds out *Ereignis* and *Erörterung* as, approximately, the gathering of circumstances into the unfolding of an object in consideration of its actuality and its potentiality, and as the critical observation and definition of such, respectively. As such, *Erörterung* "is defined as speculative thinking" insofar as *Erörterung* moves towards a univocity with *Ereignis*, but it is a "sameness," that is, speculative thought is analogous to the world - that is, incomplete, though striving towards univocity, nonetheless referential and therefore metaphorical.

9. This is not to suggest that speculative discourse becomes poetic discourse, Ricoeur maintains: "Even if *Ereignis* is called a metaphor [in the naming of being unfolding, that is, as a univocity of *Erörterung*], it is a philosopher's metaphor, in the sense in which the analogy of being can, strictly speaking, be termed a metaphor, but one which always remains distinct from a poet's metaphor."<sup>413</sup> Where poetic discourse strives against the boundaries supposed by the definitions for the world in the speculative discourse of univocity, and where poetic discourse opens the field of semantic possibility regarding such definitions for the world, *Erörterung* is nonetheless firmly within the speculative insofar as it demands conceptual resemblance with the world, and the foreclosure of possibility.

A. Citation of Heidegger's *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*, by Heidegger, which Ricoeur argues "confirms that the gulf cannot be bridged between the Same that is to be thought and poetic resemblance ... Poem and aphorism [aphorism being the philosophical statement of resemblance] are in a mutual accord of resonance that respects their difference. To the imaginative power of thought-full poetry, the poet replies with the speculative power of poeticizing thought."<sup>414</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

B. What is the difference between poetry and aphorism, then? Is not the philosopher a poet, and the poet a philosopher, at some merging place? Ricoeur answers that even where the poet and the philosopher are indistinguishable, "speculative thought employs the metaphorical resources of language in order to create meaning and answers and thus to the call of the 'thing' to be said with a semantic innovation. A procedure like this has nothing scandalous about it as long as speculative thought knows itself to be distinct and responsive because it is thinking."<sup>415</sup> The distinction between the poet and the philosopher, therefore, at the level of a language that appears to diminish any difference between them, is the intent towards opening semantic value and linguistic resemblance of the thing, the play of polysemic possibility about the world, in relation to the intent to foreclose definitional possibility about the world vis-à-vis conceptual thought.

C. Ricoeur says that the same holds true for etymologism, that such is the philosopher's attempt at reinscribing *Erörterung* with the semantic possibility of language, that is, a poetry of speculative discourse that acts as reference in terms of thought, and concept. Ricoeur concludes that "In confronting this new polysemy of being [neither privilege nor exclusion for metaphor as analogy of being], philosophy confirms that thinking is not poeticizing."<sup>416</sup>

10. Ricoeur refers to the possible objections that his reading of Heidegger "takes into account neither his wish to break with metaphysics, nor the 'leap' outside its circle that poeticizing thought demands."<sup>417</sup>

A. Ricoeur breaks with Heidegger, in what Ricoeur points to as Heidegger's insistence on "'the' metaphysical," or the historical bases of thought on which a philosophical concept of metaphysics may be understood. Ricoeur objects that, "in lumping the whole of Western thought together under a single word, metaphysics," that the thinker performs the task of thinking analogous to his predecessors but not under the same rubric and conceptual heading as his predecessors, that to think metaphysically is to think in newly metaphysical terms that obscure and diminish the

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<sup>415</sup> Ibid.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid., 311.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.



hegemony of prior thought, that to think speculatively is to always think in new language that reflects and informs new experience.<sup>418</sup> Ricoeur objects to Heidegger's characterization that metaphysics demonstrates a continuity of human experience, and definition of the world, that must be leapt from in thought, insofar as it is always being leapt from in thought, driven as it is and driving new experience.

B. Ricoeur asks of Heidegger, and of every other philosopher, who "has not meditated on the metaphor of the way and considered himself to be the first to embark on a path that is language itself addressing him? Who among them has not sought the 'ground' and the 'foundation,' the 'dwelling' and the 'clearing'? Who has not believed that truth was 'near' and yet difficult to perceive and even more difficult to say, that it was hidden and yet manifest, open and yet veiled?"<sup>419</sup> Ricoeur is arguing that speculative thought is built atop poetic thought, and where poetic thought encompasses the polysemic field of possibility that mimetic expression opens for a critical mind, and where speculative thought winnows the definition of the world towards a univocity of thinking, and the foreclosure of possibility, the products of speculative thought, concepts, cannot be uniform across what is inherently a disseminate world view.

C. Ricoeur continues with his rhetorical line of questioning, regarding Heidegger, touching on: **i.** forward and regressive movement of thought; **ii.** the presumptions of "beginning" and "end" in thought that exists within a chronological movement; **iii.** the starting human uniformity of belief that thought may encapsulate experience; **iv.** the action of thought in relation to itself, as a 'leap'; **v.** the thinking of horizons of knowledge; **vi.** that 'way' and 'place' are the same, and that 'method' and 'thing' are identical; **vii.** that "thinking and being is not a relation in the logical sense of the word, that this relation presupposes no terms preceding it but, in one way or another, constitutes

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid., 312.

the belonging-together of thinking and being; **viii.** that to think identity is to think it as non-tautological, "on the basis of this belonging-together of thinking and being."<sup>420</sup>

D. Ricoeur observes of Heidegger that, "Like the speculative thinkers who preceded him, Heidegger is seeking the key word [in his philosophy of *Ereignis-Erörterung*], 'the one that decisively carries the whole movement.' For him, *es gibt* is this key word," and that "It's unacceptable claim is that it puts an end to the history of being, as if 'being disappeared in *Ereignis*."<sup>421</sup> For Ricoeur, Heidegger presumes with his philosophy the assertion of a tautology of definition. ["Das Metaphorische gibt es nur innerhalb der Metaphysik."<sup>422</sup>]

11. Ricoeur then moves to argue that Heidegger's placement of all philosophy within the boundaries of "'the' metaphysical," and Heidegger's own subsequent and later work is taken up, on one hand, with a "logic [that] places *Ereignis* and the *es gibt* in the lineage of a mode of thought that unceasingly rectifies itself, unceasingly searches for a *saying* more appropriate than ordinary *speech*, a *saying* that would be a *showing* and a *letting-be*; a mode of thought, finally, which could never leave discourse behind," and on the other hand a "logic [that] leads to a series of erasures and repeals that cast thought into the void, reducing it to a hermeticism and affectedness, carrying etymological games back to the mystification of 'primitive sense.'"<sup>423</sup>

A. To the first logic that Ricoeur identifies of Heidegger, of the constant and continually-grounding affirmation of thought about being via the framework of language, and the apparently unending dialectic on being that is entailed by thinking via "leaping," as Heidegger would describe it, Ricoeur notes that such a mode of thought enlists and places itself irreducibly within a discursive mode, that therefore thought is essentially discursive.

B. To the second logic that Ricoeur identifies of Heidegger, which would "invite us to sever discourse from its propositional character," cites Hegel's Phenomenology of the Mind and

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<sup>420</sup> Ibid.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid.

<sup>422</sup> Heidegger, Der Satz vom Grund, 89.

<sup>423</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 312-3.

Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*; of Hegel's argument in preface iv "in regard to speculative propositions, which do not cease to be propositions," in Ricoeur's summary, discourse cannot be severed from its propositional character and that such a philosophical perspective "gives new life in this way to the seductions of the unarticulated and the unexpressed, even to a kind of despair of language resembling that found in the next to last proposition in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*."<sup>424</sup>

C. In other words, Ricoeur identifies of Heidegger's later philosophy a movement of thought at odds with itself, to the extent that being must be thought within the boundaries of language, or of what is a self-reflective and self-edifying mode of representation, and the desire to think being outside of the boundaries of representation, and the "kind of despair" that results in this, or as Wittgenstein laments of his logic, in 6.54, that "Meine Sätze erläutern dadurch, dass sie der, welcher mich versteht, am Ende als unsinnig erkennt, wenn er durch die - aug ihnen - über sie hinausgestiegen ist. (Er muss sozusagen die Leiter wegwerfen, nachdem er auf ihr hinaugestiegen ist.)," that to see the world clearly a person must accept the senselessness of a propositional logic and surmount it by climbing such propositions and thereafter disregarding such propositions.<sup>425</sup>

D. Ricoeur concludes his reflection on Heidegger with a citation from the essay "What is Philosophy?," such that "Between these two [thinking and poetry] there exists a secret kinship because in the service of language both intercede on behalf of language and give lavishly of themselves. Between both there is, however, at the same time an abyss for they 'dwell on most widely separated mountains.'" Ricoeur accepts this and understands what Heidegger means in terms of a dialectic of understanding about the world, via modes of representational logic, via speculative discourse and poetic discourse.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>424</sup> Ibid., 313.

<sup>425</sup> Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 6.54: "My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.)" This is, in essence, the demonstration of a logical enunciation along the lines of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, in which a logic comes to define the world as it is seen-as, to the effect that the world as it is understood is the world as it is mediated by the logic through which it is understood.

<sup>426</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 313.

## II. Poetic and speculative discourse

Of poetic discourse, it "sketches a 'tensional' conception of truth for thought." Ricoeur defines tension as, 1. "between subject and predicate"; 2. "between literal interpretation and metaphorical interpretation"; and 3. "between identity and difference."<sup>427</sup> These belong to the theory of split reference (as per Ricoeur's question in Study 7, "Why would not this proximity of meaning be at the same time a proximity between the things themselves?," the theory of split reference understands a "parallel between metaphorization of reference and metaphorization of meaning," that is, within reference there is the reference between the things of the world and between the ideas of the things of the world). Poetic discourse is then the expression of the copula, the suggestion that, in reference with a thing there is this other thing, and the paradoxical connotation that this carries in such an articulation of identity - that this is that means both that this is that and that this is not that; in other words, the copula of reference is "where being-as signifies being and not being," and that the field of conceptual possibility that the poetic discourse opens "articulates and preserves the experience of belonging that places man in discourse and discourse in being."<sup>428</sup>

Speculative thought coheres the articulation of experience within and "according to its own sphere of meaning," towards the thoughtful definition of experience of being via "distanciation, which constitutes the critical moment, [and] is contemporaneous with the experience of belonging that is opened or recovered by poetic discourse."<sup>429</sup> Speculative discourse is the redescription of poetic discourse and lends via critical movement the figures that articulate experience as having meaning.

There is therefore, for Ricoeur, regarding thought, and the meaning that is arrived at in the function of metaphor via analogies of being, what postulates of reference there are at semantic and discursive in recognition of the difference that is produced by such analogy (i.e., the distinction between

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<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

things and the distinction between ideas of things), the poetic positions experience as open to interpretation and the speculative positions such articulation of experience as meaning some *thing*, as bearing some significance, above all about itself, as significance, mustered in human reckoning.

f. Analytic of thought in The Rule of Metaphor

There are several important themes and ideas that Ricoeur discusses in The Rule of Metaphor, and which provide critical frameworks towards an opinion on the ontological implications of discourse. These include living and dead metaphors, the postulates of reference, ontological vehemence, and the ideas of poetic and speculative discourse.

Of the first of these, living and dead metaphors, Ricoeur distinguishes his perspective from the cognitivists on metaphor (Black, Beardsley, Richards, Searle, et al) insofar as "dead" metaphors "are no longer metaphors, but instead are associated with literal meaning, extending its polysemy."<sup>430</sup> The "living" metaphor, by contrast, is "at once meaning and event," a response to the cognitivist adherence to semantic substitution as a matter of metaphorical substance, to the effect that in the reception of a truly novel expression, "one must adopt the point of view of the hearer or reader and treat the novelty of an emerging meaning as his work within the very act of hearing or reading."<sup>431</sup> Ricoeur continues:

If we do not take [the route of emergent meaning in conjunction with the act of hearing or reading], we do not really get rid of the theory of substitution. Instead of substituting (as does classical rhetoric) a literal meaning, restored by paraphrase, for the metaphorical expression, we would be substituting (with Black and Beardsley) the systems of connotations and commonplaces. I would rather say that metaphorical attribution is essentially the construction of the network of interactions that causes a certain context to be one that is real and unique. Accordingly, metaphor is the semantic event that takes place at the point where several semantic fields intersect. It is because of this construction that all the words, taken together, make sense. Then, and only then, the metaphorical *twist* is at once an event *and* a meaning, an event that means or signifies, an emergent meaning created by language.<sup>432</sup>

This is essentially Aristotle on noun and verb, which Derrida has examined and which has been commented on in chapter 2 section d.<sup>433</sup> <sup>434</sup> Ricoeur's contribution is valuable nonetheless.<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 290.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid., 98 (Study 3, "Metaphor and the semantics of discourse").

<sup>432</sup> Ibid., 98-9.

<sup>433</sup> Aristotle, On Interpretation, 16a-b. Then it gets interesting, Someone needs to teach Aristotle's On Interpretation as a matter of course.

<sup>434</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology": "The Ellipsis of the Sun," 239-41. I don't give enough credit to Derrida, sometimes.

<sup>435</sup> See, Statkiewicz.

Working through Émile Benveniste's definition of discourse as the operation of significance at the level (which Ricoeur points out is "integral, not external, to the analysis,"<sup>436</sup>) of semantics, Ricoeur argues that, à propos Benveniste, the level of the sentence in regard to the linguistic level of the word demonstrates a semantic charge that is quite apart from the semiotics of the level of the word, that where denotation operates within utterance of the word, which is a sign, meaning is located within the sentence. Ricoeur then usefully defines discourse according to a series of traits that "readily permit a presentation in pairs, which gives discourse a pronounced dialectical character".<sup>437</sup>

- 1 - "Discourse always occurs as an event, but is to be understood as meaning";<sup>438</sup>
- 2 - That, distinguishing "between identifying function and predicative function," discourse demonstrates "correctness and error" insofar as the word is neither correct nor in error because it functions as a matter of significance, to the effect that in discourse, meaning rests at the junction of correlative identification and adheres towards a definitional stance regarding the subject (of the sentence);<sup>439</sup>
- 3 - That, having to do with "the structure of acts of discourse" and with regard to aspects of locution and illocution (notwithstanding perlocution), an innovation by J.L Austin, regarding the distinction between saying (locution) and what is performed in saying (illocution);<sup>440</sup>
- 4 - That, as "concerns sense and reference," with recourse to Gottlieb Frege, and where reference is the quality of "signs refer[ing] to other signs *within* the same system," sense connotes the "phenomenon of the sentence, [in which] language passes outside itself; reference is the mark of the self-transcendence of language";<sup>441</sup>
- 5 - That there is a differentiation between "reference to reality from reference to the speaker," and inasmuch as "Reference is itself a dialectical phenomenon," discourse is through the speaker and regarding reality auto-referential;<sup>442</sup>
- 6 - And, that between the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic, and where the paradigmatic "concern signs in the system, and so belong to the semiotic order," and that the syntagmatic arrangement of signs demonstrates the metaphor, insofar as it is an intersectional arrangement of significances, as belonging to discourse.<sup>443</sup>

Based on this definition of discourse, as an event of identification that distinguishes the saying from its performance and its sense from its reference, and which is auto-referential and syntagmatic, Ricoeur describes the work of reference as two postulates of reference operating at the levels of semantics

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<sup>436</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid., 70-2.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., 72-3.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid., 73-4.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid., 75-6.

and hermeneutics, wherein semantics, meaning, belongs to the order to the sentence, and the postulate of reference at the level of hermeneutics "addresses entities that are larger than the sentence."<sup>444</sup> In the postulate of reference at the level of semantics there contains the distinction between the semiotic and the semantic, to the effect that "difference is semiotic, [and] reference is semantic."<sup>445</sup> At the level of hermeneutics, the postulate of reference entails discussion of "particular entities of discourse called texts," and that in literary texts in particular there is exception to the reference requirement at the semantic level - that is, meaning is no longer adherent to the subordinate exigencies of semiotics, on the basis of distinction, and cannot be assumed as grasped according to a manner of reference (that is, semantics). In other words, and as Ricoeur argues, a literary discourse functions according to connotations, an auto-referential exchange and independent of an economy of denotation, until it's said out loud. This is a summary definition of the principle of reason.

Building on this, Ricoeur argues in the eighth study for a distinction between the poetic and the speculative discourses, to the effect that, with regard to the conversation about metaphor between Heidegger and Derrida, poetic discourse, "in and by itself, sketches a 'tensional' conception of truth for thought," whereas speculative discourse "bases its work upon the dynamism of metaphorical utterance, which it construes according to its own sphere of meaning."<sup>446</sup> It is understood of this that, with reference to the question of ontological vehemence and commitment (that is, the saying and the affirmation of such, basically Austin, as Ricoeur winks out loud), poetic discourse demands operation at the level of hermeneutics, as the investigation of the possible, whereas speculative discourse demands operation at the level of semantics, as the description of the limits of the possible; that is, where poetic discourse opens the space for an understanding of the contours of what may be called reality, or the world, or truth, it is in speculative discourse that such contours are come to be discovered, and known.

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<sup>444</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>445</sup> Ibid.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., 313.



## Chapter 4. Commentary on "The *Retrait* of Metaphor" by Jacques Derrida

### a. Introduction

#### 1. The scope of this chapter

This chapter serves as a reading of Jacques Derrida's essay "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," in which Derrida responds in part to Paul Ricoeur's critical understanding of Derrida's position on metaphor and metaphysics, with regard to Martin Heidegger. The reading is summarized in four sections and an analytic of thought that takes into account "The *Retrait* of Metaphor" as a matter of retrospective understanding, vis-à-vis the essay "White Metaphor."

The second section of this chapter (section "b. Metaphor and the event of rhetoric") concerns in large measure Derrida's reaction to Ricoeur's critical understanding of Derrida's position on metaphor, vis-à-vis Heidegger. Towards this, there are five distinct parts to this section of the chapter. The first part concerns Derrida's articulation of a definition of metaphor - a rearticulation, as it were. The second part is exceedingly brief and serves to demonstrate Derrida's apparent displeasure for Ricoeur's representation of his thought. This part is meant only to underscore the distinction that Derrida casts between his thought and Ricoeur's. The third part of this section offers a definition for the "retrait of metaphor," to the extent that metaphor is bound by a totality of signification. The fourth part of this section contains clarifying notes (by Derrida, and about Derrida) as a matter of rearticulating his reasoning in the essay "White Mythology," and this section has recourse to briefly examine Aristotle's Poetics. The fifth part of this section of the chapter seeks to critically posit and to understand the "traits" of metaphor that Derrida lists, in light of Heidegger's texts On the Way to Language, Being and Time, and The Principle of Reason, and of Hegel's text The Science of Logic, concluding that (as a citation of my own summary of Derrida's position) the privilege of the name is one that confers a provisional order of semantic magnitude, towards the semantic deferral of a constant shift of grounded meaning that is implied as a matter of philosophy and as a matter of obvious semantic observation.

The third section (section "c. Watchwords towards metaphysical encapsulation") posits that where language is the basis by which the analogy of being is made manifest, watchwords, as a matter of

philosophical perspective, or as metaphysical worldview, serve as a place a figurative disposition.

Towards this, Derrida focuses on Heidegger's *es gibt* and in relation to the French *il y a*.

The fourth section of this chapter (section "d. Two traits on metaphor") places Derrida's thought on metaphor within the circumscribed limits of Heidegger's thought on metaphysics, to the effect that metaphor functions as a manner of *aletheia* in expression of the world, and as a matter of metaphorical "neighborliness," as a figuration for analogistic thought. This section includes a summary of conclusions on Heidegger's essay "The Nature of Language," and serves as a basis for thought about Derrida's notions of *epoché* and *deborde*, within the context of Derrida's use of the word *retrait* and the distinction that is found between saying and speaking.

The fifth section (section "e. The trait of the watchword") understands Derrida's final position in the essay "The *Retrait* of Metaphor" as dependent on the very notion of a watchword as a summative figuration for a philosophical perspective of the world. Towards this, the notion of the *Riss* is expanded on, and the notion of *Aufriss*, as the gathering of a bearing (which comes from Heidegger's conversation with another philosopher in the first section of On the Way to Language), before settling on brief excursus through Heidegger's essay "The Origin of the Work of Art," and Derrida's aligning view with Heidegger that "truth is not truth."

The last section of this chapter (section "f. Analytics of thought in Derrida's essay 'The *Retrait* of Metaphor") revises the proposed schematic understanding of Derrida's notion of supplementarity, as a critical framework, and questions the implications of Derrida's notion of the *Riss*, with regard to the distinction between saying and speaking.

## 2. The scope of Derrida's thought in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor"

The essay, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," is a lecture translated by the editors of the journal *Enclitic*<sup>447</sup> and originally "read on June 1, 1978, at the University of Geneva during a Colloquium ("Philosophy and Metaphor") in which Roger Dragonetti, André de Muralt and Paul Ricoeur also participated."<sup>448</sup>

As a matter of style, the work under consideration hews closely to Derrida's other works, marked by an apparent acknowledgment of and play with the incapacity to mean precisely, the result of semantic deflection and linguistic inability to capture ontological circumstances, and combined with an abundance of sources and some disquiet towards Paul Ricoeur, in the instance of "The *Retrait* of Metaphor."

In effect, the essay constitutes a response to Ricoeur's critique of Derrida in *The Rule of Metaphor*, beginning with stark characterization of Derrida's basis on Hegel:

Derrida bases his work here on a particularly eloquent text in Hegel's *Aesthetics*.<sup>449</sup> It begins by stating that philosophical concepts are initially sensible meanings transposed (*übertragen*) to the spiritual order; and it adds that the establishment of a properly (*eigentlich*) abstract meaning is bound up with the effacement of what is metaphorical in the initial meaning and thus with the disappearance of this meaning, which, once proper, has become improper. Now, Hegel employs the term *Aufhebung* to describe this 'raising' of sensible and worn away meaning into the spiritual meaning, which has become the proper expression. Where Hegel saw an innovation of meaning, Derrida sees only the wearing away of metaphor and a drift towards idealization resulting from the dissimulation of this metaphorical origin.<sup>450</sup>

Ricoeur then goes on to cite Derrida:

The movement of metaphorization (the origin and then the effacing of the metaphor, the passing from the proper sensible meaning to a proper spiritual meaning through a figurative detour) is nothing but a movement of idealization.<sup>451452</sup>

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<sup>447</sup> Derrida, Jacques. "The *Retrait* of Metaphor." Trans. Frieda Gardner, Biodun Iginla, Richard Madden, and William West. *Enclitic*. Vol. II, no. 2, Fall 1978. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1978.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid. This is an aspect of the dissertation in which I have yet to make a denotative determination; it kind of got lost in the shuffle towards submission.

<sup>449</sup> Ricoeur cites "Hegel, *The Philosophy of Fine Arts* 2: 139-140 quoted in *ibid.* 24-5."

<sup>450</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 286.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid.

<sup>452</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 226 in the section "*Plus de métaphore*."

And Ricoeur summarizes Derrida's essay with this:

We must understand that here it is not a question of the genesis of empirical concepts but of the primary philosophemes, those that define the field of metaphysics: *theoria, eidos, logos*, etc. The thesis can be stated as follows: wherever metaphor fades, there the metaphysical concept rises up. We find a text from Nietzsche here to the effect that 'truths are illusions...' ["On truth and falsity in their ultra-moral sense"]... The final product of this effectiveness of worn-out metaphor, which is thus replaced by the production of a concept that erases its trace, is that discourse on metaphor is itself infected by the universal metaphoricity of philosophical discourse. In this regard, one can speak of a paradox of the auto-implication of metaphor. The paradox is this: there is no discourse on metaphor that is not stated within a metaphorically engendered conceptual network.<sup>453</sup>

Derrida would seem to confirm this view of his remarks in "White Mythology," in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," arguing that

... even if I had decided to no longer speak metaphorically about metaphor, I would not achieve it, it would continue to go on without me in order to make me speak, to ventriloquize me, metaphorize me. Other ways of saying, other ways of responding to, rather, my first questions. [What is happening, today, with metaphor? And without metaphor what is happening?] What is happening *with* metaphor? Well, everything: there is nothing that does not happen with metaphor and by metaphor. Any statement concerning anything that happens, metaphor included, will be produced *not without* metaphor. There will not have been a meta-metaphorics consistent enough to dominate all its statements.<sup>454</sup>

Derrida is consistent in the style of his writing insofar as he is at his most lucid in the summary conclusions to his essays. In the case of "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," Derrida remarks that "Withdrawal [retrait] is no more proper or literal than figurative," but it is clarifying to undertake a commenting on Derrida's reasoning. It is therefore helpful to outline and restate the arguments in clarity. It may be that Derrida's engagement with the experience of metaphor produces a poetics in reaction, what discourse that is generally spoken as a matter of reference about the experience of being - to move from Ricoeur's thought on the topic. What follows in the next sections, therefore, is an outline of Derrida's arguments in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor."

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<sup>453</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 286-7.

<sup>454</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 8.

b. Metaphor and the event of rhetoric

Questions:

"What is happening, today, with metaphor?"

And without metaphor what is happening?"

As a matter of observation, there are several points to make about Derrida's initial questions. The first is that the questions concern metaphor, and the speculative position that there is no metaphor. This is moreover couched in terms of a temporal attitude - what does the "today" refer to in the first question? Derrida indicates, in his first paragraphs of the essay, that the "today" is significant to the distinction between ancient and classical and modern understandings of metaphor - that is, metaphor exists as a philosophical concept through distinct readings and sustained philosophical discourses.

Derrida then dissembles for a while, alluding to philosophical positions that metaphor may take, as a matter of concept: *Übertragung*; *Übersetzung*; inhabitation; circulation; transportation; the critical diegesis that rhetorical study indicates, as with the speaker, the listener, those people by whose circumstances exist within an economy that lends room for tenors and vehicles to define the discursive contours of the rhetorical event.

1. Derrida clarifies himself, that he is

trying to speak *about* metaphor, to say something proper and literal on this subject, to *treat* it as my subject, but through metaphor (if one may say so) I am obliged to speak of it *more metaphorico*, to it in its own manner. I cannot *treat it (en traïter)* without *dealing with it (sans traïter avec elle)*, without negotiation with it the loan I take from it in order to speak of it. I do not succeed in producing a *treatise (un traité)* on metaphor which is not *treated with (traïté avec)* metaphor which suddenly appears *intractable (intraïtable)*.<sup>455</sup>

There is, with this, the theme to Derrida's essay, articulated in the title as *Retrait* and which Derrida plays with, as a matter of rhetorical work against what he identifies as his semantic "drifting or skidding," in the previous paragraph.

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<sup>455</sup> Ibid., 7.

2. Derrida states of his play that it is a drama in which he is made to speak, to be ventriloquized, and metaphorized, that is, as a metaphor of semantics in which the concept of metaphor dispenses with a kind of agency through the interlocutor of himself.

3. "... there is nothing that does not happen with metaphor and by metaphor." Everything that is articulated, as a matter of signification,<sup>456</sup> occurs through the winnowing grind of language metaphorizing. Derrida continues:

And what gets along *without* metaphor? Nothing, therefore, and rather it should be said that metaphor gets along without anything else, here without me, at the very moment when it appears to pass through me. But if it gets by without everything that does not happen without it, maybe in a bizarre sense it does without itself, it no longer has a name, a literal and proper meaning, which could begin to render the double figure of my title readable to you: in its withdrawal (*retrait*), one should say in its withdrawals, metaphor perhaps retires, withdraws from the world scene, withdrawing from it at the moment of its most invasive extension, at the instant it overflows every limit. Its withdrawal would then have the paradoxical form of an indiscreet and overflowing insistence, of an overabundant remanence, of an intrusive repetition, always marking with a supplementary trait, with one more turn, with a re-turn and with a *withdrawal (retrait)* the trait that it will have left in the text itself.<sup>457</sup>

There is the distinction, therefore, between the effect of metaphor - the metaphor that "drifts and skids" semantic deflections of sense - and the process of metaphor, the imbued state of understanding that by necessity articulates through the metaphorizing linguistics of discourse. By this analysis, the metaphor that is understood is the effect of a process by which a conceptualizing *treatment*, a line of thought not unreminiscent of Heidegger's path along which thought leaps, the action by which articulation is informed and by which articulation moves a semantic understanding - forwards, or sideways, or backwards, (not temporally) skidded or drifted from its originary place; it doesn't seem to matter to where, so long as the idea of forwards is dispensed with as a matter of teleological progress.

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<sup>456</sup> Reading Heidegger's *Being and Time*, §34 "Da-sein and Discourse: Language": "The existential-ontological foundation of language is discourse... Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with attunement and understanding... What is articulated in discoursing articulation as such, we call the totality of significations. This totality can be dissolved into significations."

<sup>457</sup> Derrida, "*Retrait* of Metaphor," 8.

The theme that Derrida is working with, then, is that of *retrait*, or withdrawal, which is ascribed to the process of metaphorization, and which indicates that the turn by which the conceptual is made to be an idea set before one's eyes (to describe it as Aristotle may) is a process that obscures itself as a process through the very semantic articulation that is expressed - that is, metaphors.

4. Derrida provides a couple of clarifying notes:

a. There is no possibility of escape from metaphor; metaphor is the hinge on which human reckoning may occur;

b. That "Metaphor is a very old subject" indicates first that the topic is and has always been a matter of philosophical contention; and that the matter of the topic, the "subject," as Derrida indicates, is a subject whose examples are looked beyond (that is, the articulation of metaphors) in order to examine the predicates to metaphorization.

c. Derrida goes on to state that he says "old" for two reasons:

1. Out of "astonishment" that we are still speaking of metaphor; we speak about metaphor as a matter of contemporary intellectual contention, and we have spoken about metaphor in terms of a "historical preoccupation," that is, contemporary intellectual contention is nothing new vis-à-vis metaphor. Derrida then makes reference to Aristotle's delineation of types of metaphor in the Poetics and his citation of the Odyssey in the example of the fourth type, genus to species ("Here stands my ship"), and his (Derrida's) desire to end the categorical debate about metaphor.<sup>458</sup>

2. Derrida returns to the theme of "White Mythology," the "wearing away" of semantic value and impertinence of expression, in the invention, or conceptual expansion, of thought vis-à-vis the *use* of metaphor, its tactile employment towards a manner of thinking-new. Derrida concludes that "Metaphor is perhaps not only a subject worn to the bone, it is a subject which will be kept in an essential relation to *us*, or to *usance* (*usance* being an old word, a word out of use today, whose polysemy would merit a whole analysis in itself)."<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> Aristotle, Poetics, 1457b, in reference to Homer, Odyssey, 1.185.

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

5. Derrida introduces his *traits* at the same moment that he turns to Heidegger, for Derrida a "line (*trait*) delimiting a contour"; Derrida is preoccupied with the significances of words. Derrida is writing in response to Ricoeur's critique of Derrida, towards an examination of discourse, and Derrida remains preoccupied with the conceptual possibilities that are opened at the semantic level.

a. Apart from the turn towards Heidegger, and an introductory elaboration of *traits*, and the passing allusion to "the trait as a tracing incision (*entame*) of language," which will become a predominantly dwelled-upon semantics in his conclusions, Derrida begins his response to Ricoeur via Der Satz vom Grund and Unterwegs zur Sprache.<sup>460</sup>

b. It is worth noting this, as a matter of clarification vis-à-vis Ricoeur's contention as to discursive bases: In On the way to language there is this passage, in the section "A dialogue on language," between Martin Heidegger (noted as "Inquirer") and someone else, unremarked upon except that he (presumably he) is Japanese (noted as "a Japanese"):

J: What we are now saying - forgive the "we" - can no longer be discussed on the strength of the metaphysical notion of language. Presumably this is why you tried to suggest that you were turning away from that notion by giving your lecture course the title "Expression and Appearance."

I: The entire course remained a suggestion. I never did more than follow a faint trail, but follow it I did. The trail was an almost imperceptible promise announcing that we would be set free into the open, now dark and perplexing, now again lightning-spark like a sudden insight, which then, in turn, eluded every effort to say it.

J: Later, too, in *Being and Time*, your discussion of language remains quite sparse.

I: Even so, after our dialogue you may want to read Section 34 in *Being and Time* more closely.

J: I have read it many times, and each time regretted that you kept it so short. But I believe that now I see more clearly the full import of the fact that hermeneutics and language belong together.

I: The full import in what direction?

J: Toward a transformation of thinking - a transformation which, however, cannot be established as readily as a ship can alter its course, and even less can be established as the consequence of an accumulation of the results of philosophical research.

I: The transformation occurs as a passage ...

J: ... in which one site is left behind in favor of another ...

I: ... and that requires that the sites be placed in discussion.

J: One site is metaphysics.

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<sup>460</sup> Ibid., 10.



I: And the other? We leave it without a name.<sup>461</sup>

And there is this definitional stance that Heidegger stakes in § 34 of Being and Time, "Da-sein and Discourse: Language":

The fundamental existentials which constitute the being of the there, the disclosedness of being-in-the-world, are attunement and understanding. Understanding harbors in itself the possibility of interpretation, that is, the appropriation of what is understood. To the extent that attunement is equiprimordial with understanding, it maintains itself in a certain understanding. A certain possibility of interpretation belongs to it... *The existential-ontological foundation of language is discourse... Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with attunement and understanding.* Intelligibility is also always already articulated before its appropriative interpretation. Discourse is the articulation of intelligibility. Thus it already lies at the basis of interpretation and statement. We called what can be articulated in interpretation, and thus more primordially in speech, meaning. What is articulated in discoursing articulation as such, we call the totality of significations. This totality can be dissolved into significations.<sup>462</sup>

It should be clear from the import of the two citations that their length and subsequent inclusion in the present reading of Derrida's article are necessary in elaborating a basic understanding of "The *Retrait* of Metaphor."

Of the citation from On the Way to Language, there is first the question of the definitional stance that Heidegger takes in Being and Time, that "The existential-ontological foundation of language is discourse." That is, language pertains to discourse; language is an articulation of discourse, that is itself the articulation of meaning and *equiprimordial* with attunement and understanding. Attunement is defined in § 29 ("Da-sein as Attunement") as "*ontically* what is most familiar and an everyday kind of thing: mood, being in a mood ... Mood makes manifest 'how one is and is coming along.' In this 'how one is' being in a mood brings being to its 'there.'"<sup>463</sup> Attunement is the manner in which perspective is oriented; attunement is the cast by which understanding and discourse take their shape.

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<sup>461</sup> Heidegger, Martin. On the Way to Language. Trans. Peter D. Hertz. New York: Harper Collins, 1982. 41-2.

<sup>462</sup> Heidegger, Being and Time, 150.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-7.

Heidegger goes on, in § 31 ("Da-sein as Understanding"), that "Attunement always has its understanding, even if only by suppressing it. Understanding is always attuned."<sup>464</sup> Where "Da-sein is a being that does not simply occur among other beings [but] is ontically distinguished by the fact that in its being this being is concerned *about* its very being," that "*Understanding of being is itself a determination of being of Da-sein* [Heidegger's footnote: But in this case being not only as the being of human being (Existenz). That becomes clear from the following. Being-in-the-world includes *in itself* the relation of existence to being in the whole: the understanding of being.],"<sup>465</sup> and consequent to this, that "Da-sein is always what it can be and how it is its possibility."<sup>466</sup>

There are a lot of new things to contend with, in the inclusion of Heidegger's Being and Time in the reading of Derrida's "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," but in a sense this is necessitated by Derrida's reference to Der Satz vom Grund, and the oblique (and soon explicit) reference to Heidegger's statement that "The metaphorical exists only within metaphysics," and Derrida's characterization of Unterwegs zur Sprache "where [Heidegger] seems to take a position with respect to metaphor - or more precisely with respect to the rhetorico-metaphysical concept of metaphor - , and still he does so as if in passing, briefly, laterally, in a context where metaphor does not occupy the center."<sup>467</sup> Derrida does not elaborate on § 34 of Being and Time, and thus ignores Heidegger's admonition, in the framing dialogue to On the Way to Language, to read it again.<sup>468</sup>

c. Derrida then turns to Ricoeur's critique of "White Mythology" in The Rule of Metaphor, with the snippy and unclear distinction that Ricoeur "'discusses' - the word is [Ricoeur's]" Heidegger's statement [*Das Metaphorische gibt es nur innerhalb der Metaphysik*]. Derrida offers three rationale for

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<sup>464</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>465</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>467</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 10.

<sup>468</sup> It is useful to read Heidegger's admonition in On the Way to Language, to remind oneself of Heidegger's definitional stance in § 34 of Being and Time, and it is easy to overlook Derrida not turning to § 34 of Being and Time, because the language of Heidegger tilts towards forgettable.

his note in "White Mythology" that point to Heidegger's The Principle of Reason.<sup>469</sup> The first rationale is simply the identification of the note and its citational basis; the second rationale, which Derrida calls a "second contextual trait," "is called for by a development concerning *us* (the usual, usage, wear and tear or usury) and the recourse to this *us*-value in the dominant philosophical interpretation of metaphor."<sup>470</sup> The "development" to which Derrida refers is this: "The traditional development between living and dead metaphors corresponds to the difference between effective and extinct metaphors."<sup>471</sup> Derrida goes on to state that

the movement of metaphorization (origin and then erasure of the metaphor, transition from the proper sensory meaning to the proper spiritual meaning by means of the detour of figures) is nothing other than a movement of idealization. Which is included under the master category of dialectical idealism, to wit, the *relève* (*Aufhebung*), that is, the memory (*Erinnerung*) that produces signs, interiorizes them in elevating, suppressing, and conserving the sensory exterior. And in order to think and resolve them, this framework sets to work the oppositions nature/spirit, nature/history, or nature/freedom, which are linked by genealogy to the opposition of *physis* to its others, and by the same token to the oppositions sensual/spiritual, sensible/intelligible, sensory/sense (*sinnlich/Sinn*). Nowhere is this system as explicit as it is in Hegel. It describes the space of the possibility of metaphysics, and the concept of metaphor thus defined belongs to it.<sup>472</sup>

It is worth citing Hegel from The Science of Logic, in "The Doctrine of Being," as a matter of definitional placement, on becoming, as the

equilibrium of coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be ... Being and nothing are in this unity only as vanishing moments; yet becoming as such *is* only through their distinguishedness. Their vanishing, therefore, is the vanishing of becoming or the vanishing of the vanishing itself. Becoming is an unstable unrest which settles into a stable result. This could also be expressed thus: becoming is the vanishing of being in nothing and of nothing in being and the vanishing of being and nothing generally; but at the same time it rests on a distinction between them.<sup>473</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> In Alan Bass' translation, in Margins of Philosophy, this is footnote 29 on page 226. This is a long footnote and consists almost entirely of an extended citation of Heidegger's The Principle of Reason, from lecture 6.

<sup>470</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 11.

<sup>471</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 225-6. Derrida cites T. Spöerrie's study "La puissance métaphorique de Descartes," *Coloqne Philosophique de Royaumont* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1957), and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *Traité de l'argumentation* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958).

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

<sup>473</sup> Hegel, GWF. "Science of Logic: Doctrine of Being." The Hegel Reader. Ed. Stephen Houlgate. Trans.? Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998; 193-4.

Hegel understands the distinction produced between coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be as becoming, and the process for such is the unity of "stable oneness," "as being," in "the expression 'To Sublate' [Aufheben]." Hegel defines *Aufheben* like this:

*To sublata*, and the *sublated* (that which exists ideally as a moment), constitute one of the most important notions in philosophy. It is a fundamental determination which repeatedly occurs throughout the whole of philosophy, the meaning of which is to be clearly grasped and especially distinguished from *nothing*. What is sublata is not thereby reduced to nothing. Nothing is *immediate*; what is sublated, on the other hand, is the result of *mediation*; it is a non-being but as a *result* which had its origin in a being. It still has, therefore, *in itself* the *determinateness from which it originates*. 'To sublata' has a twofold meaning in the language: on the one hand it means to preserve, to maintain, and equally it also means to cause to cease, to put an end to.<sup>474</sup>

It is easy to see the parallels that can be drawn between Hegel's thought on *Aufhebung*, and the conceptualization - the idealization - of the sensory into the extrasensory. This is, after all, the definition that Heidegger offers more broadly in lecture 6 of The Principle of Reason for the concept of metaphysics: "The setting up of this partition between the sensible and the nonsensible, between the physical and the nonphysical is a basic trait of what is called metaphysics and which normatively determines Western thinking."<sup>475</sup>

It is useful to see this chain of reasoning laid out and explicitly stated, because explicitly stating things is something that Derrida leaves it to the reader to do for him or herself. Derrida's third contextual trait concerns the citation in footnote of Heidegger's statement, cited in abbreviated form above. Derrida then cites Ricoeur's introduction to his discussion of "White Mythology," from the introduction to the five sections of Ricoeur's eighth study, and the third section in particular (pages 258-59 of The Rule of Metaphor), in which Ricoeur lays out the "inverse" conception of metaphor as articulated by Heidegger and described by Derrida. Derrida does not cite the important part of Ricoeur's claim: that in reading Derrida against Heidegger he

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<sup>474</sup> Ibid.

<sup>475</sup> Heidegger, Principle of Reason, 48.

hope[s] to show that the problematic of the dead metaphor [as above cited material: metaphor that is not declared but hidden in the 'elevation' of the concept that is expressed as such," that is, metaphor situated within the speculative] is derivative, and that the required response is to climb back up the slope of this sort of entropy of language by means of a new act of discourse. Only revivifying the semantic aim of metaphorical utterance in this way can recreate the conditions that will permit a confrontation that is itself enlivening between the modes of discourse fully recognized in their difference.<sup>476</sup>

What should be obvious about Ricoeur's readings of Heidegger and Derrida is that it is in service to the notions that Ricoeur articulates between speculative discourse and poetic discourse, vis-à-vis the development of his postulates of reference. Derrida seems more than anything to be miffed that Ricoeur does not follow him more closely, and instead reads "White Mythology" towards his own purposes in the articulated descriptions of the speculative and poetic, and Derrida places the burden for this in his understanding that Ricoeur "seems... to have neglected the place and scope of this Note [footnote 29, page 226, Margins of Philosophy] in his discussion." This doesn't seem to have been Ricoeur's point, though. Nevertheless, Derrida reiterates the importance of Heidegger from lecture 6 in The Principle of Reason as per the elaboration of Ricoeur's reading. Helpfully, Derrida limits his elaboration of Ricoeur to "two of the most general lines (*traits*) which steer all of Ricoeur's reading."<sup>477</sup>

It's unclear whether Derrida cares about Ricoeur's use of "White Mythology," towards the elaboration of the postulates of reference the poetic and speculative discourse; but it is apparent that Derrida is concerned that Ricoeur has misread him. In fairness to Derrida, his project is not the examination of metaphor per se but the use of metaphor and its philosophical examination towards an understanding of the network of significances in which humans reside and by which may be seen the patterns to which a person responds in speech, appropriating and using towards the articulation of a world view. But this is a methodology towards local purposes, e.g., with cultural studies, perhaps.

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<sup>476</sup> Ricoeur, Rule of Metaphor, 259.

<sup>477</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 12.

In any event, Derrida lists "two of the most general lines (*traits*) which steer all of Ricoeur's reading in order to resituate the place of a possible debate, rather than re-open it, still less to close it."<sup>478</sup> Derrida's concern is evidently that Ricoeur better understand him, rather than that Derrida understand Ricoeur. Thus follows a passage that strains rolling eyes, in which the two "traits" are followed.

In the first, Ricoeur is accused of accusing Derrida of Heideggerianism: "Ricoeur inscribes his entire reading of 'White Mythology' in dependence on his reading of Heidegger and on this 'saying,' as if I had attempted no more than an extension or a *continuous* radicalization of the Heideggerian movement."<sup>479</sup> Derrida then states that he expresses a "clear and unequivocal reservation" about the place in which Heidegger situates metaphor - that is, sandwiched in the metaphysical. Derrida's claim is true, but in disproportion to his sense of aggrievement for being misunderstood. Derrida calls it a "reservation." This is what he states before a lengthy citation of Heidegger: "This explains<sup>480</sup> the distrust that the concept of metaphor inspires in Heidegger. In *Der Satz vom Grund* he insists above all on the opposition sensory/nonsensory, an important, but neither the only, nor the first, not the most determining characteristic of the value of metaphor."<sup>481</sup> Derrida asks in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor": "Is not this reservation clear enough to exclude, on this point in any case, both the "common theoretical core" (not to mention that here, for essential reasons, there is no core and especially no theoretical core) and the complicity between the two couples in question?"<sup>482</sup>

The footnote that Derrida points to only distinguishes his position as being in relation to Heidegger - which is exactly how Ricoeur treats Derrida's conversation with Heidegger, because this is the entire methodology and philosophical practice of Ricoeur in The Rule of Metaphor: To examine a topic, and a problematic within a topic, by placing two thinkers in conversation with one another, thereby distinguishing positions, and perspectives on such. Ricoeur is, in this respect, ruthlessly academic.

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<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid.

<sup>480</sup> As commentary to this statement: "Nowhere is this system [sensual/spiritual, etc.] as explicit as it is in Hegel. It describes the space of the possibility of metaphysics, and the concept of metaphor thus defined belongs to it."

<sup>481</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 226.

<sup>482</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 13.

The second "trait" that Derrida disputes is Ricoeur's characterization of Derrida's "two assertions in the tight fabric of Derrida's demonstration," that is, "The first has to do with the efficacy of worn-out metaphor in philosophical discourse, and the second with the deep-seated unity of metaphorical and analogical transfer of visible being to intelligible being."<sup>483</sup> Derrida dispenses with the second assertion as equivalent to the complaint he raises in the first "trait," namely, adherence to Heidegger's metaphysical divisions. As to the first, Derrida clarifies that the *usure* or metaphor "does not correspond to some manipulative or triumphant perversity on my part, but to the intractable structure in which we are implicated and deflected from the outset."<sup>484</sup> This is another way of speaking to his conclusions from "White Mythology," such that "Metaphor, therefore, is determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular appropriation of literal, proper meaning."<sup>485</sup> This is fine; this is about as clear and concise as Derrida gets in explaining his position, but it is, as Ricoeur describes, a "demonstration" that Derrida himself concedes, petulantly, in stating further that "it is to the extent that I subscribe to this proposition ["the lexicalization of metaphor by Le Guern"] that I am not in agreement with Ricoeur when he attributes statements to me in order to contest them with statements which I had begun by putting into question myself. I did so constantly in 'White Mythology.'"<sup>486</sup> Derrida's prose is a definitional practice of eliding his point.

Derrida then cites "White Mythology" from "It was also necessary to subject this value of wear and tear to interpretation..."<sup>487</sup> This citation of his essay is the third point in the "Exergue," to the effect of an explanation for the relevance of France's The Garden of Epicurus in the larger question of metaphor, and specifically as to the theoretical framework that Derrida adopts for the essay vis-à-vis *usure*. The point in this is as a description of the metaphysical linkages to the concept of metaphor, to the end that the

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<sup>483</sup> Ricoeur, *Rule of Metaphor*, 285.

<sup>484</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 13.

<sup>485</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 270.

<sup>486</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor, 13-4.

<sup>487</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 215-16.

"concept of wear and tear... no doubt does not belong to a narrow historico-theoretical configuration, but most certainly to the concept of metaphor itself and to the long metaphysical sequence which it determines or which determines it."<sup>488</sup>

Derrida says of this citation of himself that "The expression 'long metaphysical sequence' well indicates that for me it was not a question of taking 'metaphysics' ("*la*" *métaphysique*) as the homogenous unity of an ensemble. I have never believed in the existence or in the consistency of something like metaphysics *itself* (*la métaphysique*)."<sup>489</sup> The difficulty that Derrida is pointing to counters what he understands as Ricoeur's critique of Derrida's position on the question of metaphysics - a position of Ricoeur that Derrida characterizes as holding him (Derrida) adherent to a straightforward understanding of metaphysics in which, according to Derrida, "Representation of a linear and circular closure surrounding a homogenous space is [not]. precisely, the theme of my greatest emphasis."<sup>490</sup> In other words, Derrida accuses Ricoeur of accusing him of not understanding that the world as a matter of representation is not neatly and homogeneously traversed between the limits of the sensible and the non-sensible.

Derrida then cites his essay "White Mythology" again, that "Each time a rhetoric defines metaphor, it implies not only *a* philosophy but a conceptual network within which philosophy as such constitutes itself," and then pulls from the citation his concern for "the privilege of the name," and that he (Derrida), "like Paul Ricoeur, [has] constantly... put in question the privilege of the name and the work, like all those 'semiotic conceptions which,' Ricoeur says precisely, 'impose the primacy of denomination."<sup>491</sup>

Derrida's concern with Ricoeur's critique seems to be pedantic fault-finding. It is certainly true that, in the passage from "White Mythology" cited by Derrida (himself), the "privilege of the name" is called into question, but the use to which Ricoeur puts such a privilege is as a grounding matter for the

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<sup>488</sup> Ibid.

<sup>489</sup> Derrida, "*Retrait* of Metaphor," 14.

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> Derrida, "*Retrait* of Metaphor," 15.



elaboration between the manners of discourse (re: poetic, speculative), in terms of language, specifically, semantics. The use to which Derrida puts such a "privilege" has been to call into question the assuredness of specificity; that is, the privilege of the name is one that confers a provisional order of semantic magnitude, towards the semantic deferral that a constant shift of grounded meaning that is implied as a matter of philosophy and as a matter of obvious semantic observation.

And before Derrida will let Ricoeur go, Derrida cites "White Mythology" one last time in order to make a critique of Ricoeur's critique: "To say, as Ricoeur does, that 'White Mythology' makes death or dead metaphor its watchword is to abuse that text by marking it with what it clearly marks itself off from, for example, by saying that there are two deaths or two auto-destructions of metaphor (and when there are two deaths, the problem of death *itself* is infinitely complicated)."<sup>492</sup> Derrida then refers to his final example, from his own text, "to be done with this apparent *pro domo*," as a gesture of self-awareness that he is defending himself with his own words and ideas.

This whole section of the essay, in which Derrida defends himself against Ricoeur's critique, demonstrates itself as being interested not so much in understanding Ricoeur's final position in The Rule of Metaphor, vis-à-vis poetic and speculative discourse, and is instead interested in asserting the primacy of his own philosophical position, as to what he refers to, and identifies of Ricoeur's text, as "to the difference between effective and extinct metaphors [that] corresponds the traditional opposition between living metaphors and dead metaphors."<sup>493</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> Ibid.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid., 15.

c. Watchwords towards metaphysical encapsulation

There should be a decisive break, at this point, in my reading, which reflects Derrida's break in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," between the predication to the scheme of his thought and the response to Ricoeur, with his larger concern.

Referring to "Ricoeur's watchword, the 'intersection,'" as a manner of tropical redirection, Derrida comes "to the promised Note on a Note," that is, to the question of metaphor and metaphysics, and the note concerning Heidegger's statement, "The metaphorical exists only within metaphysics./*Das Metaphorische gibt es nur innerhalb der Metaphysik.*"

Derrida begins by stating that his concern is primarily one of economy. There are several aspects of this that he elaborates, not least of which and in repetition is the hint that he is under duress to state in fullest clarity and in undue brevity what he would like to state. Regardless, and in reference to Heidegger's "Der Weg zur Sprache" from Unterwegs zur Sprache ("The Way to Language" from On the Way to Language), Derrida predicates the question of the withdrawal of metaphor with four brief notes on economy: that (and according to Derrida's orthographical "algebraism" (Derrida states that he "names [his points about economy] algebraically")):

1. Economy as to "tropical system (*tropique*) of *usure*," as per the circulatory usage of metaphor according to social custom;

2. Economy as to "*oiko-nomia*," citing Du Marsais [Des Tropes, chapter 10]"in citation of his metaphoric definition of metaphor," that the proper meaning that metaphor designates is one of being borrowed, as per an economy of privilege;

3. Economy vis-à-vis *ereignis*, in citation of Heidegger, and the matter of appropriation;

4. Economy as to "determinations of passage or of fraying," by which means significance is transferred from one semantic indicator to another.

The question, then, is "Why withdrawal and why withdrawal of metaphor?"

Before he begins his explanation, however, Derrida distinguishes between and draws equivalences among the common reference to the mother language, that is, and with reference to

Heidegger's essay "Sprache und Heimat" (*Hebbel-Jahrbuch*, 1960, pp. 27-50) that he (Derrida) dismisses as "lend[ing] itself poorly to the acceleration of a colloquium," (which is to say, the exposition of unnecessary remarks for the purposes of demonstrating erudition, and in larding the point), Heidegger says that "Dialect is not only the language of the mother, but is at the same time and firstly the mother of language." (p. 28) Derrida does nothing with this observation before he turns to "the father," who "would be tempted to occupy the place of form, of formal language." Again, it is unclear what Derrida's purpose is in gendering language and form, but he makes the interesting remark immediately following that "the place of form... is untenable, and he [the father?] can therefore only *attempt* to occupy it, only speaking in this measure the father's language, for form's sake."<sup>494</sup> This is how Derrida describes the "impossible project that Heidegger would be designating in the beginning of 'Das Wesen der Sprache' under the name of 'metalanguage,' (*Metasprache, Übersprache, Metalinguistik*) or Metaphysics."<sup>495</sup>

To turn briefly to Heidegger's essay "The Nature of Language," the concern that Heidegger faces at the beginning of the essay is that of experience, and of experience with language, stating succinctly that "To undergo an experience with language, then, means to let ourselves be properly concerned by the claim of language by entering into and submitting to it."<sup>496</sup>

Heidegger defines experience at the beginning of the essay as "mean[ing] that [...] something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us."<sup>497</sup> Later, Heidegger defines experience as "mean[ing] *eundo assequi*, to obtain something along the way, to attain something by going on a way."<sup>498</sup> This is in regard, therefore, to a relation with language, in which the experience of language is one in which it is used towards our own purposes at the same moment that it moves through and affects the person, that is, an experience with language is its use in combination with its effect on the person. It is moreover that the expression of experience is dependent on what, in relation to a person, is the foundation

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<sup>494</sup> Derrida, "Retrait of Metaphor," 18.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

<sup>496</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 57.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid., 66.

for a person's experience with language, and that of this, and "to put into language something which has never yet been broken, then everything depends on whether language gives or withholds the appropriate word. Such is the case of the poet."<sup>499</sup> There follows on this a reading of Stefan George's poem "The Word," a poem that recounts the affecting experience of language, in which language is put to use towards the realization, in the last line, that "Where word breaks off no thing may be."<sup>500</sup>

After much examination, including some meditation on the French and German *il y a* and *es gibt*, as the positing of substance through language, Heidegger argues this towards the end of the essay:

To say means to show, to make appear, the lighting-concealing-releasing offer of world. Now, nearness manifests itself as the motion in which the world's regions face each other... Language, Saying of the world's fourfold, is no longer only such that we speaking human beings are related to it in the sense of a nexus existing between man and language. Language is, as world-moving Saying, the relation of all relations. It relates, maintains, proffers, and enriches the face-to-face encounter of the world's regions, holds and keeps them, in that it holds itself - Saying - in reserve.<sup>501</sup>

What this means is that language is the basis by which the analogy of being is made manifest before the eyes, that all parts of the world of experience are in some manner relatable within the codifices of language, of Saying, as Heidegger puts it. This sheds some light on his statement, therefore, that "The metaphorical exists entirely within the metaphysical," if that the metaphysical is the articulation of the representation of the sensible, the form that is given to what is experienced as unarticulated form in relation with other and unarticulated form. And it is through language, in Saying, and with regard to and in the experience of language, that is, giving form to the sensible, the *es gibt* of relations' articulation, that simultaneously grounds and defines grounds for such articulation. Heidegger describes this as poetic experience: "the poetic experience with the word. The word - no thing, nothing that is, no being; but we have an understanding of things when the word for them is available. Then the thing 'is.' ... What the

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<sup>499</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>500</sup> Stefan George, "The Word."

<sup>501</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 107.

poetic experience with language says of the word implies the relation between the 'is' which itself is not, and the word which is in the same case of not being a being."<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>502</sup> Ibid., 87.

d. Two traits on metaphor

The second-to-last section of Derrida's essay concerns what he calls "the testing of such a transfer" as the "transformative capture... of a language, discourse, and text by another language, another discourse, and another text which can at once (as will be the case here) violate in the same gesture their proper mother tongue at the moment of importing to it and exporting from it the maximum of energy and of information."<sup>503</sup>

Derrida's scheme follows like this:

First trait, on metaphor, Heidegger, and the definition of such

1. Heidegger and metaphysics, the withdrawal of Being
2. Exceeding metaphysical discourse

Provisional conclusion 1, on *retrait*, the elusion of Being in being posited by language

Provisional conclusion 2, such elusion (withdrawal, *retrait*) demonstrates an uncertainty of position, and meaning

Second trait, on the relationship between "Heidegger's statements on the so-called metaphysical concept of metaphor, and... his own text insofar as it appears more 'metaphoric' or *quasi*-metaphoric than ever," and an examination of the continuity between these ideas.

Third trait, on the word *trait*, that is, line, way, path, etc.

1. Examination of the *trait* in terms of Heidegger's ideas on neighborliness
2. Examination of incision, regarding poetry and thinking<sup>504</sup> and *signum*, *secare*, to cut, as in, "To design is to cut a trace."<sup>505</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> Derrida, "*Retrait* of Metaphor," 19.

<sup>504</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 84, 101-6; "The Way to Language," 121.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

3. Touching on *ereignis*, Appropriation, insofar as Heidegger is concerned with Appropriation vis-à-vis language to the effect that "*The moving force in Showing of Saying is Owning*."<sup>506</sup>

Conclusion to Derrida's essay: "The trait is therefore nothing."

As to the first trait, on metaphor, Heidegger, and the definition of such in relation to metaphysics: Besides the repeated statement from Heidegger in The Principle of Reason, that "*Das Metaphorische gibt es nur innerhalb der Metaphysik*," Derrida cites Heidegger in "The Nature of Language": "*Wir blieben in der Metaphysik hängen, wollten wir dieses Nennen Hölderlins in der Wendung 'Worte wie Blumen' für eine Metaphor halten*," which the editors of *Enclitic* translate as: "We would remain suspended in metaphysics if we wished to take Hölderlin's nomination of the turn of phrase, 'words like flowers,' for a metaphor."<sup>507</sup> Peter Hertz translates this as: "It would mean that we stay bogged down in metaphysics if we were to take the name Hölderlin gives here to 'words, like flowers' as being a metaphor."<sup>508</sup>

Characteristically, Derrida does not comment on the poem itself, for the sake of clarity, or even mention, as Heidegger does, that the lines that Heidegger refers to come "at the end of the fifth stanza of the elegy 'Bread and Wine':

Such is man; when the wealth is there, and no  
less than a god in  
Person tends him with gifts, blind he remains, unaware.  
First he must suffer; but now he names his most treasured possession,  
Now for it words like flowers leaping alive he  
must find."<sup>509 510</sup>

It is useful, for the sake of clarity, to state what Heidegger understands of these lines:

"Words, like flowers": that is not a "break in the vision" but the awakening of the largest view; nothing is "adduced" here, but on the contrary the word is given back into the keeping of the source of its being. There is no lack

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<sup>506</sup> Ibid., 127; more broadly, the discussion on Appropriation and language takes place between 125-36, at the end of the essay.

<sup>507</sup> Derrida, "*Retrait of Metaphor*," 19.

<sup>508</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 100.

<sup>509</sup> Ibid., 99-100.

<sup>510</sup> Hölderlin, "Bread and Wine."

here of a "primary statement," for here the word is brought forth from its inception; no "weakness of creative transformation" but the gentle force of the singular and innocent capacity to hear.<sup>511</sup>

Earlier in the essay, Heidegger says that "The word alone gives being to the thing," that despite the independence of the thing from the word, and the independence of the thing from the person speaking the word, the thing is brought into the manifold of the conception of being insofar as it is posited conceptually; that late, where "Experience means *eundo assequi*," the poet reaches not knowledge but rather "obtains entrance into a relation of word to thing"; that further "Thinking is not a means to gain knowledge. Thinking cuts furrows into the soil of Being"; that "In order to uncover a possibility of undergoing a thinking experience with language, let us seek out the neighborhood in which poetry and thinking dwell"; that

poetry and thinking not only move with the element of saying, they also owe their saying to manifold experiences with language, experiences which we have hardly noticed, let alone collected. Where we did notice and collect them, we did so without adequate regard for just what concerns us more and more closely in our present reflections: the neighborhood of poetry and thinking.<sup>512</sup>

Heidegger concludes, as already cited further above, that

Thus the poetic experience with the word gives us a meaningful hint. The word - no thing, nothing that is, no being; but we have an understanding of things when the word for them is available. Then the thing "is." ... What the poetic experience with language says of the word implies the relation between the "is" which itself is not, and the word which is the same case of not being a being.<sup>513</sup>

The general thrust of Heidegger's thoughts are as follows:

That thinking is the conceptualization of the world; that poetry is what comes from the poetic experience; that experience is to obtain something, to appropriate some perspective into a view; that to obtain as such is to enter "into the relation of word to thing," that the poetic experience is to enter into a relation between the word and the thing and to grant the thing the ground for such experience as concerns

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<sup>511</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 100-1.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid., 62, 66, 82, 84.

<sup>513</sup> Ibid., 87.



a view of the world, and that though the word is separate from the thing such an appellation of contingency to thought (that is, poetry in relation to thinking) posits the conceptual possibility, and thereby appropriation into view, of the thing.

Derrida is thinking about this in too-complicated terms, arguing "that the metaphoric power of the Heideggerian text is richer, more determinant than his thesis on metaphor," and that

what remains to be determined... is the meaning and necessity which link this apparently univocal, simplifying and reductive denunciation of the 'metaphysical' concept of metaphor on the one hand, and, on the other, the apparently metaphoric power of a text whose author no longer wishes that what happens in that text and what claims to get along without metaphor there be understood precisely as 'metaphoric,' nor even under any concept of metalinguistics or rhetoric.

Derrida continues:

The so-called 'metaphysical' concept of metaphor would belong to metaphysics *itself* insofar as the latter corresponds, in the epochality of its epochs, to an *epoché*, in other words, to a suspensive withdrawal of Being, to what is often translated as withdrawal, reserve, shelter, whether it is a question of *Verborgenheit* (being-hidden), or dissimulation or of veiling (*Verhüllung*). Being withholds itself, gives way, escapes itself, *withdraws* (*sich entzieht*) in this movement of withdrawal which is indissociable, according to Heidegger, from the movement of presence or of truth.<sup>514</sup>

In the instance of the first extended citation, Derrida argues that it is (as yet) indeterminate as to how the metaphoricity of metaphysics aligns with the utter metaphoricity of expression, and of the second citation Derrida concludes that the suspension of the experience between the person and the thing of the world is the moment at which the thing of the world is identified as such and within the manifold ordering of philosophical view and *apart from Being itself*, in which "Being *as* eidos," stated later, or that Being understood representationally, as the product of a metaphorical experience with the world, in which language is put towards the use of representation, separates the world from itself, vis-à-vis the *epoché* of representation, that thus the world, and Being, withdraws from view. Derrida goes on to state that "One would be then be tempted to say: the metaphysical, which corresponds in its discourse to the withdrawal of Being, tends to reassemble, in resemblance, all its metonymic divergences in a great metaphor of Being

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<sup>514</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 20.

or of the thought of Being. This bringing together is *the* language of metaphysics *itself*.<sup>515</sup> This is to say that, what is understood as Being is not, in fact, Being, insofar as Being has branched from its representation as such, according to the processes by which the metaphoric function, through the appropriation of the experience with language, imagines Being as otherwise than Being, that therefore Being withdraws, that therefore the thought of Being is Being insofar as it belongs to Being but which is not, of itself, Being, nor even towards the thrust of the totality of Being.

There follow from this line of thought two caveats that Derrida offers, the first of which is brief and states

What Heidegger calls metaphysics *itself* corresponds to a withdrawal of Being. Therefore metaphor, as a so-called metaphysical concept, corresponds to a withdrawal of Being. Metaphysical discourse, producing and containing the concept of metaphor, is itself quasi-metaphoric with respect to Being: therefore it is a metaphor englobing the narrow-restrained-strict concept of metaphor which itself therefore has only strictly metaphoric sense.<sup>516</sup>

That is, metaphysics marks an *epoché* of Being from itself, and that the function of metaphor, within such a metaphysical discourse, contains the *eidos* of such *epoché* within the manner of its own saying, that is, everything that may be spoken in description of Being is already metaphor, and therefore adherent to the constrictions of its own logic about Being, that thus Being is determinately refracted through the saying, that the representation of Being as such may reflect Being, insofar as Being may be glanced in its retreat, but that the representation is a reflection moreover of its own work.

The second caveat that Derrida offers is less brief, but not nearly as meandering as Derrida is capable of:

The so-called metaphysical discourse can only be exceeded (*debordé*), insofar as it corresponds to a withdrawal of Being, according to a withdrawal of metaphor as a metaphysical concept, according to a withdrawal of metaphysics, a withdrawal of the withdrawal of Being. But as this withdrawal of the metaphoric leaves no place free for a discourse of the proper or the literal, it will have at the same time the sense of a re-fold (*re-pli*), of what retreats like a wave on the shoreline, and of a re-turn (*re-tour*), of the overcharging repetition of a supplementary trait, of yet

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<sup>515</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid. 21-2.

another metaphor, of a double trait (*re-trait*) of metaphor, a discourse whose rhetorical border is no longer determinable according to a simple and indivisible line, according to a linear and indecomposable trait.

In other words, "the metaphysical discourse," that ushering forth of the representation of the sensible as the poetic appropriation of language towards thought, is, as Derrida says, in a sense like a wave on a beach, delimiting the broad boundaries of possibility of non-conceptual understanding insofar as the poetic experience might rupture or expand or withdraw from, however briefly or turbulently, etc., from the metaphysical limit of consensus, e.g., the beach where the waves meet the sand. There is, therefore, the imagined possibility of metaphysical *debordé* that is nonetheless conceptually adduced and therefore metaphorically posited, that therefore metaphysics is unadducable although it remains under constant revision at the margins.

The conclusions that Derrida offer for this are two: That first, *retrait* is a watchword (the word that Derrida accuses Ricoeur of employing against him (Derrida), earlier in the essay, despite Ricoeur's clear insistence in the fifth study, as to both the utility and insignificance of a "watchword" in terms of *Erörterung-Ereignis* on the part of Heidegger, that "Let the philosopher write *Sein*, *Seyn*, ~~*Sein*~~ one after the other - it is still the question of being that is posed in what is crossed out," an interpretive point of which is that, beholden as we are to the poetic possibilities of our languages, such watchwords may become both useful and obscuring tools towards a clarity of thought, perhaps especially within a metaphysical concern).<sup>517</sup> *Retrait* for Derrida allows for both the withdrawal of Being that occurs in the speaking of Being, that is, the expression of poetic experience, and which lends possibility towards new lines of thought about Being in new expression thereof. To speak Being is to obscure Being with its representation, that thus, in Derrida's formulation, Being withdraws (the *retrait*), but that *retrait* also expresses the exceeding of metaphysical borders, that is, conceptual expansion or contribution that demands and formulates, through such expression, a new and multiplicitous economy of "supplementary surplus value."<sup>518</sup> This certainly serves as a good theoretical defense of his idea in "White Mythology," as

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<sup>517</sup> Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, 312.

<sup>518</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 22.

to metaphor being "determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular appropriation of literal, proper meaning."<sup>519</sup>

The second conclusion is this:

because of this chiasmatic invagination of borders - and if the word *retrait* functions here neither literally nor by metaphor - I do not know what I mean (*veux dire*) before having thought, so to speak, the withdrawal of Being *as* withdrawal of metaphor... In other words: if one wished that *withdrawal-of* be understood as metaphor, this would be a curious, inverting - one would say almost *catastrophic*, catastrophic - metaphor: its end would be to state something new, something still unheard of about the vehicle and not about the apparent subject of the trope.<sup>520</sup>

To speak is to embark on saying without the clarity of definition that metaphor, in retrospect, provides, and in the appraisal and appropriation and "polysemous *and* disseminal potential of withdrawal" of Being in being spoken the world is, as a view, in flux and in one sense dependent, as a matter of consistency, in being restated, and the world as a view of it is dependent, too, as a matter of seeing it differently, on being restated.

That where Being is in our view one of *retrait* - withdrawal, for being spoken - it is also, towards new clarity that sees the world more expansively, perhaps, the *retrait* of being spoken differently, constantly differently and simultaneously not all that differently from what is spoken prior, itself differently and not all that much, really.

The second *trait* that Derrida wishes to highlight, concerning his position on metaphysics and metaphor, has to do with what Derrida argues "unites Heidegger's statements on the so-called metaphysical concept of metaphor, and, on the other, his own text insofar as it appears more 'metaphoric' or *quasi*-metaphoric than ever, at the very moment when he defends himself from it."<sup>521</sup> Here again Derrida is concerned with the expression of a philosophy within the confines of metaphorical utterance, and he takes recourse to Heidegger's "Letter on 'Humanism,'" and the famous statement by Heidegger that

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<sup>519</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 270.

<sup>520</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 23.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

"*Das Denken baut am Haus des Seins.*" The over-riding concern of Heidegger's "Letter on 'Humanism'" is to situate human experience as a mode of thinking in terms of human capacity for such experience - that is, as a matter of thinking beyond the constraints of a metaphysical ontology, and as an explanation of thinking as "*l'engagement par l'Être pour l'Être*," in which "thinking gathers language into simple saying."<sup>522</sup> The "house of being" that Heidegger calls language is the appropriation of experience into language as an expression of thought, which itself, in Heidegger's view, "lets itself be claimed by being so that it can say the truth of being."<sup>523</sup>

Derrida argues that Heidegger's metaphor of the "'house of being' would not operate, in this context, in the manner of a metaphor in the current, usual, that is to say, literal meaning (*sens*) of metaphor," insofar as such a metaphor about being demonstrates an uncanny relationship between the thinker (and speaker) and Being, to the extent that Being lets itself be thought (and thus gathered as language into simple saying) in the same moment that it withdraws itself from the conceptual notion that the metaphor expresses.<sup>524</sup>

Heidegger's concern at the end of the "Letter" is this:

The fittingness of the saying of being, as of the destiny of truth, is the first law of thinking - not the rules of logic, which can become rules only on the basis of the law of being. To attend to the fittingness of thoughtful saying does not only imply, however, that we contemplate at every turn *what* is to be said of being and *how* it is to be said. It is equally essential to ponder *whether* what is to be thought is to be said - to what extent, at what moment of the history of being, in what sort of dialogue with this history, and on the basis of what claim, it ought to be said.<sup>525</sup>

The implication of this is that Being is insufficiently reflected in language and therefore thinking, as a matter of being claimed by Being "so that it can say the truth of Being," is insufficient as a reasoned manner of approach to reckoning, or reconciling, Being. Derrida points to this division between what is spoken and what is spoken of as *unheimlich* insofar as our principle mode of reconciling our material,

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<sup>522</sup> Heidegger, Martin. "Letter on 'Humanism.'" *Pathmarks*. Trans. Frank A. Capuzzi. Ed. William McNeill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998; 239, 276.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>524</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 24.

<sup>525</sup> Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism,'" 276.

historical, spiritual, etc., positions with Being cannot account for its very basis as a mode, and that the expression of the "house of being," albeit metaphorical, is a metaphor that undermines the concept that it indicates. "Metaphysics," as Heidegger says, of the basic movement of thought that brings together such thought with its expression, "insofar as it always represent only beings as beings, does not recall Being itself."<sup>526</sup>

Derrida argues that

This movement is no longer simply metaphoric. 1. It bears on language in general and on a particular language as an element of the metaphoric. 2. It bears on being which is nothing and which one must think according to ontological difference which, with the withdrawal of Being, makes possible both its metaphoricity and its withdrawal. Consequently there is no term which may be proper, usual and literal in the separation without divergence of this phrasing. Despite its aspect or resemblance, this phrasing is neither metaphoric nor literal.<sup>527</sup>

There is, by this, no Being that can be seen or understood directly, and such metaphor, insofar as metaphorical expression exists within the framework of thinking Being mimetically, is therefore neither metaphor, insofar as it is the gathering of Being towards its own expression, and indication of the absence of Being.

Derrida then turns to Heidegger's essay "The Nature of Language" and states that Hölderlin's *Worte wie Blumen*, in light of Heidegger's thought on the matter of metaphor and metaphysics, "concerns not only the claimed metaphoricity of some statements on language in general, and on metaphor in language. It initially pursues an ostensibly metaphoric discourse bearing on the relation between thought and poetry ... [and that] it determines this relation as one of neighborliness, according to this type of proximity called neighborhood, in the space of the home and the economy of the house."<sup>528</sup> The space of the home is the occupation of human thought in the framed perspective of language, and the economy of such concerns the mutable network of metonymic significances on which metaphorical reference may reflect experience as a matter of poetics. Heidegger directs attention to the "neighborhood in which poetry

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<sup>526</sup> Ibid., 278.

<sup>527</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 25.

<sup>528</sup> Ibid., 26.

and thinking dwell," in "The Nature of Language," as a matter of "not suppos[ing] that a thinking experience with language, rather than the poetic experience, will lead us to the light more quickly, and perhaps could lift the veil."<sup>529</sup> Neighborliness, as Heidegger employs the term, and which Derrida adopts (*voisinage, Nachbarschaft*),<sup>530</sup> demands both proximity and separation. The "Neighborhood, then, is a relation resulting from the fact that the one settles face to face with the other. Accordingly, the phrase of the neighborhood of poetry and thinking means that the two dwell face to face with each other, that the one has settled facing the other, has drawn into the other's nearness."<sup>531</sup> In terms of thinking and poetry, where thinking (in repetition of Heidegger) "lets itself be claimed by being so that it can say the truth of being," poetry functions as the articulation of the experience of being, through the gathering of being and such experience with being in language, as a manner of thought towards and of being. Derrida concludes:

Neighborliness is thus a relation (*Beziehung*) - let us be attentive to this word - which results from one's drawing (*zeiht*) the other into one's proximity so it may settle down there. We could believe, then, that in the case of *Dichten und Denken*, this relation, this trait which draws one into the neighborhood of the other, is named in a "*bildlicher Redeweise*" (imagistic style). That would be reassuring indeed. Unless, Heidegger then notes, by that we have not already said something about the very thing, namely, about what it is essential to think, that is, neighborliness, whereas it still remains "indeterminate for us what *Rede* (speech) is, and what is *Bild* (image), and up to what point *Die Sprache in Bildern spricht* (language speaks in images), if even it speaks in general in that manner."<sup>532</sup>

In other words, the neighborly perspective of thought and poetry demonstrates what may be called the manner towards representation, to the extent that saying makes clear the proximity of thought to poetry, and its essential differentiation.

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<sup>529</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 80, 79.

<sup>530</sup> Untranslated, in parentheses, by the editors of *Enclitic* in Derrida's "The *Retrait* of Metaphor."

<sup>531</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 82.

<sup>532</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 26; with citation of Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 82.

e. The trait of the watchword

The last *trait* that Derrida follows, as a matter of response to Ricoeur's critique in The Rule of Metaphor, concerns the significance of the word *trait* as a manner of thinking "the de-limitation of metaphoric ([that] there is nothing meta-metaphoric because there are only metaphors of metaphors, etc.)."<sup>533</sup> Towards this,

There is - and in a decisive way in the instance of the "there is," of the *es gibt* which one thus translates - the trait/line, an outline or a tracing of the trait operating discreetly, underlined by Heidegger, but each time in a describe place, and incisive enough to lead us to think that he precisely names the most grave, engraved, and engraving signature of the decision.<sup>534</sup>

Of *es gibt*, Heidegger has this to say:

The word itself is the giver. What does it give? To go by the poetic experience and by the most ancient tradition of thinking, the word gives Being. Our thinking, then, would have to seek the word, the giver which itself is never given, in this "there is that which gives."<sup>535</sup>

Alluded to earlier, and by Derrida's lights, towards accusations of watchwords (which, to be fair to Ricoeur, on his behalf, asks near the end of The Rule of Metaphor what it means, to say "world," or "reality," as a matter of saying, as the reflective poetics of experience in confronting the "world," or "reality,"), it is fair to say that Heidegger's watchword is *es gibt*. Derrida's point, then, in calling attention, finally, to his own watchword, *trait*, as a line or a marker within an economy of lines and markers, anticipates, or consciously reflects on, what Heidegger contemplates in the essay "The Way to Language," as a matter of the *es gibt* of words in outlining representational design, as per the notion of conceptualization. Heidegger remarks that

There is a long history to the inability, here come to light, of the vision of thinking to see directly the unifying unity of the being of language. That is why this unity remains without a name. The traditional names for what we have in mind under the rubric "language" indicate this unity always only in terms of one or another of the aspects which the being of language has to offer. This unity of the being of language for which we are looking we shall call the design. The name demands of us that we see the proper character of the being of language with greater clarity. The "sign" in design (Latin *signum*) is related to *secare*, to cut - as in saw, sector, segment. To

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<sup>533</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 27.

<sup>534</sup> Ibid.

<sup>535</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 88.



design is to cut a trace. To design is to cut a trace. Most of us know the word "sign" only in its debased meaning - lines on a surface. But we make a design also when we cut a furrow into the soil to open it to seed and growth. The design is the whole of the traits of that drawing which structures and prevails throughout the open, unlocked freedom of language. The design is the drawing of the being of language, the structure of a show in which are joined the speakers and their speaking: what is spoken and what of it is unspoken in all that is given in the speaking.<sup>536</sup>

There is allusion to Heidegger's previous statement, here, that "thinking cuts furrows into the soil of Being," but what Heidegger is more generally getting at in this citation is that the sign that is indicated by the word, in relation to the thing that the word names, segments some conceptualized portion of reality from Being (where previously, also, and as a matter of reference, Heidegger states that the relation of the word to the thing "announces itself in a single word. The word is *logos*. It speaks simultaneously as the name for Being and for Saying."<sup>537</sup>

Derrida offers three remarks on his third and last *trait*. The first is that such a cut, or *Riss*, that is predicated by the neighborliness between *Dichten* and *Denken*, "is the trait of an 'incision' (*entame*), of a tracing, *fraying* opening."<sup>538</sup> There is, in this "cutting" (which is to say, conceptual representation of reality, that therefore experience with reality, that therefore reflection on and thought about reality, according to the signs that have thus "cut" such furrows in Being and seed), a manner of endlessness about it. That is, as with Derrida's envisioning of the shore, and the water at the beach, a general border undercut by indecisiveness, or as a matter of representation without hard and fast distinction. Derrida summarizes this thought on the *trait* by arguing,

Heidegger ... says, *Diese Zeichnung ist der Riss*, [that is, the neighborliness between thought and poetry]. It incises (*er reisst auf*), it traces in opening *Dichten* and *Denken* in the approximating (*approchement*) of one to the other. This approximating does not draw them into proximity again from another place where they would already be themselves and then would allow themselves to be drawn (*ziehen*) to each other. The approximating is the *Ereignis* which sends *Dichten* and *Denken* back into the proper (*in das Eigene*) of their essence (*Wesen*). The trait of the incision, therefore, marks the *Ereignis* as appropriation, as an event of appropriation. It does

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<sup>536</sup> Heidegger, "The Way to Language," 121.

<sup>537</sup> Heidegger, "The Nature of Language," 80.

<sup>538</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor, 28.

not precede the two properties which it causes to come to their property, for it is nothing without them.<sup>539</sup>

The line of thought that understands the *Riss* of the word upon Being marks the event of *Ereignis*.

Derrida's second remark on the last *trait* that he identifies concerns the performance of the *Aufriss*, the gesture (what is the "gathering of a bearing," Heidegger says)<sup>540</sup>, to the extent that such an incision *qua* incision both unveils some aspect of Being and simultaneously veils Being in its totality, what Derrida calls *withdrawal*, that therefore *re-trait*.

And in his third and final remark on the last *trait*, on the definition of *trait*, Derrida argues that such a *trait* is one that intersects itself repeatedly, for its *Riss* and for its performance as such, and offers a retracing of lines that demarcate and adumbrate the borders that may be understood of Being, or of reality, or of world, and in reference to Heidegger's "The Origin of the Work of Art," such that "Die Wahrheit ist un-Wahrheit," that is, of the world obscured in the articulation of the world, "the trait is therefore nothing," that "All the oppositions of value have their proper possibility in difference, in the between of its divergence which brings together as much as it demarcates," that is, understood as a neighborliness, of what is both near and separate from, and set into relation, the trait as a manner of *Riss* of the world is itself obscured by further *Risse*.<sup>541</sup>

And this points back to Ricoeur's understanding of the possibility that poetic discourse opens, in which the speculative seeks to articulate, and close off, both by virtue of such possibility and as the definition of such possibility.

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<sup>539</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>540</sup> Heidegger, "A Dialogue on Language," 18.

<sup>541</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 32. Derrida's citation of Heidegger (Derr., "*Retrait*," 31) comes from "The Origin of the Work of Art," beginning near the end of the section "Thing and Work," 53, as per "the nature of truth [being] unconcealedness," and continuing in the following section, "Truth and Art," to the effect that "Truth is untruth, insofar as there belongs to it the reservoir of the not-yet-uncovered, the un-uncovered, in the sense of concealment. In unconcealedness, as truth, there occurs also the other "un-" of a double restraint or refusal. Truth occurs as such in the opposition of clearing and double concealing," 58.

f. Analytic of thought in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," with "White Mythology"

In terms of Derrida, this dissertation argues that Derrida's definition of supplementarity supplies the basis for a conceptual understanding of metaphor to the extent that, where Derrida defines supplementarity as "The verb 'to supplant' or 'to compensate for' [*suppléer*] defines the act of writing adequately," in which what is adequate is what is understood as root to cogent expression and which, as per the "necessarily indefinite process" of supplementarity, to express oneself is to supplement what cannot be expressed with what can only adequately convey the intention of expression.<sup>542</sup> This idea lends itself to an *abyeme* of constant deferral, and has in relation to it Heidegger's understanding of the insufficiency of sufficient reason, in expressing what is nonsensibly represented within his metaphysical framework.

The work on Derrida in this dissertation proposes a schematic understanding of Derrida's supplementarity, to the effect that: Experience --> Expression --> Figure --> Argument --> Metaphor, but this now seems to be as insufficient to the task of summarizing Derrida's critical framework.

To begin again, Derrida argues that metaphor is more than the rhetorical/poetic trope of expression and functions, along the lines of Heidegger, as the mechanism for reference that transfers the sensible to the nonsensible and, (as cited again), that "Metaphor, therefore, is determined by philosophy as a provisional loss of meaning, an economy of the proper without irreparable damage, a certainly inevitable detour, but also a history with its sights set on, and within the horizon of, the circular appropriation of literal, proper meaning."<sup>543</sup> This statement suffices to set out the boundaries by which Derrida critically frames a view of the world, and our human perspective thereof.

To begin with, there is metaphor, both as a matter of poetic/rhetorical trope and as a manner of mechanism within philosophical view or the world; there is of this a semantic basis, a conceit to the hermeneutic imperative of expression, and expression about such; to the work within and around what culturally/linguistically, etc., grounds the expression of such philosophical thought via metaphorical mechanism, and about which grounds there are constant, by work of supplementary deferral,

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<sup>542</sup> Derrida, "From/Of the Supplement to the Source," 281-2.

<sup>543</sup> Derrida, "White Mythology," 270.

reorganizations of view about such grounds; and vis-à-vis the inheritance of such grounds that appropriates towards the end of reorganization of perspective via recourse to what is literal and proper, that is, on the basis of poetic/rhetorical expression. This is, in all honesty, an astonishing and startlingly succinct definition of a critical framework towards approach of an understanding of the world.

It's easy to remark that Derrida largely reiterates himself in "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," responding to Ricoeur's critique of "White Mythology" vis-à-vis Heidegger's The Principle of Reason, but what Derrida's discussion of lines of significance that metaphor sets down lends the impression of a both well-defined and obscure horizon at which thought is capable of rationalizing the limitations of perspective. Derrida performs this examination with recourse to a watchword (about which he seems simultaneously adherent to, as a matter of philosophical definition, and wary of, as a matter of secondary determination, as per Ricoeur's elaboration of Derrida's thought on the matter): *retrait*. *Retrait* describes first withdrawal of Being from its conceptual representation, and then as the work of metaphor in elaborating perspective. Towards this, Derrida moves quickly: Derrida argues that Heidegger's metaphysics "*itself* corresponds to a withdrawal of Being"<sup>544</sup>; and that "so-called metaphysical discourse can only be exceeded (*déborderé*), insofar as it corresponds to a withdrawal of Being, according to a withdrawal of metaphor as a metaphysical concept, according to a withdrawal of metaphysics, a withdrawal of the withdrawal of Being."<sup>545</sup> The effect of this, according to Derrida, is two-fold: that *retrait* is a manner of watchword that allows for a crystallized view of the metaphysical function of metaphor (and, therefore, not explicitly, recognition by of the inadequacy of his watchword as a matter of expression), and that "metaphor claims to procure access to the unknown and to the indeterminate by the detour of something recognizably familiar," but which can't procure such access as a matter of foreknowledge, and that, anyways, retrospectively, metaphor obscures what, of Being, it has managed to uncover.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>544</sup> Derrida, "The *Retrait* of Metaphor," 21.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

With recourse to Heidegger's essay "The Nature of Language" in On the Way to Language, Derrida elaborates his second "retrait," to the effect that familiarity, or neighborliness, that marks the place of home in language, and *saying* (as per Heidegger's metaphor that "Language is the house of being"<sup>547</sup>), is a manner of being-not-at-home, of *unheimlichkeit*, that dwelling in significance demonstrates the inability to dwell in significance, for lack of perspective beyond concrete and objective boundaries, as with death. And Derrida's last *retrait* marks a kind of return to his discussion on Polyphilos and Aristos from Anatole France's The Garden of Epicurus, in which it remains impossible to speak to the conditions of philosophy without deflecting such discourse with contingencies of meaning, and it is here that Derrida offers a metaphor of the *Riss*, or the cut into, the furrow around (Heidegger notwithstanding), what marks the delimitations of understanding and reflects what can only be the best-views of a conception of Being - *Riss* is akin to the demarcated and obscured horizon of a nonsensible understanding of the world. *Riss* is the constant and circular figuration and refiguration of the world according to the precept of what cannot be immediately grasped, that is, Being. The idea of *Riss* as it is understood here demonstrates the critical framework, as to the matter of thought and expression, by which Derrida expresses a perspective of the world, in light of Heidegger and in reaction to Ricoeur.

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<sup>547</sup> Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism,'" 239.

## General conclusions

I read these works axiomatically as a discourse. Certainly, the three latter works are in response to Heidegger, and both Derrida and Ricoeur incorporate readings of other of Heidegger's work into their responses to Heidegger and to one another. This is especially pertinent as concerns Heidegger's On the Way to Language, which Ricoeur and then Derrida make use of in their conclusions.

The discourse is moreover not a clear response to prior statements, insofar as the discourse occurs across two books and two essays. This discourse about the philosophical questions of reason and metaphor, and metaphysics more generally, and that takes as its subject expression, and the conceptualization of the manner of expression as it concerns the faculty of sensibility in conjunction with the faculty of judgment. In this sense, the discourse is in sum a manner of meta-conversation; it is a discourse about approach to and thought about the dialectic of reason.

Return to Kant is useful here. Kant defines metaphysics as this:

a wholly isolated speculative cognition of reason that elevates itself entirely above all instruction from experience, and that through mere concepts (not, like mathematics, through the application of concepts to intuition), where reason thus is supposed to be its own pupil... In metaphysics we have to retrace our path countless times, because we find that it does not lead where we want to go, and it is so far from reaching unanimity in the assertions of its adherents that it is rather a battlefield, and indeed one that appears to be especially determined for testing one's powers in mock combat; on this battlefield no combatant has ever gained the least bit of ground.<sup>548</sup>

There's maybe an unintentional play with terms that can be read through Guyer and Wood's translation, that where ground is concerned in discourse on metaphysics, no ground is assured but rather, paths are followed as seeming more appropriate and reasonable, as to a clarity of conditions. On clarity, Kant remarks in a footnote on the "refutation of Mendelssohn's proof of the persistence of the soul" that

Clarity is not, as the logicians say, the consciousness of a representation; for a certain degree of consciousness, which, however, is not sufficient for memory, must be met with even in some obscure representations, because without any consciousness we would make no distinction in the combination of obscure representations... Rather a representation is clear

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<sup>548</sup> Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 109, Bxiv-v.

if the consciousness in it is sufficient for a consciousness of the difference between it and others.<sup>549</sup>

On the question of knowing objects, "as an object of the senses," and in terms of an object's conformity with the faculty of intuition, an object is known a priori insofar as the object is reconciled according to the concept that is found to determine it, Kant remarks that "We can cognize of things *a priori* only what we ourselves have put into them."<sup>550</sup>

The question that Heidegger asks concerns the principle of reason, and his conclusions adhere to understanding that, within a metaphysical framework in which the sensible is transferred to the nonsensible, that is, experience with the world is turned into the conceptual basis for its expression, or representation, the methodological approach that Heidegger describes is one in which a backwards-peering leap along a path that reflects the limitations of its capacity for understanding the world lends some form to a horizon of understanding. There is the logos, the critical mechanism by which expression may exist within a dialectical framework, as representation, and there is phusis, the emergence of beings into their own. Logos remarks by way of phusis, and logos, being the conceptual basis on which clarity about being may be gained, "is," in this sense, being. Logos extends itself over the conceptual field and reduces it to the semantic field. This is a structure of redescription.

It is obvious to see here the significance of metaphor that Derrida understands in Heidegger's metaphysics, and the copula of reference that Ricoeur comes to meditate on. And it should be pointed out that Heidegger spends remarkably little time on the question of metaphor. For Heidegger, the idea of metaphor concerns a mechanism by which the sensible sublates into the nonsensible; metaphor is, in this sense, a manner of reflection between the experiential nature of being human and the reason through which such experience is conceptually addended as definitional to being, and being human.

Derrida isn't so explicit about it, but he seems to largely accept Heidegger's rationale surrounding the definition of metaphor as existing within a metaphysical framework of sense/nonsense, and it is with

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<sup>549</sup> Ibid., 449, B414-5.

<sup>550</sup> Ibid., 111, Bxviii.

this that Derrida understands a substantive relationship with Hegel, to the effect that metaphor is the *Aufhebung* of our relationship with the objects of experience vis-à-vis our representations of such - that is, logos. Moreover, and insofar as the expression of the figure demonstrates a rationality of facsimile regarding experience with the world, and to the extent that logos demonstrates significance, and ultimately meaning, towards the effect of exchange (that is, economy) between continued expression and understanding of such and prior (e.g., Heidegger's leaping, to the extent that the leap concerns expression, and therefore the whole constellation of understanding about such, regarding semiotics, semantics, etc.), Derrida understands the mechanism of metaphor as one of imperfect reflection of significance. The objects of our experience are summarized and lost to us as experience inasmuch as they are placed within the economy of significances that reason entails. For Derrida, therefore, clarity encompasses both the gain and the loss of significance, that, within Heidegger's understanding of the metaphysical framework of consciousness about and representation of the world, to arrive at clarity is to simultaneously obscure one's position vis-à-vis the world. To expand conceptual horizons is to simultaneously diminish what may be seen. This is, it'd seem, the simple consequence of being a being within the unfolding of being, that is, the consequence of having a perspective at all, the conundrum of being a being among others. And this is where Derrida leaves his discussion, as a kind of aporia concerning the limits of thought. And it is not difficult to see that, where Derrida understands the *Aufhebung* of metaphor as a "provisional loss of meaning," he is not far from Heidegger's idea of the *aletheia* on the uncovering of Being, that is, "Insofar as being as such *is*, it places itself into and stands in *unconcealment*."<sup>551</sup>

The track that Ricoeur takes is distinct from Derrida's, that where Derrida examines and leaves to the side the tropological analysis of metaphor as example of expression and concentrates on the mechanism of metaphor within expression (thus, the metaphor in the text of philosophy, that is, philosophy as expression of some wisdom about the world rationalized through the lens of metaphor, and *Aufhebung*), Ricoeur engages with the question of metaphor on topical levels that takes into consideration

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<sup>551</sup> Heidegger, *Intro to Metaphysics*, 107.



the cognitive scientific approach to understanding the question of metaphor. The cognitive approach is separate from Heidegger's and describes not a philosophical perspective about the manner in which an intelligence approaches and conceptually reconciles itself with the world, but the delineations of branches of knowledge about the consequences of metaphor. The effect of this is to treat metaphor as a matter of tropology, and the literary output thus tends to amount to a rhetoric demonstrated in the banalities of example.<sup>552</sup> It's on the backs of the cognitivists, in terms of the work of representation, and what the metaphorical statement speaks to about reality, in terms of the postulates of reference, that Ricoeur is thinking things through.

Stated simply, the postulates of reference compose a distinction between reference at the order of sentence - semantics, distinction from semiotics, intentionality of discourse, sense and significance, the positivisms of our speculative outlook; and reference addressing what is larger than that, conversations, therefore hermeneutics, discourse, logos, ratio, etc., productive study, therefore especially of texts that connote things, the poetic work on a slapdash approach to or not at all denotation.

Ricoeur demonstrates a distinction between poetic discourse and speculative discourse. In the course of this examination, Ricoeur is drawn into conversation with Derrida and Heidegger, and then Derrida responds, reiterating what he'd stated, with nuance. This is safely bracketed as a conceptual unit, and as a literature of philosophical discourse.

In short, it is discovered in reading through the conversation about metaphysics, the principle of reason (in conjunction with the principle of contradiction), and metaphor, is the expression of critical frameworks towards a metaphysical perspective on the part of Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur - individually, and to the extent that their work and thought informs the others (as concerns Derrida and Ricoeur, in particular). These critical frameworks are organons, not the position of truth as the mechanics of metaphor, but a lens through which to see and hear, and to understand, the world.

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<sup>552</sup> Statkiewicz, "Live Metaphor," 551-3. On understanding the danger of blithely treating dead metaphors as examples for the condition of interpersonal clarity; Statkiewicz also observes of Ricoeur both an appreciation for the elaboration of thought about metaphor and dissatisfaction with the limitations of such an approach, as regards the cognitivists.

### Watchwords, as a watchwords

The watchword, a point within a manifold of what expresses being, a rhetorics that demonstrate a logic that extends itself, a supplementalism that structures thought about the way the world is come to be reckoned; it means something, within its literature, and it demonstrates a view of logics working, making poeties, and it remains a watchwords.

The brilliances of Heidegger, and Derrida, and Ricoeur, are intimidating to me, for methodological reasons (as per Heidegger's capacity for meditation, and Derrida's big and constellatory view of thought, and Ricoeur's facility in speaking to the structures of thought, and his inventiveness in examining implications), and for substantive reasons.

It is therefore easiest to understand Heidegger, and Derrida, and Ricoeur, and their works in question - their discourse, as per Ricoeur's analysis, of and on a hermeneutics - in terms of their larger and more basic points.

Of this, the discussion is framed in terms of modest units of reference; touchstones, watch words, topics, etc. Of Heidegger, there are the ideas of *Geschick*, of the leap and a post-hoc description of a methodology of hermeneutics, and of our inheritance of metaphysical distinction between the sensible and the nonsensible, and subsequent inadequacy towards speculative examination with regard to transcendental/sublimating work of reference. Of Derrida it's taken as semantically grounding the notions of supplementarity and mechanical retraits of the conceptual, to the extent that, à propos Heidegger's *aletheia*, meaning is, like being, continually relevant and present, and inaccessible, and about which results the constant manufacture of figure. And of Ricoeur it's taken a clear definition of discourse as it pertains to reference and with regard to ontological vehemence/commitment towards the proposition of possibility and its circumspection, where it becomes a matter of definitional thought, regarding the equiprimordial character of discourse with attunement and understanding, which Heidegger addresses.<sup>553</sup>

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<sup>553</sup> Heidegger, Being and Time, 150.

## Play and imagination

A rhetorical position towards an ontological perspective, in answer to Heidegger's question on play.

I want to distinguish briefly between what Heidegger means with the term "play" in The Principle of Reason and what Kant means with the term "imagination" in Critique of Pure Reason.

To the first, Heidegger says of "play," in conjunction with his hermeneutics of the "leap," that

... as soon as we attempt to think the play, which means to think it according to its mode of representation, we take this play as something that is. So just as a ground/reason belongs to the being of a being, so it belongs to the play. Thus the nature of the play is determined as it is everywhere determined, namely as the dialectic of freedom and necessity within the horizon of ground/reason, of *ratio*, of rules, of rules of play, of calculus. Perhaps one might have more appropriately translated the Leibnizian sentence *Cum Deus caculat fit mundus* with: When God plays, a world comes to be.<sup>554</sup>

That, via Heraclitus, *Geschick* is "world-time," that is the events in time that unfold, its play structured by a logics. There is the metaphor of a child's play, play for the sake of play, wherein the because "withers away in that play. The play is without 'why.'"<sup>555</sup>

Heidegger goes on to state that "The question remains whether and how we, hearing the movements of this play, play along and accommodate ourselves to the play."<sup>556</sup> And Heidegger asks in the Address included at the end of The Principle of Reason, these questions:

Does the above mentioned determination that humans are the *animal rationale* exhaust the essence of humanity? Does the last word that can be said about being run thus: being means ground/reason? Or isn't human nature, isn't its affiliation to being, isn't the essence of being what still remains, and even more disturbingly, worthy of thought? If this IS the way it's going to be, may we give up what is worthy of thought in favor of the recklessness of exclusively calculative thinking and its immense achievements? Or are we obliged to find paths upon which thinking is capable of responding to what is worthy of thought instead of, enchanted by calculative thinking, mindlessly passing over what is worthy of thought?<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> Heidegger, The Principle of Reason, 112.

<sup>555</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>556</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>557</sup> Ibid., 129.

Kant details the "three original sources... which contain the conditions of the possibility of all experience, and cannot themselves be derived from any other faculty of the mind," as "sense, imagination, and apperception,"<sup>558</sup> that where, after running through the categories (which are the pure concepts of understanding), Kant remarks that, through the empirical representation of things in time and space, that is, via the apperceptive rendering of the categories available for synthesis through sense, "imagination is the faculty for representing an object even without its presence in intuition."<sup>559</sup> What arrives "of apperception in relation to the synthesis of the imagination is the understanding," and that

There is thus an active faculty of the synthesis of this manifold in us, which we call imagination, and whose action exercised immediately upon perceptions [Kant] call[s] apprehension. For the imagination is to bring the manifold of intuition into an image; it must therefore antecedently take up the impressions into its activity, i.e., apprehend them.<sup>560</sup>

To object, Kant remarks that

It is, however, clear that even this apprehension of the manifold alone would bring forth no image and no connection of the impressions were there not a subjective ground for calling back a perception, from which the mind has passed on to another, to the succeeding ones, and thus for exhibiting entire series of perceptions, i.e., a reproductive faculty of imagination, which is then also merely empirical.<sup>561</sup>

And importantly:

Since, however, if representations reproduced one another without distinction, just as they fell together, there would in turn be no determinate connection but merely unruly heaps of them, and no cognition at all would arise, their reproduction must thus have a rule in accordance with which a representation enters into combination in the imagination with one representation rather than with any others. This subjective and empirical ground of reproduction in accordance with rules is called the association of representations.<sup>562</sup>

Imagination is therefore the capacity for the association of figures towards the production and reproduction of the representations of the objects in the world, according to the a priori reception of such

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<sup>558</sup> Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 225.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid.

<sup>562</sup> Ibid.

in space and time, and as a matter of apperceptive assimilation of what is derived of sense within the larger constellation of a person's catalog that grounds a person's basis for thought.

Play is, I propose, the application of the imagination in the refiguration of the conceptualization of objects of the world, that is, the conscious organization of an understanding towards a further and, it's hoped, enlightening mode of thought as experience, within the dialectic of freedom and necessity. Further, I propose that play is the integration of a system (and its rules and customs, its tacit understandings and for possibility otherwise or in conjunction, and its sciences thereof) with necessity, to the effect that what is, what Ricoeur understands as a matter of reference in terms of the copula "is," is what may be thought as otherwise than what is. That is, where ground/reason in Heidegger's lights "is" being, what is possible is in relation to and apart from what is necessary and contingent to basic assumptions about being (that is, what is as per what's a priori, i.e., temporal and spacial). The expression of such is, in my mind, poetic and speculative, to the effect that what's brought into view as what's possible is made understood as a representative object as a matter of definition. The poetic is the essence of the view, and the speculative is the definition of such view. What's accidental is contingent with but unnecessary to the view. The view is what is gained in the dialectic of freedom and necessity. Derrida describes what is necessary in terms of semantic connotations, that is, the fallibility of saying in a view towards our copulas, what undergirds reference and remains structurally inadherent to proper view - usefully remembered in viewing.

This is a rhetorical framework for understanding the conditions of a perspective. The ontological consequence is to continue to consciously apply the imaginative faculties (that is, play) towards the poetic view of things and being, towards the reinscription of such as a matter of further and constant reference.

Towards this, I've written a poem.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>563</sup> Not included here.

My rhetorical framework therefore lends insight into my methodology: I read the works of others as a matter of comparative examination and I apply what references I am able to gather against one another, within a critical and thoughtful excursus, i.e., a dialectics of intentional poetics, towards a greater ontological view of things.

Heidegger does this similarly to myself, but more focused, in The Principle of Reason, as a matter of meditative work of reference.

Derrida does this similarly to myself, in the essays that I've read as a part of this dissertation, but with a wider range of reference than I have and less meditative than is Heidegger.

Ricoeur does this similarly to myself, insofar as he sets readings in comparison on the matter of a topic, but with a greater tolerance for maintaining a reflective stance than has Derrida, and capable of greater movement than has Heidegger.

Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, are read as artefacts of a literature that seeks a speculative understanding on the questions of reason and expression. These readings are self-evident, as towards the constant work of concluding and disregarding conclusions, a dialectic of a reader reading, towards a hermeneutics, via interpretation; in this case, the ontological implications of metaphor within the frame of a conversation on the topic of metaphysics, supplementarity, and poetics, and which unfolds under the rubric of twentieth century continental philosophy.

As a matter of substance, it is taken from these readings certain organons and described in a poetics. Tzvetan Todorov usefully defines poetics as pertaining to two attitudes, that of the "text itself as a sufficient object of knowledge," and that of the "text as the manifestation of an abstract structure."<sup>564</sup> By Todorov's lights the ideal interpretation of a work is "a reading, insofar as a reading is no more than a manifestation of the work."<sup>565</sup> And as Todorov observes, no two readings are alike. The readings that are presented in this dissertation, and which conclusions seek to draw the circle around, were not the first

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<sup>564</sup> Todorov, Introduction to Poetics, 3.

<sup>565</sup> Ibid.

readings of the works by Heidegger, Derrida, and Ricoeur, under present consideration. And neither are they the last. The readings had become progressively recursive by the time they arrived at "The *Retrait* of Metaphor." Certainly, much of the reading is preoccupied with more firmly grounding what had been intuited in prior readings but hadn't been formulated as part of the larger conversation, and it was found that the more were read and reread these works the more winnowed conclusions became, more easily described as large and basically-orienting concepts of philosophical thought.

The processes that I've described in this poetics have become for me organons in my approach to the world, and they require much less explanation, ultimately, than what I might have thought otherwise. Can it be that the end of my readings is not an endlessly complicated rendering of some renderings of the world as it is rendered by my rendering counterparts in conversation? Certainly. At some point, the readings end, or must; no readings are alike unless the readings are the pure descriptive of the text in question, that is, facsimile.

Whereas an organon posits a perspective by which to consider the world, a poetics "does not seek to name meaning, but aims at a knowledge of the general laws that preside over the birth of each work," and "it seeks these laws with literature itself."<sup>566</sup> A poetics must describe the circumstances of a hermeneutic extra-textualism, the structure of the coming-into-being that is entailed by such, and my readings therefore serve as a manner of poetics towards of a literature between Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Paul Ricoeur, and to the effect that some perspective is gained in view of my world.

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<sup>566</sup> Ibid., 6.

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