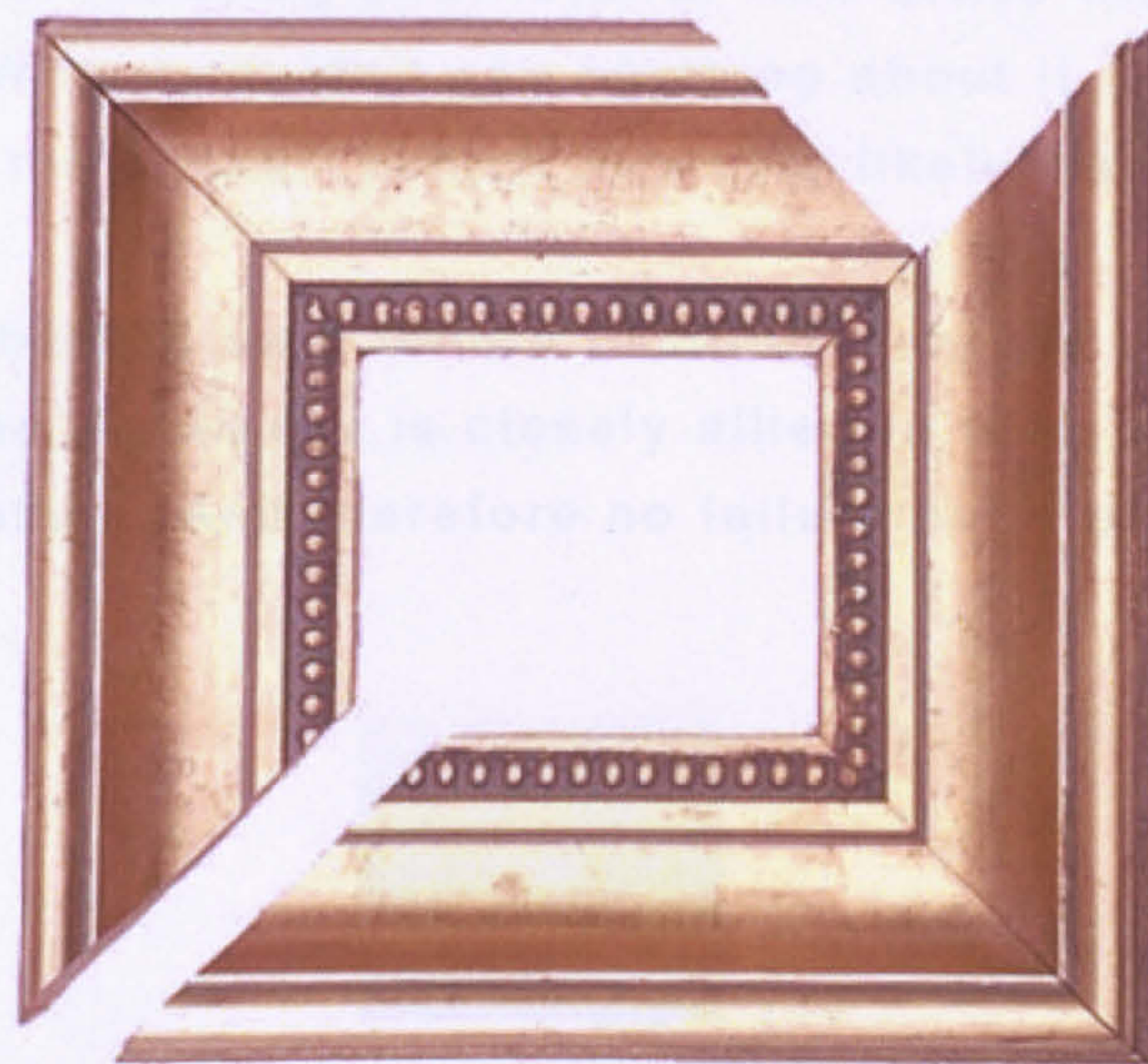


# An Aesthetics of Hauntology



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## Dissertation Abstract

The text sets out to consider the aspects of the spectral, as proposed by Derrida in *Spectres of Marx*. As an alteric *revenant* refuting the historical/chronological determination of ratio and universality, it *haunts* the architectonics of the metaphysical edifice. This spectral 'operation' is also an activity of encryption which involves a discussion speculating on the virtual by proposing the transgressive rift as an introjective interruption that is realised through the abysmal (dis)order of fenestration. It uncovers a thematic of topological (dis)location via a series of 'meridial threads' which the dissertation seeks to explore through a scrutiny of aesthetics and specific creative activities.

The first chapter explores this 'relation' with specific attention given to the alteric rift as an operation of *différance* as indicated by Derrida and seeks to critique this juxtaposition with particular reference and attention to Kant's aesthetics. Chapter two identifies Paul Celan's poem 'Todtnauberg' as a topos for a discussion on anticipation and silence in the complex historical relationship between the poet and the philosopher Martin Heidegger, as 'reported' in the poem. It identifies the topology of 'meridial haunting' at Heidegger's Black Forest mountain retreat. 'The *Unheimlich* Manoeuvre' (chapter three) deals with two key works by the architectural interventionist Gordon Matta-Clark, through a discussion on the uncanny (*Unheimlich*) and its relation to the homely (*Heimlich*), taking into account the *encystic* operation of mourning. The Final chapter continues this theme of the architecturally 'interruptive' by considering orientation with specific attention to the labyrinthine and the temporality of the *crystal-image* as cited by Deleuze

in his writings on cinema and the spectral. It looks specifically at two films by Tarkovsky; *Solaris* and *Stalker* and Mark Z. Danielewski's novel *House of Leaves* (a complex fictitious account of a nonexistent documentary film which recounts the exploration of a labyrinth which appears in an ordinary suburban house).

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## Introduction

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'Well!' thought Alice to herself. 'After such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down-stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I couldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the **house!**' (which was very likely true).<sup>1</sup>

Emptiness is held to be a failure to fill up a cavity or gap. Yet presumably the emptiness is closely allied to the special character of place. And therefore no failure but a bringing-forth.<sup>2</sup>



What began as an opportunity to consider spatiality and proximity in the artwork – a speculation on near-ness and dis-tance, prompted by Heidegger's essay 'Art and Space' (1968), took a tumble into a conundrum of labyrinthine passageways where the only hope would be the uncovering of a new lingual thread. In considering the juxtaposition of *aesthetics* and *hauntology* I uncovered a means of exploring the possibilities and limitations of the terms 'relation' and 'dialectic'. Appropriating the Derridian term *hauntology* identifies a means of articulating alterity as an essentially *spectral* imperative that, not only motivates all discourse, but also 'functions' (a 'functor') as the 'topological tool' of *variation*.

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Heidegger, 'Art and Space' (published in *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* [ed. N.Leach]), p. 123.

There were already clues as to how one might begin to stake out the trajectory of this journey in the opening remarks of 'Art and Space'. Here as a sculptor and therefore arguably, a manipulator of the spatial, I sought out, recognised and took a certain comfort in the language of volume and closure, and which Heidegger provisionally cites as the demarcation of inside and outside and the surety of enclosure and the familiarity of an ongoing technicity. However, as the text unfolds, so too is unravelled the scientific and volumetric arbitration of space and which leads Heidegger to tread what he terms 'an emergency path'<sup>3</sup> through language to release the particularity of the placial through the operation of *clearing* (*Lichtung*). Similarly, I found in Derrida the *Wegmarken*<sup>4</sup> of the lingual disruption of *difference* through the revelation of the silent phonetic arbiter of *différance*. As noted, Heidegger's engagement with the artwork specifically through the sculpted form in 'Art and Space' and more generally in 'The Origin of the Work of Art', infers that the historical definition of *aesthetics* as a kind of *scientific* arbitration of 'truth' and 'beauty' identifies and 'essentialises' a notion of 'pure form'. Here persists the continuing imperative toward an 'idealisation' or 'pre-emptive organisation' of intuition which follows and merely 'adapts', the metaphysical tradition. The domination of this tradition of 'making sense' argues that 'order' and 'ordering' not only 'give shape', but also identify that which cannot be ordered as that which *refutes* 'order'.

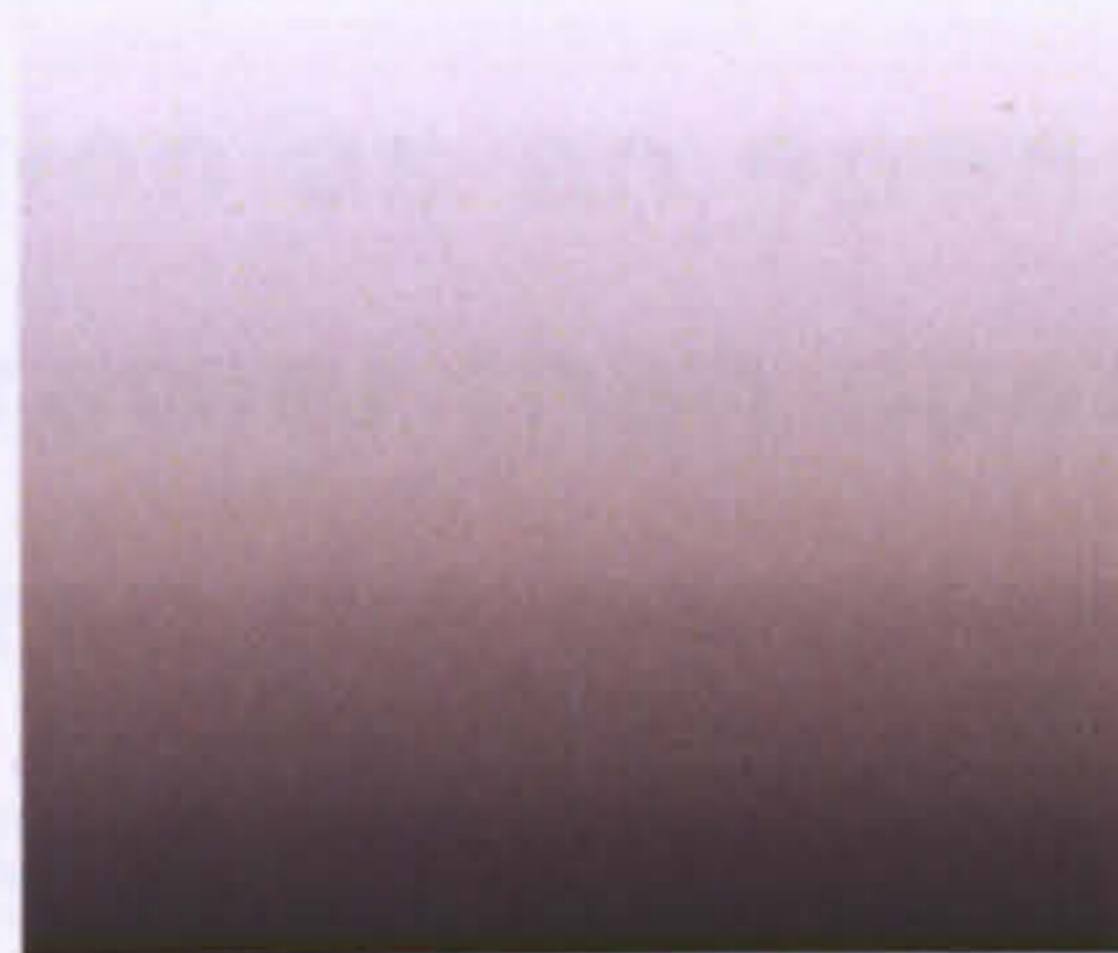
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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 122. This route is also described as 'a narrow and precarious one'.

<sup>4</sup> Translates as *pathmark*.

In the 'continuous' drive toward 'clarity' as the affirmation of an 'universal illumination' (at shadows' deferral); of that which organises while simultaneously and perhaps more militantly, suggesting a 'suppressive violence' of that which can never 'conform' to any recognised pre-determined definition of 'organisation'. This is better articulated through the 'complication' of an abysmal 'outside' *introjected*; and encrypted in all such terminologies as the *encyst-ence* of what will be called a *rift*.

If thus an abyss stretching out of sight (*unübersehbare Kluft*) is established between the domain of nature, that is, the sensible, and the domain of the concept of freedom, that is the suprasensible, such that no passage (*Übergang*) is possible from one to the other (by means, therefore of the theoretical use of reason), as between two worlds so different that the first can have no influence (*Einfluss*) on the second, the second *must* (*soll doch*) yet have an influence on the former(...). Consequently it must be (*muss es*) that there is a foundation of *unity* (*Grund der Einheit*)....<sup>5</sup>



In seeking to consider pertinent exemplars of the encystic collusion of aesthetics and hauntology, I came upon Pierre Joris' translation of Paul Celan's poetic inscription of his

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<sup>5</sup> Quote taken from Jacques Derrida's text *The Truth in Painting* (pp. 35-36) and abbreviated from Kant's treatise, *The Critique of Judgement*.

meeting with the questionably politically and morally compromised philosopher Heidegger at the latter's Black Forest retreat in July 1967. This provides the overarching thematic for a discussion that navigates the terrain of the lingual (as both *vocal* and *written* word) in relation to *silence*. I propose a critique of Celan's 'demand' for a 'word' (what Joris terms, 'his great expectations'<sup>6</sup>) of acknowledgement and contrition from Heidegger for his political 'dalliances' during the National Socialist era. I speculate on how one (Celan) who found in the evolution of their own 'poetic voice' a failing of 'vocality' and a 'stuttering into silence' (*disfluency*) could either expect or anticipate the clarity and eloquence of an apologetic assertion from another? The relationship between 'the thinking poet' (Celan) and 'the poetic thinker' (Heidegger) will also draw attention to the possibility of a *locale* resonating with a plurality of *meridial hauntings* along the *holzweg*<sup>7</sup>.

The line inscribed in the poem, "whose name did it record before mine?" identifies Celan's own speculative anticipation of *proximity* to evidence of previous visitations to the hillside retreat from arguably more contentious individuals and groups. In any 'foci' or temporal 'locale' (in this instance, a 'double' operation - the poem, 'Todtnauberg' 'locates' the place Todtnauberg and is itself 'located') there is anticipated all other possible historical 'locales', which *exceed* and *recede* the specificity of any one. This 'archaeological' *encryption* that the aesthetic of

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<sup>6</sup> Pierre Joris, Introduction to his translation of Celan's collection of poems, *Lightduress*, p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> *Holzweg* translates as logging path or wood way. It is used here and throughout this text to connote variant pathways and possible routes.

poetic language 'illuminates', postulates the *meridian* as the *topological tool* for an appropriate navigation of the *trace* as that which *vocalises* all that remains essentially *unvocal* while resisting any determination toward the *continuity* of mere *substitution*. The image of the *pharmakos* ('the scapegoat') introduces a discussion on ambiguity manifest in the complication of the remedial: that is, the intrinsic differential relation between the *curative* and *poisonous*. As a result, an aesthetic procedure where both toxicity and remedy (co)operated was sought to further explore spectrality.



Speculation on the remedial as an operation of introjection draws attention to the architectonics of *The Heimlich Manoeuvre*. This First – Aid operation determines a need for a permanent expulsion of an alien body as a remedial restoration of corporeal order. Armed with this definition of ejection, a provisional 'inversion'; defined as *The Unheimlich Manoeuvre*, is proposed. This is understood as the retention of the 'alien' as an 'essential' operation of *encryption*. The 'architectural interventions' of the artist Gordon Matta-Clark provide a specific creative oeuvre by which this operation of encyst-ence can be explored. 'The cut' of Matta-Clark's *visceral operations*, demands the continual 'insistence' and integrity of an 'architectonics of

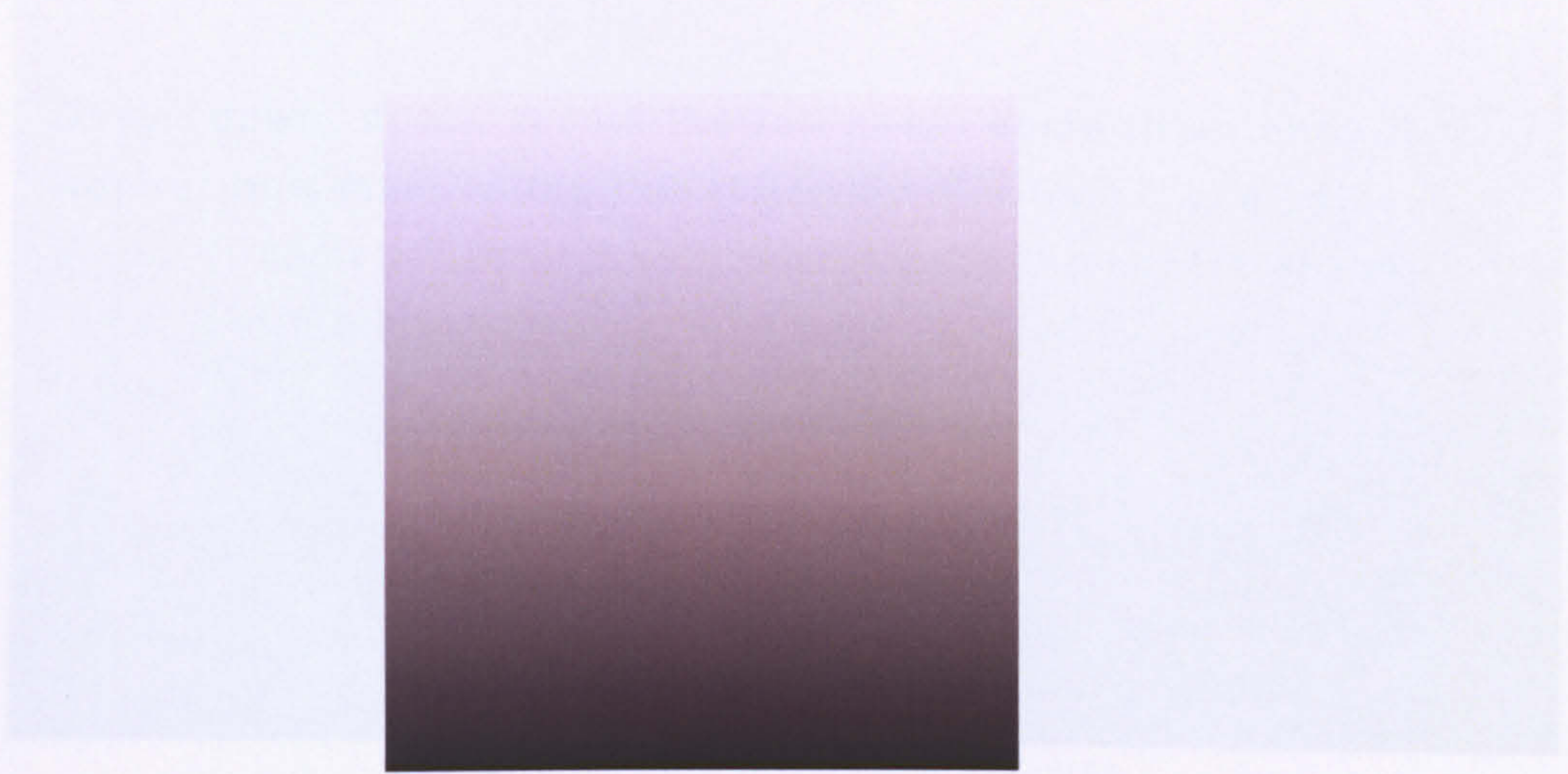
stability' to give a 'lingual potency' to the variations of a fenestrative 'manoeuvre', however, the overarching theme of encryption identifies an ambiguity at the heart of any structural 'continuity' – a *ructure*. As already stated, the *rift* is identified as the 'locale' of encryption – a 'non-place' or 'no-where' bearing the poignancy of a spatiality that refutes incorporation and questions the 'logic' of *spatio* and *extensio*. This determines the *crypt* as the 'abysmal foundation' – the *non-ument* as the 'site' of *mourning* and the locale of the spectre.

I argue that mourning as the 'event' of encryption remains fundamental to the work of Matta-Clark emphasising their conceptual 'grounding' as that which are termed *non-uments*. It also indicates that visceration is the realisation of that which remains intrinsically and exclusively invisible in the framing of any edifice. The rift as ructure 'locates' invisibility as the 'operation' of the spectral arbiter refusing absorption by and into the corporeal through the disruptive encyst-ence of discontinuity and alterity. As Paul Virilio recognises in his text *Bunker Archaeology* that the variation by which space is articulated is no longer understood by mere calculation but haunted by the introjection of the temporal.

The space I was charting with surveys and measurements of different types of casements was the space of a different historical time than that of the moment of my trip; the conflict I perceived between the summer of seaside bathing and the summer of combat world would never again cease. For me the organisation of space would now go hand in hand with manifestations of time.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Paul Virilio, preface to *Bunker Archaeology*, p. 14.



23 Janiuere, 1610

Ftaires! We haue found ftaires!<sup>9</sup>

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The aesthetic of the cinematic event interpreted as the implication/explication of a kind of Leibnizian folding, identifies duration as a 'form of time' that resists the continuity of what we might define as a succession of moments that constitute permanence. Deleuze, via Bergson understood such duration as an open whole of constant differentiation, which rather than specify fragmentation as mere dissipation, offered the complexity of incompleteness as an operation of pre-individuation (disorientation). Here the convolution of the labyrinth enunciates temporality as the *crystal-image*. It considers the concept of 'open' narrative where duration takes precedence and forms the intrinsic 'temporal structure' of two films by Andrei Tarkovsky:

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<sup>9</sup> Mark Z. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 414 (footnote reads; *Jamestown Colony Papers: The Tiggs, Verm & I Diary* [Lacuna Diary Library founded by The National Heritage Society] v.xxiii. N 139, January 1610, p.18-25)

*Solaris*, and *Stalker*. As Deleuze argued, Tarkovsky opted for the 'classical' (movement-image) concept of shot but also indicated that he referred to "the pressure of time in the shot"<sup>10</sup> animating the 'stasis of movement'.

Mark L. Danielewski's novel *House of Leaves* also 'folds, unfolds and refolds' through a series of interrelated narratives in an ever shifting operation of implicate/explicate and construes a topological thread through a series of transcribed events which surround the discovery and exploration of a labyrinth which appears in an ordinary suburban American house. The chapter explores via Tarkovsky's two films, specifically, the phi-creature in *Solaris* and the 'zone' in *Stalker* and the crystalline concept of the time-image and the spectral variation of the introjected phantom which haunts both Tarkovsky's films and Danielewski's novel. It draws comparisons with the fragmentary 'structure' of Danielewski's novel (itself a story about the making of a film) to extrapolate on encryption and the significance of the rift/ructure discussed in the previous chapters via the aesthetic 'experimentation' of film and novel. This is indicative of the orientating 'operation' of spectrality through the interruptive inconsistency of encyst-ence in the labyrinthine while also considering that which de-centres/haunts the labyrinth.

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<sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 42.



Down, down, down. Would the fall *never* come to an end? 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see that would be four thousand miles down, I think-'<sup>11</sup>

I would like to begin by proposing a question that will lead to a series of speculations which emerge from the above comment written by the poet Paul Celan in the guest book provided by Martin Heidegger, on the occasion of the Celan's visit to the philosopher's Black Forest home at Todtnauberg in the summer of 1967.

1. Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, p. 114. 'The name as word' is also indicated by Derrida in his essay 'Impossibility of a Pure Given'. Also worthy of note here is Nicolas Abraham and Julia Torok's essay, 'Introduction-Incorporation', from the book *Psychoses and Transference*, ed. S. Lebovicz and D. Wollschlaeger, in which they discuss the beginnings of introjection as found in the experience of what they refer to as words which double with the subject's presence: 'The transference from breast-bottle mouth to word-mouth is achieved through the experience of "empty mouth," p. 6. They argue that language is the word of mouth with words constituted to mark the space of incorporation through the vertical presence of the mother as the possessor of language and such constancy guarantees the meaning of words. It is also worthy of note here that Jacques Lacan in his text 'Mother Tongue' saw the mother's language as originally the origin of the written word, the mother tongue of the tongue.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, p. 10.

## Chapter 1

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### An Aesthetics<sup>1</sup> of Hauntology

A traditional scholar does not believe in ghosts – nor in all that could be called the *virtual space of spectrality*. There has never been a scholar who, as such, does not believe in the sharp distinction *between* the real and the unreal, the actual and the inactual, the living and the non-living, being and non-being.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter will develop a discourse on what Derrida has called the *virtual space of spectrality* as the alteric locale of a certain kind of aesthetic differentiation. In so doing, it will resist subsumption into any binary opposition by identifying the transgressive *rift*<sup>3</sup> (the *between*) as the active *topos* of the apparition.

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1 The Greek root 'aesthesia' denotes the capacity for sense perception, the wide realm of the beautiful, and the **science** of sensation or feeling. The Latinate *aesthetica* (in German, *Ästhetik*) was first used by A.G. Baumgarten (1714–62) in his texts *Metaphysica* (1739) and *Aesthetica* (1750) and was derived from the Greek *aisthanesthai*, 'to perceive', *aisthesis*, 'perception' and *aisthétikos*, 'capable of perception'. Baumgarten defines it as the 'science of sensory knowledge', but later restricts it to the 'science of sensory beauty'. The term covers the beauty of nature as well as the beauty of art. I am mindful here of Derrida's use of the term *cryptology* (see Chapter 3, 'The Unheimlich Manoeuvre') as the scientific study of secret writing and the deciphering of secret codes.

2 Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, p. 11.

3 I wish to consider the term *rift* with all the resonance of the German word *Riss*. Heidegger uses this term in his essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art' (*Basic Writings*, pp. 139-203) to, not only indicate a *rift*, *split* or *tear* as an indication of separation, but also to simultaneously connote a holding together (in the case of the artwork, of the revelation of *world* and the *obduration* of earth). It is further defined by Heidegger as a *plan* (as in *architectural drawing* or *ground plan*) and this will impact later in this and further chapters. Levinas, writing on transcendence, defines it as that which cannot be conceptualised, theorised, objectified or universalised as in the history of epistemology/reason. It is as a **rupture**: an opening up to the *other* that resists reduction to sameness (Western thinking's drive to objectify and universalise).

The necessity which places two such specific terms (*aesthetics* and *hauntology*) in a kind of coeval proximity to each other must provisionally recognise and explore the dialectical complexity of what might be considered their seemingly fundamental oppositional nature. However, what this also suggests is that the operation by which the initial identification of the former (*aesthetics*) as the 'science' of *beauty* and *perceptions*,<sup>4</sup> and the latter (*hauntology*) as *other*<sup>5</sup> to that science (what we might tentatively and advisedly refer to as a science<sup>6</sup> of the *spectral*), offers the potential for further scrutiny with regard to some observations on spectrality – what might be interpreted as a condition of *encryption*.

The context of the encounter between *aesthetics* and *hauntology* will be set up by the confrontation that takes place between the key thinkers of *aesthetics* (Kant, in *The Critique of Judgement*) and *hauntology* (Derrida, in *Spectres of Marx*) and given a locale in Derrida's critical project on *aesthetics*, *The Truth in Painting*.

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4 Derrida quotes Kant from *The Critique of Judgement* (§ 44, 'On the Fine Arts'), when he notes in *The Truth in Painting*, 'There is no science of the beautiful, only a critique of the beautiful', p. 89.

5 The concept of the other will be expanded on in some detail later in the text and will make specific reference to Levinas and *alterity*.

6 An indication of the significance of using the word *science* in this context has already been alluded to in footnote 1 and will be expanded on further.

This will not only attempt to identify the *alterity* of the other as that from which the emergence of any binary is manifest, but also to explore a terrain, which is more, haunted by what is encrypted<sup>7</sup> within it. This text will seek to confront these seemingly oppositional characteristics and explore the possibility of the variance of the *spectral* as that, which calls into question certainty and conclusivity (the 'closure') of the universal as thinking's framework.

It will also seek to question pure pragmatic integrity as a means of countering classical reason<sup>8</sup> and to explore spectrality as the site of the *alteric*,<sup>9</sup> but also as a complication of variation *from which* the conception of any scientific postulation might emerge through a critique of adherence and inherence.<sup>10</sup> Amidst such provisional insights and speculation, the question emerges as to where we

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7 With the use of the term *encryption* I will seek to indicate an active immanence of *otherness* that undermines and unsettles oppositional dialectics. It may be worth bearing in mind at this point Derrida's contention that *différance* is not a concept but the 'possibility of conceptuality' – a 'play', an 'undecided between' that is outside the concept of signifier and signified and therefore between *passive* and *active*. The historical context for passive and active is found not only in Kant, but also in the fundamental binary opposition of presence and absence. Derrida notes that the question, 'What is the origin of the work of art?' implies a unity of *word*, *concept* and *thing* as well as an ordinary meaning, an *etymon*. As the unity of such a truth, the work of art: 'It implies first of all that "art" can be reached following the three ways of word, concept and thing, or again signifier, signified, and referent or even by some opposition between presence and absence.' *The Truth in Painting*, p. 20.

8 In *Positions*, Derrida argues: 'In effect, we must avoid having the indispensable critique of a certain naïve relationship to the signified or the referent, to sense or meaning, remain fixed in a suspension that is, a pure and simple suppression, of meaning or reference', p. 74.

9 *Alteric* or *Alterity* from the German *Alter* translated as *other* or *to make a thing different*. The other common definition refers to *alterity* as the *state* or *quality* of *being other*, a *being otherwise*; 'For *outness* is but the feeling of *otherness* [alterity] rendered *intuitive*, or *alterity* visually represented' (Samuel Taylor Coleridge; added emphasis).

10 Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting* that: 'Absolute nonadherence should certainly have no contact, no common frontier, no exchange with adherence: no adherence is possible between adherence and nonadherence. And yet this break of contact, this very separation constitutes a limit, a blank, the thickness of a blank – a frame if you like', p. 100.

might begin to find such a locale of differentiation (assuming, at this stage, that a topographical language of *mapping* and *location* is still in some way appropriate to such an endeavour). The locale remains essentially 'without place' (arguably, *that which haunts*<sup>11</sup>) while simultaneously exercising a profound influence on what we might call the *post priori* principles of the *placial*.

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In the introduction to *The Truth in Painting*, Derrida argues for the institution of what he calls a *trait*<sup>12</sup> and which he defines as:

Between the outside and the inside, between the external and the internal edge-line, the framer and the framed, the figure and the ground, form and content, signifier and signified, and *so on* for any two-faced opposition. The *trait* thus divides in this place where it takes place.<sup>13</sup>

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11 I am mindful here that to consider a 'that which' runs the immediate risk of subjugating the spectral to a possible a priori subject/object relation, but for the moment, I leave this in place on the understanding that further critique will contextualise such a motivation.

12 *Trait*: a distinguishing feature or characteristic from the Latin *tractus* meaning *act of drawing* and which is also the etymological root for *tract* meaning; a region or area of indefinite (especially) *large extent*; in corporeal terms an area of an organ or system or in temporal terms, a *period of time*.

13 Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p. xii. Earlier in the same introduction, Derrida says of the 'trait' that: 'It situates between the visible edging and the *phantom* at the centre, from which we *fascinate*', *ibid.*, p. xii (added emphasis).

The connotation of such an attribution calls into question the prerogative of any simplistic binary in favour of a more complex interpretation of 'locale', which finds in a certain kind of predetermination an *abysmal* status that articulates (com)prehension through the relation of a *between*. However, it is pertinent to remember here that any confrontation requires the engagement of a language that is arguably already steeped in *logocentric* bias, and as such, requires us to be both cautious and attentive to the condition of play at work in the possibility of the written text as a location for speculation on or about the spectral. Likewise, historical terminologies will be used advisedly and attentively on the understanding that they may still resonate with the 'vibration of a metaphysical weight' that determines the direction of enquiry. Therefore, whenever possible, an attempt will be made to contextualise their use and proffer appropriate criticism.

Derrida comments in *The Truth in Painting* that:

The imagination is afraid of losing itself in this *abyss*. The *abyss* – the concept of which, like that of the bridge, organised the architectonic considerations – would be the privileged presentation of the sublime.<sup>14</sup>

Any observations made must be scrutinised in relation to reveal any historical determination to perpetuate a relation based in such historical binary opposition (*presence* and *absence*, *being* and *non-being*, *affirmation* and *negation*, etc.) but also recognise its import as a context for the foundation of our argument on the understanding that the

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14 Ibid., p. 129 (added emphasis).

following discussion does not merely invert affirmation and negation, but explores the complexity of both encryption and the spectral and their pertinence to the demands of structural integrity.<sup>15</sup>

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It might appear provisionally that we seek some kind of middle ground (what Derrida in *The Truth in Painting* takes from Kant as that which is between reason and knowledge; *Mittelglied*) – a place that is neither *theoretical* nor *practical*, or which is as Derrida indicates, both *theoretical and practical*, where art (in general) or the beautiful take place;<sup>16</sup> what is other to both *reason* and *knowledge* (practical and theoretical). In Kantian discourse, the abyss over which judgement constructs a bridge between the above is arguably such a non-locatable locale.<sup>17</sup> However,

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15 Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting*: ‘One would be seeking a one-and-naked meaning [*un sens un et nu*] which would inform from the inside, like a content, while distinguishing itself from the forms which it informs’, p. 22. He argues that in order to ‘think art’, one does so through a series of *oppositions* (meaning/form, inside/outside, content/container, etc.) which, he argues, ‘precisely structure the traditional interpretation of works of art ... One makes of art in general an object in which one claims to distinguish an inner meaning, the invariant, and a multiplicity of external variations *through* which, as through many veils, one would try to see or restore the true, full, originary meaning’ (ibid., as above).

16 ‘[I]f it takes place, is inscribed here. But this *here* is announced as a place deprived of a place. It runs the risk in taking place, of not having its own proper domain. But this does not deprive it, for all that, of jurisdiction and foundation: what has no domain [*Babiet*] or field [*Feld*] of its own, no “field of objects” defining its “domain”, *can have a “territory” and a “ground”* [*Boden*] *possessing a “proper legality”*.’ Ibid., p. 38 (added emphasis).

17 Note here Heidegger’s use of the image of the bridge in ‘Building Dwelling Thinking’ as the locale for the gathering of the fourfold: ‘the stay of mortals on the earth’ in *dwelling*. He determines the belonging of the fourfold as *mortals* who are affiliated to *earth* (‘on the earth’), *sky* (‘under the sky’) and *divinities* (‘remaining before divinities’) and argues that such a *belonging* as a *gathering* ‘or *assembly*, by an ancient word of our language is called a “thing”’, p. 153 (added emphasis). The specifics of the thingliness of the bridge are determined by the realisation of such a *gathering*.

such rational topography belies more complex articulations, which this text will seek to explore.

Firstly, as indicated in the opening comment, it may seem paradoxical to propose *hauntology* as a science,<sup>18</sup> however, this is done with the specific intention of proposing that the spectral is already at work, encrypted even, in the predetermined logic of science and technology. We may consider here momentarily that Heidegger hints at an alteric operation in his essay, 'The Question Concerning Technology', when he postulates that 'the *essence* of technology is *nothing* technological'.<sup>19</sup>

This notion of precomprehension is not necessarily confined to the scientific/technological trope, as Derrida points out in *The Truth in Painting*. He states:

If therefore, one were to broach lessons on art or aesthetics by a question of this type ('What is art?' 'What is the origin of art or of works of art?' 'What is the meaning of art?' 'What does art mean?' etc.) the form of the question would already provide the answer. Art would be *predetermined* or *precomprehended* in it.<sup>20</sup>

As can be noted here, Derrida finds in his various questions of and on 'art' an a priori condition that precedes any enquiry and demands consideration in advance of aesthetic specificity. The question that follows this preliminary proposal might well be one of the nature of such encryption as something essentially outside binary determination, and as such, whether it has an essential function in *all* logical

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18 The term *science* may indeed reference an empirical imperative structured by logic that has remained essentially a priori in thought and if this text attempts anything, it is to consider what I will call the *event of spectrality* in terms of empiricism and vice versa.

19 Martin Heidegger's essay, 'The Question Concerning Technology', is found in a collection of essays under the same title, pp. 3–35.

20 Added emphasis. Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p. 21.



determinations. It is hoped that this alteric condition identifies an operation of spectrality whereby the *haunting* of all that is understood as reasonableness in the logic of thinking is found in the ambiguity of the location of the *event of spectrality*, no longer understood as mere exclusion, and this will be credited and developed as the text unfolds.

The key term that will function as the overarching thematic of this discussion will be the *rift*. This will operate as a topological *punctum*<sup>21</sup> – a kind of *singularity* of *otherness/alterity* and which arguably, operates as a kind of invariant which maps the speculative field and addresses the notion of the spectre in the realisation of a realm of discontinuity not necessarily instigated by the a priori of continuity – what we might begin to think of as the visualisation of invisibility.<sup>22</sup> As has already been noted, Heidegger addresses the term rift at some length in his essay, ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’ as that which distinguishes the *obdurate materiality* inherent in the concealment of *earth* from the revealing unconcealment of *world*.

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21 The term *punctum* is used here in the sense of an *elevation* or a *depression* on a *surface* and has strong resonances with Deleuzian notions of the ‘determining’ of a continuous surface and in particular, his work on the Leibnizian *singularity*, *the monad* in *The Fold Leibniz and the Baroque*. In topological terms the singular point or foci operates as that which maintains the continuous through any transformation or discontinuity – it maps a surface (via its own continuity) while remaining unaffected by any transformation of that surface.

22 In *The Truth in Painting*, Derrida comments: ‘If the phrase “the truth in painting” has the force of “truth” and its play opens onto *the abyss*, then perhaps what is at stake in painting is truth, and in truth what is at stake (that idiom) is *the abyss*’, p. vii (added emphasis) of introduction entitled ‘Passe-Partout’.

What is initially proposed is to sketch out an overview that explores what has been already indicated, as the provisional consideration of not only the oppositional distinction, but also the commonality between terminologies (*aesthetics* and *hauntology*) and therefore what imperative brings them together – their root, as it were.<sup>23</sup>

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The rigour of this discussion will bring some clarity towards our motivation for maintaining them in what might be understood as provisionally, a proximal relation and which, while indicating a perceived historical dialectical continuity, questions the nature of such a coeval unity through the specificity of such proximity. This will also take into consideration the nature of such a proximal relation in more general terms and its relation to the specificity of difference.

At the same time, an attempt will be made to illuminate this so-called dependency and question the historical motivation towards duality, similitude and precedence. This text will both follow and anticipate a conceptual trail ('a thread'), which will not necessitate a determination towards what we might term a *chronological*

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23 I am conscious here of the provisional retention of a terminology of metaphysical enquiry and logical structure. 'Root' indicates a 'ground' that conforms to the posture of *stasis* and *reason*, which organises the historical progress of philosophical thought. This text will seek to question that genesis but through the language of its conception; hence the provisional maintenance of its language. Both Derrida and Heidegger argue for the understanding of the *abyss* or *abysmal* as the foundation for the metaphysical edifice and which in turn, violently represses its origin through constructive abuse. See Mark Wigley's text, *The Architecture of Deconstruction – Derrida's Haunt*, pp. 1–33. Also note the significance of the abyss in Derrida's *The Truth in Painting* as that which comes *between* (as described earlier as *judgement*) knowledge and reason and finds its place in the disinterested pleasure of a subjective *aesthetic* – that which Kant attempts to bridge via judgement.

*exploration*, but will look towards the interruptive aspects of what will later be considered as the *crystallisation of temporality*<sup>24</sup> in an attempt to traverse a thematic course. This course will seek evidence of the spectral through a range of thought always and already haunted, as it were, by alterity. It will maintain what will be understood as the overarching alteric thematic, identifying and locating the *other*.<sup>25</sup> It is no longer conceived as merely the prosaic condition of absence, but that, which motivates through a precedent towards invisibility as that which maintains any notion of discontinuity/continuity.

In a sense, it is a priori to the historical drive towards a universality and continuity based on similitude, which may, in effect, be seen as the post priori condition of any reasonableness and logic.

It is essential to keep in mind that any notion of continuity which may appear to unfold on this journey (which might be conceived as the alteric thought of the thinkers, Derrida, Levinas and Deleuze) must first be noted and second resisted, as it obviates the spirit of the observation and maintenance of the status of alterity in its otherness. With this in mind, it is worth remembering what Derrida expresses in his text 'Différance' on the status of the alteric: to capitalise *différance* would be to provide it with a kind of ontological status that undermines its alteric condition, and he reminds us that:

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24 The *crystal-image* as cited by Deleuze in his writings on film (*Cinemas 1* and *2*) as the expression of a distinctively different interpretation of temporality in post-war European cinema will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine'.

25 These terms are used advisedly at this stage, bearing in mind the context of the textual thematic as a critique of dialectical structure and its intrinsic role in the history of *logic* and *reason*.

It commands nothing, rules over nothing, and nowhere does it exercise any authority. It is not marked by a capital letter. Not only is there no realm of *différance*, but *différance* is even the subversion of every realm. This is obviously what makes it threatening and necessarily dreaded by everything in us that desires a realm, the past or future presence of a realm.

And it is always in the name of a realm that, believing one sees it ascend to the capital letter, one can reproach it for wanting to rule.<sup>26</sup>

The precedence of this term (*différance*) as neither a *word* nor a *concept* indicates what he refers to as a middle voice – a juncture, interval or assemblage that, he proposes, does not recount the steps of history, but refers to a ‘*general system of all these schemata*’.<sup>27</sup> This indicates that the spectral complicates any surety in what we might call ‘a chronological temporal continuity’ and through a kind of spatial intervention impacting from outside of any recognised systemisation as a transgressor of the clarity of distinction and beyond the control of individuation.

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26 Derrida, taken from the text ‘Différance’, and published in *The Continental Philosophy Reader* (ed. R. Kearney and M. Rainwater), p. 458.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 442. He also comments on the ‘dual’ in his text, *Memoirs of the Blind*: ‘Creative memory, schematization, the time and the schema of Kant’s transcendental imagination with its “synthesis” and “ghosts”.’ And later in the same text suggest that the ‘dual’ takes place: ‘the visionary vision of the *seer* who sees beyond the visible present, the overseeing, sur-view, or survival of sight. And the draftsman who trusts in sight, in present sight, who fears the suspension of visual perception, who does not want to be done with mourning it, who does not want to let it go, this draftsman begins to go blind simply through the fear of losing his sight.’ pp. 47–8 (added emphasis). We might also consider for a moment here the link between sight and voice with regard to Celan in Chapter 2, ‘Todtnauberg and the Meridian’. Does the poet fear becoming *disfluent/silent* through the fear of losing the ability to speak?

As Derrida proposes, 'a spectre is always a *revenant*.<sup>28</sup> One cannot control its comings and goings because it *begins by coming back*.'<sup>29</sup> It remains crucial to the development of our argument that the consistency of this proximal relation we are making between aesthetics and hauntology is *not* found only in similarity, although *sameness* will play a pivotal role in the topological terrain covered.

In the discussion that follows, what is essentially not similarity or a manifestation of sameness will be seen as the consistent factor (the *functor*) that haunts the fabric of the text and also that the alterity of any interpretation of spectrality will be perhaps the strongest (though not necessarily the clearest) manifestation of the overarching thematic.<sup>30</sup>

Here I begin by suggesting that sameness, as the condition of similitude, is perhaps provisionally (and arguably controversially) rather a condition of alterity. This resists the insistence towards merely inverting the binary of metaphysical logic and just presenting absence as a priori in presence's stead. Spectrality not only calls into question this historical precedent, but also refuses to recognise or

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28 Translates as *ghost*, but can also refer to the verb *to return*. Derrida exploits this variant possibility of its meaning in *Spectres of Marx*. Also note here Derrida's question on 'return' (*revenant*) and the reciprocity of the 'circle' in the section entitled 'Lemmata' of *The Truth in Painting*. 'Why a circle? Here is the schema of the argument: to look for the origin of a thing is to look for that from which it starts out ... to look for its essential provenance, which is not its empirical origin. The work of art stems from the artist so they say. But what is an artist? The one who produces works of art. The origin of the artist is the work of art, the origin of the work of art is the artist, "neither is without the other".' pp. 29–30.

29 Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, p. 11.

30 The manifestation (the 'visibility') of *invisibility* as the condition by which the spectral haunts is crucial to our argument against the logic of presence as the affirmation that precedes the negation of absence.

condone the possibility of a mere inversion as any solution to such an historical precedent.

What remains important to this operation is how it might be understood that the two terms (*aesthetics* and *hauntology*) are drawn together outside any dialectical determination based in the consistency of a historical binary opposition. I have already postulated a provisional definition of aesthetics as the science of beauty, but what of its counterpart? How might we articulate the term *hauntology*? There is implied in the structuring of the title, *An Aesthetics of Hauntology*, what might be seen as the judgemental imposition of the so-called science of beauty over the science of spectrality.

The inclusion of the preposition *of* could be seen as validating such a hierarchical interpretation. The implication is that aesthetics imposes a form of Judgement<sup>31</sup> over the *other* and it may well be that we might have to consider their inversion to be the provisional solution to that obvious call for any speculation on a priori status.

This literal inversion (what could be seen as *A Hauntology of Aesthetics*) might certainly begin to articulate the significance and relevance of haunting as pertinent to any future aesthetical postulation, but the reversal of terminologies remains just that, and does not yet address

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31 The term *Judgement* is used advisedly and with specific reference to Kant's third critique: *The Critique of Judgement*. The capitalisation of Judgement is intentional and refers to the comment made by S. Körner in his text *Kant* (p. 175) that the capital 'indicates the *power* of the faculty of judging'. As Körner points out, Kant states that 'Judgement in general' is 'the faculty of *thinking the particular as being contained in the universal*' (p. 176, *Critique of Judgement, Introduction, Part IV, 179*) (added emphasis). As already noted, Derrida subverts this lingual empowerment through capitalisation, by proposing that *différance* should not conform to such hierarchies and therefore to maintain its alteric status by the refusal of capitalisation.

the more fundamental issue of the necessity of their proximity and relation.<sup>32</sup>

In *Spectres of Marx*, Derrida proposes *hauntology* as that which is *altogether* other, the event of the 'staging for the end of history' as both *first* and *last* time (retention *and* protention). The ghost is understood as the manifestation of any insubstantiality that operates between corporeality and its facsimile as simulacrum. It is a repetition (and as such, has a kind of temporality) that engenders the spectral through the return to a kind of abstracted corporeal possibility.<sup>33</sup> An additional difficulty that Derrida discloses as manifest in the spectral is that any apparition is not merely the incarnation of spirit. The tradition that locates spirit as the transcendental at the heart of the corporeal is motivated by the persistence of an onto-theological imperative that orders through the determination to find a place for the transcendent within the carnal as that which in some way, supersedes it. The spectre is neither 'pure' spirit nor 'mere' body, but functions as an intervention which relies on the corporeal to render 'the non-sensuous sensuous'.<sup>34</sup>

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32 In *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, Heidegger points out what he refers to as 'the dialectical game' seemingly 'at work' in the phrase; '*The truth of be-ing is the be-ing of truth*'. He argues that: 'Said in this way, sounds like an artificial and forced reversal and – taken to the extreme – like a seduction to a *dialectical game*', p. 66 (added emphasis). However, he proceeds by indicating that that this is just a 'fleeting' and 'external' sign of a turn in be-ing and which indicates a more fundamental interpretation based in decision.

33 Derrida's argument for the apparitional is based in incarnation. He states: 'There is no ghost, there is never any becoming-spectre of the spirit without at least the appearance of flesh in a space of invisible visibility, like the dis-appearing of an apparition. For there to be ghost, there must be a return to body, but to a body that is more abstract than ever.' *Spectres of Marx*, p. 126.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 151. Derrida also refers here to transcendence as the *super-*, the *step beyond*.

With this in mind, the understanding of the spectral as 'merely' a simulacra or facsimile of the specificity of carnality is called into question, and articulates the contention that similarity and sameness are *not* necessarily this unifying factor.<sup>35</sup> What brings them into relation may be provisionally perceived as sameness, but this is on the understanding that similitude remains the action of reason and logic. This relegates difference to merely the negation of that sameness and therefore subordinate to it. If scrutinised more carefully, it will appear more appropriate that we consider difference as essentially more involved in the instigation of relation and therefore fundamentally preceding any grasp of similitude. With this in mind, the thinking of difference will supply the essential tools to begin this journey, but with clear provisos based on the range of distinctly different thought that is involved in the thinking of difference.

What has already been indicated with regard to the historical precedence of sameness may still remain somewhat inarticulate in any critiquing of the universal, and therefore inarticulate in the determining of an exploration of the spectral and its location as the rift. Consequently it will be productive to look to Derrida and provisionally further

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35 In his text on Levinas, *Emmanuel Levinas, The Genealogy of Ethics*, John Llewelyn articulates the distinction that Levinas makes between totality and infinity through production. He states: 'The idea of production will enable Levinas to distinguish the idea of the infinite from the idea of totality. Although totality is not the same as neutrality and *distinction* is not the same as *separation*, the thin end of the wedge that will accomplish this distinction between totality and the infinite is inserted when analysis of concrete manifestations of the concretion of existence and the existent begins to separate these.' p. 32. The wedge not only holds to pieces tightly together, but also can split them apart. I would also comment here that the distinction/complication between spectre and simulacra is looked at in some detail in Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine', with regard to the *visitors/phi-creatures* in Lem's novel and Tarkovsky's film, *Solaris*.



appropriate *différance*<sup>36</sup> at the beginning of this enquiry as the key term by which to grasp and critique this relation.

The relevance of this provisional consideration of Derridian *difference/différance* remains pertinent, given the appropriation from Derrida of the term *hauntology* as the science of 'not to be', as not merely the negation of an ontological precedent, but as the derangement of such antecedence. The prodromic thought exploited by Derrida through the notion of phonetic similarity (*hauntology* and *ontology*) in *Spectres of Marx* may provisionally be understood as the identification of difference through sameness. As he indicates with the 'sciences' of *to be* (ontology) and *not to be* (hauntology), the distinction between *difference* and *différance* is also 'not heard'.

The "a" of *différance*, therefore, is not heard: *it remains silent. Secret, and discreet, like a tomb.*<sup>37</sup>

It can only be expressed and ordered through the significance and disorder of the impure written text in the context of what he calls the vocalic notation. The difference between *a* and *e* expresses through what is written and what is read, but not what is heard.<sup>38</sup>

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36 This term is drawn specifically from Derrida's text 'Différance' (pp. 441-464) and published in the anthology, *The Continental Philosophy Reader* (ed. R. Kearney and M. Rainwater).

37 Added emphasis. Derrida, 'Différance', *ibid.*, p. 443.

38 He also states that phonetic writing can only function through the incorporation of what he calls 'non-phonetic signs' (punctuation, spacing, etc.) so that what is inaudible allows the phonemes to be heard.

*Différance* may be distinguished fundamentally from *difference* through the latter's continual dependency on the universality of sameness in reasonableness to give it shape. Derrida argues that to differ carries both the difference of a distinction or an inequality whilst also indicating the interposition of a delay or an interval. The latter definition is described as 'a putting off till later what is presently denied' or the possible that is *presently impossible* and which implies both a *spacious* and a *temporal* quality.

For Derrida, these movements of non-identity and sameness must have a common root that relates the two movements of differing to each other. *Différance* articulates a different kind of sameness that is not identical (the silent referring to 'differing' as both spacing and temporalising and the movement that structures every dissociation). However, the violence of what might be defined as the dialectic continuity of difference through similitude, essentially predicates the same. As such, it diminishes the power of difference by maintaining it as an appendage to the logic of reasonableness and therefore merely awaiting its inevitable recuperation through the event of sameness and universality.

If difference is seen in these terms, it is clear that its possibility remains *only* the inevitability of such incorporation into what is essentially universal. This event of negation might provisionally be seen as indicating the force of the *other* but at the same time it persists through the diminishing of the power of difference while simultaneously allowing it to fall into mere reflection.

Derrida's project is to distinguish *différance* from mere *difference* in this context, because as neither word nor concept, it exists as a juncture or assemblage (in the Heideggerian sense of a 'bringing-together'), that operates as a 'between' which not only indicates a bringing together as an interlacing or web of distinct threads which bind, but also lines of sense or force which also allow for separation.<sup>39</sup>

Now understood as outside the dialectical order of the founding oppositions of reasonableness (for example, sensibility and intelligence<sup>40</sup>), *différance* belongs neither to speech nor writing; it is:

*between* speech and writing and beyond the tranquil familiarity that binds us to one and to the other, reassuring us sometimes in the illusion that they are two separate things.<sup>41</sup>

What is important to remember here is that although Derrida proposes the vocalic notation of the *a* in *différance* as inaudible and therefore not present, it does allow for the presentation of being possible but not through its own presentation.

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However, it is not concealed in any sense of what he describes as a zone of non-knowing,<sup>42</sup> because this would suggest that it is exposed to a notion of disappearance, and

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39 The *thread* as a literal means of navigation is intrinsic to the traversal of, both the Minoan Labyrinth and the 'zone' in Tarkovsky's film, *Stalker*. See Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine'.

40 This will be looked at in more detail in relation to Kant's work on intuition and knowledge in the *Critiques*.

41 Derrida, 'Différance', p. 444.

42 Note here Kant's reference to the irreducible 'unknowable' between intuition and knowledge.

therefore runs the risk of falling into the dialectical possibility of appearance.<sup>43</sup>

Derrida questions the need for what he describes as a *de jure commencement*, and attempts to articulate a new strategy that resists any determination towards finality by proposing that the play at work in *différance* is beyond any binary opposition and precedes what is contingent in the dialectic of difference. Difference cannot refer to differing as temporalisation, because it operates as an eschatological<sup>44</sup> demand, which maintains rather than suspends accomplishment/finality. *Différance* compensates for the complex of meanings by designating a process of *scission* and *division* by which the *-ance* of *différance*, expresses the undecided as what is *between* active and passive.<sup>45</sup> In this way, it is no longer a concept but the possibility of conceptuality – what Derrida defines as a conceptual system of the play of reference in a conceptual system.

*Différance* produces *differences*, but crucially *not* in the sense that it precedes the plurality of differences as a 'simple and in itself unmodified and indifferent present'.<sup>46</sup> It is the non-full, non-simple origin of what Derrida refers to as the structured and differing origin *of* differences, on the understanding that differences are, as such, produced, but not by a presence.

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43 It is *not* a 'being-present' (on) in an ontological sense but remains irreducible to ontological, theological and onto-theological re-appropriation. It encompasses and surpasses such distinctions but also resists any fall into oppositional dialectic because it sustains that dialectic from outside.

44 Eschatology, the branch of theology dealing with *last things*; *death*, *divine judgement* and *life after death*.

45 In this sense, it is 'outside' the concept of signifier and signified as determined the concept of *presence*.

46 Derrida, 'Différance', p. 449.

*Différance* is what makes the movement of signification possible only if each element that is said to be 'present', appearing on the stage of presence, is related to something *other* than itself but retains the mark of a past element and already lets itself be hollowed out by the mark of its relation to a future element.<sup>47</sup>

In *Difference and Repetition*, Gilles Deleuze makes clear his intention in confronting difference is *not* to perpetuate the continuation of a dialectical precedent by investing in the continuation of the binary model of essence and appearance, but in seeking to extract what might be understood as the marginalised category of the simulacrum as the subverter of any dialectical model. This differs from Derrida's spectre as it relies on the grasp of the simulacra as a facsimile undermining the continuity of the universal.<sup>48</sup> This is also a key issue for Levinas as an important thinker of alterity, who understands and acknowledges that the *other* (as essentially *other*) can never be recuperated into sameness and, as such, is not just an addendum to the logic of historical empiricism and therefore contingent on the form of the dialectic. The history of logic would propose *the same* as reason's highest aspiration, through the drive to universality and therefore relegate the other, through the particularity of difference, to the role of that which is merely what is not *the same*.

This suggests that the other could remain trapped in a dialectical model from which its essential possibility is *merely awaiting assimilation* into the *same*, and, as such, it is robbed of any and all of its essential alteric power. The

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47 Added emphasis. *Ibid.*, p. 450.

48 As already indicated, Derrida's spectre is neither a facsimile of spirit or body – it is *between*.

important shift from a difference determined and predicated by sameness to a deferral, is through the recognition of the contribution of the rift as an essential factor in the forging of a concept of this kind of relation.

The rift will provide the specific conceptual form by which hauntology, and its relation to the aesthetic, will be explored, and through which it will also seek to articulate the contention that the imposition of the alteric through this understanding of the rift undermines the existing order of predication and binary opposition in Western thinking. However, it is vital to keep in mind that the rift is also the operative manifestation of the event of encryption and must not be conceived as a mere afterthought to reason but essentially encrypted within it – what *haunts* it. The rift is what forms the notion of relation<sup>49</sup> and is what essentially holds apart. It is the *between* of the rift that will initiate the articulation of hauntology and its status as a critique of the persistent drive of logic to universality and reasonableness.

The contention that the phenomenological project's aim was to reduce the gap between thought and embodiment – *being* and *existence* – demands closer scrutiny of the manoeuvre that draws together knowledge and sense and exposes them through their difference. What persists in this dialectic underlines the predication of continuity – sameness and universality as the driving force for logical stasis.

As already indicated, when Derrida articulates a phonetic rift in his text *Spectres of Marx*, he indicates the similarity between the spoken terms *hauntology* and

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49 Husserl identifies 'relation' as the key proposal of the 'science' of *phenomenology*.

*ontology* (in French, the terms sound almost identical when spoken).<sup>50</sup>

This logocentric play of phonetic similarity disguises a more fundamental concern which recognises this distinction as an encryption that resists the status of a mere insertion or addendum to continuity by conferring on the encryption a condition of otherness, which does not resort to a resolution through similitude.

When he refers to the former (hauntology) as the science/logic of 'not to be', and the latter (ontology) as the science/logic of 'to be',<sup>51</sup> he articulates this *between* as the juncture of a difference. This is seen provisionally as that which holds together the lingual identity *being* and *non-being* in a relation exposing the phantasm of otherness encrypted into the presence of *being*.

Language as the site of both identity and difference must be negotiated further through the contention of what has already been noted as the deferral of difference. The complication cited by Derrida as provisionally phonetic, and therefore critiquing any logocentric bias, has far reaching implications in the development of my argument for the intrinsic phantasm at work undermining the structure and constraints of the linearity and polarity of the historicity of logic.<sup>52</sup> The rift as a non-site<sup>53</sup> – a fenestration in the

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50 It is also worth remembering here what we have already said about the phonetic issue of silence at work between *difference* and *différance*.

51 I will later draw attention to the distinction between Derrida's science/logic of 'to be' and 'not to be' and Levinas's writing about *il y a* – 'there is', with its implicit alterity.

52 Logic understood as the place for establishing and exploring the essential requirements of genuine knowledge and science – a discovering of norms.

53 A *non-site* as the active possibility of encryption has a strong link with the work of Gordon Matta-Clark and the term *non-ument* and will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3, 'The Unheimlich Manoeuvre'.

architectonics of thought – exposes the possibility of encryption as the active participant in the structuring of any corporality. For example, the architectural interventions of the artist Gordon Matta-Clark not only rely on architectural structure to give them shape, but expose that edifice to an intensive dissective scrutiny (a *fenestration*) through an act of visceration.

It is important to remember, however, that Matta-Clark is not merely dissecting the body of the building, but articulating its language through the complication of, on one level, blurring the borders between *inside* and *out* and all that might imply, as well as drawing attention to the pertinence of the event of mourning (*encyst-ence*)<sup>54</sup> resonating in the visceral act – a *commemoration through annihilation*.

With this in mind, it must be remembered that its active role remains outside the recognised continuity of active and passive as understood by Kant with regard to intuition and knowledge in the Critiques. As a kind of hermeneutic<sup>55</sup> intervention, it disrupts linearity and indicates that there is a potential for discontinuity in any generating of continuity, inverting the Cartesian model of a separateness, which contends that continuity generates and structures discontinuity.

As already suggested, Derrida argues that *différance* is an assemblage, and through the event of ‘bringing together’ it allows for different threads and lines of sense and force to interlace. But what remains contingent in this

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54 Derrida refers to *the* act of mourning in *Spectres of Marx* as the attempt to ontologise ‘remains’ – to make present, as it were, that which can never essentially be present.

55 Hermeneutic understood as the science of interpretation.



manoeuvre is that what binds also has the potential to separate, with the possibility for continuity and discontinuity at the juncture. However, what must remain at the forefront of our thought when considering this disruption of continuity is that we do not fall into the trap of indicating merely a dialectic inversion through the predication of the discontinuous.

As will be argued, this will only persist in maintaining the status of universality and sameness as that which attempts to recuperate otherness, and therefore the event of mere inversion can only be described and contained within the same binary framework of any epistemological enquiry.

Deleuze, however proposes the tactic of the disjunctive use of faculties, whereby the unconscious condition of each faculty is revealed, replacing a philosophy of identity and representation with one of difference. He differs from Derrida in that he critiques the pertinence of difference as deferral by suggesting that a stable intrinsic meaning can never be found there as a perpetual regress of one word defined by yet another therefore prevents the discovery of a linguistic ground. Difference operates as a paradoxical element – *it is never where it is sought and always where it cannot be found*. This discloses a sensible realm of intensities, and an ideal realm of problems – what is indicated by Deleuze as a physics and metaphysics of the simulacrum.

Where Platonic ideality provisionally proposed the model (the 'ideal') and the copy (its representation), it also distinguished between 'good' (*eikon*) and 'bad'

(*phantasme*<sup>56</sup>) copy. The former operates as the 'true' inner resemblance while the latter is the 'false' external illusion. The *phantasme* remains fearful to Plato because it has no fixed identity; it is *unlimited* and *illogical becoming*, which reveals in the copy that the domination of the *ideal* as model is undermined by its proximity to its copy as representation. For Deleuze, to overturn Platonic ideality is to revel in the simulacra (the so-called bad copy) as the denial of the primacy of the ideal – the model over the image – and to glorify the simulacra and the reflection.<sup>57</sup>

The proper activity of thought for Deleuze is not to immerse oneself in the realm of the essence, but to seek the impingement of the simulacrum through the critical examination of mental experiences, which he refers to as *transcendental empiricism*.<sup>58</sup> Transcendentalism is relevant for Deleuze with regard to empirical principles because, as he states, they always 'leave outside of themselves the elements of their own foundation'.<sup>59</sup>

The ruling opposition of *ideal* and *sensible* is undermined by the Deleuzian terminology of the *virtual* and *actual*, which indicate a more fundamental distinction between the aconceptual and the conceptual. The sub-representative/unconscious (aconceptual) of illogical

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56 *Phantasme* and its epistemological root to the spectral.

57 In *Spectres of Marx*, Derrida distinguishes the spectre from Platonic *phantasma* and simulacrum by describing it as the 'tangible intangibility of a proper body without flesh, but still the body of someone as someone other', p. 7. This has a strong resonance with the manifestation of the *phi-creatures/visitors* in Lem's novel and Tarkovsky's film, *Solaris*, and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine'.

58 This is distinguished from Kantian transcendental idealism, which presupposes 'good' sense and 'common' sense – 'real' experience is for Deleuze, sub-representative. Deleuze's method is empirical because its object is experience not the *possible* experience of Kantian thought through meaning 'capable of representation'.

59 Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 328.

intensities and the representative/conscious (conceptual) logic of common sense – whereby the problem occupies the paradoxical space *between* existence and non-existence<sup>60</sup> – is the rift. The transcendental can now be understood as the realm of the problem and is paradoxical because it resists incorporation into empirical principles – in a sense, it is a problem without a solution.

It is important to remind ourselves here that to comprehend this rift we must grasp it as not just a holding apart in the sense of what we might provisionally consider as a difference of separation contingent on the priority of similitude.

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What is essentially different between *hauntology* and *ontology* is also the irreducible transcendence of alterity, understood as that which holds them together<sup>61</sup> and therefore is resistant to the collapse into a duality of sameness.

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60 'Ideas', for Deleuze, are not Platonic simple essences but rather Kantian problems without solutions. Deleuze also prefers to exploit the terms *subsistence* and *insistence* rather than *existence*.

61 In his text 'Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book', Derrida states:  
'A first encounter, an encounter above all unique because it was a separation, ( ). Encounter *is* separation. Such a proposition, which contradicts "logic" breaks the unity of Being – which resides in the fragile link of the "is" – by welcoming the other and difference into the source of meaning.' *Writing and Difference*, p. 74.

Derrida's use of the term *hantise*<sup>62</sup> at the beginning of *Spectres of Marx* evokes not only a spectrality but also indicates a further meaning rooted in common sense, which can *also* be translated as an obsession, a constant fear, a fixed idea or nagging memory.<sup>63</sup>

In the text he indicates that historically the so-called spectre of Communism preceded its realisation in the revolution of 1917, which inaugurated the Soviet Union – and which was, in a sense, the pre-emptive 'secret' that Old Europe, demanding continuity and stability, hoped would remain thus (as 'a secret') but, *for which*, and *by which*, it was fearful of (a labour movement that transgressed the security and stability of the existing geopolitical landscape).<sup>64</sup>

In 'Différance', Derrida proposes the temporality of the trace (the spur) as that which relates to what is called both future and past through the constitution of a present by relation to what it is not. In order for the trace 'to be' an interval from what it is not, it must intervene and, as such a division, that constitutes it *in the present*.<sup>65</sup>

The *spectre* here is conceived as a transgressor of boundaries but what is important to keep in mind is that the

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62 This translates into English as *haunting*.

63 Derrida's observation that the first noun in *The Communist Manifesto* is 'spectre' is the basis for his attempt to recuperate Marx. For Derrida, Marx was a scholar 'capable of thinking the possibility of the spectre' and this distinguished him from the 'traditional' scholar who could only conceive distinctions in binary oppositions – real and unreal, actual and in-actual, living and un-living, being and non-being ('to be or not to be').

64 Note here Derrida's suggestion in 'Violence and Metaphysics' that the security of the Greco-European tradition is undermined. Knowledge is neither 'habitual nor comfortable but permits us to experience torment or distress in general', p. 82.

65 Derrida goes further by saying that this division, which constitutes *in the present*, must also divide that present and therefore everything conceived on the basis of presence; for example, *being*, *substance* and *subject*.

complication that Derrida wishes to invoke in the spectral is in its location as encrypted within the 'historical phenomenon' of Europe, old and new. He states: 'At bottom, the spectre is the future, it is always to come, and it presents itself only as that which could come or come back; in the future'.<sup>66</sup>

For Derrida, our inheritance is no longer the 'end of history' but rather the end of a certain concept of history whereby an injunction should not be seen and understood as a restrictive ordering, but a reaffirming by choosing in the division on the injunctive: 'The present appears neither as the *rupture* or effect of a past, but as the *retention* of a present past.'<sup>67</sup>

The plurality of 'one must' in dealing with an inheritance as injunction is to filter, criticise or sort out several different possibilities that inhabit that injunction. The naturally transparent univocal is without interpretation and has nothing to inherit from – there is no inheritance in infinity, memory is a condition of the specificity of finitude. The finitude of consciousness preserves significations, values and past acts as habitualities and sedimentations and is where the *other* becomes the sedentary spectre.

Derrida argues that it is possible to recuperate Marx as the revolutionary transgressor now, in a predominantly

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66 Derrida cites the 'plagues' of the 'new world order', of which number 7 is defined as 'inter-ethnic wars'. He describes these as driven by an archaic phantasm, a primitive conceptual phantasm of community, the nation-state, sovereignty, borders, native soil and blood. He terms ontopology as the axiomatic event whereby the topos of territory (native soil, city and the corporeal – body) is rooted in an anxiety of displacement. Communism is both a 'future spectre' and *now*, a 'spectre of the past' and as such, temporal linearity is undermined – displaced.

67 Added emphasis. *Spectres of Marx*, p. 57. *Retention* and *Protention* form the active elements in an adumbration, where the transience of history and immanence (possibility) invoke variety rather than sameness. David Bell identifies this in Husserl's thought.

post-communist world where the disjuncture of thought and action on such a thought can be rectified. Spectropoetics<sup>68</sup> becomes the examination of the ways in which Marx still haunts and influences through the methodology of poetics. This is understood as the uncovering of layers of meaning in events and texts by pursuing such literary devices as analogy, metaphor and allusion and therefore outside the conceived rational ordering of a science.

If we understand history as essentially a linear temporal movement (chronology) – that historical/political events follow each other in ordered succession – Derrida's conception of inheritance has no place.<sup>69</sup> Inheritance *interrupts* this infinity of history by proposing memory as a condition of finitude – a plurivocality that exposes the possibility of choice in the order of the injunctive. As Derrida argues, the univocal in its natural transparency has no finitude, cannot be interpreted and has nothing to inherit from the internal untranslatability in Marx. Its lack of system is not a sign of weakness, but an opening up where injunction and promise could not *be* without such a disjunction. This latter term, *disjunction*, perhaps requires a clearer definition – it describes a sharp cleavage, a disunion or separation and expresses an alternative or opposition *between* the meanings of connected words – a rift.

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68 Is this the archaeology of encryption?

69 Derrida's use of *Hamlet* is instructive here. Hamlet's Father's ghost is a spectral manifestation of Hamlet's inheritance, disrupting the continuity of the social order by encouraging revenge, and instigating the unfolding of the tragedy that is the form of the play. As an apparition, its 'form' is *both* and *neither* a carnal representation of Hamlet's Father, and also a 'spirit' – outside rational/order but intrinsic to the play's unfolding narrative. Banquo's ghost performs a similar literary function in *Macbeth*.

As a compositional tool in language, it indicates a rift that performs a conjoining (as in a compound sentence in logic) yet does not lose that which brings together in this event of conjunction; it maintains its status in *separateness*. It is intrinsic to, yet also exclusive to any composition. As already indicated, Derrida distinguishes *différance* from *difference* by virtue of the former's irreducible status as a juncture of proximity and separation.

The spectre as a phenomenal/carnal form of the spirit transgresses the boundary of phenomenon as flesh and spirit as invisibility. In becoming a 'thing', it remains difficult to name as it is *neither body nor spirit*, yet it is *both one and the other* – it becomes the embodiment of invisibility and, as such, the event of transgression. Phenomenality bestows apparitional status on the spectre through the simulation of the corporeal. In not knowing what it 'is' (as a spectral entity), one does not not know out of ignorance,<sup>70</sup> but rather because, as non-object, non-present *present*, there *is* a being there of a someone/something absent or departed which no longer belongs to knowledge (logic/science and the rational). It is the *invisibility* of the *visible* or the *visibility* of that which hitherto has been *invisible*.<sup>71</sup>

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70 It is important to remember here that the *spectres* in both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* are not immediately recognised by the leading characters, but it is perhaps the instability of conscience that reveals who they represent. De-stabilisation becomes the function of the spectre.

71 'The animated work becomes that thing, the thing that, like an elusive spectre, *engineers* [*s'ingénie*] a habitation without proper inhabiting, call it a *haunting*, of both memory and translation.' Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, p. 18.

The transcendent nature of such apparitions are prefixed, 'given form to', as it were, by carnality,<sup>72</sup> and in this way might be understood as following the model of the event of *transcendental reduction* as laid out by Husserl.

*Embodiment* gives form to the spectral but the ambiguity arises in a contention towards any condition of a priori in this manoeuvre.<sup>73</sup>

*Spectres of Marx* makes clear that dis(place)ment as an event of spacing is the precursor of the stability of any sedenterisation and as such, the memory of displacement roots such historical conceptions as nationality so that any grasp of archaism is already based in a kind of dislocation.<sup>74</sup> The root is itself a phantasm of the inconsistency of plurivocality – its retention and protention, and apparitional otherness. Equally, temporality is active in this event of spacing as interval. Haunting is historical, but not encumbered by the specificity of dating; it is not without time but is *untimely*.<sup>75</sup>

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72 Derrida states, 'the spectre is a paradoxical incorporation, the becoming-body, a certain phenomenal and carnal form of the spirit' (p. 6, *Spectres of Marx*). As *becoming-body* the spectre is neither spirit nor form.

73 Phenomenological enquiry refocuses the reduction as an act of change that is highlighted in the ambiguity between the everyday (materiality) and the transcendental.

74 We may wish to think here of Lyotard writing about the displaced other in his text *Heidegger and the 'jews'*: the memory of displacement manifest in the 'Jewish nation' undermining the fiction of Germanic rootedness. The phantasm of nation-state is itself haunted by the intolerable physical manifestation of dislocation – a nomadic parasite at the heart of German cultural life. As is later remarked, Derrida finds in Kant and Hegel a 'Semitic' relation to the sublime irruption between finite and infinite (see *The Truth in Painting*, p. 134).

75 'Untimely, it does not come to, it does not happen to, it does not befall', *Spectres of Marx*, p. 5.



The term *conjunction* is introduced to indicate a causal imperative in the form of a calling forth,<sup>76</sup> which in itself certifies nothing yet provokes *something* to happen while at the same time linguistically implying a conspiracy, the swearing of an oath in a struggle against a superior power.<sup>77</sup> The complicity of an absence in the shaping of a 'something' is not without precedent in both Derrida and Heidegger's thinking. Significantly, in Deleuze's work on difference can also be found the structure of what he refers to as the virtual idea, which bares no relation to its actual embodiment.

Gilbert Simondon's influence on Deleuze's thinking can be seen through the example of individuation in his studies of the process of *crystallisation*.<sup>78</sup> This process is a movement from what is known as a *metastable/amorphous* to a *stable/crystalline* via the introduction of a seed crystal which communicates structure to a molecule of the metastable substance and which is then passed on to others in what is called a process of individuation. What is crucial here is that the process of individuation precedes the individual and for Deleuze, the metastable is *difference in itself*. The *implicate spatium* of groundless space precedes the *explicate extensio* of representable space where

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76 The disembodied voice of conscience in Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* speaks through the spacing of silence. In his later text, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, Heidegger introduces the term *echo* and emphasises the appropriateness of silence as the proto-locale of thought.

77 This is defined as both a conjuring trick *and* the practice of oath swearing.

78 It is worth noting here what will later be discussed in Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of The Labyrinthine' – the crystal-image, which Deleuze discusses specifically in his text *Cinema 2* as the fragmentary consideration of the temporal as the key conception of post-war European cinema.

intensity as *difference* – the state of pre-individuation – haunts the explication of the individual.

In scientific terms, crystalline structures are formed by an exterior factor/element that resists inclusion/absorption through the initiation of the event, but its presencing traces an encrypted signature – a memory of what formed it, on what is formed.<sup>79</sup> The event of encryption is located in dislocation – an active between that shapes and gives form while remaining shapeless itself.<sup>80</sup>

For Kant, sensibility and therefore perceptions were primarily a passive faculty shaped by the a priori forms of space and time. The complication in Kantian thought is understood in the resistance to categorisation of space and time conceptually and Kantian thought insists on

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79 Celan makes reference to the crystalline in two poems, 'Crystal' (1952), about which John Felstiner comments in his text, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew* that the title 'speaks for pattern and solidness in poetry and spurs a memory of Nazi "Kristallnacht," the *rupture* of the poem', p. 60. It reads:

Not on my lips look for your mouth,  
not in front of the gate for the stranger,  
not in the eye for the tear.

Seven nights higher red makes for red,  
seven hearts deeper the hand knocks on the gate,  
seven roses later plashes the fountain.

(Translation by Michael Hamburger, from *Selected Poems*, p. 69.) I note here Celan's reference to the mouth with regard to later remarks on the dysfluency of 'latemouth' and the 'mouth as wound' in Chapter 2, 'Todtnauberg and the Meridian'. Also note the last stanza of 'Bitten away' (1963):

Deep  
In the time-crevasse,  
by the honeycomb-ice  
there waits, a breathcrystal,  
your unannullable  
witness.

(Translation from John Felstiner's text, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*, p. 219.)

80 As already stated, the architectonics of encryption will be explored further in Chapter 3, 'The Unheimlich Manoeuvre'.

maintaining their intuitive status. If *aesthetic* is defined by Kant as a derivation from the Greek for sensation in 'The Transcendental Aesthetic', space and time are *not* conceptions applied to intuitions, but fundamental forms of intuitions themselves.

Kant's argument states that all sensation must intrinsically have the imprint of temporality and the spatial conferred by the organisational status of both space and time.

Derrida argues in 'Différance' that the term *différance* operates as an interval which, in order to function ('to be what it is not'), must intervene and become a division that constitutes it in the present where it must divide that present and consequently everything conceived on the basis of presence.<sup>81</sup> As an interval, it indicates a spacing whereby we can understand a deferral through *becoming* that undermines the notion of presence through the interval as not only *time's becoming spatial* but also *space's becoming temporal*. Derrida's introduction of a complication through the derivation of the term *différance* as an indication of what he refers to as primordial *difference*, questions the binary imperative of presence and its a priori status. He states:

And it is this constitution of the present as a primordial and irreducibly nonsimple, and, therefore, in the strict sense nonprimordial, synthesis of traces, retentions and protentions ... That I propose to call *protowriting*,<sup>82</sup> *prototrace*, or *différance*. The latter (is) (both) spacing (and) temporalising.<sup>83</sup>

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81 Here Derrida is referring to all that belongs to the revelation of presence; 'being' – substance and subject.

82 Protowriting is understood as an inscription prior to writing – a trace.

83 Added emphasis. Derrida, 'Différance', p. 451.

This notion of the precedence of the trace (spur), indicated through the interval of *différance*, bears clear comparison with Kant's view of the alteric condition of the spatio-temporal imprint on the sensory.

Kant's argument is developed through an understanding of the inner sense of time grasped through the organisation of our experience and that no mental state can exist outside time. Likewise, the outer sense of space qualifies an independent status for all that is objectified in the world through exteriority and therefore, as outside, it is deported in a spatial relation to oneself. In denying space and time a priori status, Kant accepts that they are not conceptual, in that they do not define a plurality of instances and therefore are not latterly applied to any sensation. However, one must bear in mind that Kant's view of both space and time is understood through what he believed to be the necessity for there to be only *one* space and *one* time, from which all specific spaces and all times are derived.

As already stated, Deleuze's methodology for critiquing Kant's understanding of the faculty of the sensible is both empirical (because its object is real experience) and transcendental, because such empirical principles 'leave outside themselves the element of their own foundation'.<sup>84</sup> Deleuze replaces the designation of a supposed opposition between the historical dualism of essential/ideal and accidental/sensible, with new conceptions of the *virtual* and the *actual*. These new terms

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84 Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 328. John Rajchman notes in *The Deleuze Connections*, that '...in Deleuze's semiotics, there is no 'double articulation' – no prior or necessary bi-univocal link between word and images or saying and seeing; there is no 'schematism' as in Kant that would link intuition and concept.' P. 68.

not only confer a different condition for the recognised forms of dialectic that form the metaphysical opposition of both Kantian faculties and Platonic ideals. They offer what Deleuze considers to be a more fundamental opposition that indicates the sub-representative as the realm of the unconscious, conceptual ideas and intensities, with the conscious realm of the conceptual representations of 'common sense'.

The idea, in the Platonic sense of simple essences, is now replaced by the problem without solution in the Kantian sense, and indicates that problems are the immanent *within*, yet irreducible to, their solutions. The problem for Deleuze is implicit in the creation of a realm in which solutions might take place, but essentially they remain outside that realm and transcendental to it. This event of encryption (dis)embodies a kind of transcendental through locating it, but refuses any notion of absorption or incorporation in preference to a kind of introjection and, as already indicated, the intensity of metastability as *implicate* precedes the specificity of any *explication*.

What is implicate for Deleuze is spatium or the groundless space of pre-individuation, and this communicates form from which the specificity of *explicate*, *extensio* or representable space appears.<sup>85</sup> Deleuze conceives the points or foci that remain fixed, in a

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85 Note here that Kant, writing on aesthetics, makes this distinction between the beautiful and the sublime. He writes: 'The beautiful in nature relates to the form of an object which consists in *limitation*: the sublime on the contrary is found in an object devoid of form in so far as it immediately involves.... a representation of *limitlessness* yet with a super-added thought of its totality. Accordingly the beautiful seems to be regarded as the representation of an indeterminate concept of understanding, the sublime as the representation of the indeterminate concept of reason.' *The Critique of Judgement*, §23. 245, pp. 90-91.

topological sense, during the process of a transformation as the form of pre-individuation that mediates for individuation. Although they are implicit in the structuring of any domain/realm of possible solutions, they are explicit in the actuality of any preconceived notion of structure, and as virtual rather than actual, they determine a paradoxical place that is neither existence nor non-existence.<sup>86</sup>

What is important to remember here is that the virtual is involved in the event of embodiment while remaining without body itself (arguably, the invisible topos). This does not mean that it is an amorphous, undifferentiated mass, but rather an event of distribution mapped by singularities without the specificity or particularity of an identity, but which provide the genetic code for the generation of a specificity through difference – *a haunting!*

The differential relation between these singular points (foci) indicates the potential for various forms of embodiment in a zone where possible actualisations are continually *forming* and *un-forming* (protentions and retentions). To locate a problem, it can only be realised through the conglomeration of all possible actualisations and embodiments. For Deleuze, problems occupy a paradoxical space between existence and non-existence, and the structure of the virtual idea bares no relation to its embodiment.

In his study on Husserl, David Bell discusses a process of cross-referencing, understood as an *adumbration*

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86 It is worth noting here the subsistence of the virtual as a structuring for the actual while bearing no resemblance to what is actualised. Also consider the concept of enframing posited by Heidegger in 'The Question Concerning Technology' (*Part 1*, pp. 3–35) where the framework (what Heidegger refers to as 'enframing') for technology and machination is essentially *nothing technological*.

or event/point of various perspectival aspects: 'Every adumbration ... contains within it a structure of "retentions" and "protentions" that are a function of memory, imagination, expectation and habit.'<sup>87</sup> Each adumbration is surrounded by a horizon of other possible adumbrations – essentially an event of the spectral via the haunting of one possibility with other possibilities. Not only mapped externally via this horizon, they are also structured internally by a multiplicity of what are termed *retentions* and *protentions*. This forms what we might call reciprocity of contractive and expansive possibilities within the variety of perspectival aspects.

In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas proposes that:

[S]ince Husserl the whole of phenomenology is the promotion of the idea of *horizon* which for it plays a role equivalent to that of a *concept* in Classical Idealism; an existent arises upon a *ground* that extends *beyond* it, as an individual arises from a concept.<sup>88</sup>

The *existent* becomes the silhouette on the horizon of *being* and as such, *being* becomes the guarantor of that existent's independence. Derrida notes in *Spectres of Marx* that '[i]n the movement of protention, the present is retained and gone beyond as past present in order to constitute *another* primordial and original Absolute, another living present.'<sup>89</sup>

Derrida's play with what I will call a 'phonetic deferral of sameness' (similitude) undermines the terminology of similarity while exploiting the very structure of such a

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87 David Bell, *Husserl*, p. 190.

88 Added emphasis. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 45.

89 Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*, p. 58.

conceptualisation in the epistemological canon of metaphysical enquiry. The operation of similitude in this context is crucially and essentially spectral, and is haunted by what always remains other (alteric) to it. Derrida's phonetic play emphasises that alterity through its invisibility in the universalisation of logic. Motivated by the immanence of such conceptualisation of a logic of alterity; I use all these terms advisedly, and it would be worth considering the historical context for otherness/spectrality in modern thinking with a view to reconfiguring the imperative towards objective similarity from within the framework of epistemology.

Perhaps an appropriate point of departure for this exploration of the spectral, given the proposal of this text to consider a so-called aesthetics of hauntology, would be to return to Kant's transcendental aesthetic.<sup>90</sup> Kant, in *The Critique of Pure Reason* writing about the transcendental aesthetic, distinguishes between the cognitive powers that relate to objects and how they are composed, as *intuition* and *conceptual*. What is distinctive about the former is its base in the phenomenology of the immediate and the cognitive power of sensibility and the specificity of an object. The latter is based in the cognitive power of understanding, and indicates a kind of mediation between the features that several things/objects have in common. In this provisional distinction, Kant proposes that the particularity of the singular representation (intuition) precedes the generality of objects (conceptual) where the

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90 The topic of Kant's aesthetic is to analyse the form of experience by isolating sensibility from understanding and separating off from it everything that belongs to sensation. Kant's imperative towards a transcendent ideality for aesthetics is found in the presupposition of the existence of experience.



application of the concept belongs to a kind of which there could be other instances.

What is crucial here is that, for Kant, our intuition is 'sensible' and not intellectual, and that what he calls 'sensible representations' are formed through receptivity and passivity – through being affected. Intuitions (on their own) do not amount to cognition of objects, they merely 'give' and can only relate to an object under the condition of being brought 'under a concept'.

Understanding is the producer of concepts and then the applier of those concepts to objects and is both active and spontaneous.<sup>91</sup>

It indicates a generality that distinguishes it from the particularity of singular representations, which remain essentially intuitive. The sensibility of the intuitive through the power of the cognitive assumes an essentially passive and receptive demeanour that distinguishes it from understanding, which Kant indicates to be both active and spontaneous.

However, the mutually irreducible functions of intuition and understanding/thinking remain heterogeneous. This double movement implies something crucial through this divisive event of cognition. For Kant, intuitions cannot amount to the cognition of any object as they only 'give' and relation to an object requires that such an object be

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91 We need to consider here the proposal by Deleuze and Guattari in the text *What Is Philosophy?* This suggests that philosophy is the creation of concepts and where the insistence is not on the philosophical event as contemplative or reflective, but always essentially immanent. The implication here is not that the philosophical process is 'in addition' to the intuitive in the sense that Kant suggests understanding making sense of the immediate, and therefore a posteriori. When Kant proposes understanding as both active and spontaneous, he implies a creative event that may be concomitant with Deleuze and Guattari's immanence.

conditioned by being 'brought under a concept'. Equally, if all thought is removed from experience, no knowledge of any object remains, as concepts on their own lack objects; therefore Kant proposes that the knowledge of an object requires the conjunction of concept and intuition. He stated that:

Without sensibility, no object would be given to us, without understanding no object would be thought. Thoughts without context are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind. It is, therefore, just as necessary to make our concepts sensible, that is, to add the object to them in intuition, as to make intuitions intelligible, that is, to bring them under concepts. Those two powers or capacities *cannot exchange their functions*. The understanding can intuit nothing; the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise.<sup>92</sup>

Why is it relevant to consider in such detail this fundamental proposition of Kantian epistemology with regard to a discussion around the concepts of aesthetics and hauntology? It is perhaps an obvious perception of a kind of alterity in the divisive event of cognition that Kant refers to as *knowledge*. We may therefore initially propose to sketch out the idea that that intuition haunts understanding in an equality that may be inverted to presume that understanding may also haunt all that is intuitive.<sup>93</sup> The proposal that intuition and understanding are irreducible indicates an essential difference fundamental to such an epistemological relationship. This distinguishes

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92 Added emphasis. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* § 51, p. 93.

93 It is important to remember here our earlier contention that we were not fall into the trap of mere inversion as a means of uncovering the rift. I refer back to our earlier consideration with regard to aesthetics and hauntology – 'mere inversion' dismisses the complexity of the intervention of the rift.

actuality from possibility through what insists (*encysts*) in the sensibility of intuition, and the discursiveness of understanding, there is also what Kant describes as a common root that remains unknowable.<sup>94</sup>

The question that arises is one that we may think of as a kind of temporality with regard to precedence in the relationship between intuition and understanding. Precedence implies temporality by indicating a before or perhaps an a priori, and what becomes clear in Kantian epistemology is that such privileged status is given to space and time.<sup>95</sup> As already stated, Kant's view of space and time as a priori intuitions meant for him that they did not derive from experience and as intuitions, and were both immediate and non-conceptual.<sup>96</sup>

A question now arises: how can there be something that is *a priori* in intuition, in contradiction to the natural conception of sense experience as entirely a posteriori?

Kant proposes what he terms the *synthetic judgements* as a priori and as such, are made true by objects and *not* concepts. Intuitions are the representations whereby objects are given a priori judgements and require a priori grounds. Synthetic a priori judgement is made possible if there is a priori intuition on which it may be grounded. In

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94 Is the implication for Kant's 'unknowable' in a sense subjective and is this subject some kind of divinity – 'God'?

95 The Background to Kant's understanding of space and time is found in the Absolutist thinking of Newton and the Relational thinking of Leibniz. Newton states that space is an absolutely real self-subsistent container which would exist with no physical objects contained within it – a self-sufficient substance. Time is the same. For Leibniz, space is a logical construction out of the relations between objects and any statement about space is therefore reduced to one about objects and their interactions.

96 They are both irreducible (contra Leibniz) and not real in the absolute sense (contra Newton).

the *Third Critique* Kant distinguishes Judgement's<sup>97</sup> a priori principle in relation to that of feeling, as distinctive to understanding's relation to knowledge/empirical fact and the relation of practical reason to desire. As such, this mediation allows us to see the empirical world conforming to the ends of practical reason, and thus practical reason as adapted to our knowledge of the empirical world.

This faculty of Judgement, then, mediates (bridges, as Derrida extrapolates in *The Truth in Painting*) between the faculties of understanding (the First Critique) and practical reason (the Second Critique). The fundamental problem for aesthetics as a judgement, however, is through the incompatibility of aesthetics, understood as the expression of subjective experience and judgement as a claim of universal assent. It is crucial to our understanding and proposed use of the Derridian term *hauntology* in the context of this text that we clarify the need to explore in such detail this Kantian epistemology of synthetic judgement. We must look here to Kantian appearance as a means of navigation towards the spectral.

Appearance is not, for Kant, a manifold of sensations in a posteriori sense, but presupposes that sensations are in some way ordered or have form. Experience, in this sense, cannot be all content: it must have form, as to be without form would be buzzing confusion.

The spectrality of such form is significant to the understanding of appearance in relation to sensations.

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97 As stated earlier, the capitalisation of Judgement is indicative of Kant's prioritising of the term.

To be conscious of its experience as 'something', a subject must understand that 'something' as ordered in some way. In this way, form is the unifying factor that allows the content of experience to show itself as a structure of relation's a priori supplied by our power of intuition. What is clear from this is that what gives order to sensation cannot derive from that sensation and is essentially outside that sensation.<sup>98</sup>

The form of appearance is a relational structure through the power of intuition, but its form cannot derive from either intuition or thought; it is located between sensation and thought and is prior to the application of any concept and, like thought, does not derive from sensation. It is evident from this that Kant proposed a kind of intuition that is independent of sensation and which he defined as 'pure' intuition, which is distinguished from 'empirical' intuition.<sup>99</sup> We may momentarily recall here an earlier comment that defined a common root between the actual and the possible (intuition and understanding) as something that Kant defined as 'not knowable'. I would suggest here that the heart of Kantian epistemology, with its root in the

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98 It may be worth reiterating here earlier remarks that Heidegger in 'The Question Concerning Technology' made regarding enframing, that the essence of technology is nothing technological – a suggestion that the *abysmal encryption* of alterity is that which gives order. It is also worth reminding ourselves here of the natural formation of crystalline structures by the seed crystal; they are formed by an alteric factor that is not essentially crystalline (genetic?) – it is other to the formation of the crystal yet the crystal is dependent on it for its formation. I also introduce here, as a precursor to later remarks in Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine', the notion of the seed crystal with reference to the *crystal-image* and temporality in Deleuze's writings on cinema, particularly in his text *Cinema 2*.

99 Kant now defines two kinds of intuition – 'pure', containing nothing belonging to sensation, the form of appearances; and 'empirical', understood as the specificity of sensations and objects in the world.

context of intuition and thought, pure and empirical intuition, is essentially alteric.

Kant's aesthetic indicates two forms of beauty: dependent and pure. The former relies on the understanding of the object being 'brought under a concept', for example, painting as an expression of content, or a building as the performance of a function, which, as such, is less 'pure'. The latter allows for the relaxation of scientific and practical thought and the entry into a free play of what he describes as purposiveness without purpose.<sup>100</sup>

This is an indication of the ground of aesthetic beauty, which abounds in nature and *not* in art.<sup>101</sup> The unity of free beauty is purified of all interest and therefore is of no definite purpose (what Kant terms *disinterested*), but reflects back at us an order of origin within ourselves as purposive beings. What is important here is that free beauty's capacity to indicate origin is not through its involvement in the specificity of purpose, but in what Kant defines as the 'indeterminate mark of purpose'. The unity

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100 This is understood as a beauty purified of all interests and therefore as having no definite purpose. It reflects back at us an order of origin within ourselves as purposive beings and bears the unspecified/indeterminate marks of purpose, yet it is without specific purpose itself. The perception of purposiveness is not understood as a 'what is' in an ontological sense, but as an 'as if'. This does not conform to a sense of infinite possibility but rather the inescapability of a 'we must', which ties us to the act of seeing the world in a certain way so as to discover our 'proper' place within it.

101 This is indicated as the sublime. Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting* that the sublime is essentially a violent experience of indirection and superabundance, which is preceded in man by inhibition, arrest and suspension. He argues that this conjunction of pleasure/attraction with repulsion indicates that the trait of attraction has the double meaning of affirmation and negation – 'What the "pleasing-oneself-in" of the sublime "contains" is less a "positive pleasure" than respect or admiration. That's why it "deserves to be called a negative pleasure".' He also comments: 'It appears to do violence to the imagination. And it is all the more sublime for that. The measure of the sublime has the measure of this unmeasured, of violent incommensurability', p. 129.

previously described displays purposiveness without purpose.

However, the perception of this purposiveness is not of a 'what is' but rather an 'as if', which, unlike what has already been speculated on in the discussion of difference, does not conform to an infinite possibility, but the inescapability of a 'we must', which demands the viewing of the world in a certain way through which we can ascertain our proper place within it.

Aesthetic judgement frees us from the rigour of both theoretical insight and moral endeavour and, as an idea of transcendental design, is supersensible.<sup>102</sup>

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As an aesthetic idea, it imprints on the senses an intimation of the transcendental realm, transcending any natural example to make us aware of something beyond description from which any natural example can only be seen as just a pale reflection. The aesthetic experience involves the perpetual striving to pass beyond the limitations and specificity of any particular point of view to attempt to embody what cannot be thought.

The philosophy of beauty moves through Kant's attempt to free the limitations and particularity of a specific perspective based in the inevitable necessity of our own self-conscious condition, towards an aesthetic experience where we view ourselves in relation to the transcendental –

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102 Kant likens aesthetic judgement to the idea of reason and the concept of purposiveness as 'beyond' the pragmatics of 'mere sensibility'. Derrida argues that: 'The sublime cannot inhabit any sensible form. There are natural objects that are beautiful, but there cannot be a natural object that is sublime. The true sublime, the sublime proper and properly speaking [*Das eigentliche Erhabene*] relates only to the idea of reason.' *The Truth in Painting*, p. 131.

a reality beyond the realm of thought. Kant's distinction between beauty and the sublime finds the former harmonising between nature and our own faculties and infusing this relation with purposiveness and understanding of all that surrounds us. Kant makes the distinction between aesthetics and Judgement by claiming that the former is an expression of subjective experience and therefore directly related to that experience, whereas the latter claims universal assent.

This suggests that the Judgement of taste cannot be based on a conceptual framework, as that would lay it open to dispute, hence the need to distinguish *dependent* and *pure*. Kant's philosophy of beauty demands a relation between our own perspective based in what he describes as the 'necessary condition of our own self-consciousness', while simultaneously addressing the sublime as the overcoming of purposiveness and the renouncement of any attempt to understand or control the infinite greatness of the world. As such, the mind is 'incited to abandon sensibility'.<sup>103</sup> To judge the sublime, we demand a universal recognition of the immanence of the supersensible realm and, as such, it recognises the intimation of a transcendental origin from which no reasoned argument can be drawn.<sup>104</sup> Purposiveness (in beauty) offers a sense of harmony between nature and our faculties that is not bound to the specificity or particularity of a pragmatic purpose,

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103 Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, p. 92.

104 For Kant, all morality stems from the transcendental point of view. The awesomeness and solemnity of natural phenomenon make man aware of the sense of his own limitations and allows Kant to extend from the sublime a context for the faith in a Supreme Being. We may wish to reflect back to earlier comments regarding the context for teleology and unknowing with reference to intuition and knowledge in the First Critique.



and therefore offers an 'as if' as the indeterminate condition for aesthetical transcendence that is still inescapable from and conditional for any worldly praxis. However, the *realm of the transcendent* that Kant advocates as the pre-conceptual aesthetic experience still conforms to the sensibilities of purity and impurity, and it predicates affirmation over negation and as yet indicates, but does not explore, the possibility of a transcendent terrain of interval and *between*. However, as Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting*: 'The "pleasing-oneself-in" of the sublime is purely or merely negative [*nur negativ*] to the extent that it suspends play and elevates seriousness.'<sup>105</sup>

This constitutes an act of violence through what Derrida defines as an occupation that is related to moral law, whereby violence is done not by the imposition of reason on the senses, but by the imagination itself. This turning of violence against itself by imagination constitutes a self-sacrificial operation that subsumes the legality which calls it to order – what Derrida refers to as 'the law of the sublime as much as the sublimity of the law'.<sup>106</sup>

John Rajchman points out that Deleuze critiques an aesthetics based in the Kantian notion of a transcendent manifold as the sublimation of sensation to what he refers to as aesthetic pieties. He argues that Kantian disinterestedness in the idealisation of art is merely recast in Heideggerian *Gelassenheit* and Freudian sublimation. Deleuzian sensation pushes beyond any such aesthetics of transcendence and the belief in the precedence of another

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105 Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p. 130.

106 Ibid., p. 131. Unlike that of the beautiful, the principle of the sublime must, as Derrida points out, 'be sought in ourselves who *project* [*hineinbringen*] the sublime *into* nature, ourselves as rational beings', p. 132 (added emphasis).

world, in favour of a new logic of paradox and the nonsensical, which proffers the commitment to the possibilities of this one: 'The category of sense replaces that of truth when true and false describe the problem and not the propositions that respond to it.'<sup>107</sup>

For Levinas, any criticism is the basic capacity for human dwelling and indicates a primordial relation with alterity.<sup>108</sup> This spectral other as the ordering/unifying factor for experience may be more closely linked with terms employed by Levinas in his work around his alteric term, the *il y a*.<sup>109</sup> Levinas exploits this notion of the *il y a* in all the ambiguity of its indeterminateness as an impersonal 'isness' – a precursor that precedes any recognised epistemological enquiry of the isolated subject. It is before revaluation or any conceptual framework that can order it. There are distinct parallels to be drawn here with Deleuze's thinking on the process of individuation in *Difference and Repetition*, as indicated earlier.<sup>110</sup>

Levinas argues that ontological enquiry persists in the determinant specificity of a *being* through 'isness' and therefore in the subjectivity of identity – an '*it is*'.

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107 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 145.

108 This is distinct from the Heideggerian notion of dwelling as essentially a poetic experience.

109 The *il y a* translates as 'there is' and is imbued with horror as it is neither interior or exterior – a 'between' that is the impersonal sheer fact of *being*. We may also need to consider here *lekton* – one of the four Stoical categories of incorporeals, understood as what is expressible – a 'between' as 'extra-being'.

110 This refers to Deleuze's conception of a pre-individuation as a priori to the specificity of individuation in *Difference and Repetition*.

The epistemological quest for accurate knowledge of the world perceived marginalises any other discourse that resists sublimation into the tradition of the isolated subject.<sup>111</sup> The de-personalising of *being*<sup>112</sup> creates a trauma of consciousness and the impossibility for symbolic process, but what is significant is that the a priori nature of 'there is', is not a negation of rationality in the sense of irrationality – a mere inversion – but a positive force that refuses avoidance and exclusion via possibility.

By proposing 'there is' as a critique of the ontological 'it is', Levinas does not procure a new lingual form to do away with *being*, but finds in ontology the tools to reconsider what Husserl refers to as *ontological commitment*. It may also be worth remembering that the concept of the transcendental, crucial to Husserl and Levinas, is founded upon the manoeuvre of bringing the outside inside while retaining its essential exteriority – an event of encryption that is not incorporation.

Consciousness is implicitly subjective and therefore, in a sense, already torn away from the 'there is'. To be conscious is already to be 'outside of' and as such compelled to construct consciousness into a subjectivity formed of a certain framework of rationality and logic. The so-called darkness of the unconscious is suffused with the light of consciousness, but Levinas's notion of exteriority

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111 For Levinas, Phenomenology comes closest to encountering what he refers to as an 'ethical responsibility' that critiques the tradition of epistemology, which places knowledge and perception via an isolated subject at the centre of any discourse. However, the shift that Levinas proposes is from Husserl's transcendental ego whose activity is directed towards objects in the field of first-hand experience, towards an ethical reflection of human concern for others extended through the work of Heidegger and Sartre.

112 The impersonalness of *being* considered by Levinas is concomitant with Heidegger's interpretation as expressed particularly in *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*.

extends beyond the traditional recognised dichotomy of the historical discourse of thinking/philosophy.<sup>113</sup> *There is (il y a)* is neither transcendent nor based in the ego nor any form of the personally symbolic and '[i]t insinuates itself in the night as an undetermined menace of space itself disengaged from its function as a receptacle for objects, as a means of access to beings'.<sup>114</sup>

It is the *particular* that eludes/haunts the *universal* – the horror/shadow of *being* that is exposed as impersonal neutrality, and relocates any enquiry from the clarity of ontological and epistemological discourse, to the nudity of alteric otherness.<sup>115</sup>

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The historical understanding of the transcendent as that which can be conceptualised, theorised, visualised, objectified and therefore universalised is in contrast to Levinas's use of the term. He understands it as a rupture, an opening up to the *other* as resisting any reduction to sameness (Western philosophy's historical drive to objectify and universalise) where similitude's dominance makes the universal the goal of thought.<sup>116</sup>

Phenomenology's aim was to reduce the gap between thought and embodiment – being and existence and to

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113 This is understood as the discourse of interior/exterior, presence/absence and sense/nonsense.

114 *The Levinas Reader*, p. 31.

115 I am reminded here in Levinas's and Blanchot's critique of Heidegger's Being of the existent as impersonal neutrality, of post-war criticism of Heidegger as 'non-humanistic' with reference to his silence about the Holocaust/Shoah.

116 The universal is defined as independent of any given set of concrete circumstances and is therefore disembodied and idealist.

advocate relation as the new motivation.<sup>117</sup> Whereas, in attributing a primacy to alterity, is Levinas setting the *other* up as the universal in the formlessness of a waiting to be conceptualised or universalised and therefore just a formal *other* of negation and not a true alterity? The distinction is important here: otherness as just another version of sameness (its negation), or an irreducible other that is foreign to the 'order of the same'?<sup>118</sup> The other for Levinas arises in the *relation to others* rather than in relation to the universality of laws and is therefore a relation of ethical responsibility.<sup>119</sup>

Such responsibility towards the other engages with its foreignness of irreducibility that is at once transcendent, in that it is not just the negation of sameness and therefore an a posteriori corruption of universality and its drive to conceptualise. It is essentially outside and persists as an overarching alterity that maintains difference as the framework of indeterminacy – deferral as the motivation against ontological order that both Husserl and Heidegger advocate in their thinking. The event of presencing only operates as such if as an occasion, we comprehend and

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117 It is worth remembering here the provisional discussion on relation at the opening of this chapter: the significance of between and the integrity of the *rift*.

118 The distinction is important in relation to Phenomenology, as Husserl's attempt to reinvigorate the transcendental via a new relationship with existence is undermined by Levinas, who wishes to expose what is essentially alien in transcendental otherness and therefore unable to conform to the phenomenological persistence in a formal dichotomy.

119 Ethics is understood here as the practical relation of one to another that is prior to ontology. Husserl's project is to locate signification in existence; Levinas's is in responsibility for the *other*. The communication, which must be established in order to enter into a relation with the other means that the relation is no longer ontology, but rather religion – a place where knowledge cannot take precedence over sociality. This is relevant to what will be later discussed in Chapter 2, 'Todtนาuberg and the Meridian', with regard to the relationship between Heidegger and Celan and manifest in Celan's poem, 'Todtนาuberg'.

maintain the metaphysical binary of presence and absence.<sup>120</sup> The former (presence), as illumination, can only be understood via a simultaneous grasp of its counterpart shadow – however, the full glare of the always entirely present can only banish shadow to an ever-diminishing role that can only be maintained in proximity to the privileged ideality.<sup>121</sup>

In 'Reality and its Shadow', Levinas proposes that the artwork is 'an event of obscuring', in that the consciousness of representation is in the knowledge that the object represented is essentially not there.

The perceived elements of any artwork do not serve as symbols in the absence of the object – they do not force its presence, as it were, but by their very presence insist on its absence.<sup>122</sup>

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120 Even as an active process, presencing is haunted in its motivation by absence. As an active verb, *to presence* must embrace absencing as its hidden imperative – the shadow to any illumination.

121 It may be pertinent to remember our earlier remarks on consciousness and the unconscious in Levinas with regard to illumination and shadow.

122 Hegel states in his lectures on aesthetics, 'For the beauty of art is the beauty that is born – born again, that is – of the mind.' In Bosanquet's translation, *Geist* can mean *both* mind *and* 'spirit' and an allusion to a biblical source can be detected: 'born of water and of the Spirit' (John 3: 5) refers to spiritual rebirth. Natural objects, materials, etc., are 'transformed' by spirit (in this context, the human mind) and are reborn as works of art. This relation activates aesthetics and specifically determines the sublime.

For Hegel, the mind/spirit (*Geist*) is the contributory factor that elevates what is natural to art. What distinguishes between them is not conceived in terms of hierarchical quantitative judgements, but by saying that the unique contribution of *Geist* to artistic beauty is that 'mind and mind only, is capable of truth'.<sup>123</sup> Natural beauty cannot be systemised as it is too vague and destitute of a criterion, but Hegel introduces the term *utility* in an attempt to compile the natural as product into a 'science of use'.<sup>124</sup>

In the forms of art we seek repose and animation in place of the austerity of the reign of law and the sombre self-concentration of thought: we would exchange the *shadowland* of the idea for cheerful vigorous reality.<sup>125</sup>

The transcendent spirit in Hegel's aesthetic transforms materiality through elevation via the conduit (thread) of a transcendent *Geist* and conceives ideality and its law as imparting restrictions, against the 'caprice and lawlessness of the mind'.

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123 This combines two ideas:

- (i) The mind discerns the truth about other things, e.g., discovers the laws governing the solar system and focuses on and accesses the beauty of sunsets, etc.
- (ii) The mind is independent and self-contained, having such qualities as beauty underderivatively. The beauty of nature is a reflection of the beauty that belongs to the mind. It is an imperfect and incomplete mode of being.

124 He also uses the term *curative*, which has implications for the work in Chapter 2, 'Todtnauberg and the Meridian', particularly with reference to comments on the *pharmakos*. Beauty and art 'form the bright adornment of all our surroundings', 'soothing the sadness of our condition', and 'keeping evil at a distance'. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, Chapter 1 (part vi), p. 5.

125 Ibid., p. 7, Chapter 1 (part vii) (added emphasis).

In this way ideality becomes the spectral transformer of the sensual via transcendence.<sup>126</sup>

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Death for Heidegger is *impossibility* – the *possibility* of *impossibility*, but for Levinas mortality is beyond the capacity of what he refers to as the ‘I can’; the impersonal otherness of the ‘there is’ allows for the possibility of taking life as it were, but not the capacity for ‘taking death’; it is rather the *impossibility* of *possibility*.<sup>127</sup> We may conclude that, historically, the ‘wholly present’ and ‘wholly absent’ correlate in their dialectic with illumination and shadow as a clear manifestation of the metaphysically persistent binary. However, the movement of becoming indicates a more complex articulation, which ruptures this opposition and its hierarchy by creating a fissure between the clear paradigm of epistemological presence and absence – a ‘between’ or interval or rift. Mindful of this, to propose *becoming* as a more appropriate operation of the event by which any dialectic can be undermined and reconfigured, must take into account that the very binary it seeks to rethink still determines it within the hierarchies of being and non-being,

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126 This differs from Derrida in that the directional nature of the impact of *Geist* as transcendent still conforms to a Platonic ideality of imposition. Derrida’s spectre undermines that chronology by insinuating itself via encryption and discontinuity. Levinas speaks of the materiality/component/element as old garments occupying a place to make a removal as though the represented objects *died*, were degraded, and were disincarnated in its own reflection.’ (added emphasis). Levinas, ‘Reality and its Shadow’, p. 136. Later in the same text, he states, ‘[t]he artist moves in a universe that precedes ... the world of creation, a universe that the artist has already gone beyond by his thought and his everyday actions.’ Also note here remarks made by Derrida on predetermination in *The Truth in Painting*, p. 21.

127 This is understood as a ‘coming toward’ rather than a ‘that which I am toward’; ‘isness’ is depersonalised in the *other*.



truth and non-truth, sense and non-sense, understood through ratio.

Derrida's suggestion (quoted at the beginning of this chapter) that the traditional scholar can *only* think in binaries, does not suggest that such oppositional hierarchies should be done away with, but rather that closer scrutiny must uncover that exteriority which is encrypted as a spatio-temporal event. To suggest a literal relation for shadow with any binary counter-part is to fall, if not cautious, into the persistence of a distinction between affirmation and negation as the contingency by which shadow might be proposed and exploited.<sup>128</sup> Levinas described a doubling of reality with its image as indicated by the idea of shadow or reflection. He argued that '[t]he whole of reality bears on its face its own allegory, outside of its own revelation and its truth'.<sup>129</sup>

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The work of art/artistic event is then the obscuring of *being* in images and therefore the arresting of that *being* in a temporal 'between' – a *meanwhile*. In citing two contemporary possibilities for *being*, Levinas seeks to rethink disclosure and its function in the artwork outside revelatory predisposition commonly attributed to it historically. The simultaneity of idea and soul – being and its disclosure – is superseded by the simultaneity of being and its reflection, where the absolute reveals itself to reason and also lends itself to a kind of erosion outside

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128 I am thinking here of the *cinematic* – the object of the film occurs in the temporal flux between illumination and shadow – *other* to illumination and *other* to shadow. Also note here Deleuze on the object as present image in *Cinema 1*.

129 Levinas, 'Reality and its Shadow', p. 136.

causality: 'Non-truth is not an obscure residue of *being*, but is its sensible character itself, by which there is resemblance and images in the world.'<sup>130</sup>

For Levinas all art depends on rhythm (and is ultimately musical) and produces a state of intoxication where distinctions between subject and object are blurred and dissolve into impersonality and anonymity. Its time is not that of the real world but of the dream – a between time where any future is replaced by fatality.

As a shadow of reality, it can only be engaged through criticism (questions of technique and influence 'wake' art from its 'dream').<sup>131</sup> Husserl's definition of the image as 'the real object minus its being posited as really present anywhere' is critiqued by Levinas, who proposes that consciousness of the absence of the object should be understood as an alteration of the *being* of the object. The phenomenology of the picture in clarifying the *phenomenology* of the image destines the virtue of the image in its own right so that it is no longer merely the medium through which something else might be reached. Unlike a sign or a symbol,<sup>132</sup> the image and therefore representation are reversals or allegories – the shadows that reality casts before it.

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130 Ibid., p. 136.

131 In the introduction to *House of Leaves*, the character Johnny Truant states, 'Old shelters-television, magazines, movies-won't protect you anymore. You might try scribbling in a journal, on a napkin, maybe even in the margins of this book. That's when you'll discover you no longer *trust the very walls you always took for granted. Even the hallways you've walked a hundred times will feel longer, much longer, and the shadows, any shadow at all, will suddenly seem deeper, much, much, deeper*', p. xiii (added emphasis).

132 Signs and symbols understood here as that which is tied to that which are signified through them.

The world of the artistic imagination and of imagination in general is not merely a reflection or re-presentation of reality, but a double of reality presenting its *sensible truth*.<sup>133</sup>

In 'The Transcendence of Words', Levinas states, '[n]on-sense is the most evenly distributed thing in the world'.<sup>134</sup>

Understanding sense outside the remit of the negation/affirmation dichotomy allows us to grasp a conception that no longer relies on the privileging of reason as the essential component to understanding. What is 'not' sense in the order of reasonableness remains other to it – its shadow, and as such, a bifurcation. In his introduction to 'The Transcendence of Words', Seán Hand comments:

An original bifurcation means that any static identity or representation overflows from the beginning. The primary *space* which this creates is one filled with *anxiety* for Levinas, unless it includes a relation with someone that is the necessity of critique. This necessary communication means that there is no pure sound prior to the word: sound or words produce a transcendence by breaking the world of self-sufficiency. Speech situates the self in relation to the other in a way that shows us how being for the other is the first fact of existence.<sup>135</sup>

When Levinas states that thought is originally erasure, he refers to a network of associations in which what is key is not that ideas displace one another, but the assurance of the presence of one idea *in* another.<sup>136</sup>

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133 Added emphasis. *The Genealogy of Ethics*, 'Tropes', p. 195.

134 Levinas, 'The Transcendence of Words', from *The Levinas Reader*, p. 145.

135 Levinas, Introduction to 'The Transcendence of Words', p. 144.

136 '[T]he thought at the moment of its erasure still influences through its erased meaning; its different meanings participate with one another.' 'The Transcendence of Words', p. 146.

The association of ideas understood through this level of erasure takes thought beyond the classical categories of representation and identity.<sup>137</sup> Space is no longer conceived as the accommodator of things, but rather as that which is delineated through their erasure. This line of ambiguity is where the skeletal function of the linear is shed in the framing of the pictorially spatial in favour of an infinity of possible connections where the modern work of art proposes a state of incompleteness and possibility through the simultaneity and ambiguity of erasure.

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137 Such an overflowing has a close affinity with Bergsonian duration, but Bergson's concept represents this negation of identity as a process of evolution against the primordial status of Levinas's notion of erasure which 'affirms the simultaneity of multiplicity and the irreducibly ambiguous nature of consciousness'. (Levinas, 'The Transcendence of Words', p. 146) Deleuze's appropriation of Bergsonian duration is particularly evident in the texts *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*. This will be explored in more detail in a later chapter, but it suffices here to mention that duration incorporates both temporality and spacing, and where the precedent is no longer to consider time as the mere diminutive of space but to propose *durée* as the relation of time-space. Levinas argues that overflowing lies beyond the classical categorisation of representation and identity and looks towards Bergsonian duration noting that Bergson's conception represents the negation of identity as a process of evolution. Duration here is not explicit, as such variation is both simultaneous *and* spatial and therefore there is no etudic process towards completion.

Derrida says of Levinas that he respects the zone or layer of traditional truth, but his thought makes us tremble through dislocation and move towards a prophetic speech that is no longer the site or home for a god.<sup>138</sup>

The bifurcation of the other as an event of difference promotes the status of ambiguity, so that intrinsic meaning is deferred in an attempt to liberate thought from the *same/being* and the *one/phenomenon* through the interval of deferral. This may be provisionally conceived as a difference between what is and what is not, when perhaps it is more appropriate to think of it in terms of a complication of similitude – a *différance*.<sup>139</sup>

In the preface to Derrida's 'An Introduction to the Origin of Geometry', in a footnote, he attempts to define *différance* via language:

Here in the usage of our language we must consider that the ending *-ance* is undecided between active and passive. And we shall see why what is designated by 'difference' is neither simply active nor simply passive, that it announces or rather recalls something like a middle voice, that it speaks of an operation, which cannot be thought of either as a passion or as an action of a subject upon an object, as starting from an

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138 In the text 'Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book', Derrida speaks of the coincidence of 'right to speech' and 'duty to interrogate'. He says, 'But if this right is absolute, it is because it does not depend upon some accident *within history*. The breaking of the Tables (tablets?) articulates, first of all, a *rupture* within God as the origin of history. ( ) God separated himself for himself in order to let us speak, in order to astonish and to interrogate us. He did so not by speaking but by keeping still, by letting *silence* interrupt his voice and his signs, by letting the Tables be broken,' p. 67 (added emphasis). Derrida remarks in *The Truth in Painting* that, '[a] piece of wasteland [*terrain vague*] has no fixed limit. Without edge, without any border marking property ... *Vague* [i.e., *wanders, roams* –Trans] is a movement without its goal, not a movement without goal but without its goal', pp. 92–3.

139 Christopher Norris, writing on Husserl, describes the transcendental reduction an oscillation that disables materiality, perhaps the intervention of interval – the vibration of undecidability.

agent or from a patient, or on the basis of, or in view of any of these terms.<sup>140</sup>

As already stated, the essential alterity of *différance* is not to be defined exclusively by the operation of the 'not' of difference, the complications of identity and the universality of sameness. It continues to specify a locale of a 'between', which is perhaps still organised and essentially defined by the dialectic of presence and absence and within which the pre-existent a priori is maintained.<sup>141</sup> The trauma of the 'there is', as understood by Levinas, is formed by the indeterminate ambiguity of its 'isness'. It comes to thought before either personal revelation or the rigorous necessity of any concept that can order it.<sup>142</sup>

The distinction employed between *difference* and *différance* is significant to the understanding of the spectral, and in as far as difference retains some proximity to the universality of sameness, *différance* articulates a trauma of more complex irreducible undecidability.<sup>143</sup>

Derrida articulates two questions with regard to Husserl's *The Origin of Geometry* in his introduction. The first concerns the status of what he describes as the 'ideal

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140 Preface to 'An Introduction to the Origin of Geometry' by Derrida, p. 4, footnote 12. I also draw attention here to earlier comments on active and passive with regard to Kant writing on intuition and knowledge.

141 I am thinking here of the primacy of alterity defined by Levinas as not a negation in the sense of the irrational, a void, but as a positive force, essentially particular and eluding the universal. It is important to remember here that the other, in the sense of *difference*, may still be defined in terms of 'waiting to be conceptualised and universalised' – the *other* of Western thought as just another version of the *same*. Levinas is looking for an *other* that is irreducible to the universality of difference and foreign to the order of the same.

142 As neither transcendent nor based in the specificity of the ego nor personally symbolic, it is truly nowhere.

143 '[T]he crisis of the text is not brought about by polysemy or the overabundance of meaning but rather by the very inability to decide meaning', 'An Introduction to the Origin of Geometry', Preface, p. 5.

objects of science'<sup>144</sup> (geometry being one example) and their production by identifying acts as sameness and the constitution of exactitude through idealisation.<sup>145</sup> The second considers the interrelated and concrete conditions for the possibility of these ideal objects through language and intersubjectivity – the world as the unity of *ground* and *horizon*.

For Derrida, *The Origin of Geometry* unites organically the two denunciations of historicism and objectivism to create a new conjunction: the *historicity of ideal objectivities*, which obeys different rules and is neither the factual interconnections of empirical history nor an ideal and ahistoric 'adding on'.<sup>146</sup> He proposes an occultation through the event of objectivism in science whereby the founding subjectivity of science, and therefore its basis in what Husserl defines as the *Lebenswelt*,<sup>147</sup> are alienated and rendered strange.<sup>148</sup>

To free science from its subjective origins is to be involved in what Derrida, via Husserl, describes as a 'necessary act' of objectivisation and conquest, but which is also an act of irresponsibility by rendering the world (via

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144 I refer back to earlier comments on science. Derrida's use of Husserl's *Origin of Geometry* gives status to science/geometry as a means of navigating towards its origin.

145 For Kant there is *one* geometry: the Euclidean, which is viewed as a body of synthetic a priori propositions about the structure of perceptual space, for example, the proposition that space has only three dimensions.

146 This conjunction is crucial because it is quite clearly, for Derrida, *neither* factual nor ideal. This new unity of different rules is perhaps most strongly linked to the Heideggerian originary event of the essence of technology. The term *objectivities* indicates a close link to event status in as far as the exactitude of objectivity is undermined by immanence.

147 Translated as 'life world'.

148 The situating of imagination as the scission between sensibility and knowledge highlights the rift as the erudition of the unfamiliar (the *Unheimlich*) in the midst of what is comprehended (the finitude of comprehension) as familial.

the sense of science and logic/reason) unintelligible.<sup>149</sup> In this way, the responsibility of sense and objectification, through what might be defined as ‘the logic of clarity’, imposes an obscuring structure on subjective origin.<sup>150</sup> Derrida defines this ‘forgetfulness of origins’ thus:

Undoubtedly, Husserl’s production also involves a stratum of receptive intuition (as in Kantian ‘revaluation’). But what matters here is that this Husserlian intuition, as it concerns the ideal objects of mathematics,<sup>151</sup> is absolute, constitutive and creative: the objects or objectivities that it intends did *not* exist *before* it: and this *before* of the ideal objectivity marks more than the chronological eve of fact: it marks a transcendental prehistory.<sup>152</sup>

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- 149 It may be worth thinking here of Deleuze writing on sense, pre-sense and nonsense in his *The Logic of Sense*. If we understand pre-sense and nonsense in terms of discontinuity, they interrupt the smoothness of any continuity and give the continuous shape.
- 150 Husserl’s consideration of pre-sense critiques Galilean blindness to origin via the accomplishment of idealisation and its lack of enquiry into origin via the pre-geometrical, sensible world and practical acts.
- 151 In *The Truth in Painting*, Derrida speculates on scale and the differentiation between mathematical and aesthetic evaluation. ‘The mathematical evaluation of size never reaches its maximum. The aesthetic evaluation, the primary and fundamental one, does reach it; and this *subjective* maximum constitutes the absolute reference which arouses the feeling of the sublime; no mathematical evaluation or comparativity is capable of this, unless ... the fundamental aesthetic measure remains alive, is kept alive [*lebendig erhalten wird*] in the imagination which presents the mathematical numbers.’ pp. 139–40.
- 152 Derrida, ‘An Introduction to Edmund Husserl’s Origin of Geometry’, p. 40.



In Kantian reevaluation, the first geometer merely becomes conscious that it suffices for any mathematical activity to remain within a concept that it already possesses, and therefore a construction that is the explication of an already existing concept is the non-creative act teaching the sense of a ready-made geometry.<sup>153</sup> As such, it remains the history of an operation, and not the act of being instituted – a founding.<sup>154</sup> Derrida's argument that deconstruction is a rigorous attempt to think the limits of the principle of reason remains pertinent to this institution, as it inherits the active demand of Heidegger to re-think origin (in this instance, the origin of reason, but the same application may be made to a more general sense of origin as in Husserl's geometry). What is implicit to Derrida's project is the imperative to go beyond the tradition of oppositional terminology of praxis and theory, however, the activity of deconstruction remains inconceivable outside the tradition of enlightened rational critique, whose classic formulations are found in Kant. In demanding a reason for reasonableness, Derrida maintains that rationality understood as the likes of technology, science, geometry, etc., remains a highly specific historical

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153 Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting* that: 'The nonconceptual resembles the conceptual. A very strange resemblance, a singular proximity of affinity [*Ahnlichkeit*] which, somewhere draws out of *mimésis* an interpretation of the beautiful which firmly rejects imitation', p. 76. He argues that the place of the gathering of 'without-concept' and 'concept', universality 'with' and 'without' concept, legitimates what he refers to as the 'violent occupation' of the nonconceptual field by the grid of conceptual force.

154 In the sense that Heidegger proposes the essence of technology as nothing technological, is Derrida proposing that the essence of geometry is not geometric? I pose the following two questions: Is the origin/essence inside geometry through the temporality of historicity? And if so, as such a component does it remain alien to the architectonics of geometry – a viral contamination encrypted at the source of ideality? Derrida notes on the intermediary of imagination recognised in aesthetic evaluation, between sensibility and understanding in *The Truth in Painting*, that 'for aesthetic evaluation to give rise to a mathematical measure, the intervention of the imagination is indispensable', p. 140.

formation that *cannot* be appealed to as a kind of ultimate ground.<sup>155</sup> He argues in *The Truth in Painting* that:

An inadequate presentation of the infinite presents its own inadequation, an inadequation is presented as such in its own *yawning gap*, it is determined in its contour, it cises and incises itself as incommensurable with the without-cise.<sup>156</sup>

Where he differs from Heidegger is in his insistence that there is no possibility of thinking back beyond the origin of a false enlightenment to a primordial state of being where language touched the ultimate truths of experience. This remains too logocentric in its assumptions about speech as self-presence and is still trapped in the empirical framework of conceptual oppositions. The active re-thinking of reason's origin through what is described as an immanent critique implies a Kantian dialectic of passive and active, and perhaps suggests that such an activity can only take place within the principality of reason in the Western tradition.

Derrida's notion of 'beyond reason', as already stated, differs from Heidegger's notion of 'beyond' in as far as the primordial linguistic origin the latter considers remains still concerned with the patterns of logocentric ordering while aspiring to be distinctly other.

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155 In this way he continues Heidegger's critique of instrumental reason as the 'essential task of any authentic "modern" philosophy'.

156 Added emphasis. Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, p. 132. Derrida's excavation of the word *cise* from incision is significant because it draws attention to the contention that sublimity exceeds the order of what Kant calls 'productions of art', as they are concomitant with the scale of man: 'the sublime, if there is any sublime, exists only by *overspilling*: it *exceeds cise and good measure, it is no longer proportioned according to man and his determinations*', *ibid.*, p. 122. This superabundance opens an abyss – an in[cise]ion within ourselves where magnitude as absolutely large 'is no longer of the order or at orders of largeness as dimension. *It is larger than largeness, neither large nor largeness, but absolutely large.*' *ibid.*, pp. 135–6 (added emphasis).

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This more parasitic<sup>157</sup> activity acknowledges its encrypted blurring of the internal/external ordering of metaphysical logic, and emphasises Heidegger's origin as still essentially a metaphysical one, in that *being* haunts beings in a way that it (*being*) persists in the form of a primordial ideality. He critiques Husserl's attempt to define the universal knowledge of geometry as the combination of present intuition and past discovery, through what he perceives as the essential role of the lingual as an event of emancipation from the intuition of actuality. Derrida plays with the Husserlian interplay between present and past in intuition and discovery as a circulatory source of illumination from which consciousness discovers a path.

Derridian ideality, in what we might refer to as 'the lingual permanence of language', sources the a priori truth *not* as the geometric form as a universal knowledge, but confers the source of such ideality in the language in which that form is expressed.<sup>158</sup>

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Phenomenology, as defined by Husserl, is the philosophy of essences – objective, intangible and a priori – but is also the philosophy of experiences, the temporal flux of what is

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157 In *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, Husserl contextualises logic by saying that: '[This] theory of pure forms is the intrinsically first discipline of formal logic, implanted as a *germ* in the old analytics but not yet developed', p. 50 (added emphasis).

158 It is worth noting here that if we understand writing, as Derrida proposes, as an endlessly productive signifying practice, irreducible to some ultimate, self-evident truth, the conception of writing is already a deferral of meaning, and therefore the assurance of an objectivity of pure presence in the written form is already undermined. Husserl's reliance on the lingual form to express the geometric places deferral at the heart of any 'origin'.

lived. The path of such thinking is defined, as Christopher Norris states, by an oscillation between genesis/intuitive (the temporal), and structure/ideality (permanence). In his introduction to Husserl's *Origin of Geometry*, Derrida states, '[h]istorical incarnation sets free the transcendental, instead of binding it'.<sup>159</sup> For him, the 'speaking subject' (the fall back into the lingual, as it were) constitutes the ideal object and therefore objectivity, and raises the question of the disassociation of the ideal object from all subjectivity and empirical language, both of which may confuse the transparency of the univocal and objective significations of a pure logic. According to him, the reductive process of phenomenology by which Husserl parenthesises constituted language, operates to let the originality of constitutive language come to light. As such, the reductive process must inhibit any objective positing produced in unreflective consciousness (perceived, remembered, judged, etc.), so that the world is not understood absolutely but via consciousness – the experience 'of', as it were.<sup>160</sup>

In the preparatory considerations of his text *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, Husserl argues:

As a theory of science concerned with principles, logic intends to bring out *pure universalities*, a priori *universalities*. As already said in the introduction, it does not intend to investigate empirically the so-called sciences that are given beforehand – the cultural formations going by that name, which have in fact come into existence – and abstract their empirical types, on the contrary, free from every restriction to the factual (which supplies it only with points of departure for a

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159 Derrida, 'An Introduction to Edmund Husserl's The Origin of Geometry', p. 77.

160 'Of' as the 'via' of consciousness, may give a context for the preposition 'of' that operates between aesthetics and hauntology.

criticism of examples), it intends to make completely clear the final ideas that hover dimly before us whenever we are actuated by a purely theoretical interest.<sup>161</sup>

Husserl's investigations belong, not within a deductive logic, but in what might be considered as a second-order discipline now understood as the philosophy of logic.<sup>162</sup> The determination towards a systematic coherence of knowing in Husserl's thought makes a clear distinction between the pure logic of Kantian judgements: 'finding ground for one's knowing, and suitably combining and ordering the sequence of such groundings'.<sup>163</sup>

The essence of science is no longer merely the accumulation of various isolated pieces of knowledge, but the unity of a whole system of grounded validations. Logic, for Husserl, becomes the theory of theories and is a priori in that, as David Bell states in his study of the philosopher: 'It is the science that studies the possible forms of any systematic, rational knowledge whatsoever, regardless of the material content of that knowledge.'<sup>164</sup>

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161 Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, p. 28.

162 It is worth remembering here that, logic, as a 'pure' science, is understood as the investigation and codification of relations of deductive consequence, holding *between* sentences or thoughts and propositions and what they express. Kant's objective deductio was a positive attempt to establish the content of a priori knowledge by asking the question, What are the presuppositions of experience? The truth follows *not* from the particularity of this or that experience, but from the fact that we have experience at all. For Kant, the particularity of experience cannot verify this truth, only the universality of reason is capable of defining what will be true in every 'world' where sceptical questions are asked.

163 'Objects are *given* to us by means of sensibility, and it alone yields us *intuitions*; they are *thought* through the understanding, and from the understanding arise *concepts*.' Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, §33, p. 65.

164 David Bell, *Husserl*, p. 90.

The objectivity of pure logic can only be proved *outside* its own system and requires epistemological self-evidence (the reflection and critique that, as far as Husserl is concerned, only a philosopher can supply), and all syntactic, semantic, logical and metalogical laws and principles,<sup>165</sup> that together comprise the formality of the objective, requires a complementary investigation into the subjective and material aspects of rational thought – philosophical logic. This materiality is a key to any understanding of the temporal flux of phenomenological thinking, and introduces a Hegelian/historical dimension as a ground for knowledge and as a reaction against a priori truth as a grand synthesis.

For Derrida, the power of logocentric thinking is to absorb all differences by viewing the event of difference as merely a signposting towards this synthesis. Therefore dialectical reason becomes an attempt to comprehend all via terms that the philosophical lays down in advance.<sup>166</sup>

In this sense, Husserl's proposal to render a philosophical logic through means of subjectivity and materiality can be seen to indicate, through the distinctions manifest in the application of the aforementioned terms, difference as the core of rational thought. What haunts the objective in its drive towards the application of principles is another logic grounded in distinctiveness and diversity.

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165 Husserl describes these as: 'the merely negative conditions of the possibility of truth'. From 'Experience and Judgement (§3)', and quoted in David Bell's text *Husserl*, p. 91.

166 Derrida critiques Husserl's conception of structure via writing as permanence, suggesting that this origin relies on what he refers to as 'mortal script'. In his introduction to Husserl's *Origin of Geometry*, he asserts that the imperative to define geometry, via writing, traps Husserl's thinking in a continual logocentric bias, which is contrary to writing's irreducibility to any self-evident truth.

Derrida alludes to this in his critique of *The Origin of Geometry* expressed through 'mortal script'.

However, the particularities of what Husserl describes as emancipated sciences cannot realise their true potential – their full being-sense, without relinquishing their provincial particularities, their exclusivity of method and specificity.

The combinations of their research potential must lead to 'the universality of being and its fundamental essential unity'.<sup>167</sup> Any impetus to blame pure or formal logic for the creation of exclusive scientific principalities is contingent on the suggestion that the logic of universality has relinquished its capacity for overseeing and has resorted to the role of a special science. Implicit in this historical manoeuvre is a shift in significance from the transcendental to the merely formal.

The procedure<sup>168</sup> of phenomenological reduction that Husserl advocates is a method by which one can reduce to zero ontological commitments based in what he describes as the natural attitude.<sup>169</sup> The principle of reduction addresses the naivety of ontological commitment on the premise that ontology is understood here as the existence of physical objects, properties, and facts in the form of an objective causal nexus. The *transcendental reduction* is a

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167 Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, p. 4.

168 *Phenomenological Reduction* is for Husserl, a *procedure* and not a *theory* that can be *applied*. It is an expression of *imperatives* rather than a declaration of 'truth' – an *activity* rather than a *belief* that induces a particular *state of mind* of which no adequate *conception* can be formed or understood by others who have not already successfully *performed the reduction*.

169 *Natural Attitude* denotes a complex system of interlocking beliefs permeating our everyday understanding of things. It is generally a shared system of commitments that are linked to the pursuit of objective truth by the natural and human sciences, and which, for Husserl, are essentially philosophically naive, in that they remain uncritical and largely unconscious.

method for neutralising these ontological components without excluding them or obliterating them and this is crucial to any understanding of the complexities of the shift from *natural attitude* to *neutralised attitude*.

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In *Ideas*, Husserl indicates the process thus:

[A]lthough it remains what it is in itself, we put it 'out of action', we 'exclude it', and we 'bracket it'. It is still there, like the bracketed matter inside a pair of parentheses ... but we make no use of it. We put out of action the entire ontological commitment (*General thesis*) that belongs to the essence of the natural attitude, we place it in brackets whatever it includes with respect to being.<sup>170</sup>

The oscillation that Christopher Norris refers to between the intuitive/temporal and structural/permanence is indicated by the parenthetic event of transcendental reduction, which essentially disables any materiality/objectivity. If pure or formal logic is understood as the place for establishing and exploring the essential requirements of a genuine knowledge, the discovery of such norms, and therefore the new sense of science in a metaphysical sense, arises in the Platonic establishment of a formal logic. The ambiguity of Husserl's reductive process mediates for a different interpretation of the transcendental that resists the metaphysical imperative to impose universality on temporality. The complication of this manoeuvre provisionally shifts the emphasis of what is essentially transcendent from a priori to post priori. However, this

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170 Edmund Husserl, *Ideas* §32, p. 111.



procedure is not merely an inversion of the common understanding of the historical metaphysical dichotomy.

What Husserl alludes to, and Norris amplifies, is a more complex affiliation between the intuitive and the structural, whereby the emphasis is no longer on exclusivity and separateness in the sense of diminishing, but rather an ex-istence.<sup>171</sup> In the introduction to *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, Husserl proposes a reversal of the historical relationship between logic and science by stating:

Instead of seeking out the pure essential norms of science in all its essential formations, to give the sciences fundamental guidance thereby and to make possible for them genuineness in shaping their methods and in rendering an account of every step logic has been pleased to let itself be guided by the de facto sciences, particularly the much-admired natural sciences in conceiving its ideal of science and in setting its own problems.<sup>172</sup>

The contradiction in transcendental reduction remains in the worldliness implicit in ontological commitment that Husserl provisionally insists must be done away with. The external, once neutralised, allows for the transcendental residuum of consciousness (which has its own absolute essence) to come to the fore as it is unaffected by the reductive process. Thus the dichotomy of internal/external is retained by Husserl's phenomenology as the spectre of consciousness. This operates as a transcendental residuum, which haunts ontological commitment. Husserl's attempts to resolve the contradiction of this dichotomy by

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171 Ex-istence is understood as a departure from *being* and the categories that define it. In making this departure, what remains crucial is the contribution of the embarkation point for the journey.

172 Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* – 'Introduction', p. 3.

proposing the reductive act as one of change, but what is highlighted is an ambiguity between the everyday and the transcendental – the legitimacy of truth and its acknowledgement.

The scientific imperative that Husserl adopts in his transcendental ontology fails to provide it with a genuine explanatory power, because it persists in assigning scientific functions to both transcendental and natural sciences.<sup>173</sup> Derrida's contention in 'Violence and Metaphysics' is that:

[T]he consciousness of crisis is for Husserl but the provisional, almost necessary covering up of a transcendental motif which in Descartes and in Kant was already beginning to accomplish the Greek aim: philosophy as science.<sup>174</sup>

The complication of legitimising a new provision for the transcendental is most acutely felt in Husserl's determination to configure it within the context of the Greco-European tradition. It alludes to a security that undermines its potential and radicality.<sup>175</sup> However, as previously stated, Derrida in 'Violence and Metaphysics' also suggests that knowledge within the aforementioned tradition 'is neither habitual nor comfortable but, on the contrary, permits us to experience torment or distress in general'.<sup>176</sup> The reductive process performs as an inhibitor of objective positing produced in unreflective consciousness (perceived, remembered, judged, etc.) and by placing the

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173 Derrida's contention that Husserl's reliance on mortal script to define scientific/geometric ideality may be pertinent to remember here.

174 Derrida, 'Violence and Metaphysics', p. 82.

175 David Bell in his study on Husserl, suggests that phenomenology is an inherently conservative philosophy.

176 Derrida, 'Violence and Metaphysics', p. 82.

'world' in brackets, it is no longer understood absolutely but obscured via consciousness – the experience 'of'.

The transcendental, then, appears to be absolute and not hindered by specificity and through the process of phenomenological reduction it is the revision of the shutting out of universal consciousness in favour of the pure phenomenon – the purely psychical.

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Perception of a body as a concordant multiplicity of perceptions of one and the same body becomes unthinkable as factually occurring perceptions or expectations. It becomes the presentation of invariant structural systems better understood as essential forms or *eidos*. Kant, in 'The Dreams of a Spirit Seer', states:

The initiate is already accustomed to heighten his intellectual powers and thus transcends the *crude world* of the five senses by help of reason and abstract concepts: thus he has learnt to discern spiritual shapes, devoid of material particles, in *the twilight where the dim glow of metaphysics renders to him the realm of shadows*.<sup>177</sup>

Kant's theory indicates an intermediary link for the concept of the organism. It is not dead/inert matter; neither is it the immaterial substance or pure pneumatic<sup>178</sup> understood as a reciprocity not hindered by the laws of any material inertia. This 'neither' is further articulated and understood, as previously stated, by Christopher Norris as the oscillation between intuition and structure as the motivation for phenomenological discourse.

Where this movement, or perhaps it might better be defined as a vibration, provisionally differs from the Kantian concept is in the latter's imposition of the spiritual as an event of animation on the dead matter of the material

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177 Added emphasis. Kant, 'Dreams of a Spirit Seer', Chapter 2, p. 44. In Derrida's text *Memoirs of the Blind*, he comments: 'the operation of drawing would have something to do with blindness, would in some way regard blindness [*aveuglement*].' Later in the same paragraph he extrapolates: 'the blind man can be a seer, and he sometimes has the vocation of a visionary', p. 2. Mark Z. Danielewski's character, Zampanò in *House of Leaves*: the keeper and original commentator of *The Navidson Record*, wrote constantly about seeing: 'What we see, how we see and what in turn we can't see', p. xxi, while proposing that the fictitious documentary film, *The Navidson Record*, was an attempt to 'somehow capture the most difficult subject of all: the sight of darkness itself', *ibid.*, p. xii. Significantly it is noted by the character Johnny Truant that: 'He was blind as a bat.' ('Almost half the books he owned were in Braille. Lude and Flaze both confirmed that over the years the old guy had had numerous readers visiting him during the day.' It is noted that Zampanò's readers were mostly women: 'those soothing tones cradled in a woman's words'.) *Ibid.*, pp. xxi-xxii. Deleuze remarks in *Cinema 2* that: 'the visionary, the seer, is the one who sees in the crystal, and what is seen *is the gushing forth of time as doubling, as scission*', 109:81 (added emphasis).

178 'Pneumatic' was the current word for the spiritual in Kant's day.

world.<sup>179</sup> Knowledge and intuition remaining outside materiality, yet still impose criteria on matter.

David Bell suggests that the phenomenological reductive bracketing of materiality acts as a form of indexing, but uncovers the contradiction implicit in Husserl's understanding of the reductive event, which, while proposing the radicality of a transformation, insists on 'everything being left as it is'. The problem becomes one of a change that is fundamental yet essentially a transformation that has no impact on materiality as materiality.<sup>180</sup> Kant, writing about Swedenborg in 'Dreams of a Spirit Seer', stated that:

All knowledge of material objects takes on a double significance: one meaning is being obtained through the external relations of matter, and the other is obtained from the way (material things) reflect the forces from the spiritual world for these are the causes of (material things).<sup>181</sup>

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179 I note here one of the corporeal operations of the *cyst* as a receptacle for 'morbid matter' – see Chapter 3, 'The Unheimlich Manoeuvre'.

180 Bell's proposition that 'the sense of', described by the Fregian model of 'Σ' as a pre-fix to any assorteric statement. The semantic shift towards Σ as a bracketing of any proposition indicates the transcendental as a pre-fix of the sensual. Also for Foucault's remarks on the use of parenthesis in Roussel's writing, see Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine'.

181 Kant, 'Dreams of a Spirit Seer', p. 88.

The question of correlation between spiritual and material is brought into sharp focus by the bracketing that Kant employs here but the distinction between this, Husserlian phenomenology and transformation is key to any interpretation of *mere inversion*.<sup>182</sup> The ambiguity of the bracketing complicates the tendency towards the oppositional by shifting the assured historical composure of the internal and external dialectic of logic towards an alteric encryption of the spectral. In semantic terms, the physical punctum of the bracket encloses materiality – framing it as it were, and in this sense, is contingent to a ‘giving sense to’ as articulated by the Fregian model cited by David Bell in his text *Husserl* and detailed in footnote 180. However, for the framing to have a sense, it must in some way, enter into a relationship with the material that maintains, as part of that engagement, its status outside materiality – transcendent to it. With this in mind, the complexity of what we might define as the *imposition* of the transcendental on materiality does not constitute an event of displacement, but the implicit spectral relation of hauntology.

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182 Bracketing may also have a correlation with *sous rature*. Both Heidegger and Derrida employ this process to undermine/draw attention to the discrepancies in the metaphysical project – a deletion can only be a deletion if the evidence of what is prior to the event of deletion (what is to be deleted) is retained. Likewise, Husserl’s reductive process relies on the preservation of materiality – the imposition must acknowledge that on which it imposes. Husserl’s contention, however, reverses the imposition so that matter/materiality invokes the transcendental. Levinas states that ‘thought is originally erasure’ and he refers to a network of associations towards which what is key is *not* that ideas displace each other, but the assurance of the presence of one idea *in* another: ‘the thought at the moment of its erasure still influences through its erased meaning; its different meanings participate with one another’, Levinas, ‘The Transcendence of Words’, p. 146. It is also worthy of note that Foucault considers the parenthetical aspect of the bracket in his text on Roussel, *Death and the Labyrinth* (see Chapter 4, ‘The Orientation of the Labyrinthine’).

Derrida says of Levinas:

Levinas respects the *zone or layer* of traditional truth; and the philosophies whose presuppositions he describes are neither refuted nor criticized. Here, for example, it is a question simply of revealing beneath this truth, as that which founds it and is dissimulated within it, 'a situation which precedes the division of Being into an *inside* and an *outside*'. However, it is also a question of inaugurating, in a way that is to be new, quite new, a *metaphysics of radical separation and exteriority*. One anticipates that this metaphysics will have some difficulty finding its language in the medium of traditional logos entirely governed by the structure of 'inside-outside', 'interior-exterior'.<sup>183</sup>

*Being* for Levinas is a kind of suffering that invokes an enchainment or imprisonment (incarceration), and so what becomes implicit in *being* and therefore in ontology, what is encrypted within it, is the invitation to escape.<sup>184</sup> Escape then becomes the consequence of *being* whereby restlessness – the unquiet of existence, manifest in dissatisfaction – is conceived as a more pronounced imperative than Heidegger's concept of anxiety in *Sein und Zeit* or distress in *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*. Derrida sees in Levinas no longer the thought of *being* (Heidegger) or *phenomenality* (Husserl), but rather a process of *dismantling* and *dispossession*.

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183 Added emphasis. Derrida, 'Violence and Metaphysics', p. 88.

184 Two possibilities occur here: firstly, the Labyrinth as a mechanism for incarceration (the prison of the Minotaur and the concealment of a secret – see Chapter 4, 'The Orientation of the Labyrinthine') and the encryption of the 'bunker' as both locale of escape *and* ultimate imprisonment (see Albert Speer's comments on Hitler's bunker, also noted in Chapter 4).

The impersonal fact of *being* is understood as indeterminate and ambiguous and comes to thought before revaluation or the imposition of a conceptual framework. It is neither transcendent nor ego-based nor construed in any form of the personally symbolic. It resists inclusion into any binary opposition and is therefore irreducible to recognised forms that might order it. However, as an alteric phantasm it cannot operate as pure exclusivity without some relation to historical thought.<sup>185</sup> As already indicated, the spectre that Derrida proposes must be involved in some kind of specificity via relation to *a someone*. The particularity of the haunting of both Hamlet and Macbeth (Hamlet's father and Macbeth's friend Banquo) in Shakespeare is intrinsic to the event through recognition as a certain kind of relation.

Exclusivity would suggest concomitance with a kind of transcendental ideality already outlined in the metaphysical project – an overarching aspiration, which refutes Derrida's more complex articulation of an encrypted intervention of spectrality. As already proposed, to haunt is an exclusive event of interiority which exploits the carnal imperative of phenomenality and the impact of a transcendent alterity on such corporeality while resisting the determination to comprehend incorporation as merely absorption.

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185 Levinas proposes religion as the site of communication for the established order to enter into relation with the '*being* of the other', whereby this relation is no longer ontological, but spiritual – a place where knowledge does not take precedence over sociality. Ethics is grasped as the practical relation of one to another – a relation prior to ontology.



The ghost or spectre<sup>186</sup> as the manifestation, or more specifically, the visualisation of that which remains essentially invisible, operates as an *insistence* (what I will later call an *encyst-ence*) through this complication of an interpretation of it as an encryptive event. This designates a deferral maintained as a kind of difference designated by Derridian *différance* rather than the incarnation of 'mere' absorption, which implies the continuity of similitude. Implicit in that encryption as an interval or rift is a notion of temporality that is identified by the immanence of discontinuity as the form by which time is made manifest spatially. As Derrida remarks, the spectre is always a return and never an emanation, and it is from this event of spectrality that the continuity of chronological time is undermined and the clarity between *spatio* and *extensio* is blurred.

As hauntology is named as the so-called science of the spectre, it identifies anomalies in the progression and stability of any ontological speculation, so close scrutiny of aesthetics as the science of beauty uncovers comparable discontinuities. As we have tried to explore, the possibility for hauntology, as a mechanism for questioning the stability of the metaphysical terrain, finds in the encryptive spatio-temporal interval of the rift the location of an anomaly, which erupts and disrupts the continuity of logical chronology. To infer that discontinuity is the predicate of any reasonable notion of continuity must go further than

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186 In *Of Spirit Heidegger and the Question*, Derrida argues: 'a spirit, or in other words, in French (and English) as in German, a *phantom*, always returns, I mean in the sense of a *revenant* (ghost), and *geist* is the most fatal figure of this *revenance* (returning, haunting) of the double which can never be separated from the single', p. 40 (added emphasis).

rely on this as an opportunity to invert a binary as a means of radical reconfiguration. The necessary wound of the rift demands a more complex articulation of it as a locale for the emergence of a transcendental imperative that does not conform to any previous clarifications of what transcendence might 'be' (or not 'be').

In as much as this *transcendental* place is 'not', its visibility or lack of visibility sets it apart as distinctive from shadow, simulacra or facsimile – it is not more than or less than any of these, but essentially *other* to them, as it is other to illumination and ideality. Also it is not merely an exteriority/explicate that operates as the negation of an interiority/implicate, but occupies the 'between' that differs via deferral.

*Différance* as the indeterminate event of deferral is distinguished from the notion of any ontological difference by which difference is understood as the anomaly between the specificity of a *being* and the transcendence of *being*. Not only is *différance* *other* to ontological difference, it is *other* to the forgetting of ontological difference and, as such, it subsists as a trace. Its radical alterity is removed from every possible mode of presence and presencing and is characterised by irreducible after-effects, delayed effects and unconscious traces (there are no conscious ones). It remains a trace because it highlights the inadequacy of metaphysical and phenomenological speech through the interruption of that speech – not as an external addendum to be latterly applied, but as the interval already encrypted into its labyrinthine architectonics, parasitic in its spectral rupturing (a *ructure!*). It identifies difference through its own invisibility as interruptive event and its spectrality

adopts the facsimile of the corporeal while remaining essentially other to any semblance of that carnality.

The trace (*spur*) is not a presence but rather is the simulacrum of a presence that dislocates, displaces, and refers beyond itself. The trace has, properly speaking, no place, for effacement belongs to the very structure of the trace.<sup>187</sup>

As we have seen, the phantasm of the trace insinuates itself into the very fabric of reasonableness and can be observed as the very predicate of all that is logical. It is the question that articulates aesthetics and judgement and the substance of difference. It is the haunting that motivates and predetermines enquiry and yet undermines resolution to any such enquiry by disrupting visibility, not with the obscuring determination of a presence which resolutely enforces alterity as diminutive to its absolution and universality, but with the disconcerting irreducibility of the absolute other manifest only in the effacement of invisibility.

The phantom exceeds through such undermining of visualisation. It resists any predilection to locate it as either facsimile or mimetic entity in its capacity to be grasped as a mere replication or semblance with all the incumbent diminutions of representation. Neither is it recognised as spirit, equally encumbered by the transcendental and its urge towards ideality and meta-language. Both these possibilities appear as addendums to the historical imperative, which organises thought through rationality and logic as the ongoing mechanism for definition and determination.

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187 Derrida, 'Différance', p. 461.

The operation of spectrality finds its functionary locale in all the placial coordinates, which refute dialectic assurance and binary oppositions, and insists and subsists through its inherent capacity to resist sublimation and objectification by always locating itself outside the places where it can never be found.

This nomadic status determines transgression via encryption as its active *modus operandi* and, in so doing, finds in continuity all that is discontinuous, not as afterthought but as integral to its very formation. Where language breaks down and disfluency becomes the determining agency of communication, so the spectre as silent interrogator introjects, not through force of speech or by exceeding the *topos* of the spoken, but through the arrest of silence as that which precedes all that is said.

When Heidegger seeks and demands a locale for silence in *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, which endows an a priori spatial anomaly where an echo (the silent voice of *be-ing*) can be heard emanating from the pre-Socratic past whilst simultaneously heralding a new god to come – a cyclical determination which engages temporality without ever falling into linearity. To be haunted is to find one-self steeped in the anxiety of the sensation of feeling *not-at-home* with all that is familial, where proportion suddenly determines the unfamiliar and calculation can no longer afford assurance of where one is. Heidegger's indication that the eventuation of *be-ing* and *enthinking* as a creative engagement (rather than wilful imposition of a new form) of responsiveness has, as Richard Polt notes in his essay 'The Event of Enthinking the Event', a parallel with the activity of landscape drawing as

in-vention. As such, the drawing (as *genuine* work of art) not only represents a place but also brings meaning (a facet of its being) to our attention. This meaning was never simply 'there' prior to the execution of the drawing, but was what Polt refers to as latent and vague and can only become fully alive when appropriated *by* the drawing. In-vention is then understood as a *coming upon* as opposed to any planning or willing and is a venture-some openness of experience towards which the artist is him/herself appropriated and, in a sense, transformed.

*In-vention* undercuts the opposition between creativity and truth. It is neither the discovery of a previously formed object nor the creation ex nihilo of a new form but the attentive cultivation of meaning. *In-vention* allows the meaning to flourish – and allows the finder of the meaning to flourish as well.<sup>188</sup>

Here I draw a parallel with the locale of a certain kind of poem (transcribed by a certain kind of poet) as also an in-vention of a certain kind of *topos* no longer restricted to the mere observation and representation of the topography of landscape – its flora and fauna. In language it finds in what is spoken, the silence of the spectral event, a transformation which flourishes through pervasion, transgression – the place of both, anticipation and disappointment, in-vention and anxiety, toxin and remedy.

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188 Added emphasis. Richard Polt, 'The Event of Entinking the Event' (*Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*), p. 92.

## Chapter 2

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### Todtnauberg and the Meridian

#### **Todtnauberg**

Arnica, eyebright, the  
draft from the well with the  
star-die on top,

In the  
hütte,

written in the book  
– whose name did it record  
before mine –?

In this book  
the line about  
a hope; today,  
for a thinker's  
word  
to come,  
in the heart,

forest sward, unleveled,  
orchis and orchis, singly,

crudeness, later, while driving,  
clearly,

he who drives us, the man,  
he who also hears it,

the half-  
trodden log-  
trails on the highmoor,

humidity,  
much.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Translation of *Todtnauberg* by Pierre Joris and published in his essay, 'Celan/Heidegger: Translation at the Mountain of Death' and found on website: <http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/authors/joris/todtnauberg.html>. Also published in Joris's translation of Celan's collection, *Lightduress*, pp. 62–5.

It is language that speaks as an *open* even when its language is the language of mediation, that is, even when it is the bearer of love and grace.<sup>2</sup>

In the hut-book, looking at the well-star, with a hope for a coming word in the heart. On 25 July 1967 Paul Celan.<sup>3</sup>



I would like to begin by proposing a question that will lead to a series of speculations which emerge from the above comment written by the poet Paul Celan in the guest book provided by Martin Heidegger, on the occasion of the Celan's visit to the philosopher's Black Forest *Hütte* at Todtnauberg in the summer of 1967.

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2 Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, p. 114. 'The mouth as *wound*' is also indicated by Derrida in his essay 'Shibboleth for Paul Celan'. Also worthy of note here is Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's essay 'Introjection-Incorporation' (from the book *Psychoanalysis in France*, ed. S. Lebovici and D. Widlöcher), in which they indicate that the beginnings of *intro-jection* are found in the experience of what they refer to as *empty mouth* doubled with the mother's presence. 'The transition from breast-filled mouth to word-filled mouth is achieved through the experiences of "empty mouth".' p. 5. They argue that learning to fill the *void* of mouth with words constitutes an early paradigm of introjection through the continual presence of the mother as the possessor of language and such constancy guarantees the meaning of words. It is also worthy of note here that Jacob Bachofen in his text 'Mother Right' saw the *matriarchal/tellurian* as arguably the origin of the written form – the letter written *at the hearth*.

3 From *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*, by John Felstiner, p. 244.

In keeping with the locale of Heidegger's mountain retreat, I will negotiate a plethora of *Holzweg* in order to develop a discourse which questions the *topos* of Todtnauberg as an aesthetic experiment in language and a place haunted by the trace of meridial threads.

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Provisionally, it will be perhaps considered a question of anticipation and also forgiveness, but largely one of disappointment as indicated by the comment noted in the guest book by Celan, variously recognised as the *writer*, *translator*, *poet* and *Jew*. It will be borne out of what might be still be interpreted as a pervading and embracing silence that not only preceded the writing of the poem; its *inscribing*, but through the continual provocation of its determination towards a certain kind of *absenting*, which was insisted by the poem's inscription and latterly by its translation and re-inscription.

This silence 'spoke' and continues to 'speak' remaining voluble in the various translations that have been proffered for publication since its initial inscribing in the immediate aftermath of that encounter between Heidegger, the 'poetic thinker' (the German *Denker*) and Celan, the 'thinking poet' (the Jewish *Dichter*).

It alluded to, and perhaps, continues to invoke, what I might venture to call a *meridial haunting* that resists the univocal permanence of stasis and any static point of view in favour of a concentration of possibilities (or significance of temporality and spacing concomitant to the virtuality and immanence of dates and dating!).



In his text 'Shibboleth for Paul Celan', Derrida speaks of the 'date' as a kind of visceral intervention in the corporeality of the poem. The readability of dates marks the possibility of the enunciation of a spectral recurrence that is distinct from what he calls the 'absolute recurrence' of that which 'cannot return'.

The spectral return is understood as of that which is unique, in that its occurrence will never return. Derrida's preliminary comments in his discussion on Celan propose that:

We will be concerned then with the date as a *cut or incision* which the poem bears in *its body* like a memory, like, at times, several memories in one, the mark of provenances of a place and of a me. To speak of *an incision* or cut is to say that the poem is entered into, that it begins in the *wounding* of its date.<sup>4</sup>

Concealed within the date is the 'stigma' of singularity, which sustains and prolongs its dating through the temporality of lasting, which is understood as that which *is* the poem.

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4 Added emphasis. Essay published in *Word Traces, Readings of Paul Celan* (ed. Aris Fioretos, pub. Johns Hopkins University Press), p. 19.

Derrida argues that for the date to function in the poem, it must retain, though *concealment*, the specificity of the singular (a 'specific' date) to assure its own longevity as that which 'lasts longer' than that which it commemorates.<sup>5</sup> In the essay 'Catastrophe', Philip Lacoue-Labarthe states:

The place of poetry, the place where poetry takes place, every time is *the place without place* of the *intimate gaping* – something that must certainly be thought as the pure spacing which places (do not) suppose and which upholds them with no hold.<sup>6</sup>

The topology of the meridian manifest in the continuity of *folding, unfolding* and *refolding*<sup>7</sup> indicates, to employ a description used by Celan in his 'Meridian Speech' of October 1960, an animation of 'tremors and hints' that are both inclusive and exclusive to the 'poetic event'.<sup>8</sup> As Derrida argues in 'Shibboleth for Paul Celan', they are the temporal/spatial anomalies that are written into the text and which, through concealment and effacement, transgress its textural body.

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5 Derrida later argues that: 'This is the only chance of assuring its spectral return. Effacement or concealment, this annulment in the annulations of return belongs to the movement of dating. And so what must be commemorated, *at once* gathered together and repeated, is, *at the same time*, the date's annihilation, a kind of nothing, or ash.' *Ibid.*, p. 22.

6 Added emphasis. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

7 These terms are borrowed from Deleuze and used specifically in his text, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*.

8 'The Meridian' speech was delivered by Celan on the occasion of receiving The Georg Büchner Prize, Darmstadt, 22 October 1960. Published in *Paul Celan, Collected Prose*, trans. Rosemarie Waldrop, and published by Carcanet Press, pp. 37–55.

They are the tracings of 'what is', 'what has been' and 'what will be' – the variance of protentions and retentions that mark the visibility of invisibility and the immanence of the virtual 'transcribed' as the meridial interval or the movement of 'dating' of the poem.

This commemoration through annihilation articulates a negation through the double movement of gathering and repetition that annuls the date, reducing it to *a kind of nothing*.<sup>9</sup> Silence prescribes this condition of negation in the encryption of the poem by commemorating that which subsists as that which is unvocalised rather than exclusively absent.<sup>10</sup> This poses the question as to the nature of annihilation? Is it to be understood by Derrida in relation to Celan's poetic articulations that the trace is manifest as the visualisation (vocalisation) of that which remains essentially invisible (unvocal), and is this merely a substitution?

If silence is not the merely the anticipation of any substitution – the 'not yet' of a representation, how does it activate the topological transformation of the poem?

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9 Commemoration through annihilation has a strong resonance with the events of the Holocaust/Shoah and is something that haunts the fabric of Celan's poem. I would also note here a reference to Gordon Matta-Clark's two works discussed in the later chapter, 'The Unheimlich Manoeuvre': *Time Well/Cherry Tree* and *Descending Steps for Batan*, as possible examples of this commemoration by annihilation.

10 In *Creative Evolution*, Henri Bergson argued against the possibility of a total annihilation by stating that: 'The idea of an absolute nothing, in the sense of the annihilation of everything, is a self-destructive idea, a pseudo-idea, a mere word. If suppressing a thing consists in replacing it by another, if thinking the absence of one thing is only possible by the more or less explicit representation of the presence of some other thing, if in short, annihilation signifies before anything else substitution, the idea of an annihilation of everything is as absurd as that of a square circle.' pp. 285-286

Dennis J. Schmidt in his essay on Celan entitled, 'Black Milk and Blue', states:

To think the poetic place means remembering that the *silence* making that place has its own contours; it also means knowing that such *silence* is not to be confused with mere quiet; but needs to be heard as the *unvocalised voice* of the poem.<sup>11</sup>

Any provisional consideration of what is traced in Celan's poem may perhaps look towards Heidegger's much publicised (and much commented upon) 'conspicuous' *silence* in the years following the collapse of the Third Reich in 1945 until his death in 1976. Such speculation must be in light of his contentious involvement with the National Socialist movement from its coming to power in the early 1930s.<sup>12</sup> This could well be seen as the overarching spectre that prompted the 'writing of' 'Todtnauberg', and pervaded the anticipatory note, not only in Celan's poem but also in the comment inscribed in the visitor's book at Todtnauberg. I would suggest that such a consideration, though valid, is perhaps just one of several historical events – *traces*, as it were, which singularly anticipate but perhaps do not fully address the complexity of the many unvocalised possibilities that haunt its lingual prosody. What is more compelling is the more complex double dispossession of language at work in *oeuvre* of Celan's poetry.

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11 Added emphasis. *Word Traces, Readings of Paul Celan* (ed. Aris Fioretos), p. 110.

12 It is worth noting here that Heidegger recorded an interview for *Der Spiegel* magazine in 1967 where he touched on his involvement with the Third Reich, but with express instructions that it would not be published until after his death.

The High-German that was Celan's poetic mother-tongue was steeped in the Germanic tradition of Hellenic Romanticism,<sup>13</sup> which pervaded the poetry of Hölderlin, Rilke and Trakl. As such, predating the events that led to the Holocaust/Shoah,<sup>14</sup> it was no longer 'at home' in the post-Auschwitz world (this is a reference here to Adorno's comment in 1955: 'After Auschwitz, to write a *lyric* poem is barbaric').<sup>15</sup>

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- 13 This term is used to describe the Germanic literary and artistic tradition with a strong affiliation and interest in Hellenistic culture, at its peak in the era of Hölderlin. I also wish to note here that Jacob Bachofen distinguished *Hellenistic* culture as specifically *Apollonic* (what he terms 'the Apollonic age'). It was the patriarchal era of the Uranian Solar Hero where the spiritual principle rose above the corporeal – the dawn as the foundation of transcendent hopes. Derrida comments in *The Truth in Painting* on Kant's recourse in *The Critique of Judgement* to a 'dead language' (Latin) in parenthesis when describing 'pure' beauty (in this instance Kant puts forward the example of the tulip – this botanical reference remains pertinent to later discussion in our text), which gives rise to pure aesthetic judgement, that: 'in "speaking arts" at least, the models should be written "in a dead and scholarly language". For two reasons, one lexical and the other grammatical. So that these models should be spared the transformations suffered by living languages and which have to do first with the vocabulary: vulgarization of noble terms: then with the grammar: the language which fixes the model of taste must have a *Grammatik* which would not be subject to "the capricious changes of fashion" and which would be held in "unalterable rules".' p. 92.
- 14 Holocaust/Shoah – the proximity of these two terms throughout the text is intended to articulate both meanings. *Holocaust* is the most recognised term, and refers to a 'great destruction resulting in extensive loss of life, especially by fire. It is most commonly used in reference to the genocide of European Jewry by the Nazis during the Second World War and its epistemological root is in the Greek *holokauston*, which translates as a *burnt offering* in the sense of a sacrificial offering, but its historical application did not become established until the late 1950s. However, *shoah* (the English derivation of the Hebrew shō'â) translates as 'catastrophe', but its biblical sources also suggest that 'a wasteland or desert' or 'personal ruin or devastation' were first used to refer to the Nazi slaughter of Jews during the Second World War. It may be pertinent to keep the Greek meaning in mind with regard to later comments made about the *chthonic Dionysian* cult of dead heroes and the *pharmakos*. The acknowledgement of both meanings will be recognised throughout the text.
- 15 Adorno, *Prisms*, from the chapter 'Cultural Criticism and Society', p. 34.

Yet its very alterity is found in the invocation of certain kind of literary status of lingual historicity that pervasively haunts and remains intrinsic to the very circumstances by which the solution of the Holocaust/Shoah was made manifest.

Such a condition of alteric homelessness found in the surety of a familial terrain of what was both written and spoken may be crucial to our understanding of Celan's personal history and its impact on his poetry. It is where an *otherness* that is perhaps more complex than the strangely familiar of the *unheimlich*,<sup>16</sup> not only haunts the 'poetic event', but predicates the very language which inaugurates that event. Lacoue-Labarthe in his text 'Two Poems by Paul Celan states':

'Todtnauberg' is really barely a poem; a single nominal phrase, choppy, distended and elliptical, unwilling to take shape, it is not the outline but the remainder – the residue – of an abortive narrative.<sup>17</sup>

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16 *Unheimlich* translates literally from the German as *unhomely* and from this is derived the more spectral definition of uncanny. See Freud's essay published by Penguin in the volume of his collected works entitled *Art and Literature* (Number 14). The significance of the uncanny is, as Freud points out, its very familiarity.

17 Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Poetry as Experience* (pub. Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 35. Stephen Pruslin in the liner notes for the recording of *Pulse Shadows* (1996, released by Teledac in 2001) says of the composer Harrison Birtwistle's settings of Celan's poems for soprano, string ensemble and string quartet that: 'one can understand his affinity with Celan's poetry: its concision and concentration; the aphoristic quality that allows even a carefully structured poem to suggest a "fragment": above all the verbal implosions that only leave an imprint', p. 5.



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I will begin by proposing that, in speculating around the questions that pervade the inscribing of the poem 'Todtnauberg', the evolution of Celan's late poetic voice<sup>18</sup> tends towards a truncation and dislocation that does violence to language. Lacoue-Labarthe suggests that this is comparable to Hölderlin's later efforts before the onset of his insanity, and quotes Adorno, who refers to them as 'condensation and juxtaposition, a strangling of language'. In the poem 'Tübingen, January',<sup>19</sup> Celan speculated on the religious man's attempts to speak of the age or time (today) as Hölderlin did in his time, but he was condemned to a kind of aphasia: 'stuttering on the edge of silence'. I would like to suggest that the difficulty of Celan's later

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18 In the Celan poem, 'The Vintagers/Die Winzer' of 1953, he uses the term 'latemouth' to describe this poetic voice. In the poem, he uses the metaphor of an Autumnal harvest and in particular emphasises the last gleaning of grapes before they rot on the vine as the crop that produces the richest wine. In Hölderlin's poem, 'Germania' (5th stanza) the metaphor of the flower is explored in terms of a 'mode of mouth'.

And secretly, while you dreamed, at noon,  
 Departing I left a token of friendship,  
*The flower of the mouth* behind, and lonely you spoke.  
 Yet you, the greatly blessed, with the rivers too  
 Dispatched a wealth of golden words and they well unceasing  
 Into all regions now.

(Added emphasis. *Selected Poems and Fragments*, p. 192.)

19 *Paul Celan, Selected Poems and Prose* (ed. J. Felstiner), p. 159.

work is steeped in the concentration of an anxiety that persists in confounding a poetic eloquence where even the poetic event as 'poetic' is called into question.

I would like to propose a term that might indicate the complexities of such a lingual encounter in Celan's later poems that is poetic in background, but psychological in utterance – a form of 'disfluency'. There is a crucial question that it now seems appropriate to ask with regard to Celan's comment in the visitor's book at Todtnauberg.

In his text *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno acknowledges the pressure inherent in Celan's poetry, claiming that:

Celan's poems articulate *unspeakable horror* by being silent, thus turning their truth content into a negative quality. They emulate a language *below* the helpless prattle of human beings – even below the level of organic life as such. It is a language of *dead matter*, of stones and stars ... Celan writes poetry without an aura.<sup>20</sup>

This question is perhaps not meant to be directed towards Heidegger's silence, but how a poet with such a pronounced and progressively more difficult ability to *speak*, a profound *disfluency*, can not only interrogate

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20 Added emphasis. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (trans. C. Lenhardt, pub. Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 444. It is worth noting here that Adorno refers to the language of dead matter as that of stones and stars. Is this making reference to *Todtnauberg* and, specifically, the line 'the draft from the well with the star die on top'? With regard to Adorno's oft-cited quote on the demise of so-called lyric poetry, Derrida notes in his essay 'To Forgive' (published in the anthology, *Questioning God*) that: 'Forgiveness died in the death camps', p. 34.



Heidegger's thought but in confrontation with the thinker, demand a fluency and a conciseness – a word of contrition, a remedial pardon from Heidegger to end his silence?<sup>21</sup>



3

## COMPLETION AND POSSIBILITY

Celan, in his acceptance speech of 1960 entitled 'The Meridian', stated:

Whenever we speak with things in this way we also dwell on the question of their where-from and where-to, an 'open' question 'without resolution', a question which points towards open, empty, free spaces – we have ventured far out.

The poem also searches for this place.<sup>22</sup> What is evident from this statement is the affinity that Celan proposes between the thinker who questions and the writer/poet who seeks. The nature of how the question might now be asked has perhaps changed, so that its proximity to the poetic of that which is sought is most significant in the proximal.

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21 The issue of end as completion will be discussed later in the chapter but suffice to say here that Celan's hope for a conclusive end to Heidegger's silence contradicts his own thoughts particularly in the 'Meridian' speech.

22 Celan, 'The Meridian' (published in *Collected Prose*), p. 50.

Its internal logic is usurped by the externalising of a kind of questioning that reaches back to a primordial ontology, where the distinction between the assurance of the *interiority* of the present and the *exteriority* of absence is undermined by the operation of 'a seeking of the same place' that is found in *silence*. This potential alliance between poet and thinker – this seeking of the same place – would suggest that Celan's topology of silence is common to both. Yet he remained unmoved and insistent in his determination to 'demand a word' from Heidegger, to break that silence in a way that, rather than propose a question that might point to *openness* and a way forward, is directed towards *completion* and *closure*.<sup>23</sup>

Maurice Blanchot, in his text *The Writing of the Disaster*, indicates that silence is already dislocated from the lingual and, as other to it, places language 'at risk'. He argues that 'the silence of silence which by no means has any relation to language for it does not come from language but has already departed from it'.<sup>24</sup>

The suggestion is that this departure is from that which maintains the *availability for silence*, in that it does not 'lead away' from the poem, but rather belongs to language itself 'in' the poem – a *departure* in language marks the *place of the poem*. It is the pause (for Celan the 'turn of breath') as the site of an ambiguously infinite compression and extension – a breathing space where the

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23 In this regard, Derrida states in 'To Forgive' that: 'Nothing can be more unjust than clemency' (from the anthology, *Questioning God*), p. 33.

24 Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, p. 57.

dependent possibilities of inhalation and exhalation operate in a lingual collusion.

For the poet speaking, the *other* in language is the kinship of language through the medium of the poem with that which always places that language at risk – silence.



4

In seeking the 'place of silence', Celan understood it as common to both *thinker* and *writer* and so the question still remains, why was it that he could not grant the privilege of such a silence to Heidegger?

It may be that Celan, the *poet*, 'stuttering on the edge of silence' was in no way comparable with Heidegger, the *thinker*, who, it may be argued with reference to his lack of comment, his *silence* on the Shoah/Holocaust, was merely 'stuttering at the edge of speech'. Therefore, the distinction between *he who questions* and *he who seeks* remains unbridgeable. What is problematic is what Celan introduced by suggesting that the topological ground where such a questioning and seeking takes place is essentially the locale of a kind of sameness.

What is pertinent in the consideration of this locale, where both a seeking and questioning take place, is that it not only draws attention to the distinction between the activities of the poet and the thinker as understood by

Celan, but complicates any disparity by finding a common locale of similitude – a placial sameness. As such, similitude as a common ground for questioning and seeking must be understood, not in the equivocality of any historical conception of identity, understood as a locale for the equanimity of the same (a kind of placial univocality), but rather as a ‘topological’ anomaly whereby the equivocal and univocal should perhaps be reconsidered through similitude, as the difference of univocal and univocal. Why is it pertinent to make this distinction relevant to an issue of sameness and locality where both questioning and seeking might well appropriate this place in a kind of equanimity?

In observing this disparity (I use this term cautiously and advisedly), I am mindful that Heidegger himself had addressed the issue of identity at some length in a series of texts published under the heading *Identity and Difference*.<sup>25</sup> It is worth digressing momentarily to consider how this may inform Celan’s understanding of sameness in light of ‘The Meridian’ speech, and given Celan’s own commitment to Heidegger’s thought.

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25 I refer here to the 1969 edition of *Identity and Difference* (trans. Joan Stanbaugh; pub. Harper Row).



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'The Principle of Identity'<sup>26</sup> addresses the issue of identity as provisionally a formulaic structure based on a kind of equality (Heidegger uses the 'tautology' of the mathematical formula  $A = A$ , defining it as an unnecessary equality) that proposes sameness without indicating firstly, where that equality is 'rooted', and secondly, how such an equality might be redefined in relation to its source.

Via Plato, Heidegger reformulates this customary formulation of the principle of identity ( $A = A$ ) by the introduction of sameness, so that not every  $A$  is itself the same, but is itself the same *with* itself. The key here is not sameness as the source of the principle as it stands, but the mediation of this preposition, the 'with' as a connective synthesis or relation.

It is intrinsic to Heidegger's ontology of identity that the connective 'with' (provisionally reformulated as  $A \text{ is } A$ ), identifies the keynote to the formulation as the preposition; and the 'is' indicates the *Being of beings*, articulated by Heidegger as the ontological difference that indicates the principle's true conception that every being is itself the

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26 This is the first essay in the above-mentioned publication, *Identity and Difference* (pp. 23-41).

same with itself.<sup>27</sup> What is essential to sameness in this context is the intrinsic and fundamental difference between *Being* and *beings* that is the ontological difference that Heidegger places at the heart of the 'Principle of Identity'. Heidegger proposes an event of appropriation between *Being* and *beings* that is the essential difference between them:

The event of appropriation is that realm, vibrating within itself, through which man and Being reach each other in their own nature, achieve their active nature by losing those qualities with which metaphysics has endowed them.<sup>28</sup>

For Heidegger, this event is also where *thinking/man* receives the tools by which *it/he* might be most appropriately active as part of the togetherness of this event through the 'most delicate and susceptible vibration holding all within this structure' – *language*.

At this point I wish to refer back to Celan's comment in 'The Meridian' speech that indicates a unity or sameness of placial locality for thought/questioning and writing/seeking. This unity, as sameness, is the locale (place) that both the thinker and the poet are involved in locating (through the questioning of thought and the seeking of the poem) and therefore, the relationship between the thinker and poet is structured in the realm of language. Finding in Heidegger a comparable conception of

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27 Heidegger considers sameness with reference to the Parmenides quote: 'for thinking and Being are the same.' See his essay, 'Moirai (Parmenides VIII, 34-41)' in *Early Greek Thinking* p. 79.

28 From 'The Principle of Identity' and published in the collection of essays, *Identity and Difference*, p. 37.

identification through the provisional notion of locale, for the more complex and active nature of the event where man as *thinker* dwells and as such, is given over to language, indicates that appropriation as an essential togetherness proposes sameness as difference.

Although for Celan, the thinker and poet seek the same place, the structure of the place is essentially difference,<sup>29</sup> the question then arises: How can *similitude* and *difference* enter into a fruitful correspondence?

The search for the sameness of this place is contingent on the understanding that its essence is a differential that precedes any certainty of a unity prior to belonging. For Heidegger, the ontological difference is essential to a conception of identity.<sup>30</sup> In the 'merely identical' (as understood by the preliminary formulation  $A = A$ ), difference disappears, whereas in the same, its appearance is essential and *not* an addition or contribution to *Being* or *beings*. I would suggest that Celan too is concerned with difference, and the sameness of place sought by thinking and poetic writing is indicated by the differential between thought and poetic speech/writing.

I am now forced to reappraise my provisional thought that Celan could have had the ethical presumption to *hope* or *demand* that Heidegger discontinue his most pronounced silence at a specific time/date (one might well alternate the term 'time/date' with 'encounter') and a specific location, given his own tending towards silence. In the term *ending*

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29 As already discussed in Chapter 1, 'An Aesthetics of Hauntology', Derrida too essentialises difference in speech and writing as the primordial event of metaphysics.

30 He states: 'The essence of identity is a property of the event of appropriation' ('The Principle of Identity'), p. 39.

we might well look to a kind of completion, a conciseness of closure, that is largely at odds with Heidegger's own thought, and which is certainly unfamiliar and to some extent 'inappropriate' to Celan's writings. Having indicated this, with reference to the specificity of this encounter between Heidegger and Celan at Todtnauberg, I will not yet dismiss it without finding it of some further use.

I would like to extend my attempts to contextualise Celan's 'demand' of Heidegger by citing the latter's influence on the poet as not only intrinsic to Celan's need for penitence from the thinker, but also in a wider context that locates Heidegger in a zonal historicity that might well be conceived as 'meridial'.<sup>31</sup> Heidegger's influence on Celan is well documented, and Lacoue-Labarthe goes so far as to suggest that 'Tübingen, January' could not have been written without reference to Heidegger's lectures on Hölderlin of the 1940s.

This would suggest that Heidegger's legacy, his process of thinking and how that was imparted in written or spoken form, was intrinsic to the development of Celan's poetry. We must remain conscious that Celan's hope for a 'coming word' does not intrinsically insist that the expectation of an appropriate penitent remark would suffice

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31 By 'meridial', I refer to the active temporal nature of a locale that is not restricted to a finitude without possibility.



to reassure him of Heidegger's contrition and draw to a close Celan's *anxiety*<sup>32</sup> in a mood of absolution and arguable *forgiveness* on that Black Forest hillside outside the *Hütte*.<sup>33</sup>

It is further complicated by the manoeuvre whereby Celan seemingly moved continually towards silence as the formal aspects of his poetry 'broke down' into disjuncture and disfluency.<sup>34</sup> (I refer back to the earlier quote from Lacoue-Labarthe regarding the structure of 'Todtnauberg') His hope was for Heidegger to take the opportunity of their meeting to resist the evasive tenure of his post-war writings and speak candidly. This demanded of Heidegger a move towards the 'most vocal' – an inversion of his own lingual trajectory.<sup>35</sup> The conspicuousness of Heidegger's silence is perhaps 'most amplified' (if this is indeed not a contradiction), by the scant references he makes in his

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32 I am also reminded here that *anxiety* as defined by Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* is an authentic experience of being-in-the-world – integral to *Dasein*'s inmost possibility.

33 In discussing the frame as border (the *Parergon*) in *The Truth in Painting*, Derrida articulates an etymology of 'border' (*au bord*), in which is heard 'on the border' (*Il est d'abord l'à-bord*). He plays with the term, *à-bord* in which he refers to the Middle High German, *Bort* (meaning table, plank or deck of a vessel) and finds here an etymology in 'deck of vessel' (a construction of planks), which articulates another kind of border that limits and encloses. The rhetorical figure of the boat has in this instance the same etymological root as 'brothel' (*bordel*) and which Derrida refers to as 'an easy one, at first a little hut made of wood', p. 54 (added emphasis).

34 *Disfluency* – a break in fluent speech. Stuttering has more disfluencies than is considered average. The different types of disfluency include sound or syllable repetitions, silent blocks and prolongations (unnatural stretching out of sound), and are often accompanied by facial grimaces or tics.

35 We may want to think here of Heidegger's contention (in the *Nietzsche* lectures) that Nietzsche did not escape the metaphysical – he merely inverted its values.

post-war writings<sup>36</sup> to the specificity of the Holocaust/Shoah and its 'impossible possibility'.

What is certainly contentious in Heidegger's overview of the history of productionist metaphysics is an inability to distinguish between the technological transformation that is manifest in both the *hydroelectric dam* and the *crematoria* (I am mindful here of Heidegger's technological dilemma manifest in the term *technê*, that can understand The Rhine as both a technological resource and the subject of Hölderlin's poem).

If there is an issue to be made of his post-war silence, it is perhaps in this very distinction that approaches the issue of the technological as the 'transformation of things' (or the reduction of 'things', human or otherwise, to 'standing-reserve' – a *resource*) to the neglect of all social institutions and practices.

It is worth reflecting here momentarily on the specific incident where the 'infamy' of Heidegger's post-war considerations on technology with reference to the Final Solution<sup>37</sup> remains sharply focused by later commentators on what is now known as the 'agricultural remark' taken from a 1949 lecture on technology:

Agriculture is now a mechanised food industry. As for its essence, it is the same thing as the manufacture of corpses in the gas chambers and in the death camps, the same thing as

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36 There are further references to the 'technological production' of humans as *standing-reserve* in his collection of essays on the perils of technology in 'The Question Concerning Technology'.

37 Inaugurated at the Wannensee Conference in the winter (January) of 1942 as the mechanised and wholesale extermination of Jewish culture from mainland Europe. It is perhaps where the ambiguity of definition was steeped in a certain kind of encryption and where the word *evacuation* actually stood for annihilation.

the blockades and reduction of countries to famine, the same thing as the manufacture of hydrogen bombs.<sup>38</sup>

In this sense, humanity is a commodity like all others in the drive for the purity of technological empowerment and *machination*. To anticipate that Heidegger might distinguish between the relative 'thingliness' of these resources is to imply that moral or ethical considerations might be brought into play. The nihilistic tendency of contemporary history as Heidegger understood it (in what might be considered to be the slow decline of metaphysical enquiry from its inception in the thinking of Plato and Aristotle to an understanding of 'productionism' as the primary force of modern life) fuels his grasp of the institution of technology and its essence.

In his essay 'The Cries of Others and Heidegger's Ear: Remarks on the Agricultural Remark', Robert John Sheffler Manning proposes to critique a consensus of informed opinion that suggests that the remark is a clear example of the lack of an ethical status within not only the specificity of this particular statement, but across the breadth of Heidegger's thought. He cites John Caputo's comments in his essay 'Heidegger's Scandal: Thinking and the Essence of the Victim', as perhaps the clearest example of the taking a moral stance against what Caputo describes as Heidegger's 'ethical deficiencies'.

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38 This is Thomas Sheehan's translation taken from his text *Heidegger and the Nazis*, published in *The New York Review of Books*, 16 June 1988, pp. 41-3.

For Caputo, Heidegger was ‘deafened’ by the ‘call of Being’ to the point where the suffering of individual or collective beings is obliterated – was silenced.<sup>39</sup>

The contention of both Caputo and Levinas is that the silencing of the victim brings forward a question of not only muteness, but also invisibility in Heidegger’s post-war thought. The individuation of *Dasein*’s authenticity that is explored in *Sein und Zeit* is sacrificed in favour of the bigger picture of Being’s ‘self-showing’.

Manning disputes this contention and suggests that this convenient closure of such an argument (that which separates Heidegger’s lack of ethics, via his concern *only* with the history of Being, from the security of a morality that is assured in the reaffirmation of such a separateness, as proposed by both Caputo and Levinas) fails to address the question that is perhaps more pressing: Why does this separation need to take place at all and, more importantly, what does this say about the commentator?

Manning argues that there is compelling evidence that Heidegger does not exclude the individual from his philosophical discourse, and, in fact, in *Sein und Zeit* the notion of *being-with* is distinctive from his other grasp of the collective negation of individuation – the *They* (*Das Man*), which is understood as equiprimordial with Being-in-the World. The authenticity of *being-with* is not in the distinction of ‘others’ over and against whom the ‘I’ stands out, but rather those from whom the ‘I’ does not distinguish

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39 Perhaps the clearest example of this inability to hear can be seen in the so-called turn (*Kehre*) Heidegger makes from the individuation of *Dasein*, to the concern for *Being* (*beyng-historical-thought*) in his later thought.

itself – those with whom the ‘I’ is not separated, but is one too.<sup>40</sup>

An understanding of the continuity of this solicitude in Heidegger’s thinking is the crucial point of Manning’s argument against both Caputo’s and Levinas’s contention that the ‘agricultural remark’ reflects a general lack of humanity in a Heidegger that prefers the consideration of a metaphysical transcendent conception of Being rather than any ethical or moral preoccupation with beings.

He proposes that the superficiality of such a reading at Heidegger’s expense serves to underline a moral and ethical superiority taken by commentators to differentiate themselves and those in accord with them, from Heidegger’s compromised stance, illustrated by the ‘agricultural remark’.

Manning attempts further persuasion by drawing on examples from the post *Sein und Zeit* era, using written evidence of Heidegger’s solicitude.<sup>41</sup> The first, from the period of the now infamous Rectorate year at Freiburg, takes the form of a speech calling for a bridge to be

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40 The distinction between the collectives of the They (*Das Man*) and *being-with*, as cited by Manning is crucial, but it may be worth considering how such distinctive collectives square with Heidegger’s understanding of nationhood and the Volk in the years after the publication of *Sein und Zeit*.

41 For example, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)* compiled in the late 1930s and seen by some as a companion work to *Sein und Zeit*. The first of the six fugues (entitled *Echo [Anklang]*) deals specifically and explicitly with silence. In her essay ‘Poietic Saying’ (published in *Companion to Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy*), Daniela Vallega-Neu comments: ‘The experience of a lack of words and the experience of the necessity of words that say beyng’s\* occurrence go hand in hand. It is precisely the lack that compels thinking; it is in the lack that beyng’s silent call resounds.’ pp. 70–1.

\* The spelling connotes an archaic rendering, which Heidegger hoped would infer a more essential interpretation outside the pre-existing ontological etymology.

formed to celebrate the unity between scholars and manual workers. In the speech (given on the arrival of 600 formerly unemployed workers, now given employment by the Nazi administration of the city and sent to the University to begin their National Socialist education in February 1934), Heidegger attempts to bind and unite the people through knowledge, basing this understanding on the premise that 'the production of the miner is not fundamentally less spiritual than the action of the scholar'.<sup>42</sup> The contention, by Manning, that this is a clear example of Heidegger's humanism in drawing together the manual and the intellectual in a common cause seems to underplay the cause with which Heidegger was associating himself at this point.

It may be reasonable to assume that Heidegger's appropriation of the National Socialist ideal in the period of the Rectorate remains, at this stage, essentially a form of political naivety, as has been suggested by a number of later commentators. The consensus of opinion favours the view that Heidegger considered his position at this stage as an intellectual arbiter for the new order, able to influence and (within the confines of the university) institute policy.

The institution of the so-called *Führer* Principle in the academic system, and the militarisation of the student body as laid out in the Rectoral Address,<sup>43</sup> seem to be equally as important in any understanding of Heidegger's humanism,

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42 Taken from *German Existentialism* (trans. D. Runes, pub. New York Philosophical Library, 1965), pp. 37–42.

43 The full text of the Rectoral Address, titled 'The Self-Assertion of the German University' appears in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader* edited by Richard Wolin (MIT Press, 1993).

and the restrictions imposed by such a systemising of the academic environment certainly seem to look towards a kind of *Volk* humanism.

However, the treatment of Husserl over the contentious issue of access to the University libraries<sup>44</sup> and a more general disassociation with his former mentor in this period, lends currency to the issue of Heidegger's ethical behaviour.<sup>45</sup>

What is perhaps more pertinent in any case against Heidegger's humanism in this era is the so-called Baumgarten Affair. Heidegger's damning report to the League of National Socialist University Lecturers in December 1933 used Baumgarten's 'Jewish affiliations' as an argument against him becoming Heidegger's assistant at Freiburg, and as such, he made what Hugo Ott describes as 'a verbal obeisance to anti-Semitism'.<sup>46</sup>

The unity that permeates Heidegger's attempts to affiliate the labour of the worker with the intellectual labour of the academic institution in both the Rectoral Address and the later speech to the newly employed workers, can also be heard in the second text that Manning cites in his case for Heidegger's ethical humanism. 'Why Do I Stay in

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44 In Hugo Ott's book *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, he refutes this charge by saying: 'Let us be clear about one thing: as rector and head of department Heidegger did not issue a ban of any kind on the use of the university library or the departmental library. This oft-repeated charge is without foundation.' p. 174.

45 The suggestion is often made that Heidegger's treatment of Husserl in this period was directly responsible for his untimely death in 1938. It is also worth mentioning here that Heidegger retained the dedication to Husserl in *Sein und Zeit* in the fourth edition published in 1935, but dropped it from the fifth, published in 1941. The dedication read: 'Dedicated to Edmund Husserl in respect of friendship. Todtnauberg, in the Black Forest, 8 April 1926.'

46 From Ott's text, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, p. 191.

the Provinces?'<sup>47</sup> written in the period directly after Heidegger resigned the Rectorate in 1934, was a clear attempt to identify his place of thought in the heart of the *Volk* community of the Black Forest region where the *Hütte* had been built in the early 1920s.

As Rüdiger Safranski states in his book, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*:

The places of his thinking can be quite accurately determined: an imaginary and a real place – ancient Greece of his philosophy and his province, more accurately Todtnauberg.<sup>48</sup>



6

Heidegger shared with his contemporary Alfred Baeumler the view that any critique of modern nihilism would require its' understanding as a radical problematic, which in some way preceded their respective involvements with National Socialism.

In this sense, they were both philosophical radicals, whose common ground was the critique of idealism and the resulting principles of materialism associated latterly with Marxist principles. They looked to Nietzsche as the

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47 The whole of this text is translated and published in Thomas Sheehan's book, *Heidegger, the Man and the Thinker* (pp. 27-30).

48 Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, p. 277.



spiritual/conceptual father of a radicalism, which pointed eventually to the holistic, folkish doctrine of National Socialism.<sup>49</sup>

For both, this meant the redefining of spirit or *Dasein* within the context of historical being and time, through the 'recuperating' of Hölderlin (and his Greek view) and the 'new' interpretation of Greek tragedy as an attempt to uncover a new sense of history based on the exegesis of mythic symbols<sup>50</sup> and reconstructing the appropriate conditions for the possibility of the transformation of the historical existence of a people.<sup>51</sup>

As Frank H.W. Elder states, in the second part of *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger had always intended to include a dismantling of the Western philosophical tradition in an attempt to uncover a more originary understanding of Being.

This deconstruction would deal with the explication of mythic and scientific *Dasein* as two fundamental possibilities of being-in-the-world, and from which could be retrieved a more originary relationship between *mythos* and

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49 Safranski comments that: 'The anti-political mood would no longer reconcile itself to the fact of the plurality of human beings; instead it was looking for the great singular – the German *Volksgenosse*, the labourer of hand and head, the spirit.' Ibid., p. 230.

50 Baeumler wanted to give ontological and epistemological priority to symbols (understood as the middle term between instinct and form). He argued for two languages – *Word*, as the conscious articulation of concepts used in discussion and indicative of itself and the object, and *Symbol*, the silent language of inner conscious and instinct, and for which there is no interpretation without *primary* and *primitive* comprehension; it is outside understanding.

51 For Baeumler, this meant an interpretation of Greek tragedy based on chthonic Dionysus and the cult of dead heroes.

*logos*, which would anticipate and create the conditions for such a radical transformation.<sup>52</sup>

Both Heidegger and Baeumler agreed that logic and reason had become groundless and that the revolutionary project of the 'new man', the 'new university' and the 'new state' would be involved in the process of grounding ratio in a more originary origin. The key to this radical manoeuvre was to liberate Greek antiquity from the domination of Roman and Judeo-Christian interpretation, through the recuperation of both Hölderlin *and* Nietzsche in the 1920s by those who have recently been referred to as the radical conservatives of German academia and to which Heidegger and Baeumler serve as polar examples. For example, Norbert von Hellingrath was responsible for bringing to light Hölderlin's translations of Pindar into German and coined the phrase *das geheime Deutschland* (the secret Germany) as the *spirit* of the state that did not yet exist but was 'poetised' in Hölderlin's poetry.<sup>53</sup>

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Nietzsche's new interpretation of Greek religion and art as essentially Dionysian (emphasising the darker, orgiastic and horrifying side) also resurfaced in this post-Great War

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52 Heidegger perhaps followed through this notion of a transformation of thought most distinctly in his text *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, written between 1936–8. The significance of this text as a radical rethinking of thinking in a more poetic manner is reflected not only in the style of the language but also in the insistence that the so-called grounders of the abyss are the ahistoric poetic voice personified by Hölderlin.

53 I note here Derrida's text *Of Spirit-Heidegger and the Question*, where Derrida seeks to find a notion of spirit in Heidegger's work amidst the seemingly continual refusal by Heidegger to address the term specifically. Derrida argues for its spectrality in Heidegger's writings.

era, countering the 'classical' philology (the rational or scientific view) of ancient Greek culture that had dominated the academic field since the 1880s. For both Heidegger and Baeumler, the significance of their interpretation of Hölderlin as the historical precursor of a German revolution highlighted the significance of the poet as not merely the writer of verse but as a seer who saw beyond the aesthetics of beauty and art to the alterity of a religious-mythic dimension. Edler states:

Baeumler saw the mystery of the living sense of myth because the mythic was *beyond* the grasp of all previous categorical conceptions used to understand world history.<sup>54</sup>

The contextualisation of history resting on myth undermined all previous measures of historical time and, for Baeumler, was the symbolic expression 'of the development of man's essential nature'.<sup>55</sup>

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54 Added emphasis. Frank H.W. Edler, 'Alfred Baeumler on Hölderlin and the Greeks: Reflections on the Heidegger-Baeumler Relationship', p. 4.

55 Ibid., p. 4.

The hidden source of world history was the essentially alteric mythic dimension of human nature, which complicated any perceived clarity of interiority against exteriority and wrested control of chronological history' from rational *logos*.<sup>56</sup> In the two addresses entitled 'The Meaning of the Great War I and II', given in 1929 and 1930, Baeumler reminded his audience that the dead of the Great War were now powerless, and it was entrusted to the living, in what was more of a 'religious' than a 'moral' responsibility, to allow their thoughts and deeds to 'reach the light of day'.<sup>57</sup> For Baeumler, the creation of 'tragic drama' in ancient Greece had great historical consequences as a turning point in the history of the West. It also had a strong resonance with the 'reassertion of the heroic' in post-1918 Germany, whereby a 'genuine', 'real' Germany (a 'secret' Germany), lost in the depths of history,

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56 Johan Jacob Bachofen (1815–87) was a key figure in the development of an anthropology of myth in nineteenth-century Germany. His most noteworthy text, 'Mother Right', argued for the precedent of a historical matriarchal period that preceded the Hellenic/Roman (patriarchal) era and was bound up with the development of the chthonic. His two methodological axioms were:  
 (i) Phenomena are governed by discoverable natural laws.  
 (ii) These laws are continuously operative and uninterrupted by miraculous intervention.

He said of myth: 'It has been said of myth, like quicksand, can never provide a firm foothold. This reproach applies not to myth itself, but only to the ways in which it has been handled. Multifarious and shifting its outward manifestation, myth nevertheless follows fixed laws and can provide as definite and secure results as any other source of historical knowledge. Product of a cultural period in which life has not yet broken away from the harmony of nature, it shares with nature that unconscious lawfulness which is always lacking in the works of free reflection. Everywhere there is a system, everywhere cohesion; in every detail the expression of a great fundamental law whose abundant manifestations demonstrate its inner truth and natural necessity.' 'Mother Right', p. 76.

57 'Not the pangs of conscience but fear and trembling, not reproach but misfortune befalls us if we do not comply with the social command of Pietas in German fidelity.' Ibid., p. 5.

would rediscover itself through heroism as the natural disposition of the German *Volk*.<sup>58</sup>

He looked for a new language in the silent symbolism of the Nazis, which challenged the old language of intellectualism as no longer appropriate, because it was disconnected from the spiritual and instinctual depths of the *Volk*. He is quoted by Edler:

Only in what people themselves cannot express, in what is done and protected without word, without reflection in worship and custom, does the depth of reality disclose itself.<sup>59</sup>

Baeumler argued that the only person capable of interpreting the living sense of life is someone who understands the silent language of symbols into which life flows, and Hitler, as the living symbol of National Socialism, was to function for the Germans as the heroic *dithyrambic*/tragic drama had functioned for the Greeks.

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58 The implication of a racial imperative in Baeumler's rhetoric is strong here. His argument that heroism is the natural disposition of the *Volk* is founded in the hereditary biology of a martial Germanicness. Baeumler's Hölderlin is perceived as a youthful Germanic fighter, whose ancestors stretch back to the 'racial paradigm' of Siegfried (the German counterpart of Achilles).

59 From Edler's essay 'Alfred Baeumler on Hölderlin and the Greeks (Part I)', p. 9 ([www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.cfm](http://www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.cfm)).

The *chthonic*<sup>60</sup> articulates the heroic *dithyramb*<sup>61</sup> as associated with the Dionysian cult of the souls of dead heroes rather than the *bacchic ekstasis* of hedonistic Dionysian enthusiasm and draws attention to the distinction between the mystical suffering of Dionysus and the 'real' suffering and deeds of heroic figures.<sup>62</sup>

It is in relation to death that the chthonic hero is distinguished from the epic hero of Homeric verse.<sup>63</sup>

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60 *Chthonic*: tragic.

61 *Dithyramb*: the dramatic chorus integral to the structure of Greek tragedy. The song of the chorus (the *dithyramb*) was sung by faithful worshippers in religious ceremonies and preceded the sacrifice of an animal on the grave of the hero, its blood pouring into the earth to honour him. The 'spell' of the *dithyramb* called the hero from his grave and created a *daemoniac being* (*Geist*). The fear of such a prospect terrified the chorus to such an extent that they made the leader of the group into a 'stand-in' hero and this visualising of what was darkly felt was the catharsis of fear and trembling.

62 Baeumler argued that the true hero must incorporate what he called the 'fear and trembling ... that the religious man senses in the face of a daemoniac being who is capable of affecting things even from beyond the grave' (*Das Mythische Weltalter: Bachofens Romantische Deutung des Altertums*; abbreviated English translation: *The Mythic Age*). From Edler's essay, 'Alfred Baeumler on Hölderlin and the Greeks', p. 5 ([www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.cfm](http://www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.cfm)).

63 Baeumler wanted to avoid the mistake he perceived the Greeks had made, by escaping the use of Homeric language to express the *chthonic* hero. His connection with Bachofen is significant here as the *chthonic* hero was essentially *tellurian* (of the earth) and therefore linked to the Demetrian mother principle, whereby matriarchal peoples searched for consolation in the phenomena of natural life and sought solace in what Bachofen referred to as 'the generative womb, to conceiving, sheltering, nurturing mother love', 'Mother Right', p. 92.

The latter have no relation to death and remove the underworld to a safe distance, whereas the former through poetising the tragic, invoke the dead and transform the soul from the realm of flattening shadow through the primordial phenomenon of the tragic act, into an acting and speaking 'being'.<sup>64</sup>

The manifestation of the hidden unspeakable depths in the image of the tragic actor 'living' as the dead hero were contingent on the spoken language which, in the Homeric epic, was controlled by the intellectual and excluded the instinctual drives. As such, it was complicit in the de-potentialisation of the chthonic depths, so the unchanging light of being as identified in the Homeric gods triumphed over the daemonic existence of the *chthonic* hero. Bachofen critiqued the modern historical presumption that matriarchal/chthonic mysteries were merely a later degeneration of *Hellenic/Classicism* as manifest in the Homeric epic, by stating:

[T]he maternal mystery is the old element, and the classic age represents a late stage of religious development; the later age and not the mystery, may be regarded as a degeneration, as a religious levelling that sacrificed transcendence to immanence and the mysterious obscurity of higher hope to the clarity of form.<sup>65</sup>

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64 These heroes are no longer pale insubstantial shadings on the margins of the Homeric epic, but indicate 'the truth of the dramatic form is the making present of something past'. From Alfred Baeumler, *The Mythic Age*, p. 73, and quoted in Edler's essay, 'Alfred Baeumler on Hölderlin and the Greeks', p. 6 ([www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.cfm](http://www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.cfm)).

65 Bachofen, 'Mother Right', pp. 88–9.

For Heidegger (as for Baeumler), the Great War broke the materialistic and bourgeois world that had instituted it, and both Hölderlin and Nietzsche symbolised the potential re-emergence of a Greek-Germanic essence unfettered by the trappings of the historical precedence of the Roman/Judeo-Christian tradition.<sup>66</sup> Hölderlin's slumbering youth was transformed by Baeumler into the embodiment of latent Germanic instinct and enthusiasm, which identified its creator, and latterly Nietzsche too, as outsiders alienated from the modern world. Significantly, where Baeumler differed from Heidegger was in the precedent the latter gave to the special affinity between the Greek and German languages.

For Baeumler, the bond was created through what he described as youthful enthusiasm, as the expression of race and as such, it is clear to see a more direct connection with the more extreme policies of National Socialism than Heidegger's literary synthesis.<sup>67</sup>

It is evident then, that their respective desires to ground *ratio* were founded in a general heroic mood

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66 Nietzsche and Bachofen (historical contemporaries) clearly defined this later cultural period as essentially the Apollonian age (see Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*), in which patriarchy as the spiritual principle, rising above and breaking the bonds of maternal/tellurism, created the Uranian Solar hero to oppose the earlier Chthonic Mother goddess. Derrida notes in *Memoirs of the Blind* that: 'Between Apollo and Dionysus a "fraternal bond" is certainly possible, if we are to believe Nietzsche', p. 122.

67 In Baeumler's inaugural address at the University of Berlin in 1933, he spoke of a 'new unity of the people' *not* rooted in the one-sided goal of the educated individual, but in the community of the *polis* where the 'new type' would be one of many political soldiers. Baeumler saw the bond between Greek and German based in heroic enthusiasm and race as essentially a deeper bond than Heidegger's originary lingual imperative of Greek origin. [www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.efm](http://www.janushead.org/JHspg99/edler.efm), p. 6.



(*Stimmung*) of attunement, whereby the spiritual mission of the university was grounded in the essence of science but the evolution and establishment of such a grounding would be distinctly different.

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Baeumler's scientific approach looked to the active and political of youthful enthusiasm as the spirit<sup>68</sup> of this world-changing new science, while distinguishing it from what he defined as the passivity and 'contemplation of a theoretical man'.<sup>69</sup> Change and living enquiry could not 'be carried out in the idyllic nooks of monks' and therefore, Baeumler's critique of Heidegger centred around the latter's seeming desire for a cloistered aestheticism.

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68 *Spirit (Geist)* was not identified with either consciousness or intellect, but for Baeumler was the origin of science.

69 Baeumler distinguished between the passivity and disinterest of a 'theoretical man', and the pragmatic, participatory aspect of a 'political man' through active or passive involvement in change. It is worth noting that Heidegger conformed to the latter type, particularly after his retreat from the political life of the Rectorate in 1933 and with his vision of a, however 'secular' academic community in Berlin which would draw on the particularity of his *volkish* view gleaned at Todtnauberg. As Baeumler stated: 'the scientific-scholarly subject is supposed to withdraw completely from the world like a *monk* of the Middle Ages who leaves the world behind in order to dedicate himself completely to the *via contemplativa*. The theoretical man as the secular monk: distant from the world in absolute safety, he leads a life of asceticism, which is clearly always in danger of transforming into an *idyllic* life.' From Baeumler's *The Mythic Age*, and taken from Frank W. Edler's essay, 'Alfred Baeumler on Hölderlin and the Greeks (Part II)', p. 5 ([www.janushead.org/2-2/fedler.cfm](http://www.janushead.org/2-2/fedler.cfm)).

Edler confirms this view:

Anyone who knew Heidegger would know of his retreats to his *Hütte* in Todtnauberg and to Benedictine monasteries and could easily see Heidegger precisely as a secular monk.<sup>70</sup>

Equally, Heidegger critiqued Baeumler by indicating that he did not go far enough into the essence as a questioning process in the privileging of activity over consciousness.<sup>71</sup>

For Heidegger, science arises out of the event of Greek philosophy as *Aufbruch* – a ‘rupture’ or ‘breaking open, of a *revealing–concealing*, clearing where science can emerge, made possible by language.<sup>72</sup>

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70 Frank W. Edler, ‘Alfred Baeumler on Hölderlin and the Greeks (Part II)’, p. 7. Herman Mörchen commented on visiting Heidegger at Todtnauberg during a break in the *Plato* semester (1931–2) that: ‘He doesn’t seem to concern himself with political details. If a man lives up here, he has a different yardstick for everything.’ From Mörchen’s text *Aufzeichnungen*, and found in Rüdiger Safranski’s, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, p. 227.

71 Baeumler distinguished between (but failed to explain) scientific activity originating in the *spirit* of bold and daring enthusiasm characteristic of the Germanic people, whereas the passive scholarly and contemplative life of the intellect was more characteristic of the Jewish people.

72 As already stated, Heidegger does not concur with Baeumler’s racial theory of the essence of science, however, he was not against Baeumler’s theory of the chthonic as it was concomitant with his conception of concealing–revealing as a jointure not overcome by the defiance of knowing. The chthonic was important for Heidegger as the event of origination in Greek philosophy and thus referenced to Bachofen’s work on the chthonic hero. Bachofen stated: ‘Thus the hero, who expects to achieve immortality, sees himself and his race succumb to the law of earthly matter.’ And later in the same text: ‘He belongs to the world of endless becoming, not to the world of being. Everything that material energy brings forth is doomed to death.’ ‘Mother Right’, p. 125.

He highlighted Baeumler's rubric of 'theoretical man' as non-compliant with the Greek conception of *theoria* given that it was not understood as 'pure contemplation' pursued for its own sake.<sup>73</sup>

*Aufbruch* – the rift, as the originary event – was for Heidegger the condition under which the German language must place itself so that once immersed in its retrieved Greek origin, a more radical understanding of language and a more fundamental science of language would emerge.<sup>74</sup> The route to language that Heidegger mapped out had strong parallels with his own retreat from politics after his resignation from the Rectorate in 1933. It is evident from the shift in his concerns that the emergence of 'language' and its relation to logic, however radical, were perhaps, through his work on Hölderlin, evidence of a lack of a specific moral and ethical posture.<sup>75</sup>

It is perhaps his greatest failing, and the location from which his conspicuous silence emanates, that Heidegger refused to acknowledge that such moral and ethical considerations were no more than just the continuing restrictive vestiges of metaphysical valuation that had no place in the possibility of a 'new' world and the

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73 The Greeks struggled to conceive and enact contemplative questioning as the highest mode of *energeia* – of man's 'being-at-work'. Theory is then understood as the highest realisation of genuine practice and therefore Baeumler's 'modern' distinction is collapsed when thought back to the originary event (the same place from which science emerges).

74 It is worth noting here that Bachofen indicated that the origin of letter writing was credited to Atossa (the mother of Xerxes) and the evolution of this written form of language was expressly due to the confinement of the 'Asiatic queens' (Bachofen's term) to the interior of palaces; the written word sourced at the *hestial/hearth*.

75 It is worth reminding ourselves of Baeumler's view of Hölderlin as essentially political, in that Hölderlin's sleeping youth was a model for the potential for Germanic re-emergence through the waking of youthful enthusiasm (and therefore, race distinction).

advent of a 'new' god. To commodify humanity as one indistinguishable resource amongst a plethora of other resources is perhaps too much of a generality of what might seem to be Heidegger's high-minded attitude towards the baseness of such valuation, and as such and requires further clarification.

Michael E. Zimmerman, in his text *Heidegger's Confrontation with Modernity*, cites Hölderlin's view of the tragic as a way of understanding Heidegger's attitude towards his stand on archaic valuation in a way that maintains a significant connection with the Greek culture that he so admired and also a notion of completion that recognises both finitude and possibility. The arrogant pride (*hubris*) of the Greek tragic hero (and here we may alternate the archaic Greek figure with the modern German), in defying the divine, creates a *caesura* (a cleft), where the god reveals itself as an abyss which can either signal the possibility of a new beginning or the end of all historical possibilities. The two laws of such a tragic vision require the caesura to be understood as a characteristic of finite existence, and secondly that the tragic hero in recognising and facing the absence of god, must finally submit to his own mortality and finitude. The important factors that we might glean from Hölderlin's view of the tragic (essentially a Greek view) in relation to Heidegger is, that the attitude of the Greek/German hero (*hubris*) is perceived as an excessive pride that may be directed towards or, in defiance of the divine.

The potential for the heroic *hubris* to follow either path (or interpret the caesura/abyss as either the possibility of the end of all possibility) invites the

suggestion of what might be described as a cleansing punishment.<sup>76</sup> One might reflect here a moment on the essentially German/Greek aspect to this view, which is noted by Lacoue-Labarthe, who states:

German has never ceased aspiring on pretence of its strange similarity to Greek (the 'language of origin'), to the unique relation it has believed it could establish to everything most authentically Greek about Greece.<sup>77</sup>

For Zimmerman, the extremity of the National Socialist technological 'will to will' that found its most pronounced expression in the final solution as symbolised by Auschwitz, was the consummation of technological domination (*machination*) and the reduction of humans to mere industrial waste. Heidegger saw the German's blinded by the 'death of god', making a valiant effort to prepare the way for the advent of a new divine, but perverted from this course and led astray by the continuing power and drive of the technological will.

When seen in the light of this view of the tragic, the notion of a cleansing punishment can be seen historically, in two ways; firstly (and this may well be Heidegger's preferred view, given his own treatment at the hands of the de-nazification committee in Freiburg), in the restitution and 'tributes' demanded by the victorious allies, and secondly, in the purgation and cleansing of Germany by the German people themselves through racial exclusion and extermination.

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76 The suggestion has been made that Heidegger's lack of courage was that which made him look to pre-1933 Germany as the *Hölderlinian caesura*, rather than the Holocaust/Shoah itself.

77 'Two Poems by Paul Celan', p. 7.

Lacoue-Labarthe's view is that the German people themselves were never the scapegoat' and to direct one's attention towards the plight of a nation that seemingly so embraced National Socialist doctrine is entirely misplaced (the argument being that Heidegger seemed to be incapable of distinguishing between the losses to the German Army on the Eastern Front and the extermination of the Jews). The suggestion is made that Heidegger's lack of courage at the moment when the courage to admit his grave error was perhaps all he had left, forced him to reconfigure the conception of the caesura as the radical break in history, *not* in the extremity of the Holocaust, but further back in the period that preceded Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

Lyotard complicates this view of the tragic break further in his commentary *Heidegger and the 'jews'*,<sup>78</sup> by suggesting that the meaning of the mass extermination of the Jews is not in the caesura of the Holocaust/Shoah, because in his view, nothing has changed since the war. The technological imperative remains undiminished, so *even* the extremity of such a racial cleansing had not halted its continuing drive towards domination. In this sense, Lyotard is in some accord with Heidegger's post-war views on the technological (an agreement about the continuing drive of the technological), but where they differ in the most significant way is in addressing the meaning of Auschwitz.

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78 Jean François Lyotard, *Heidegger and the 'jews'* (trans Andreas Michel and Mark Roberts; pub. University of Minnesota Press 1990).

Lyotard interprets the Holocaust/Shoah as a genocide borne out of resentment. He perceives the Jews as a reminder of the impotence of all the West's projects to make everything representable, present and thus controllable. The Jews represent the experience of being uprooted (nomadic!) and hostage to the unnameable divine (Jehovah) and, as such, represent the memory of an unconquerable obstacle to understanding and the truth. As bearers of the memory of human finitude and dependence, it was necessary to exclude them, and their extermination was the most extreme attempt to erase their unwanted memory.

The secrecy<sup>79</sup> under which this action took place further sought to obliterate, so the very memory of the obliteration of memory might be forgotten in a kind of double erasure. For Lyotard, Heidegger's post-war silence was a refusal to deconstruct his most basic assumption that the history of the West is identical to the history of *Being* initiated by the Greeks.

As the bearded patriarchs sought to continually remind the Children of Israel of their unnameable origin (the divine), so Heidegger, as the prophet of *Being*, involved himself in the reactivating of pre-Socratic

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79 With a view to secrecy, I refer Martin Gilbert's text, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy*. He comments: 'Throughout Eastern Europe, rumours abounded as to some sinister fate for the growing number of Jews being deported *to the east*. But the exact nature of that fate was still unknown. Also unknown was the reason: the *final solution*, worked out administratively at Wannsee, remained a tight secret.' p. 313. This refers to the Wannsee Conference of 20<sup>th</sup> January 1942 at which it was reported were discussed 'the various types of solution possibilities.' However, as Gilbert points out, what 'these *possibilities* were, the notes of the Conference do not record.' Ibid., p. 283

memory.<sup>80</sup> The Jews testify to another dimension of faithfulness to a divine law that is certainly comparable with the history of *Being*, but remains unacceptable to the purity of *Being* in the Greek sense and therefore as Heidegger understood it.

In the Preview to his text, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, Heidegger comments:

At this point to ask the question 'who are we?' is indeed *more dangerous* than any other opposition we face on the level of certainty about man (the final form of Marxism, which essentially has nothing to do with Judaism or with Russia; if anywhere a spiritualism still lies dormant and unevolved, then, then in the Russian people; Bolshevism is originally Western, a European possibility: the emergence of the masses, industry, technicity, the dying off of Christianity; but insofar as dominance of reason as equalization of all people is merely the consequence of Christianity and Christianity is fundamentally of Jewish origins – cf. Nietzsche's thought on slave-rebellion in morality – Bolshevism is actually Jewish; but then Christianity is fundamentally Bolshevik! And then what decisions become necessary from this point on?).<sup>81</sup>

As Lyotard states, they represent the flaw of a humanity trapped in an essentially negating relationship with the divine that undermines the supremacy of possibility. The contention as to where historically the radical break of the caesura might be situated has some bearing on the longevity of Heidegger's silence.

I propose that there is a strong argument to suggest that Heidegger's conviction about a period of

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80 *Bearded Patriarch* is a reference to Celan's poem 'Tübingen, January'.

81 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, p. 38.



consummation preceding such a break remained intact, although its place in history is altered seemingly by history itself (or arguably, Heidegger's interpretation of history).<sup>82</sup> As with Lyotard, Heidegger continued to consider the domination of the technological as ongoing after Auschwitz and therefore its potential significance as the event of caesura was diminished.<sup>83</sup> The question we may need to consider in light of this, is whether the radicality of such a break is contingent with history itself (is built into it's matrixical/sequential 'order') or that such an event, if can be considered with the specificity of a term like 'event', is perhaps much more ambiguous and not party to the constraints of a sequential temporal order?

I would suggest here that the historical event that we refer to as the Holocaust/Shoah is/was/will be resistant to the constraints of a completion that culminated in the liberation of the camps in 1945. Further, it could be argued that the beginning (if such a term can be used) can never a singular point of origin that does not take account of the contingent historical or social implications that not only feed into its phenomenal substance, but also feed out into all repercussive activities that follow on from it as a historical/meridial moment.

In this sense, the *poem* is contingent on the same meridial force and this is perhaps most evident in Celan's

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82 I refer here to key post-war texts such as 'The Question Concerning Technology' and 'On the Question of Being'.

83 Heidegger's 'On the Question of Being', a commentary directed towards Ernst Jünger, suggested that the post-war era was entering the 'zone of the consummation of nihilism' and was yet to 'cross the line'. Heidegger also refers to this line in a quote from Jünger as the 'zero meridian'. Published in *Pathmarks* (ed. W. McNeill; pub. Cambridge University Press, pp. 291-322).

consideration of the significance of dating the poem and the date as a signifier or sign.

For Lacoue-Labarthe, Celan the *poet*, as both *Jew* and *survivor*, was confronted by the 'most brutal question possible': 'How was (he) able to situate not himself, but *us vis-à-vis it?*'<sup>84</sup> (The 'it' here refers to 'impossible possibility' of the mass extermination/holocaust – 'the intolerable banality of our time.')

He also states:

We are at the endpoint of what *Nous*, *ratio*, and *Logos* still today (*heute*) the framework for what we are, what we cannot have failed to show: that murder is the first thing to count on, and *elimination the surest means of identification*.<sup>85</sup>

It is perhaps, only provisionally sufficient to retain the term *end* for the time being, for the benefit of some comments on completion. In Lacoue-Labarthe's text, 'Two Poems by Paul Celan', he indicates that for Celan, both Heidegger (through the poem, 'Todtnauberg') and Hölderlin (through the poem 'Tübingen, January') 'give voice to what is at stake in our era'. This vocalising of the particularity of what might be considered our temporal predicament is understood by Lacoue-Labarthe, via Celan, Heidegger and Hölderlin, as the 'closing of a circle' – a completion of the 'age of knowledge'.

For Heidegger, the Greek term *technê* ushers in this era, but its significance is directed by the particular definition that is preferred in post-Socratic thought. In

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84 Lacoue-Labarthe, 'Two Poems by Paul Celan' (from the collection *Poetry as Experience*), p. 9.

85 Added emphasis. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

favouring its epistemological context (remember here that *epistêmê* and *technê* in Greek are both words that mean a kind of knowing, and as such, a knowing that is also a revealing), we understand it as the pursuit of knowledge as pure presence.

This is where the development of philosophical thought from the Socratic era is made manifest in a metaphysics that shackles thought via knowledge to a drive towards a technological understanding of the world – as such, the a priori of *presence* over *absence*. It is evident that in the Greek word *technê* we already hear the modern term *technology*, and for Heidegger, the essence of such technology drives forward through constraint, limitation and manipulation.

What is referred to as enframing (it is important to remember here that man is not the force that fuels such a posturing of technology; as perhaps the dextrous arch-manipulator, but is challenged by and, as such, as much at its mercy as any of the things that it orders). What Heidegger pursues rigorously in his essay ‘The Question Concerning Technology’, is what is forgotten in the word *technê* – that for the Greeks it also meant a revealing in the sense of the artistic and poetic. He states:

There was a time when it was not technology alone that bore the name *technê*. Once that revealing that brings forth truth into the splendour of radiant appearing also was called *technê*.

Once there was a time when the bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful was called *technê*. And the *poiêsis* of the fine arts also was called *technê*.<sup>86</sup>

For Heidegger, what is lost in the later metaphysical incarnation of *technê* – the route defined by *epistêmê* towards the prioritising of knowledge via technology – is the poetic/artistic (*poiêsis*) conception also found in *technê*. This form of revealing (*alêtheia*) is perhaps more appropriately conceived by Heidegger as a kind of *unconcealment* that is not directed by the enframing mode of the technological, but by an occasioning that appropriates modes<sup>87</sup> without favouring any individual mode within the event of occasioning.<sup>88</sup> As such, he declines to dismiss this reign of enframing as only an exercise in the restrictive practices of the essence of technology, and completely without merit. What is heard in *technê* is both the revealing of the challenging forth of technology's essence, and also (and most importantly for Heidegger's project) the unconcealment of the artistic and the poetic.

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86 Heidegger, 'The Question Concerning Technology', p. 34.

87 This references Heidegger's definition of the 'four modes of occasioning' in 'The Question Concerning Technology', pp. 7–8.

88 This is distinguished from Aristotle's version of instrumentality and causality and the four causes: *causa materialis*, *causa formalis*, *causa finalis* and *causa efficiens* – *causa efficiens* (the maker) being prioritised.

He quotes Hölderlin in the latter part of the essay 'The Question Concerning Technology':

But where the danger is, grows  
The saving power also.<sup>89</sup>

In the midst of the technological drive towards reducing all to 'standing-reserve', there is heard a revealing that can be referred to as unconcealment (*alêtheia*). It is an opening that is created (artistically or poetically) to allow the presencing of things in themselves without the constraint of enframing through the technological (*technê* as both *poison* and *cure!*)<sup>90</sup> – a rift.

This brief diversion is intended to provisionally contextualise the particularity of a conception of a world age (Heidegger's world picture)<sup>91</sup> as essentially formed by the understanding of the essence of truth' through knowledge and valuation via the mechanisms of technological enframing.

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89 Heidegger, 'The Question Concerning Technology', p. 34. Otto Pöggeler, in his text *The Paths to Heidegger's Life and Thought* (Chapter 3, 'Art-Myth-Language') argues that Heidegger misunderstands Hölderlin here by suggesting that this phrase 'does not hold nihilism and the demise of the godly to be the greatest danger, but the opposite: that the breakthrough to unmediated proximity with God could lead to arrogance!' p. 239.

90 I will briefly mention the *Pharmakos* as both *poison* and *cure* as explored by Derrida in his text *Dissemination*, and as something to which I will return later.

91 This term is a reference Heidegger's essay, 'The Age of the World Picture', and found in the collection, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. In it he states: 'The fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture. The word "picture" [*Bild*] now means the structured image [*Gebild*]\* that is the creature of man's producing which represents and sets before.' p. 134.

\* It is noted in the footnote that the word *Gebild* is Heidegger's own word and taken from the noun *gebilden*, which means *a thing formed, creation, structure or image* and the assumption is that the prefix *ge-* connotes the force a kind of gathering to be found in the word.

(It may be worth mentioning here that Nietzsche was the first 'modern' thinker to question valuations – to attempt to scrutinise values that previous thinkers had accepted as beyond such consideration.<sup>92</sup>

It is also worthy of note that both Nietzsche and Hölderlin were considered outsiders and were essentially recuperated by radical conservative academics such as Heidegger and Baeumler).

Perhaps more appropriate is to distinguish this era (whose closure Lacoue-Labarthe suggests, as inaugurated by the poetics of Hölderlin and the thinking of Heidegger) under the historical term *nihilism*.

Nihilism should be understood as the persistent unremitting decline towards the ultimate negation that constrains all possibilities via the mechanisms of valuation (the good and the bad, the noble and the base). It is this value structure (the enframing of Heidegger's essay, 'The Question Concerning Technology') that is the very essence of the metaphysical project whereby everything is coerced into a levelling binary of opposition where negation orchestrates, controls and dictates.

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92 Specifically Kant's uncritical use of the valuations of truth and beauty, etc., Derrida comments in *The Truth in Painting* that: 'Kant and Hegel reflect the line of cut or rather the *pas* crossing the line between finite and infinite as the proper place of the sublime and the interruption of symbolic beauty: it is not surprising that they both consider a certain *Judaism* as the historical figure of the sublime irruption, the one, Kant, from the point of view of religion and morals, in the ban on iconic representation (neither *Bildnis* nor *Gleichnis*), the other, Hegel, in *Hebraic poetry considered as the highest negative form of the sublime.*' p. 134 (added emphasis).

Nietzsche stands at the perimeter (the meridian?) of this completion and, for Heidegger, he personifies the last vestiges of all metaphysical inquiry inaugurating the era whereby the zone of nihilism's consummation is entered.<sup>93</sup> As the inverter of Platonism, he is located by Heidegger, in the zone of nihilism's consummation. His aphoristic attempts at revaluation are not the creation of new values or the destruction of all valuation but are the inversion of all preceding values – the *Platonic* valuations of ideality and the worldly turned on their head. As such, for Heidegger, Nietzsche cannot escape the age of metaphysical knowledge, the age of nihilism, and stands on one side of the perimeter as the circle closes.<sup>94</sup>

The task of thought, as defined by Heidegger, quoted by Lacoue-Labarthe in his text, and manifest in the work of Hölderlin *and* Heidegger, is to emerge from the midst of this completion as that which has to be deployed (what up to this moment, has been forgotten or rejected)<sup>95</sup> to clear a path to a possible future, re-inaugurating history, re-opening the possibility of a world and paving the way for the advent of a new god.

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93 See 'On the Question of Being', published in *Pathmarks*, pp. 291–322.

94 I have specified Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche here in the context of an understanding of the completion of metaphysics/nihilism. What I have not touched upon is the Derridian and Deleuzian readings of Nietzsche, which complicate Heidegger's perception of Nietzsche as 'the last great metaphysician'.

95 I refer back to what Heidegger hears in *technê* – the unconcealment of the artistic and poetic.

This need to free grammar from logic (the *is*-predication) could not be conceived by merely improving upon or supplementing any existing tradition, but through the understanding that the a priori structure of discourse was essentially existential.

If discourse is temporal, any permanence of an objective presence in which logic is based blocks and hinders any attempt to retrieve a more originary experience of time and therefore that from which this more originary understanding of Being and language might be formulated. For Heidegger, this linguistic praxis sets to work as a gathering in the German language of Greek *logos* as essentially the preservation of the origin of a temporal gathering through the manner of the pre-logical. Hölderlin's late poetry identified a pre-logical lingual form that anticipated the drive towards nihilistic consummation and the rift/interval (the *ructure*) of 'no more' and 'not yet'. His encroaching inability to speak identified the possibility for silence as the praxis by which language might be predicated in the *pre*-logical.



As Heidegger stated with reference to Hölderlin's prophetic consideration of the 'between' of this era as a time of distress and the world's night:

The 'no more' of gods who have fled and the 'not yet' of the god to come.<sup>96</sup>

## POISON AND CURE

Yet Suddenly: silence. A fever's dull glow  
Sends poisonous flowers blossoming from my mouth,  
And how the dew falls, pale and shimmering the branches  
As if from a wound, and falls, and falls like blood.<sup>97</sup>

Is it appropriate to consider that Celan's demand of Heidegger was that of a patient of his doctor, and that such a consultation on the hillside at Todtnauberg would provide the curative solution to Celan's long-term illness?

I would like to draw attention to a number of possibilities that Celan introduces in the poem to indicate the need for a cure that perhaps is both metaphorical and observational. As such, the insight at work in the text is how what is observed becomes metaphorical, but these

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96 Hölderlin's encroaching madness is identified by Celan in 'Tübingen, January' as the collapse of his ability to speak. He wrote: 'if he spoke of his time, could only babble and babble, ever-ever-moremore. ("Pallaksch. Pallaksch.")'. From *Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan*, tran. J. Felstiner, p. 159. Lacoue-Labarthe notes in 'Two Poems by Paul Celan' that: 'We are told when Hölderlin went "mad", he constantly repeated, "Nothing is happening to me, nothing is happening to me."' *Poetry as Experience*, p. 21.

97 This second stanza is taken from Georg Trakl's poem 'Horror' – the translation by D. Simko and published in the collection *Autumn Sonata*, p. 29.

considerations are extended further through later translation and mistranslation, so that meaning can no longer be understood as complete or without further extension.

It is well documented that Celan's fascination for the botanical and the geological informed much of his poetry and provided important references in the complicated strategies of his poetic insights. 'Todtnauberg' is no exception, but perhaps what appears insistently remedial should not be viewed as exclusively curative, and our seemingly clear understanding of such a cure at work in the poem must be revised.<sup>98</sup>

Pierre Joris's commentary is among many that follow the pattern that proposes that Celan's hope at the beginning is manifest in the observation of particular kinds of flora common to a location like Todtnauberg that were known for their curative properties. Both Arnica and Eyebright are common natural remedies, and Celan's insertion of them at the commencement of the poem is obviously intended to charge the text with a provisional hope for the curative – an expectation brought to the meeting and reflected in this initial observation of the surroundings.

It is worth remembering here what drew Celan's attention to these particular plants in the light of such expectation by indicating their curative powers. Arnica is a

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98 Derrida comments in *The Truth in Painting*: 'As such, insofar as he inscribes his object in the cycle of natural finality, ascribes to it an objective function and end, the botanist cannot find the flower beautiful. At the very most he can conceive of an adherent beauty of the flower. If a botanist accedes to a vague beauty, it will not be insofar as he is a botanist. Scientific discourse will have *become mute* or impossible for him.' p. 95.

perennial herb indigenous to Central Europe and found commonly in woods and mountain pastures.

Its most common application is as a tincture for external application on sprains, bruises and wounds where the skin remains unbroken. For our purposes, what is vital is its significance as an external treatment for injuries close to the dermal perimeter of the corporeal, where, most importantly, this perimeter remains un-breached.

To extend this reading of its properties further, it is seldom used internally because of its irritant effect on the stomach, and as an external application, if used repeatedly, it may produce severe inflammation to the skin surface, and to some particularly sensitive to the plant, it can be poisonous, particularly if taken internally.<sup>99</sup>

What is indicated here is that a cursory grasp of the properties of Arnica may lead us to interpret it as essentially curative without any provisos – an inherently good treatment if used appropriately. Yet even in its most appropriate use, it has properties that are not entirely without risk to the patient, and in certain circumstances, such properties are potentially hazardous.

In considering the intrinsic relationship between that which is considered curative, and that from which one is cured, what is perhaps not accounted for is the characteristics of such a cure that are not essentially affirmative and unproblematic. The binary nature of the opposition of the injurious and the curative does not take

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99 A homeopathic tincture (X6) has also been used successfully in the treatment of epilepsy. This information can be found on the website [www.botanical.com](http://www.botanical.com).

account of the complication of what might be inherently injurious in the curative.

What I propose here is that Celan's use of the remedial as primordial to the anticipatory event of hope, which instigates the poetic consideration of his meeting with Heidegger in 1967, is not without the problematic built in to the essential nature of the potential remedy itself. Arnica is a remedial herb, but this quality is not exclusively an unreserved affirmation of its good qualities as is perhaps considered by some commentators. What is essential to the curative is also the possibility of the poisonous.

With this in mind, a reading that suggests that Celan's provisional hope is manifest in the remedial/herbal of the indigenous flora of Heidegger's Black Forest retreat is complicated, and this is echoed, as Joris has suggested, by a less literal reading of the metaphorical at work in the poem.



7

Provisionally, Arnica is a treatment for injury, and if considered exclusively as such, its aspirational qualities of hope are beyond question. What is perhaps less obvious is the conditions by which such a remedy can act effectively as a cure and how it, as a remedial treatment, impacts on such conditions via its pharmaceutical nature.

We must be attentive towards what must be considered the key quality of Arnica as a remedial herb and as a treatment for what ails a body. At its most effective, it is primarily (though not exclusively) an external tincture applied to bruising, chilblains and sprains, as already stated, where the skin remains unbroken. As an external application, its curative qualities act upon that which is internal without coming into direct contact with the internal injury itself.

The body's dermal layer – the skin – becomes an intrinsic part of the curative process by refusing the penetration of the tincture across the border that separates internal from external. To be effective as a treatment, it must always remain external to the corporeal, and so its relationship with that which maintains it as external (the skin) is fundamental to its operation as remedial and curative while resistant to its complete absorption into the corporeal.

The dermal layer conducts the remedial qualities of Arnica to that which is injured internally – it effectively 'translates' what is appropriate in the qualities of the herb as tincture to treat the injury, while withholding that which might prove injurious.

As we have stated, Arnica is not curative without reservation. It can be, in certain circumstances, an irritant,

and with repeated application it can cause inflammation and discomfort. Equally, when used for internal treatment in specific circumstances (epilepsy and travel sickness), it must be administered with care, particularly if the patient is sensitive to the plant. If this is the case, it can result in severe discomfort and even poisoning when taken internally in this way.

Celan's use of Arnica as a metaphor for the remedial that he found so abundant around the *Hütte* was perhaps to identify the curative that surrounded Heidegger, firstly, in anticipation that a 'word' might come to cure what ailed the poet, and secondly, that Heidegger himself might be cured of past transgressions that compromised the purity of his thought.

What I propose here is that the natural characteristics of the herb Arnica are not without risk when used to treat any malady and, as such, can be construed as a conditional manoeuvre that includes both the curative and the poisonous. When Joris argues for the refusal of the comfort and security of the definitive translation in his text 'Celan/Heidegger: Translation at the Mountain of Death', he complicates the reading of 'Todtnauberg' by making it conditional in the same way that the application of Arnica as a medicinal tincture for treating injury is conditional. To 'translate' Celan's use of Arnica as exclusively curative is to avoid its other natural characteristics that refuse the remedial and have the potential to be injurious, even poisonous.

The clarity of Celan's hope manifest in the remedial qualities of Arnica are now complicated by the other qualities of the herb that are not curative and perhaps,

what is now most important about these characteristics is that it can only operate as a treatment effectively when applied externally, *not* through ingestion or absorption, where it has the potential to act as a poison.<sup>100</sup> How might this be understood with regard to both Celan and Heidegger? Arnica, as a treatment for internal injuries, can only effectively be administered externally and in so doing is reliant on the dermal layer to translate its curative qualities.

If absorbed or ingested, it is risked as a poison to the body that would certainly be discomfoting, perhaps even fatal. As a treatment, it is effective against what might be considered only minor injuries and only when administered externally under certain conditions.<sup>101</sup> How might we expect such a treatment to be considered curative of an injury that may well be more deeply set within the corporeal?

To remain an external treatment is perhaps to limit the effectiveness of such a treatment with particular reference to the severity of the kind of injury to be treated.

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100 The beginning of hope in the poem not only commences in the remedial possibilities of the surrounding blooms (Arnica and Eyebright) but also in the image of the well-spring. The change occurs when the affirmation of the spring is lost with the later identification in the poem of moisture as dampness – we can interpret this as ‘water without a clear source’ and as such, an unease or anxiety is articulated. Celan’s term for log as in ‘half-trod log-paths’ (the means of traversing the damp ground) is *Knüppel*, which also means *bludgeon* and has a strong resonance with the treatment of interned Jews. In the Alain Resnais film *Night and Fog*, it was noted in the commentary (for which Celan was responsible, in 1956, for a German translation of Jean Cayrol’s original, in French – see John Felstiner’s text, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*, pp. 92–3), that camp prisoners were ‘bludgeoned awake’.

101 I am mindful here of the internal application of Arnica as a treatment for epilepsy and travel-sickness and would like to consider these further in light of disfluency and displacement.

As such, does Celan have in mind, in this reference to the remedial via the use of Arnica, a general context for some kind of healing balm at the beginning of the poem, or is potential superficiality of both treatment and injury masking a deeper consideration of what is inherently poisonous within the curative?

I am conscious here that we have yet to broach the second remedy cited in the preliminary lines of the poem, and as such, have not given it the same attention as Arnica. This is because Eyebright is more obviously a treatment for a particular condition that more clearly connects with what I believe to be Celan's provisional metaphorical indications towards a sense of hope in advance of the meeting. As the English translation makes clear, it is an optical treatment and restorative that is sight-based – 'a consolation of the eyes' (*Augentröst*). The obvious association between the weakness of sight restored by the curative qualities of bathing the eyes in an infusion of Eyebright reaches beyond the mere improvement of 'corporeal' sight.

For Celan, it indicates a more profound metaphorical realm of a treatment for the improvement of 'insight', not a general insight, but the particularity of an individual's insight towards a particular historical event or events. What was hoped for by the poet was that Heidegger would express a more insightful 'word' towards that which and about which he has previously remained conspicuously silent, and the proximity of such a restorative herbal balm to the philosopher's place of thought – the *Hütte* – is anticipatory of such an oral event of contrition.





8

Where Eyebright can be more literally conceived as a metaphor for the soothing of restricted sight (in Heidegger's case, possibly a kind of tunnel vision or myopia towards the ontological) and as such, acts as a restorative balm,<sup>102</sup> Arnica's role in the poem is significantly more complex.

If Arnica's status in the poem is one of 'undecidability', it not only poses the problem of the *pharmakon*,<sup>103</sup> but also that of translation. To operate successfully as a cure, it must remain a tincture that soothes externally and its remedial role is contingent on it remaining exterior to any injury it is called upon to treat.

102 *Restorative* implies a condition where vision once clear, becomes impaired and is in need of treatment to restore clarity. This process implies a *temporal* condition – a recurrence.

103 *Pharmakon* should be understood from classical Greek and understood to mean either remedy or poison – either a *cure* for an illness, or its *cause*.

Once it traverses the barrier that indicates the separation between the external and the internal, its essential nature as a *pharmakon*, comes into play.

As an internal treatment, it is not without remedial properties, but as undecidable (i.e. it cannot 'decide' to be either a remedy or a poison; this is contingent on the condition of the particular circumstances of its application), the risk is run of an adverse reaction – a poisoning that at the very least would cause severe discomfort, and at worst, may prove to be fatal.<sup>104</sup>

The undecidability of the *pharmakos* – its drift between the polarities of poison and cure– has tangible links with not only the pharmaceutical nature of Arnica as a remedial treatment for the specifics of a corporeal injury where it is maintained (at lowest risk to the corporeal) in its exteriority, but also as a phenomenon associated with the undecidability of the *pharmakos*.

The latter term is evidently derivative from (rooted in) the former, and essentially functions in much the same way – as a manifestation of undecidability. The specificity of the *pharmakos* is translated as the term *scapegoat* and is understood to mean an *evil* maintained with the structure of the *polis*, and which is sacrificed by the state to maintain its purity.

In ancient Greece the ritual of the *pharmakos*, as a rite of *civil purification*, obliged the citizens of the city-state to maintain (at public expense) a group of individuals

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104 It is worth remembering that the two recognised ailments for which Arnica may be used as a remedy via ingestion, epilepsy and travel-sickness, might well be considered those of the outsider/other – Celan as both *poet/seer* and *nomadic/alien*.

(‘wild, ugly and deformed’ and arguably barbaric) solely for the purpose of sacrifice.<sup>105</sup>

At times of greatest need (the onset of such natural phenomena as flood, famine or pestilence), an individual was selected to be removed from the confines of the *polis*, and was subjected to a frenzied beating that resulted in death. This was followed by the immolation of the remains, which were scattered to the four winds.<sup>106</sup>

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105 The precedent for the scapegoat is noted in Heidegger’s past through the figure of Heidegger’s assistant at Freiburg University, Rudolf Stadelmann. Hugo Ott notes in his book, *Martin Heidegger, A Political Life*, that Stadelmann was dismissed from the first of Heidegger’s camps at Todtnauberg (4–10 October 1933) to appease the warring factions also present from Freiburg, Heidelberg and Kiel Universities. The specificity of the misdemeanor remains unclear, but Ott records that the sacrificial lamb, Stadelmann, noted: ‘I shall never seek to evade this discipline. And in Todtnauberg I realized more clearly than ever before that my place is in the camp of revolution, not among the ranks of the opposition or the carping spectators. I shall maintain discipline but *had hoped for more*, I had believed in the possibility of true allegiance. This is why I was so saddened and shaken by the way things turned out,’ p. 233 (added emphasis). Latterly when teacher and assistant were reconciled, Heidegger urged Stadelmann to ‘learn to become hard’ (p. 232). Even in 1933, Todtnauberg can be seen here as the site of a rift that required remedial treatment through the realisation of a kind of scapegoat to restore order. I would note here Stadelmann’s anticipation of reconciliation with Heidegger in the context of these events was distinctly different from Celan’s.

106 The *weapon* most commonly used for the beating of the *pharmakos* was a bulbous plant known as a *squill*. It is significant that the two common varieties of this plant, white and red, are used alternatively as a diuretic, stimulant or expectorant (white), and a poison (red). Of coincidental note here is that the cottages converted to provisional gas chambers at Auschwitz, were referred to as *the little red house* and *the little white house*.



9

The significance of the phenomenon of the *pharmakos*, for our purposes, is firstly in its links with the root of *pharmakon* as already defined in the undecidability between toxicity and the curative. Arnica, as outlined, has the provisional condition of the curative and as such, is generally considered (with Eyebright) as the metaphor for remedial hope that inaugurates the opening stanza of 'Todtnauberg'.

I would like to suggest that this remedial possibility is incomplete without recognising that what is conceived as essentially curative is also essentially toxic – the spectre of toxicity which haunts the curative. In exploring the characteristics of the remedy that Celan opens the poem with, the condition of undecidability can be grasped in the low risk exteriority of Arnica as a *pharmaceutical* tincture. The key proposal of it as a treatment for any interior ailment is that it is not introduced to the interior and has no direct contact with it (except under exceptional circumstances of treatment for epilepsy or travel sickness and with acknowledgement of some risk to the corporeal).

The risk of its toxicity to the body is at its lowest when it is administered externally, and as a treatment under these conditions, its toxicity must be recognised and acknowledged – we can no longer conceive of it as exclusively curative without the otherness of its essential nature being recognised in the remedial.<sup>107</sup>

Likewise, the historical figure of the *pharmakos* is essentially an undecidable, and to acknowledge its curative function in the purification of the *polis* is also to recognise its otherness as essential to its operation as a scapegoat. To function as *pharmakos*, it must be embraced by the state without undergoing any kind of absorption into it. It is perhaps more appropriate to consider the scapegoat in these circumstances, as ingested into the corporeal of the *polis* on the clear understanding that such ingestion is *not* merely absorption.

The ingested *pharmakos* is held within the body of the state (historically maintained by the state) and as such has a function within its apparatus, a function that is fundamentally other to this structure, and one that operates at its most effective for the purposes of the *polis*, outside its confines (the *pharmakos*, when sacrificed, is removed from the interior of the *polis* and dispatched on its periphery).

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107 I also reiterate here earlier comments made about the parallels between *remedial* and *toxicity* in the context of the use of water in the poem. From the hope of a well-spring to the unease of source-less water. Paul Virilio notes in his text, *Bunker Archaeology*, that Hitlerian ideology had just one element – the *lithosphere* (earth and blood). His fear of the hydrosphere (the ‘liquid horizontality of the sea’) led to the construction of the Atlantic Wall ‘looking out over the void, over this moving and pernicious expanse, alive with menacing presences; in front of the sea Hitler rediscovered ancient terrors: water, a place of madness, of anarchy, of monsters’, p. 30.

To be held within the state as essentially alien to its apparatus indicates not only the undecidability of such otherness (that it is both exclusive and inclusive), but also that at the heart of the structural integrity of the *polis* is the notion of difference – the *pharmakos* is essentially different from the state that maintains and sacrifices it and has to be so to operate as *pharmakos*.<sup>108</sup>

Arnica, then, within the confines of the poem, is essentially a metaphor for difference that is precluded in its nature and, as such, we cannot ignore its potential as a literary *pharmakon*. Most commentaries understand it as that which is curative prior to the meeting between Celan and Heidegger – an anticipatory *possibility* and expectation on behalf of the poet. Even Joris, whose critique of particular interpretations and translations of Celan's poem, provisionally informed this exploration, states:

The poem's opening line, Celan's account of the surrounding botany he spies upon arriving, is however full of hope and healing: Arnica is a bright-yellow flower, whose mountain variety, *A montana*, is used to prepare a tincture helpful for healing sprains and bruises.<sup>109</sup>

What is seemingly ignored by Joris is the nature of Arnica as a remedy that must include in its remediality the otherness of a toxicity, which not only indicates a notion of difference already at work in the remedy, but, as Derrida might well point out, proposes a deferral whereby the

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108 I am mindful here of Derrida's work on the *pharmakon/pharmakos* in *Dissemination* and also Mark Wigley's text, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*.

109 Joris, 'Celan/Heidegger: Translation at the Mountain of Death', p. 3.

circumstances by which the *pharmakon* is instituted have some say in its meaning.

For to mean cure, and *only* the possibility of a cure in the context of the poem, is already to exclude that which is the very nature of Arnica in its remedial state. As conditionally curative, its toxicity must be recognised and, as such, the clarity of the curative is complicated by the inclusion of that which had been largely excluded. The essential difference at work in the herbal/remedial of curative and toxicity in Arnica expands into a reading of it that informs an interpretation of the poem beyond the dimension of the exclusively remedial. It may be that toxicity is essentially silent – an unspoken other that is not an appendage to the remedial qualities of the herb, but that which is an integral part of the herbal. This being the case, it is appropriate that, given the complexity of such difference, such a reading might be extended into the wider context of the more figurative *pharmakos*.

A question arises at this point regarding a context for the interpretation of the *pharmakos* in the light of the poem *Todtnauberg*. Can we specify a particular participant (Celan or Heidegger) in the drama of the poem that we might identify as exclusively the scapegoat? Initially, one might propose that Celan himself could occupy this position. Both geographically and linguistically, Celan remained outside – he wrote in his mother-tongue without being an ethnic German and the language he used was essentially a form of High-German that, Joris argues, was out of place in post-war Europe (the language of German Romanticism – that of the poets Hölderlin and Trakl, and ironically that of the intellectual elite of Germany between

the wars, espousing the very anti-Semitism that preceded the Holocaust, but a language that may well find it difficult to describe).

As someone already marginalised within the language that he chose to define his poetic vision, Celan not only instigated a deferral within the lingual form, but was himself an *undecidable* within that form: a Jewish poet who wrote in German without being a naturalised German, and who located himself on the periphery of the topographic location of a post-war, divided Germany, crossing its borders occasionally and with some reservation.<sup>110</sup>

The topography of this 'new' (post-war) Germany was itself a deferral (and as such, becomes a topology) of political responsibility that, it could be argued, in an attempt to provide remedial treatment to cleanse the National Socialist canker, found itself struggling with what provisionally might be conceived as the physicality of an oppositional binary of toxicity and curative within the confines of the corporeality of the state.<sup>111</sup>

Celan, in situating himself on the perimeter, remained on the periphery of the state/*polis*, yet was intrinsically involved in its apparatus through his insistence in the use of its language (though significantly, in an archaic form

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110 Celan variously lived in Romania, Austria and France – creating a meridial sweep across central Europe that excluded the homeland of his mother-tongue and extended a perimeter of exclusion.

111 Perhaps an example of such toxicity and remedy might be found in the post-war Democratic and Federal states of Germany each both curative and poisonous towards each other – hence a zone of exclusion was set up between them. The question of undecidability arises between them as to which was poison, and which cure?



rooted not only in the Germany of pre-1945, but more importantly, that of pre-1914).<sup>112</sup>

In the German Romanticism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the aspirations of literary figures, such as Goethe and Hölderlin, were towards a stronger association between the German tradition and the ancient Greek world<sup>113</sup> that would provide a remedial edge and which would allow German culture to reach its full potential and blossom. Geographically, its location at the heart of Europe gave it topographical privileges of centrality that made the links between the culture and its locale significant historically.<sup>114</sup>

In literary terms, the seeds of the cultural shift from the high aspirations of Goethe and Hölderlin to the darker visions of Trakl<sup>115</sup> and Celan were sown in this association – this special relationship between the ancient Greek and the modern German. The German metaphysics of nationality mythologised Germanic distinctiveness, through

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112 It could be argued that literary figures like Celan and Kafka were the products of a wider 'German-speaking Reich', rooted in the unification of a greater Germany in 1871 and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As writers working in German, neither were indigenously German by birth (Celan, Romanian and Kafka, Czech), and both were Jewish.

113 The aspiration of the German intellectuals to find the legacy of ancient Greek culture in 'modern' Germany began in this period and continued to be sought up to, and including the period of the Third Reich (Heidegger is an example of such an intellectual on such a quest). Heidegger's conviction towards an essential ontology was rooted in this tradition.

114 Heidegger exploits this topographic locality in his most direct commentary on the Germany of the Third Reich, in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, 'The Fundamental Question' (pp. 45–6).

115 This 'darker vision' is discussed in more detail in the text *Posthumous People: Vienna at the Turning Point*, Chapter 17, 'Abenland'.

the geographical location of the homeland as that of a central people occupying the rift between east and west.<sup>116</sup>

German nationalism rose when there was no nation-state or political order to channel and contain nationalist feelings, and therefore the people were forced to rely on literary, poetical and philosophical means to locate their nationhood.<sup>117</sup> In 'Two Poems by Paul Celan', Lacoue-Labarthe writes:

German has never ceased aspiring on pretence of its strange similarity to Greek ('the language of origin'), to the unique relation it has believed it could establish to everything most authentically Greek about Greece.<sup>118</sup>

If conceived remedially, the higher considerations of literature and thought were certainly intended to inspire comparable works in German. What perhaps was less evident provisionally, in the strong linkage between the two cultures advocated by the intellectual elite, was the potential for a spherical toxicity expressed through the corruptive force of nomadic cultural influences that resist

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116 Heidegger draws this distinction in his text, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, published in the 1930s.

117 It is noted here that Hans Sluga suggests the historical significance of this central role, was not essentially German. The ancient Greeks also placed themselves at the centre of the world and distinguished themselves from the barbarians by their use of language. German unification was only realised in 1871, so when Wilhelm Wundt (Heidegger's contemporary) assumed that a nation was primarily defined by language and therefore national character would reveal itself most clearly in a nation's poetry and philosophy, it indicated a lingual locale. Heidegger's Rectoral Address was not a new conception of the German people's spiritual mission, but an insertion into an already long history of nationalistic claims (for example, Fichte's 1807 'Address to the German Nation', which attempted to define a unifying mythology around which a nation might grow).

118 Lacoue-Labarthe, 'Two Poems by Paul Celan', p. 7.

the *polis*, not necessarily through subversive activities against the state, but through the distinctiveness of their own cultural identity. The upsurge of anti-Semitic behavioural patterns in nineteenth-century German cultural life,<sup>119</sup> prior to and after unification, though not without comparable historical precedents across Europe, was certainly a clear example of the Greek tradition of the *pharmakos* exceeding its temporal containment in history and finding a new status in a modern culture in search of itself. Celan's Jewishness already excluded him from such a culture that recognised the *pharmakos*/scapegoat as a tradition worthy of upholding in the modern world and intensified the search for, and the institution of, a cultural purification.<sup>120</sup> This colluded with his birth into a tradition that was not only Jewish, but also non-German (although post-First World War Romania had previously been between Tsarist Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At the outbreak of the Second World War, the area around Celan's birthplace was a zone of contention between the Third Reich and Stalinist Russia; at different times, Celan was in the hands of both Russian and German forces),

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119 Richard Wagner, for example, and his text 'Judaism in Music' (1850) published in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* under the pseudonym, K. Freigedank. In this essay he critiqued what he considered to be the prevailing forces in German cultural life (particularly the theatre world) as essentially Jewish and corruptive of the higher aspirations of a Germanic cultural imperative, which he identified in his own *music-dramas*. It is noted here that Wagner's anti-Semitism was the product of frustration borne out of his rejection by a society, which lionised the Jewish composer Meyerbeer.

120 The Jew as an expendable scapegoat for cultural/religious purification is rooted in the European tradition from the Middle Ages.

where he was encouraged to not only speak German, but also to write it.<sup>121</sup>

This collusion might be seen in two ways; firstly, to acknowledge the significance of the appropriated language is to give it an a priori that provisionally addresses its importance and distinctiveness and propagates it. Secondly, to undermine that language, to call into question its validity as culturally a priori, one is perhaps better placed to articulate its anomalies from within the language itself. For Celan, the priority (and extreme difficulty) was to speak the language of the culture that was responsible for the extremity of the Holocaust, to draw attention to these extremities through the tongue that articulated and instigated it, and proposed the Jew as a modern *pharmakos*.

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121 Both Kafka and Celan wrote/spoke in German although neither were citizens of that country – were they in some way contributing to a cultural propagation while remaining excluded from it? The profundity of those who were excluded speaking and writing in the language of inclusion should not be lost here.

Celan, while immersed in the lingual prosody of the appropriated German language, was maintained in his exclusion from it by his persistence in attempting to speak of the events that pushed it to the limits of its expression and meaning – how can one find the appropriate voice to speak of such things without diminishing their power?<sup>122</sup>

Derrida distinguishes between what he refers to as the ‘silent mimesis’ of painting and sculpture, and writing/poetry by suggesting that the latter ‘imitates the voice by means of the voice’.<sup>123</sup>

The precedent of the vocal through the historical tradition of the *logos* as essentially a priori has always suggested that the written word is merely the diminishment of what precedes it, what is *spoken*. This is clearly seen in *The Phaedrus* where Plato argued that:

And once a thing is put in writing, the composition, whatever it may be, drifts all over the place, getting into the hands not only of those who understand it, but equally of those who have no business with it; it doesn't know how to address the right people, and not address the wrong. And when it is ill-treated and unfairly abused it always needs its parent to come to its aid, being unable to defend itself or attend to its own needs.<sup>124</sup>

As already stated, the inscription of the written word differs from the representation of visual language in the fine arts because it *does not* involve itself in an act of substitution whereby an image replaces or represents its model.

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122 As already noted, Lacoue-Labarthe asks the most brutal question possible of Celan: ‘was Celan able to situate not himself, but *us vis à vis* it?’ (‘it’ refers to the impossible possibility of the Holocaust and the mass extermination of the Jew – ‘the intolerable banality of our time’).

123 Derrida, ‘Plato’s Pharmacy’, in *Dissemination*, p. 137.

124 Plato, *The Phaedrus*, p. 275.

Derrida proposes that 'it inscribes in the space of silence and in the silence of space the living time of voice'.<sup>125</sup>

Writing is no longer conceived as mere weakened speech but as that which de-composes the voice through a double movement of *conservation* and *corruption* transforming voice into the abstract spatial elements of *stuttering* and *cluttering* which instigate a disfluency. To evaluate Celan's poem 'Todtnauberg', we cannot ignore the significance and relevance of the plethora of translations that have informed its interpretation and become part of its life.

The Joris translation we have chosen to highlight resists any attempt to provide a clear interpretation in favour of the more labyrinthine hermeneutical approach to the substance of the piece.<sup>126</sup> For example, Joris chooses to retain the German word *Hütte* where other translators have proposed the English words *chalet*, *cottage* or *hut*.<sup>127</sup> Joris defends this decision by suggesting that maintaining the German word *Hütte* complicates interpretation, as it brings with it the resonance and particularities of location or site – a secluded mountain hut, a locale of thought, the retreat Heidegger escaped to after resigning the Rectorate.

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125 Derrida, 'Plato's Pharmacy', p. 137.

126 Stephen Pruslin comments in the liner notes to *Pulse Shadows*: 'These imperatives come into sharpest focus in 'Todtnauberg'. When the cycle is performed in Hamburger's translation, as in the present recording the soprano sings this poem in German while simultaneously "reciting" it in English. (When the work is performed in Celan's original German, the position is reversed: this particular poem is sung in English and recited in German.) From either linguistic direction, the sung version makes the poem more remote, while the formalized rhythmic speech brings nearer by both "explaining" and commenting on it.' p. 6.

127 The suggestion is that *Hütte* allows for the spectral invocation of other translations (*chalet*, *cottage*, etc.), which their specificity would preclude. *Hütte* articulates differentiation by resisting its mere substitution, with the possibility of deferral.

Perhaps more powerfully, it was recognised as the site of Nazi indoctrination sessions during the period of the Rectorate and that which prompted Celan's question: 'Whose name did it record before mine?'<sup>128</sup> It is also the site of this portentous meeting between philosopher and poet, and of which, on Celan's part, so much was anticipated and hoped for in the form of an appropriate act of contrition.

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Derrida speaks of the 'strange community' recognised through the genealogy of the visitor's book where Celan's question marks the anguish as to the name of 'the other' through a strange kind of fraternal affiliation with previous visitors/inscribers.<sup>129</sup> In his essay 'Language and the Poem', Heidegger defines site:

Originally the word 'site' suggests a place in which everything comes together, is concentrated. The site gathers unto itself, supremely and in the extreme. In gathering power penetrates and pervades everything. The site, the gathering power, gathers in and preserves all it has gathered, not like an encapsulating shell but rather by penetrating with its light all

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128 During the period of the Rectorate (1933), Heidegger made contact with Nazi student leaders to arrange what were referred to as 'science camps' and to which both students and lecturers were invited to come together in a new form of academic/political collaboration. Also as a periphery note, Albert Speer noted a family link in his memoirs, *Inside the Third Reich*, with that region of South West Germany, in that his grandfather was 'the son of a poor forester in the Black Forest', p. 3.

129 This affiliation transgresses the order of forgiveness, interrupting the clear designation of one who seeks forgiveness and one who grants it. Derrida describes this 'written' fraternity of alterity as the realisation of what he terms 'the abyssal countersignature', 'To Forgive', p. 38.

it has gathered, and only thus releasing it into its own nature.<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, there is the model the *Hütte* symbolised – an idealised philosophical monastic community, which Heidegger had made tentative plans to transpose to the University of Berlin pending his appointment to the chair of philosophy.

This would be the specific imposition of the ‘lifestyle’ advocated in his short essay ‘Why do I Stay in the Provinces?’ as an ideal and appropriate relationship for the ‘new’ intellectual to engage with the *Volk* community.<sup>131</sup>

As holiday home, mountain retreat, hideaway and indoctrination camp, the *Hütte* indicates the possibility of a location to invoke both the *curative* and the *poisonous*. It is not the *pharmakon* within the poetic structure, but it is the translatory indicator of the poem as *pharmakos*. It is the manifestation of the meridian of the poetic structure drifting on the perimeter of coherence, resisting fluency, *cluttered*,<sup>132</sup> an abortive narrative which is a compression of a temporal space.

It is bloated with the haunting of other temporalities, other dates, which expose the in-articulation of disfluency,

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130 Heidegger, ‘Language in the Poem’, pp. 159–61. It is worth noting here that Lacoue-Labarthe refers to ‘blindness’ and ‘blinding’ as the empty space between words, or the ‘not having words to say what it is’ – difficulty as ‘an event without answer’.

131 This is often cited as another example of Heidegger’s humanism, with his apparent engagement with the *Volk* community that surrounded his Black Forest mountain retreat. However, the community proposed for Berlin was much more exclusive and emphasised the isolation of the retreat rather than its integration with the community. The emphasis was on a rural rather than an urban *Volk*.

132 *Cluttering* involves excessive breaks in the normal flow of speech and is a fluency disorder characterised by a rapid or irregular speaking rate.



but not cluttered in the sense of stifled by a lingual density, but in the sense of the compression of all possible resonances, all traces at its threshold. It is the moment in the poem where the curative and the poisonous coincide and resonate – the interval which is its meridial condition and which indicates all the dates that dissect the poem and haunt the *Hütte*. From it emanates the possible trajectories of how the poem might be read, how it might be spoken, who reads it, who speaks it and in what tongue.

Lacoue-Labarthe concurs with Joris when he argues that the two poems ‘Tübingen, January’ and ‘Todtnauberg’ are untranslatable. He writes: ‘They *necessarily* escape interpretation; they forbid it. One could even say they are written to forbid it.’<sup>133</sup>

This issue of encryption via what we might call the integrity of translation, poses the question of how a poem might be inscribed when its coding fails in advance all attempts to decipher it and how it makes itself absolutely singular, forswearing repetition of the disastrous and the ‘already said’.

In a sense, Celan’s determination to ‘speak’ a certain kind of German engages an alteric spectrality that wrenches the poem clear from the language of the age (the age of subjectivity and the ‘I’) and creates a kind of pure idiom of poetic singularity. Lacoue-Labarthe questions this possibility for the singular experience and how it might come into language, by speculating on inscription as the moment where singularity is lost in what is written.

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133 Lacoue-Labarthe, ‘Two Poems by Paul Celan’, p. 13.

This proposal is developed by understanding the singular experience as silent and untouched by language and therefore explores language through its capacity to take on the burden of the silent singular as outside recognised articulated discourse.

He provides a distinction between idiom and encryption which understands the latter as a refusal to reveal a point of view and a form of encoding placed on language with the intention of disguising and is endemic to the 'modern' – '*stuttering* is the only "language" of our age. The end of meaning – hiccupping, halting.'<sup>134</sup>

In his essay 'After the Disaster', Stephen Mitchelmore suggests that:

Celan could not breathe in the old language. The old language was saturated with the conditions by which an entire culture was able to produce the greatest art and thought in history and then produce death camps with the efficiency of a factory.<sup>135</sup>

The question of idiom is one of singularity, *not* in the sense of either solipsism<sup>136</sup> or autism<sup>137</sup> but rather one of *solitude*.

The sense by which we might understand terminology like *stuttering*, *cluttering* and *disfluency* does not fall into any problem of communication identified by either the *solipsistic* or the *autistic*.

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134 Ibid., p. 18.

135 Article taken from *Spike Magazine*, <http://spikemagazine.com/0900celan4.htm>.

136 Solipsism – this is the view that the self is all that exists or can be known.

137 Autism – the mental condition characterised by complete self-absorption and a reduced ability to respond to or communicate with the outside world.

Both 'Todtnauberg' and 'Tübingen, January' are not mere examples of an introverted self-absorption, but are attempts by Celan to communicate – a solicitude of being-with. More particularly they acknowledge experience as the bedazzlement of memory and identify the poem as an opening for experience if we grasp it, not as the specificity of anecdotal association with what is lived, but as the possibility without form, an event without closure not constrained by the parameters that would define and predict the finitude of its eventhood.<sup>138</sup>

The springing forth of the poem in its possibility is also the enigma whereby the source remains un-revealed because of the bedazzlement and dizziness of what is placed before it as the suspension of occurrence – the non-occurrence which maintains its inaccessibility.<sup>139</sup>

Lacoue-Labarthe argues that there is no poetic experience in the sense of a lived moment, and therefore the poetic state can only give rise to a story, a discourse in verse or prose, but prose *not* a poem. A poem has nothing to

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138 *Experience* is understood here in its strictest sense, from the Latin *ex-periri*, a *crossing through danger*. This has a strong resonance with Heidegger's crossing-through of *Being* as the zone of nihilistic consummation in 'On the Question of Being' and latterly, Derridian *sous rature*.

139 In Hölderlin's poem, 'The Rhine' (published in an English translation by Michael Hamburger, in Penguin's *Selected Poems and Fragments*, pp. 197–209), he writes that, 'an enigma is the pure sprung forth'. Lacoue-Labarthe makes the point that Hölderlin's river poems ('Ister', 'Rhine', etc.) bring on dizziness through the double meaning of water as subject and the river of eloquence of Hölderlin's verse. The two images of water that Celan exploits in 'Todtnauberg' follow this double pattern. Firstly, the spring water of the well as hopeful and life-giving possibility, and secondly, the swamp-like sodden ground of the sword where he and Heidegger latterly walked. The implication of the second image is of disappointment and foreboding.

recount except that from which it wrenches away – its source.<sup>140</sup>

The poetic condition articulated by Lacoue-Labarthe of ‘wanting-to-say’, in the sense of the purity of a ‘not-not-wanting-to-say’, may have some bearing on both Heidegger’s pronounced post-war silence and Celan’s demand for that silence to be broken.

Is Heidegger’s silence a ‘pure-wanting-to-say’ of nothing in the sense of a clearing of possibility that is both curative and poisonous – a true *pharmakos*?<sup>141</sup> However, true alterity – true nothingness – is always *other* and can never be incorporated into the potential specificity of a poetic wanting, and therefore remains inaccessible to it. This therefore poses the question of whether there can there be such a thing a poetic experience if experience merely marks the absence of what is lived.

The particularity of the specific moment (the moment of the visit, for example) is not the moment of the poem’s birth – memory cannot be mere recollection nor is it purposely or consciously lived by the subject, but is the *atopia*<sup>142</sup> of existence – what takes place, without taking place. Dizziness and bedazzlement cannot constitute the specificity of any one moment, but as Blanchot states in his essay, *The Writing of the Disaster*, there are no words for extremity, the excess of light which blinds; they can

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140 Lacoue-Labarthe argues that the poem’s ‘wanting-not to-say’ does not *want* not to say. It *wants* to say, but is nothing but ‘pure wanting-to-say’.

141 When Hölderlin went mad, it was reported that he repeated the phrase, ‘nothing is happening to me, nothing is happening to me’.

142 *Atopia* – from the Greek, meaning uncommonness, from *atopos*, out of the way, uncommon.

only be expressed through the deficiencies of the eye – through *myopia*.<sup>143</sup>

Hölderlin's prophetic tone found in his flood of words not what constitutes the immersive 'swamping of language', whereby the poetic is lost in the lingual deluge, but that which maintains a grasp of the possibility of articulation, if only a kind of incomprehensible stuttering of the incommunicable language of an idiolect or idiom – the wreckage of poetry.<sup>144</sup>

The sacred pathos of the world's night<sup>145</sup> indicates the possibility of poetry as the consummation of a world of ecstasy and risk. The Greek phenomenon/form of tragedy offered the possibility of transgression in which the poetic risks through letting go.<sup>146</sup> Celan as the exiled poet was persecuted without the possibility of remission with what remained unforgettable and indelibly traced on language. Auschwitz, the 'purely unthinkable', had become the event that symbolised a collection of other atrocities which had ushered in 'a time of distress that no hope of a god could

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143 *Myopia* – shortsightedness. We may think back here to earlier observations on Celan's use of Eyebright in 'Todtnauberg', from which a tincture can be made for the treatment of eye problems.

144 Lacoue-Labarthe states that to be engulfed in a 'flood of poetry' means that poetry itself sinks and drowns in eloquence (a 'saying-too-much') – a *source* submerged in the flood that it brought upon itself.

145 For Heidegger, 'the *no more* of the gods who have fled and the *not yet* of the gods to come'. The significance of 'night' is steeped in the tradition outlined by Bachofen in 'Mother Right' as the tellurian/matriarchal world of the pre-Hellenic era.

146 Nietzsche's text *The Birth of Tragedy* explores the Dionysian as the Greek form of the ecstatic and draws comparisons with Wagner's tragic operatic music-dramas as equally momentous historical artistic events. Lacoue-Labarthe argues that: 'Madness is, indeed, the absence of artistic production. In turning away from madness, the Greeks lost themselves in works, in artistic virtuosity. If they undergo a trial of madness, Westerners or moderns risk the inability to accede to work, to artistic sobriety; and yet in this sobriety resides that which is their own.' 'Two Poems by Paul Celan', p. 25.

still buttress'.<sup>147</sup> This time of distress also demarcated a time of pain in which that pain, understood as extreme interior, becomes an absolute singularity where subjectivity is no more and becomes a 'waiting-for-an-other' as the possibility of a dialogue as a way out of solitude.

For Celan the question of poetry's possibility was the possibility of going outside the self and the hope, which permeates 'Todtnauberg', was the hope for such a dialogue.<sup>148</sup> As Celan's poetry, prior to the meeting in 1967, had already in effect been an ongoing dialogue with Heidegger's thought, the demand made of the physical encounter had the potential of the *pharmakos* and ran the risk of being both curative and poisonous. Its effectiveness was complicated in the ambiguity of such an encounter as necessarily being just the possibility of an affirmation, a 'word' about pain. What was equally implicit in the encounter's possibility was also the possibility for disappointment, of a prohibition and a breaking off of dialogue. 'Todtnauberg' no longer persists as just the specificity of a 'poem of disappointment', but is rather an articulation of the 'disappointment of poetry'. The risk taken by Celan in encountering Heidegger at Todtnauberg was that the curative hope that he had anticipated in the confrontation with the philosopher's thought over the previous decades would be confounded.

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147 Ibid., p. 31.

148 Both Celan and Hölderlin recoiled from the disappointment of the failed possibility of dialogue and were thrown back into inarticulate speech.

The inducement for this was the hope of finding in what Heidegger said and the gestures that he made at the meeting, a kind of completion or resolution that would allow Celan the opportunity to be at peace with this poetic/intellectual relationship via the ‘cleansing punishment’ of the encounter. However, the possibility of a notion of end or resolution remained at odds with his thoughts on poetic practice.

For Celan, the possibility for the event of the poetry was not a liberation in the sense of a dismissal – the resolution of all quandaries and the absolution of any moral or ethical compromise, but rather a deliverance in the sense of *Freisetzung* – a setting free. Was Heidegger’s silence the blossoming of poisonous flowers or does the absence of a word prompt the curative blossoming from the mouth/wound of Celan? Celan’s wound was continually opened and re-opened as the ongoing guilt of the survivor festered and refused to allow it’s healing.<sup>149</sup>

To speak was to continually re-open the wound, and his words would always be poisonous, their curative power external like Arnica, yet in some ways remaining ‘superficial’.<sup>150</sup> The complication that the cure is such because it is also a poison means that it can never be exclusively curative – a healing balm that soothes all and placates the controversy of Heidegger’s silence as well as

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149 Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting*, ‘there would be not merely finality but end, because the pure cut could be bandaged’, p. 88.

150 Joris draws attention to some translations of ‘Todtnauberg’ that indicate some kind of settlement or resolution between Heidegger and Celan. Also it is important to remember that Heidegger’s own understanding of the poem was, in some ways, superficial and misplaced – he saw it as merely a memorial to the historic meeting of great thinker and great poet. To ingest it any further would be to be *poisoned* by Celan’s *cure*.

condoning Celan's 'fall into silence'. For to cure Celan's stutter – his disfluency – would be to settle what cannot and should not be settled. A 'word' from Heidegger might have initiated a closure – the healing of the wound, but the maintaining of that silence holds that wound open, refusing healing, and in the insistence of that silence, maintains that about which it continues to be silent over as contentious.<sup>151</sup>

The question arises as to whether Heidegger was conscious of such a deliberation over the maintaining of his silence and if so, was it with the intention of not undermining its potency, or perhaps Heidegger too was struck with disfluency?

Rather than speak, perhaps, like Celan, he was forced into silence by the inadequacy of his own speech – lacking the lingual tools to express what could not be expressed. However, it may also be pertinent to consider the pragmatism of political naivety and intellectual arrogance as the motivation, and to specify the historical events of the Holocaust/Shoah would have been to undermine the generalities of his own ontological project, putting it in the same context as other technological empowerments, and therefore signifying it as outside or other to the nihilistic drive. To separate an event like the Final Solution was to suggest that the Holocaust/Shoah was the consummation of nihilism and signified the end of that understanding of nihilism, but as Lyotard concurs with Heidegger, however

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151 In 'To Forgive', Derrida notes: 'History continues on the background of [*sur fond de*] an interruption of history, in the abyss, rather of an infinite wound which in its very scarring, will have to remain open and unsuturable wound', p. 42.



extreme those events, nothing has changed with regard to the technological drive, and there is no 'new age'.

To heal the wound of locales like Auschwitz would be to cover over this most extreme event, and begs the question of Celan as to the appropriateness of such a healing to remembering, and ask whether it is rather just an attempt to forget to remember.

The new language, the new poetry, would be a way of turning us towards that which is absent in our everyday world, that which '*stands apart in the world*'.<sup>152</sup>

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152 Stephen Mitchelmore, 'After the Disaster', *Spike Magazine*, <http://www.spikemagazine.com/0900celan4.htm>

## A NOTE ON FORGIVENESS

In a certain way, it seems to us that forgiveness can only be asked of granted 'one to one', face to face, so to speak, between the one who has committed the irreparable or irreversible wrong and he or she who has suffered it and who is alone in being able to hear the request for forgiveness, to grant or refuse it.<sup>153</sup>

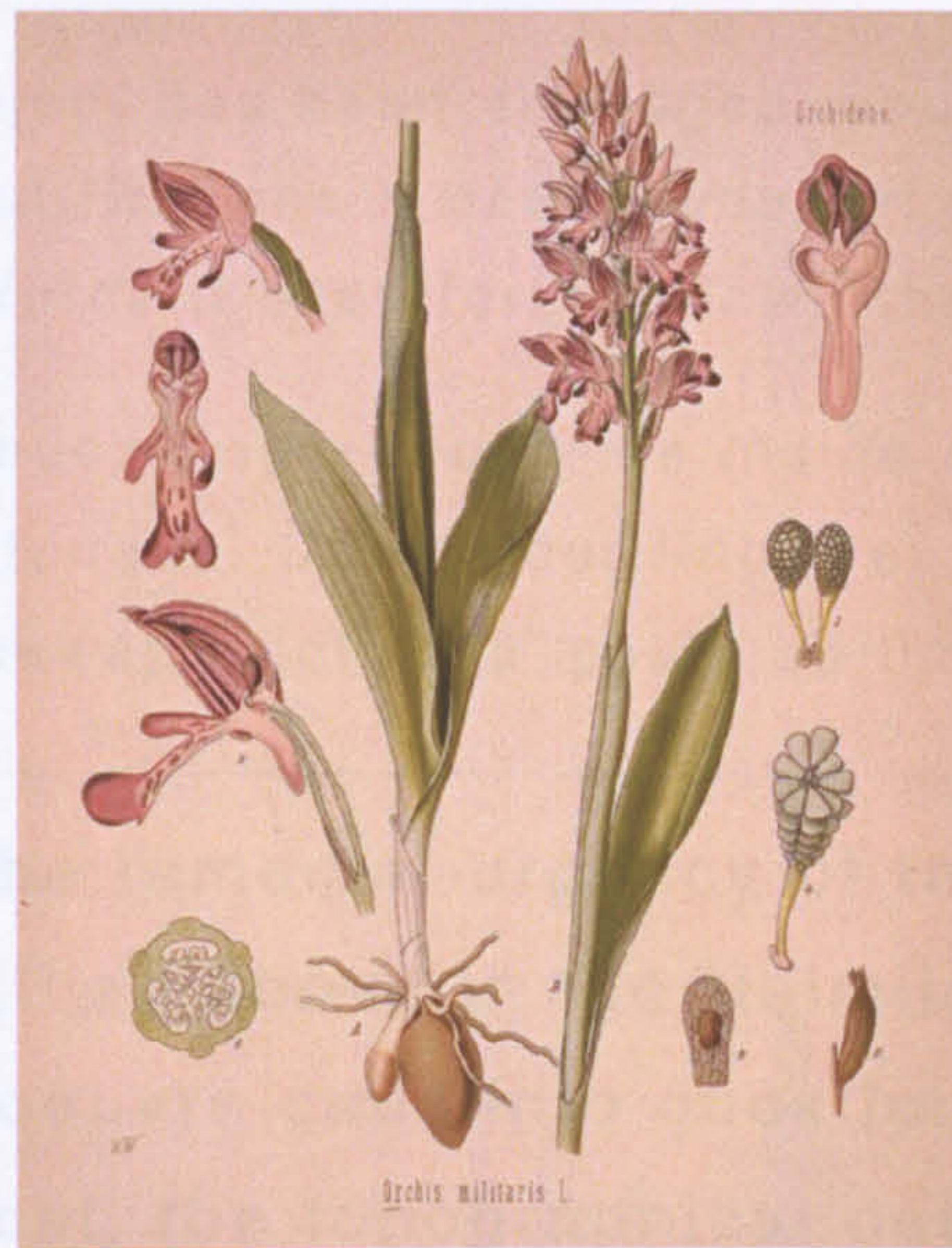
What Derrida describes as the 'solicitude of two'<sup>154</sup> marks the scene of forgiveness as that which predicates the formal possibilities of granting or refusal while simultaneously suggesting a deprivation of what he terms 'authentic collective forgiveness'.

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153 Derrida, from 'To Forgive' and found in the collection, *Questioning God*, p. 25.

154 In this regard, we may remind ourselves here of the specificity of such solicitude with regard to 'Todtnauberg' as the commemoration of anticipation of such a scene. We might also consider the precedent already set by Celan in an earlier prose work from 1959, entitled 'A Conversation in the Mountains' which describes a meeting between two Jews ('Gross' and 'Klein'). He remarked in the text: 'There they stand, the cousins, on the road in the mountains, the stick silent, the stones silent, and the silence no silence at all. No word has come to an end and no phrase, it is nothing but a pause, an empty space between the words, a blank – you see all the syllables stand around waiting. They are tongue and mouth as before, these two, and in their eyes there hangs a veil.' Paul Celan, *Collected Prose*, p. 19. Additionally, it is worth reminding ourselves here of Joris's discussion in 'Celan/Heidegger: Translation at the Mountain of Death', of the line, 'orchis and orchis, singly' as an interpretation of the complexity of *near-ness* (their physical proximity at the meeting) and *distance* (the psychological discrepancies which the hope for the meeting sought to alleviate, but in reality merely exacerbated, between poet and thinker. The further use of a botanical motif is instructive here as the *orchis* or *orchid* is a member of the large family of monocotyledonous herbs, normally with red or purple flowers made up of three petals, the middle one of which is enlarged into a *lip*.\* Also of interest here is the etymological root of *orchis* in the Greek word *orkis -ios*, meaning *testicle* and referring to the plant's tuber. Here I refer back to earlier remarks on the *pharmakos* and make particular note of the use of the *squill* as a *weapon to beat the victim on and around the genitals*.

\* The suggestion of a *lip* and its connection with *mouth* should be noted here.



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In this sense, the discretion of the singular event, by which we mean the concurrence of an intimate individuation (the possibility of a resolution between he/she who might seek forgiveness and he/she who is capable of granting it), locates this scene outside the ruling of any collective jurisprudence and in some sense might be interpreted as an *interruption* of the law itself.

The questions arises then, firstly, of how forgiveness might be determined outside or perhaps more appropriately, as an interruption of, what Derrida terms 'the juridical space'. And secondly, what is the relation between forgiveness and the disruption of the event of mourning through insistence of forgetting?

It is a matter of some certainty that forgiveness in some ways is interpreted as a two-fold operation of demand or request and granting. In this way a linearity of retrieval lays out a template by which forgiveness might be conceived as an act of completion that directs the

operation towards the discretion of forgetting as its inevitable consequence.

The conferring of such a recognition of secrecy articulates the conspiratorial event at work at the heart of such an interpretation of the sovereignty<sup>155</sup> of forgiveness, so that consequentially the encryption of that over which one might seek to be forgiven is not only buried by he/she who is absolved, but is further assisted in that deception by he/she from whom absolution is requested/demanded. That we might speculate that Celan would seek some kind of moral restitution from Heidegger, his philosophical mentor, on that Black Forest mountainside arguably places the poet, if not at the centre of such a conspiracy, then as a proactive participant in an operation of the permanence of a healing process, whereby the wound is appropriately cauterised, sealed and eventually *forgotten*.

Derrida notes that Kant argued that clemency should only operate between sovereign and subject when the misdemeanour is committed by the latter against the former and *not* where the sovereign acts as a third party mediating between two or more subjects: forgiveness should be between victim and perpetrator and as such, begs the question as to whether discussion of forgiveness is really one of the limit. (Should forgiveness be in the hands of man or reserved for God?) When Celan seeks a 'word' from Heidegger, does that infer that once a conciliatory remark is made, that the process of mourning is inaugurated which

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155 Derrida notes that a precedent for interruption had already been set for the judicial-political system through what he argues is the sovereign right to pardon as above the law. He comments: 'As often the foundation is excluded or exempted from the very structure that it founds', 'To Forgive', p. 33.

then, in some way, proffers a limit to the status of the misdemeanour through the capacity to (begin to) forget?

Derrida argues that the language of the other is identified here not through any ethical or moral condition, but is always fundamentally outside what he terms the 'fraternal transcendence' of the signatory community affiliated with firstly, the visitor's book and secondly, the *Hütte*. Celan's personal affiliation is maintained through constancy of distress and anxiety and the ambiguity of forgiveness and what insists through the unforgivable.<sup>156</sup>

'Todtnauberg' remains thus to be read, to be received – as gift or forgiveness themselves, a gift and a forgiveness which are the poem before being, possibly, its themes or the theme of the poet's disappointed expectation.<sup>157</sup>

In the anticipation of forgiveness, whereby it may or may not have firstly been appropriately sought and *then* taken place on that Black Forest mountainside in 1967, the application of a remedial suture had first to have been recognised and then made possible, in the recognition of the roles of who administered and who required treatment, by the concurrence of the patient (on the understanding that it was clear who the 'patient' was!).

However, we are still confronted by the whereby the assimilation of the wrong inaugurated through the commencement of the act of mourning and sought in the agreement of both parties (he who might seek and he who might grant forgiveness), is perhaps merely a local

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156 As already noted this strange community, this conglomeration of alteric visitations at the *Hütte*, exceeds ethical and moral restitution through subsistence and insistence.

157 Derrida, 'To Forgive', p. 38.

(mis)understanding. Derrida argues that even when forgiveness of the inexplicable has seemingly taken place, in the future it will not have taken place and therefore will remain merely illusory, inauthentic and illegitimate.

The link between forgiveness and the therapy of forgetting becomes the crucial interpretation of the event of mourning as the healing of a wound. However, the history of forgiveness arguably stopped, and continues to remain stalled when confronted by the limit beyond all limits of what Derrida terms 'radical evil', and by which we can infer that he is speaking of the wholesale mechanised genocide of the Final Solution. The gift of the poem as the element of forgiveness should anticipate the dilemma of healing as a mechanism for not only the excavation of the sepulchral into which morbid matter might be placed, but the covering over of such a site so that the temporal event of *forgetting* could commence.

The questions as to whether it was appropriate for Celan to confer *forgiveness* on Heidegger, and also whether the philosopher first saw the need to seek such *forgiveness*, and whether he might also see the meeting at the *Hütte* as the opportunity whereby such an event might take place, are still open to a scrutiny and debate.<sup>158</sup>

Must forgiveness pass through words or must it pass (beyond) words? Must it pass through word-verbs or must it pass (beyond) them, these word-verbs? Can one only forgive or ask forgiveness when speaking or sharing the language of *the other*, that is to say by already identifying sufficiently with *the other* for this, and, by identifying with *the other*, *making forgiveness both possible and impossible?*<sup>159</sup>

Everything will flower at the edge of a deconsecrated tomb  
...<sup>160</sup>

Where have the *Holzwege* of 'Todtnauberg' led us – these paths trodden by Celan and Heidegger on that day in July 1967? The encryption of the poem has only further determined an indeterminate locale of poison and cure and reinforced the possibility and impossibility of forgiveness. Here Arnica, Eyebright and Orchid, bloom on the perimeter

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158 I note here that according to Hans Sluga, Heidegger's contemporary, Alfred Bauemler, did, in a letter to Manfred Schröter and dated 24 March 1950, seek (unlike Heidegger) to take some responsibility for his affiliation with the Nazis. He spoke privately of his 'blindness', 'aberration' and 'political guilt' and that he had belonged to 'a system of aggression and force' and that genocide was 'repulsive and most contradicts the order of things'. He declared his former allegiance as 'an error and a madness' and, in speaking of what he had written with regard to Christianity and the Jews, as 'an incredible darkening' and 'an aberration of the mind', and finally stated that he did not wish to escape the consequences of his actions, '*even if it meant to be condemned to silence to the end of my life.*' From Sluga, *Heidegger's Crisis*, p. 242 (added emphasis).

159 Added emphasis. Derrida, 'To Forgive', p. 47.

160 Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, pp. 81-82

(meridian) of the *Holzwege*. These paths have become the interruptive labyrinthine passageways of the tomb; and the rift, the secular place of the dead, the site of mourning and the visceral operation of the *Unheimlich*.



## Chapter 3

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### The *Unheimlich*<sup>1</sup> Manoeuvre<sup>2</sup>

The house is a memory device, but one from which memory has been alienated. It has to be *opened up* so that it can remember in order to set those memories free again.<sup>3</sup>

The bedrock hangs over an abyss of sheer possibilities of space – and space as pure possibility, indeed of the very possibility of pure space. No wonder, dangling thus, *Dasein* feels intensely anxious and not-at-home and flees into the comforting and tranquilizing embrace of everyday dealings and gossipy talk as well as reflective assurances of sheer theory. Yet what is glimpsed in the

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1 *Unheimlich* – from the German, literally translates as ‘not at home’. It also has a connotation of *eerie* or *creepy* and can be translated into English as *uncanny*. Sigmund Freud in his essay, ‘The Uncanny’ (published in number 14 of his collected works, and entitled *Art and Literature*), refers to the *unheimlich* as that which is *strangely familiar* and that that familiarity is intrinsic to its status as *uncanny*. He argues, ‘the *unheimlich* is what was once *heimisch*, familiar; the prefix *un* [*un-*] is the token of repression’ (p. 368). Freud also states that the word *heimlich* belongs to two sets of ideas, which, although not entirely contradictory, remain distinct from each other. On the one hand it means *familiar* and *agreeable*, while on the other, what is *concealed* and *out of site*. Anthony Vidler in his text *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*, proposes the English word *uncanny* as the most helpful definition, as it means, literally, *beyond ken* or *beyond knowledge* (*ken* from the Anglo Saxon *can* or *cann*, the present indicative of *cunnan*: *to know* or *be able*). *Canny* means *cautious*, *prudent*, *knowing* or *watchful* but the meaning extends to *possessed of supernatural powers* or *skilled in magic*. *Uncanny* then means *mysterious*, *unfamiliar*, *frightening* and *preternaturally strange* or *eerie* and is affiliated to *canny* in the same that *unheimlich* is to *heimlich*. He describes the *uncanny* as ‘an uncomfortable sense of haunting rather than a present apparition’ (ibid., p. 22).

2 *Manoeuvre* – from the Latin: *manus*, hand and *operari*, to work – *manuoperare*. The operation of the hand implies a corporeal function inherent in the *unheimlich* manoeuvre which this chapter will seek to exploit. I am also aware of Heidegger’s determination towards such an operation in his early interpretation of ‘worldliness’ via *zuhanden* and *vorhanden* (‘present-at-hand’ and ‘ready-to-hand’) as particularly discussed in *Sein und Zeit* and ‘The Origin of the Work of Art’.

3 Added emphasis. Brouwer, ‘Laying Bare’, and published in the Serpentine Gallery catalogue on Gordon Matta-Clark from 1993, p. 364.

moment of anxiety, *Dasein's* abyssal *unheimlichkeit* remains 'the most primordial phenomenon'.<sup>4</sup>

By exploring the topological terrain of the *unheimlich* I hope to uncover some provisional insights into the structural and non-structural aspects of the corporeal (the body) and the architectural, via an exploration of the metaphysical edifice as not only a model of architectonics, but also as a basis for how we comprehend aspects of corporeality. This will also prove insightful for the ongoing thematic of haunting and the spectral as linked to the body as the site of mourning, and also with particular reference to the abysmal aesthetic experience inherent in the artwork as a *ructure*.

The chapter will consider the work of the artist Gordon Matta-Clark and will identify an encryptive eventuation of mourning as a key aspect of not only the larger body of the artist's work but with particular reference to two works: *Time Well/Cherry Tree* (1971) and *Descending Steps for Batan* (1977). This will also indicate *encyst-ence* as the overarching introjective theme of this chapter. The motivation of this argument indicates an atopic locale, which identifies the slippage between the architecture of the body and the body of architecture as an encryptive rift – in the words of Gordon Matta-Clark himself, a kind of *anarchitecture*.<sup>5</sup>

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4 Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, p. 255.

5 A term coined by Gordon Matta-Clark and a group of fellow artists in New York in 1973 for what we might describe as their 'guerrilla activities'. Matta-Clark described it thus: 'The group's architectural aim was more elusive than doing pieces that would demonstrate an alternative attitude to building ... We were thinking more about metaphoric voids, gaps, left over spaces, places that were not developed ... These places are also perceptually significant because they make reference to *movement space*. It was about something other than established architectural vocabulary, without getting fixed into anything too formal.' Gordon Matta-Clark interview with Liza Bear (*Avalanche*, December 1974, p. 34, added emphasis).

The Heimlich manoeuvre as a mechanical procedure for the permanent ejection of an alien object from the body – an act of sustaining the internal integrity of the corporeal through the act of expulsion – in some ways operates as an illustration via corporeality of what is recognised as the key settled binary opposition in the history of metaphysics. It sustains the exclusivity and predication of interiority over exteriority – the expelling of the alien at its most pragmatic, remains an event of security and maintenance of the status quo.

The *unheimlich* manoeuvre in some way attempts to redress this balance, by identifying the complication of an imbalance (the placeless place of disorientation) and drawing attention to the exteriority of operations of rejection and expulsion as the false arbiters of a continuity in the face of the possibility of a more appropriate operation of introjection and incorporation. These are recognised as intrinsic to the encryptive arbitration of the manoeuvre as what I will now term the ‘event of *encyst-ence*’. It must be made clear at this point that any act of retention alluded to through the terminologies of the *unheimlich* does not necessarily redress the relation between homely and unhomely through any capacity for either a determination towards subjugation or an objectification inherent its operation. What remains significant to any understanding of the activity of the *unheimlich* manoeuvre is that through the event of introjection an encryptive change occurs and the retention of the alien demands the recognition of this transformation as fundamental to the acknowledgement of

an operation of cryptology<sup>6</sup> at work. As will be explored, what is essentially encrypted does not necessarily conform to the 'balance' of historical subject/object relation, and therefore there is also a change in the appropriateness and particularity of a certain language. Encryption critiques the binary of inside and outside by complicating the terrain of that opposition via introjection. This undermines the juxtaposition of terminologies in a hierarchical confrontation of privilege and subjugation, and posits a variant lingual topology by which to articulate its diversity and variation.

I am reminded here that both Heidegger (in 'On The Question of Being') and Bachofen (in 'Mother Right') questioned the imperative and need for kind of continuity, or what I will call a 'lingual stasis', by proposing a demand that in order to reconsider current thought, it must in some way be transgressive and rearticulated if there is to be any determination to exceed it. Heidegger, while heralding the recognition of a zone (a nihilistic topographical feature of thought, as it were), which Ernst Jünger's acknowledged in *The Worker*, critiqued the capacity to 'cross the line' of nihilism's consummation by suggesting that such a transgression must require a new language.

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6 *Cryptology* – the scientific study of cryptography (secret writing, the enciphering and deciphering of messages in secret code). I would like to note here that the scientific credential of *-ology* as a means of legitimating a term as worthy of study should not be lost here. See Chapter 1 of this text.

The language of metaphysics as the lingual arbiter of that consummation, and the navigation (the topographic) which must precede it, would no longer be appropriate to this new zone and any use of it would merely contaminate it.<sup>7</sup> Likewise Bachofen, in *Mother Right*, remarked that in order to embrace the matriarchal idea, any scholar would have to renounce the ideas of his own time and transfer him/herself 'to the midpoint of a completely different world of thought'.<sup>8</sup>

However, before we can consider the atavistic<sup>9</sup> possibility of speaking a different language, it is important to begin to negotiate the possibilities of cryptology<sup>10</sup> through a recognisable lingual form. Derrida (commenting on Abraham and Torok's text) suggests that the Wolf Man's

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7 Heidegger's 'On the Question of Being' (published in the collection, *Pathmarks*) took the form of a letter to the writer Ernst Jünger. He observed that any attempt to cross the line, would be confronted by a peculiar difficulty: 'The reason for this difficulty lies in the fact that in your "crossing" over the line, i.e., in the space on this and on the other side of the line, you speak the same language. The position of nihilism is, it seems, already relinquished in a certain way by crossing over the line, but *its language has remained*' ('On the Question of Being', p. 298).

8 Bachofen, 'Mother Right', p. 81. Note here quote cited at the beginning of Chapter 1 of this text and taken from Derrida's *Spectres of Marx*, which identifies the traditional scholar as one who cannot accept the virtual space of spectrality and immerses him/herself in all that is *reasonable* and *logical*. He also notes in *The Truth in Painting* that 'the pure philosopher, the metaphysician, will have to operate *like* a good architect, like a good *tekhnités* of edification' (p. 40). In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze proposes: 'The philosopher is no longer the being of the caves, nor Plato's soul or bird, but rather an animal which is on a level with the surface – a tick or a louse' (p. 133). This aspect of the parasitic mooted by Deleuze should not be lost here.

9 Atavism identifies a resemblance to one's ancestor's rather than one's immediate parental line – arguably a reversion to a more primitive type. Both Heidegger (on Being) and Bachofen (on matriarchy) considered the primordial experience the essential one, and one to which we must in some way, always return.

10 In his introduction to Abraham and Torok's *The Wolf Man's Magic Word*, Derrida asks the question: 'What is a crypt? No crypt presents itself. The grounds [*lieux*] are so disposed as to disguise and to hide: something, always a body in some way. But also to disguise the act of hiding and to hide the disguise: the crypt hides as it holds' (p. xiv).

*verbarium*<sup>11</sup> is to be thought out as starting from the crypt, as a 'crypt effect'. He states:

The verbarium no longer conforms to any law and order – certainly not to philosophical order, which thus finds itself moved, to the point of no return, by a psychoanalytical lever – but neither does it abide by the common law of psychoanalysis. *This* crypt no longer rallies the easy metaphors of the Unconscious (hidden, secret, underground, latent, other, etc.), of the prime object, in sum, of any psychoanalysis. Instead using the first object as a background, *it is a kind of 'false unconscious', an 'artificial' unconscious lodged like a prosthesis, a graft in the heart of an organ, within the divided self.* A very specific and peculiar place, highly circumscribed, to which access can nevertheless only be gained by following the routes of a different topography.<sup>12</sup>

The crypt, then, is descriptive of an architectonic locale of the sepulchral as that which identifies an alteric variation as the de-centred possibility on which any edifice is now contingent. The so-called architect of reason (the metaphysical thinker), in search of the ultimate *grund* on which to raise a framework of metaphysical principles, is no longer just confronted with the possibility of the abysmal as its ultimate critique, but also that any descent in search of a bottom (*bythos*) to this or any abyss, must recognise that disorientation (the pre-sensibility of 'a without-knowing' in advance) is the *topos* by which and for which the pretext of

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11 *Verbarium* – a game in word making (related to logomachy – a dispute about words or a dispute carried on in words only, a battle of words).

12 Added emphasis. Derrida, introduction to Abraham and Torok's, *The Wolf Man's Magic Word*, p. xiii. Further comment will be made on the divided self with particular reference to Gordon Matta-Clark and Freud's work on the double. The contention of this chapter will be to identify this 'different' topography as in fact a topology of the crypt.

(dis)location takes place.<sup>13</sup> However, such a critique must not resort to the pure exclusivity of a language, which refuses to acknowledge the relevance of the fabrication of a certain domesticity from which and in which to commence. Mark Wigley argues:

The idea of discourse can never be separated from a certain talk about houses, that is really to say *a certain silence*, not the absence of talk but *a certain fold within the fabric of the discourse* which hides something unspeakable.<sup>14</sup>

The metaphor of the *heimlich* manoeuvre should be understood provisionally as the sustaining of a secure interiority of unmediated presence, which through the mastery of an act of subordination excludes all that is other, to an absented ambiguity of outside.

It represents surety and exclusion at the expense of introjection, whereby the denial of the incorporative event excludes the possibility of mourning and the restitution of the memorial as contingent to the status of corporeality.

With Derrida's previously quoted comments on the crypt in mind, I would like to suggest here that a more complex reading of the clarity of what might be provisionally understood as the inclusive oppositional relationship of *heimlich/unheimlich* is necessary.

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13 Derrida postulates in *The Truth in Painting* that such a descent is fraught because the prehension to such a navigation already indicates a variant that is the errant possibility (the 'without knowing') that the bottom does not exist. See p. 40 of above-cited text.

14 Added emphasis. Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*, p. 124. The notion of silence has already been addressed in Chapter 2 of this text, and the rubric of the fold will be considered further in this chapter and Chapter 4.

Any cursory reading might incline towards an understanding of *Heimlich* ('homely') as merely the inversion of 'unhomely' – but this strategy remains complicated by its actual translation.

The German word more commonly used in this regard is generally *gemütlich*, which translates variously as *snugly*, *comfortable*, or *cosy* as well as *homelike* or *homely*<sup>15</sup> and, as such, the term *heimlich* already appears contentious. Over the issue of a common usage or a lingual currency, it is significant that the emphasis is on the complexity and slippage at work in this link as it will continue to unfold and re-fold as the strategy of this text. Freud, in his text *The Uncanny*, already alluded to what he referred to as 'the different shades of meaning' for the word *heimlich*, which he illustrated at great length with a list of derivations at the beginning of the essay.<sup>16</sup> A cryptology is already at work.

The key statement identified that the obvious compulsion to consider *heimlich* and *unheimlich* as merely oppositional (the latter being merely, at best, an inversion of the former; at worst, inferior to), was complicated by the ambiguity of two sets of ideas at work in the non-contradictory, but significantly different<sup>17</sup> aspects of the word *heimlich*.

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15 *Gemüt* (from which *gemütlich* is derived) translates as *nature*, *disposition*, *feelings* and *soul*.

16 See Freud's essay 'The Uncanny' (published in *The Penguin Freud Library (Volume 14: Art and Literature)*, pp. 342–5.

17 The significance of an understanding of difference outside a context of mere inversion has already been discussed at length in Chapter 1 of this text.



Freud isolated two meanings from a plethora of possibilities, which drew *heimlich* and *unheimlich* in closer proximity by finding in the former not only what is familiar and agreeable, but also what is concealed and kept out of sight.<sup>18</sup> Freud later noted:

Thus *heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of *ambivalence* until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*. *Unheimlich* is in some way a 'subspecies' of *heimlich*.<sup>19</sup>

In this way, the surety of the home gives shape to what is distinctly not-at-home (it is also worthy of note here that the operation that we recognise as the *Heimlich* manoeuvre is so named *not* for any semantic reasons that Freud might have uncovered in his search for the linguistic root of the *unheimlich*, but by the accident of its inventor's surname – a kind of 'Derridian' play of lingual ambiguity).<sup>20</sup>

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18 It is noted by Freud in a footnote that the Oxford English Dictionary attaches a similar ambiguity to the word *canny* (see footnote 1, this chapter) as not only meaning 'cosy' but also 'endowed with occult or magical powers'. In the main body of the text he points out Shelling's comment (in the earlier list of possible definitions) on the *unheimlich*, which he argues sheds new light on its meaning by suggesting that everything is *unheimlich* which ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light (p. 345).

19 Added emphasis. Freud, 'The Uncanny', p. 347.

20 See remarks made in Chapter 1 of this text on Derrida's phonetic play between *ontology* and *hauntology*. I would also like to note here that Paul Virilio, in his text *Bunker Archaeology*, mentions, with reference to the construction of the so-called Atlantic Wall during the Nazi occupation of mainland Europe, the Todt Organisation. This was the strategic organisation of 'diverse social and ethnic groups, starting with German technicians – be they civil, military or deported – and including conscripts and volunteers' (p. 28). The reason for mentioning this is two-fold: firstly, Paul Celan was conscripted into the Todt Organisation in Nazi-occupied Romania and, secondly, the name *Todt* (the German for *death* as in 'Todtnauberg' – 'mountain of death' (note Joris's text cited in Chapter 2 of this text)) was so-named after Fritz Todt, the architect of Nazi mobilisation for strategic defence of the Reich and whose untimely death in a plane crash resulted in the promotion of Albert Speer, who succeeded him in 'all his offices' (see Speer's memoirs, *Inside the Third Reich*). I note the play at work here in comparison to what is noted about the surname Heimlich with regard to this chapter.

Having said this, this text in some ways continues Freud's project in *The Uncanny*, by uncovering yet another shade of meaning through this accident of titling by which the terrain of the *unheimlich* might be explored.<sup>21</sup>

The contingency by which this recognised directional supposition of set and subset interprets a hierarchy that locates meaning and gives value to it by predication and the subordination of other contingent meanings, fails to recognise that, as Freud indicated, there is an ambiguity already inherent in the term *heimlich*. This ambiguity refuses to conform to a clear interpretation of the terminology along metaphysical lines of binary and dialectic – what we might articulate as that which haunts the *heimlich*.

However, it will be possible to exploit the essentially alteric proposition of the *unheimlich* by recognising its relation to a form of unmediated presence in the *heimlich*, but clearly not as merely the negation or 'not' of such *presence*.

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21 I also note here that in so entitling the procedure, an act of commemoration has taken place and, as such, this operation of the hand is potentialised as a memorial to its inventor and therefore a similar possibility for the *unheimlich* manoeuvre will be explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

In seeking to find the *unheimlich* in the *heimlich*, Freud seemed to proffer yet further evidence to identify the former as perhaps just the diminished spectre – the shadow of all that predicates, and the *not-at-home* – on the understanding that to be *at-home* must always be the location of a departure.<sup>22</sup> But what if such directional determination merely hides (as Freud and Derrida have suggested) deeper anxieties which are no longer merely the *not* of exclusion settled by the surety of *at-home*, but the resistance to the recognition of the processes of introjection or incorporation as the premise by which the *heimlich* might be addressed?

Anthony Vidler suggests that the *unheimlich* was, for the romantic era of Schelling and Hölderlin, simultaneously a psychological condition *and* an aesthetic one, in that it had the capacity to both establish and destabilise through the authenticity of what he refers to as a ‘first burial’ that was given potency through a return which was potentially the re-visitation of a power essentially out of place and long since considered dead.

He argues:

To such a force the romantic psyche and the romantic aesthetic were profoundly open; at any moment what seemed on the surface homely and comforting, secure and clear of superstition, might be reappropriated by something that should

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22 Bachofen extrapolated at length in ‘Mother Right’ on the premise that matriarchy was the principle of the hearth and centred in material existence. The mother principle encouraged warlike bravery while entrusting ‘the family, the cart, the hearth, the slaves ... to the women’ (p. 152). Linked to the preservation of the home was the cult of the *chthonic*; the matriarchal encouraged heroism and chivalry and therefore advocated departure from the hearth and heroic death.

have remained secret but nevertheless, through some chink in the shutters of progress, had returned.<sup>23</sup>

He tracks a historical shift in architectonic systemisation which situates the corporeal relation between architecture and the body at the heart of this evolution and which is, most importantly for our purposes, integral to its eventual *dismemberment*. The projection of the idealised body onto the building (essentially a classical theory) identified architectural authority from this relation, while at the same time determining confirmation for the body through the criteria of socialisation and individuation *in the world*.

This anthropomorphic proposition that an edifice had fundamental concomitant structural similarities to a body began to change in the latter part of the eighteenth century, as the potential for that relation to evolve, to take account of an emerging determination of the psychological to have an impact on the shape of the edifice developed. The shift from the arguably fixed attributes of classical proportion and artifice to the more conditional empathetic operation of the experiential, set the scene for the emergence of a subliminal aesthetics, which engaged with an emotional attribution of beauty, foregrounding psychotic notions of fear, terror, unease and disquiet – the *sublime*.

In *The Fold Leibniz and the Baroque* (Chapter 8, 'The Two Floors'), Deleuze argues that the baroque house is made up of what he refers to as spiritual elevation (the upper area) and physical gravity (the floor below). The convergence of these operates on what Deleuze refers to as the movement along the divergent paths motivated by the regimes of the immanence of expression via the incorporeal

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23 Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 27.

and the transitive nature of impression via the corporeal. The former indicates actuality as the fold of verticality (the monadic), which is conditioned by absolute interiority, infinite inflection and is without coordinates and differs from the virtuality of materiality (material bodies) as the horizontal dimension of coordinated stability and vectored gravity.<sup>24</sup> The line of difference is not between any concept of organic or inorganic, but rather dissects both by distinguishing individuation from any notion of a collective or mass phenomena. Actuality (identified in the monad) is the primal force of an absolute surface that is essentially co-present with all modifications ('each *monad* expresses the sum of the world and a body receives the impression of "all" the others up to infinity'),<sup>25</sup> whereas virtuality (identified as the bends of matter) conceal something from the relative surface on which there are having an affect.

In this sense, the world is understood as this combination of virtuality/actualisation and possibility/realisation<sup>26</sup> and, as such, is defined by the event. However, this reserve of events grasped as world (the *eventum tantum*) is conceived as both a pure virtuality and possibility, and also a pure predicate, and is essentially a battle with a potential that exceeds the souls that direct it and the bodies the execute it.

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24 In *Death and the Labyrinth*, Foucault describes the lingual construction of Roussel's *Impressions d'Afrique* thus: 'This technique of a *secret verticality* could lead to no possible discourse if it weren't balanced by another. Capable of opening a *horizontal diffusion*' (p. 35, added emphasis).

25 Leibniz, 'Monadology', and found in *Basic Writings*, pp. 61–2.

26 Note here that Deleuze proposes that realisation operates through resemblance – this suggests the significance of the simulacra (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 4 of this text).

We speak of the event only as already engaged in the soul that expresses it and in the body that carries it out, but we would be completely at a loss about how to speak of it without its *withdrawn part*.<sup>27</sup>

The accord between monad (the conception of the entire world, independent of others and without influx) and body (the expression of the material universe, every body receiving the influx of others and expressing that totality) is determined as a pre-established harmony, whereby a body always expresses from its side and with its surroundings what a soul/monad expresses in its own region – a ‘between’.<sup>28</sup> Deleuze makes clear that the monad as simple substance (its first nature) is essentially irreducible, but the intrinsic possessions of any individual bear the marks (its second nature) of those foreign to it so that ‘there is

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27 Added emphasis. Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, p. 106. It is worth noting here Heidegger’s emphasis on concealment as intrinsic to the materiality of the artwork in *The Origin of the Work of Art*. For Heidegger, the double operation of revealing and concealing was fundamental to the event of the artwork (see footnotes 81 and 82).

28 Deleuze poses the question – How can we speak of the body of a monad? The monad is always an ‘each’ and ‘every’, whereas the body is always a ‘one’; however, this ‘one’ is such through the event of a ‘belonging’ to each ‘every’ without ever relinquishing its ‘oneness’. This belonging is referred to as *appurtenance*. In *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, Deleuze states that ‘pre-established harmony of the soul and the body rules their real distinction, while the union determines their inseparability’ (p. 108). Deleuze makes four points regarding belonging, by citing the responses of both Leibniz and Husserl:

- Though as self-cogito – by which he means the diversity of thought, changing perceptions, all individual predicates – the entire world as perceived.
- The zone of the world as conveyed by the individual – its own ‘special possession’.
- Primary matter – what an individual ‘owns’ as the requirement of ‘having a body’.
- The owned body that fulfils that requirement – an organic body with which an individual is immediately present.

Husserl understands the other as being the ‘other-self’ – an aperceptive transposition that begins with the individual’s own body, whereas Leibniz determines a subdivision or clear zone, in which everything exceeds but within which everything is included as ‘dark and obscure’.

nothing obscure in me that might not be pulled into clarity from *another monad*'.<sup>29</sup> For Husserl, the body is the commencement of individuation and differs from Leibniz in that the latter argued for a negative image of other *monads*, which are used to form their own clear zone:

The soul and the body can always be truly distinguished, but inseparability traces a coming and going between one level and the other.<sup>30</sup>

The domination of the cipher of appurtenances<sup>31</sup> suggests for Deleuze that possession or the 'domain of having' is a moving transient reshuffling of relations and now replaces *being*, so that 'to have or to possess is to fold'.<sup>32</sup>

Domination remains a vague term if we persist in the understanding that no monad contains any other, but Leibniz articulated what he referred to as a 'substantial *vinculum*' as the linkage of a complex relation in which a dominant monad becomes the subject of an adhesion. This adhesion resists the distinction between predicate and attribute (but maintains the relation between variables and constant while determining that this relation is both exterior to such variables and outside the constant), but articulates a topology of torsion and infinite folding which understands the *vinculum* as the unlocalisable primary link, bordering the absolute interior but as exterior to its own interiority – a reflecting wall.

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29 Ibid., p. 107.

30 Ibid., p. 108.

31 *Appurtenance*, meaning *belonging, appendage or accessory*.

32 Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 110.

A brief diversion (*Holzweg*) to consider the definition of a corporeal procedure in order to enlighten an incorporeal one may now be appropriate.

## THE *BODY* OF ARCHITECTURE AND *ARCHITECTURE* OF THE BODY



### **To perform the Heimlich manoeuvre<sup>33</sup>**

If the victim is not getting air, and his/her throat is blocked, don't wait for medical help. Take first-aid steps for choking immediately. Stand behind your victim and wrap your arms around his waist.

Place your fist with the thumb side against the victim's abdomen slightly above the navel and below the rib cage. Grasp your fist with your other hand and pull it into the victim's abdomen with a quick upward thrust.

Repeat the movement several times if necessary.

A further section entitled 'Sweep it out', reads:

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33 Abbreviated from the *Indiamart Healthcare WebPages* [health.indiamart.com/emergencies/choking.html](http://health.indiamart.com/emergencies/choking.html). The procedure was developed by an American thoracic surgeon, Henry Heimlich, and first introduced in 1974. It is now often referred to as 'the abdominal thrust'.



Once the object has been dislodged, you can try to remove it manually, but first see it before you put a finger in the mouth, or you may force it even further down the throat.

Move your index finger along the inside of the cheek to the base of the tongue. Using your finger as a hook, dislodge the object and sweep it into the mouth so that it can be removed.<sup>34</sup>

In contrast, to the remedial urgency of the event of expelation identified above in the Heimlich manoeuvre, the *unheimlich* manoeuvre calls into question, via the metapsychological, the topographical determination of the fantasy of incorporation against the process of introjection.



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Prior to this, the terminologies of incorporation and introjection have been placed in a proximal alliance against

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34 In the essay 'Economimesis' (*Diacritics*, vol XI, no. 2 [1981], pp.3-25), Derrida articulates the introjective object as 'that which cannot be eaten either sensibly or ideally and which ... by never letting itself be swallowed must therefore *cause itself to be vomited*' (p. 21).

those of absorption and ingestion to indicate that an event of mourning requires exclusion not through denial, but rather through the discretion of secrecy.<sup>35</sup>

The shift in concern for any analogy of the body in architecture in many ways highlights a radical distinction from the humanistic model, in that a true corporeal metaphor, described as that which identifies a body in pieces and fragmentation as that which breaks from humanist concerns of domestication and the surety of accommodation.

Anthony Vidler points out that Le Corbusier's vision of modernism was no longer confined to the recognisably human, but embraced a plethora of biological existents that were as diverse as the embryonic and monstrous.<sup>36</sup> The model of unity was now usurped by the fragmentary, morselation and breakage and it is significant to see this change as not mere reversal but the demonstration of an anthropomorphic strategy exhibiting its functional and classical origins within a different sensibility. However, as Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok point out in their essay 'Introjection–Incorporation': 'Incorporation corresponds to fantasy, and introjection to a process.'<sup>37</sup>

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35 In their essay 'Introjection–Incorporation', Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok argue that absorption is the rejection of mourning and its consequences, as it is the refusal to take into oneself the part of oneself that is in a sense 'contained' in what is lost. This would be the admission of the true meaning of that loss – the admission of a change in oneself.

36 Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 70. I would like to draw attention here to a parallel to the labyrinthine, firstly with regard to the occupation of such a structure by something embryonic and monstrous – in the case of antiquity/mythology, the model of the Minoan labyrinth occupied by an entity both embryonic *and* monstrous – the Minotaur (see Chapter 4 of this text). On a more playful note, I reference the title of the journal, which published Matta's essay (*Minotaure*) with regard to its obvious affiliation with the labyrinthine.

37 Abraham and Torok, 'Introjection–Incorporation', p. 3.

Already we find a complication is at work whereby the fantasy of incorporation operates as a representation, belief or body-state, which works for the maintenance of what Abraham and Torok refer to as a topographical status quo. As an essentially conservative and preservative function it represents continuity of the subject through narcissism by attempting the transformation, not of the subject itself, but of its surrounding world.

Abraham and Torok propose that fantasy – understood through incorporation is called upon to preserve the subject in what they refer to as an ‘intrapsychic situation’ and this is in contrast to metapsychological reality which threatens a topography of change through the act of incorporation.<sup>38</sup> They argue that absorption is the rejection of mourning and its consequences because it refuses to take within the part of oneself contained in what is lost (this is the true meaning of loss). The admission of a change in oneself (a difference) is recognised as a refusal of introjection.<sup>39</sup> The arguably contentious proposition that the architectural edifice might offer an appropriate metaphor for the continuing stasis of the historicity of metaphysical thought, demands that any such understanding is contingent on the pertinence of a metaphorical permanence inherent in the inviolate structural integrity of a certain kind of

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38 *Incorporation* has two interrelated procedures:  
(i) *Demetaphorisation* – taking literally what is meant figuratively.  
(ii) *Objectivation* – what is experienced is not an injury to the subject, but the loss of an object.

39 The term *introjection* is coined from Ferenczi and refers to an enlargement of the ego whose first beginnings take place in the experience of ‘empty mouth’. The *void* is first experienced through *unfulfilment* – the transition from the ‘breast-filled’ mouth to the ‘word-filled’ mouth. There is also a key maternal link here exploited by Abraham and Torok with the connection made between the ‘filling of the void’ with the nourishment of the maternal breast and later replacing that with the spoken word.

architectonics which emphasises what is essentially continuous, assured and stable. What is most significant in understanding this stability as a metaphor is the recognition of it as a kind of linearity or directional verticality from foundation through structure/edifice to decoration. In so doing, it maintains the clarity of this architectural model as concomitant with the development and continuity of the scrutiny any metaphysical enquiry.

However, the architectural model also offers the opportunity to question a tradition of the perceived security of housing or dwelling, and by which things are safely put into place, as it were, by also locating the fissured porosity of an encrypted presence revealed through the event of what we might call the visceral orientation of the edifice.<sup>40</sup>

In her text on Gordon Matta-Clark, 'Laying Bare', Marianne Brouwer proposes that:

The *dark otherness*, is built into architecture so that it shall not be victimized by it. Modernism creates its own therapeutic discourse on the level of a conscious language that means to incorporate the subconscious.<sup>41</sup>

This relation between a modernist discourse in architecture and the incorporation of a lingual subconscious is found in

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40 In his text on Walter Benjamin, *The Colour of Experience*, Howard Caygill argues that the categories of what he refers to as the 'modern experience' are porosity, threshold and shock. These are derived from what he calls the 'impure dispersal of anonymous transitivity'. Transitivity expresses a kind of continuity through relation and transition, which in Caygill's view articulates Benjamin's notion of mobility by replacing the traditional substance and subjective experience of the urban. In his text *Constructions*, John Rajchman states: 'For in contrast to Heidegger, Deleuze is a philosopher not of the forest and its paths but of the city and its modes of arranging or disposing persons and things – its *agencements* (assemblages).' Rajchman argues that for Deleuze, architecture is first of all the arts – a montage, a composition. This is in contrast to Kant's view of architectural protocols which were, for him, debased by commerce.

41 Brouwer, 'Laying Bare', from exhibition catalogue, Serpentine Gallery, London, June–August 1993, p. 364.

the specificity of Matta-Clark's personal history through the professional relationship of his father to the modernist architect Le Corbusier manifest in the former's critique of the latter in the Surrealist journal *Minotaure* in 1938.

Roberto Matta (Matta-Clark's father), a Chilean painter who had relocated to pre-war Paris and was affiliated to the Surrealist movement, had provisionally been an associate of the architect Le Corbusier, working with him on a number of unrealised projects.

Eventually, as illustrated in his article 'Mathematique sensible: Architecture du Temps', he rejected the latter's *mathematique raisonnable* and its transcendent forces of a prevailing anthropomorphic geometry as merely the rationalisation and harmonisation of man's circumstance reducing him/her to a utopian subject of idealised form – modular man as reasoned proportional verticality; regularised and essentially linear.<sup>42</sup>

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42 In 'Laying Bare', Brouwer notes: 'Because of the themes of the bourgeois home, of verticality and the void, this design at first reads like a work by Matta-Clark himself, until one realises that in fact the proposal in *Minotaure* implies the construction of a womb, or rather the production of *the* womb. The logic of the interior is dialectically linked to the concept of the exterior in Modernism. Matta's collaboration with Le Corbusier on a museum in the *form of a labyrinth* would corroborate this view. The "armature of rational architecture" contains the maternal image of the Womb as the Glass House contains the Hearth – indeed as *the labyrinth contains Art*; a usurped symbol' (p. 364, added emphasis).

Matta's illustration that accompanied his critique proposed a non-regularised space occupied by pneumatic furniture – 'opening upon vistas of deeply ambiguous space'.<sup>43</sup> What was visualised by Matta was essentially a kind of 'intra-uterine safe-haven' – a trope of the Freudian uncanny, as a critique of Le Corbusier's determination towards a prevailing transcendental geometry based on anthropomorphic idealism.

It was described by Jeff Wall in his text, 'Dan Graham's Kammerspiel', as an 'intrauterine design for an apartment dedicated to the senses' and as a deliberate attack on the bourgeois home, as 'a space that will bring into consciousness human verticality'.<sup>44</sup> A further relation to

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43 Lee, *Object to be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark*, p. 7. Matta is quoted by Lee as describing the space thus: 'We need walls like damp sheets which lose their shape and wed our psychological fears ... To find for each person those umbilical cords that put us in communication with other suns, objects of total freedom that would be like psychoanalytic mirrors.' If the womb is understood as the birth-site of domestic order, it is also at once the place of expelation into being *and* also the retreat to imagined death. It is also worth noting here Bachofen's detailed anthropological study of 'mother-right', specifically, his contention that matriarchy and its fundamental tellurian/corporeal character were essentially bound up with the chthonic (see Chapter 2 of this text) and that it marked a cultural stage which preceded the restrictions of the spiritual principle of the later patriarchal/Hellenic. For Bachofen the feminine *sporum* (womb) was seen as the representation of the Demetrian Mystery where Demeter represented the fertile and cultivated soil and was the earth mother who presided over the harvest and agricultural labour, and bound the maternal to the earth and the hearth (*hestial*). In *The Uncanny*, Freud argues: 'To some people the idea of being buried alive by mistake is the most uncanny thing of all – and yet psychoanalysis has taught us that this terrifying phantasy is only a transformation of another phantasy which had originally nothing terrifying about it at all, but was qualified by a certain lasciviousness – the phantasy, I mean of intra-uterine existence' (p. 367).

44 Jeff Wall, 'Dan Graham's Kammerspiel' in *Dan Graham* (exhibition catalogue), The Arts Gallery of Western Australia, Perth 1985. Also in this text, Wall articulates a kind of vampirism at work in the double operation of the reversal of the perspectival image of the human body with its alteric reflection. This is particularly noted with regard to Graham's *Alteration to a Suburban House* where the 'vampire' as the 'double' of power and possession comes in the night to feed on its prey when the 'openness' and 'transparency/reflection' of the glass house is no longer the 'master of that reflection' in the daylight hours, but vulnerable through its transparent determinacy, to the nocturnal illogic of the forces of nature.

Matta-Clark's work is through the event of encryption and its specific connotation with the act of mourning as a double operation of an act of refusal through the fantasy of incorporation. As will be explored further, Matta-Clark's two works, *Time Well/Cherry Tree* of 1971 and *Descending Steps for Batan* of 1977, were specifically involved with the act of inclusion as that which persisted in its exclusion and to all intents and purposes, introduced what might best be described as a phantom *into* the corporeal.

What remains crucial to any further analysis of this contention is that one must understand incorporation not merely as an act of absorption where the corporeal assimilates that which is alien to it, but rather as an act where the object is retained within the body as something excluded. A foreign body that remains impossible to assimilate, must be rejected, and consequently this inability to expel becomes what I now term the *unheimlich* manoeuvre.<sup>45</sup>

In his foreword to Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's *The Wolf Man's Magic Word*, Derrida described the crypt thus:

The crypt is thus not a natural place [*lieu*], but the striking history of an artifice, an *architecture*, an artefact: of a place *comprehended* within another rigorously separate from it,

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45 In his forward, to *The Wolf Man's Magic Word* by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, entitled 'Fors: The Anguish Words of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok', p. xxxviii, Derrida argues that the fantasy is no longer the 'pure' expulsion of what is alien but 'involves eating the object (through the mouth or otherwise) in order *not* to introject it, in order to vomit it, in a way, into the inside, into the pocket of a cyst.' The definition of a *cyst* as a sac containing 'morbid matter', or a cell or cavity enclosing a parasitic organism clearly demarcates what is *introjected* as not only 'alien' but also as 'gaining nutrition from ' and sustained through *symbiosis* with the corporeal.

isolated from general space by partitions, an enclosure, an enclave.<sup>46</sup>

In identifying any displacements by which the disturbance of a construction by its so-called inherent undecidable figures is interrupted, we recognise such resistance to domestication whereby the *hestial* is interrupted by an alterity that is neither pure exteriority or its counterpart of interiority and which would sustain the continuation of binary oppositions as the standard dialectic of metaphysical enquiry. Mark Wigley states:

As both the hiding of a secret and the hiding of that hiding, the crypt cannot simply take its place in the topography it preserves. The traditional demarcations between inside and outside, the closure established by the drawing of a line, the division of a space by a wall, is disturbed by the internal fracturing of the walls by the crypt.

The crypt organises the space in which it can never simply be placed, sustaining the very topography it fractures.<sup>47</sup>

It persists by virtue of its capacity to complicate any dialectic by exploiting an inherent characteristic, which can essentially be neither included nor evicted, and, as such, operates as a violation which undermines any notion of *hestial* assurance.

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46 Ibid., p. xiv. Where Derrida cites the partition as intrinsic to encryption, we may wish to consider Matta-Clark's use of such structural determinations to give shape to his 'interventions'. I am particularly reminded here of *The W-Hole House: Atrium Roof* project where the previously constructed internal partitions dividing the space were integral to the later 'visceral interventions'. It is also worth noting here that the translator's note for Derrida's introduction indicates that *fors* (translated from the French) is derived from the Latin *foris* (meaning *outside, outdoors*), an archaic preposition meaning *except for, barring, save*. Also *fors* as plural of *for*, meaning *inner heart and subjective interiority*, therefore *fors* means both exteriority and interiority; this is a spatial problematic that Derrida explores in connection with the crypt.

47 Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*, p. 144.



This figuration, articulated as essentially something that takes the form of an imposition by an exclusively exterior force, is undermined by the ambiguity of such characteristics, which refuse to conform to the clear and arguably insurmountable oppositions/dialectics of *presence/absence* and *inside/outside*. The argument is proposed that perhaps that which insists through a determination to resist, can neither be relegated to a superior transcendent capacity, imposing itself and its ideality upon the domestic, nor as a mere alien appendage that is either organised or emerges from such domestication, but as that which is essentially alteric and therefore must remain entirely other.

John Rajchman in his text *Constructions* sees Matta-Clark's anti-monumental incisions as a process of ungrounding which married to the comparative events of unbuilding and undoing, contrast any attempt to retrieve the context of the historical city<sup>48</sup> through architectural form and offer the possibility of another route out of such contextualism. He argues:

they exposed not an architectural memory in monuments but a subversive memory hidden in the social and architectural facades with their false sense of integrity and wholeness,

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48 In *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger states: 'The *polis* is the historical place [*Geschichtsstätte*] the there *in* which, *out* of which and *for* which history happens' (p. 152). Heidegger's reading of *polis* should not be recognised as merely one 'city-state' but as the ahistorical place – the 'there' of historical 'being-there'. Edward S. Casey argues in his text *The Fate of Place* that: 'Within a limit [*peras*], room is made – and thus place. To lack limit is to lack place, and conversely; not to be in place is to be unlimited. A limit is a positive power within which place is made.' p. 262. This interprets the limit (*peras*) as that which invokes of a kind of respect for the placial and not merely a confinement and it 'allows *the most effective building-up of the world within the place of the polis.*' (added emphasis) *Ibid*', p. 262.

breaking out through the openings in the body of banal spaces.<sup>49</sup>

The shift orchestrated by Matta-Clark's interventions was in a sense a two-fold commentary, in that he had provisionally seized upon and exploited what might be conceived as the progressive tendencies of the hestial demands of the so-called bourgeois American dream.<sup>50</sup>

The gloss of privacy identified in the development of the American suburb was revealed by Matta-Clark (in a project such as *Splitting* of 1973) as a mere façade of stability, which masked a deep-seated insecurity at the heart of the iconic suburban home.

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49 Rajchman, *Constructions*, p. 82. In his book *De-Architecture*, James Wines comments on Matta-Clark that: 'Structures were cut up, stripped, torn-apart, excavated – dematerialized in some way – to achieve a feeling of orchestrated apocalypse' (p. 139).

50 It is also worth noting here that Pamela M. Lee draws attention to the possibility of an arguably contentious reading of Matta-Clark's 'interventions' (specifically *Splitting* of 1973) as the violation of not only the domesticity of the suburban home but also the visceration of hestial/maternal order. As Lee indicates, feminist commentary identified this act as essentially genderised, and also linked it with a Freudian interpretation of the domestication of the uterine. She quotes Maud Lavin from her essay in *Arts Magazine* (January 1984, pp. 138–41), 'Gordon Matta-Clark and Individualism': 'Matta-Clark's *wounding* of a house can be seen as a male violation of a domestic realm with female associations. I am not making a case for Matta-Clark's work as a whole to be read as anti-female, but certainly it is concerned with male virility' (added emphasis). In *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud states: 'It often happens that neurotic men declare that they feel there is something *uncanny* about the female genital organs. This *unheimlich* place, however, is the entrance to the former *heim* of all human beings to the place where each one of us lived once upon a time and in the beginning. There is a joke saying that "love is home-sickness"; and whenever a man dreams of a place or country and says to himself, while he is still dreaming: 'this place is familiar to me, I've been here before", we may interpret the place as being his mother's genitals or her body' (p. 524).



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As a cipher of the pretension of class mobility which inaugurated the socio-economic shifts of late capitalism in housing, the suburb was perhaps not, as Pamela M. Lee points out, merely the growth of the city as urban expanse, but rather the *perimeter* through which its peripheral status conditioned and preserved the city's status as centre.<sup>51</sup>



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51 Pamela M. Lee argues that Matta Clark's two projects, *A W-Hole House* and *Splitting*, 'revealed ... the very emptiness at the centre of the two structures, a centreless centre, so to speak.' She also questions Maud Lavin's contention that Matta-Clark's 'domestic projects' were misogynistic attacks against the gendered domestic order of the feminine by querying the coding of domesticity as essentially 'maternal' (*Object to be Destroyed*, p. 18). Marianne Brouwer also refutes this suggestion and comments that 'he is attacking a paternal image rather than a maternal one. If anything, Matta-Clark cuts through the fetishism of the umbilical cord that connects the notion of verticality and the void in his father's project and gives it a completely different vocabulary. A vocabulary in which high and low become metaphysically joined' ('Laying Bare'), p. 364.

The implication of the suburb as not only the vincular in the sense of an unlocalisable primary link that borders the absolute interior, but also in its algebraic sense of a horizontal line drawn over a group of terms to show they have a common relation to what follows or precedes. This must be understood as a relation in the monadic sense of a relation between what is constant and what is variable given that neither constancy nor variation are dependent on that relation *and*, most importantly the *vinculum* as relation is exterior to any variable and also *outside* any constant.<sup>52</sup>

These were manifest in the inexorable march of the modernist architectural determination of corporate and municipal projects as well as social housing in the post-war period and also in the violence and wilful destruction that accompanied them. In this sense Matta-Clark's interventions preserved through a kind of demolition and simultaneously through the act of the artist, shifted the significance of the building from the praxis of mere occupancy to a higher level of cultural merit.<sup>53</sup>

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52 It is worth noting here Dan Graham's *Alteration to a Suburban House*. As a 'perversion' of the ideology of transparency concomitant with modernist architectural ideals, the project sought to remove the façade of an ordinary suburban house and replace it with a glass sheet – a *vinculum*. A mirror would divided the interior of the building into two areas – a front section revealed to the public, and a rear, private section which would remain undisclosed. The mirror, as it faced the glass façade, would not only reflect the public face of the interior, but also the street and the outside environment – bringing the outside into the house through the intervention of a vincular, transparency. In his short story 'Tlön Uqbar, Orbis Tertius' (from the collection *Labyrinths*), Jorge Luis Borges states 'mirrors have something monstrous about them' (p. 27).

53 James Wines, commenting on Robert Smithson's *Buried Shed*, argues that its entropic trope articulates a political commentary that was based on the 'unconscious relationship that exists in the popular mind between buildings and orderly functions – their generic state of use' (*De-Architecture*, p. 137). The question arises as to whether Matta-Clark's work was a continuation of Smithson's thematic of earth, no longer conceived of as a mere stable ground but as the entropic force ever *undoing* the information of formal structures.

Judith Russi Kirshner in her essay on Matta-Clark entitled 'Non-uments' identified the labyrinthine complexity of these visceral projects as essentially a contradictory relation between the event of dissection and its violation of continuity.<sup>54</sup> She drew attention to:

Matta-Clark's contradictory dissections, his intricate mazes opposing the clarity and geometry of an architectural plan, violated the unity and continuity associated with Modernist architecture, exposing relationships between forms and materials to make visible unexpected, multiple layers in spatial and temporal depth.<sup>55</sup>

The creative act as an interruption of the *polis*, if we understand this to mean the recognition of a political orientation of interiority and structure, can only proffer itself as such by assenting to such a placial integrity and which confirms exteriority status on the antithesis of the *polis*, the *geopolis*. I also draw attention here to earlier remarks made in Chapter 2 in the section *Poison and Cure*, where the placial undecidability of the *pharmakos*<sup>56</sup> in ancient Greece was articulated as the maintenance by public donation, of an individual or group of individuals at

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54 'Matta-Clark fragments or splinters architecture, turning it into a kind of reverse Cubism or "anti-monument", but one whose task is to reconstitute memory, not conventional memory as in the traditional monument but that subversive memory which has been hidden by social and architectural façades and their false sense of "wholeness"' (Dan Graham, 'Gordon Matta-Clark', essay published in the Serpentine catalogue, p. 379).

55 Judith Russi Kirshner, 'Non-uments', p. 367. Derrida, in his foreword to *The Wolf Man's Magic Word*, argues, 'Constructing a series of partitions, with their inner and outer surfaces, the cryptic enclave produces a cleft in space, in the assembled system of various places, in the architectonics of the open square within space, itself delimited by a generalized closure in the *forum*' ('Fors', p. xiv). See Gordon Matta-Clark's project, *A W-Hole House: Atrium Roof*, 1973.

56 As previously stated, the significance of the *pharmakos* in the context of this text is as the identification of 'undecidability' – literally through its root in the term *pharmakon*, as potentially both *poison* and *cure*.

the heart of the *polis* in order to insure an appropriate sacrifice (the scapegoat) at times of dire need.

The often barbaric nature of these outsiders had strong links with the creative frenzy of a Dionysian excess, which if we are to follow Nietzsche's model in *The Birth of Tragedy*, conceived the Apollonian framework of the organised *polis* of the late Hellenic period as progressively repressing such disorder. Yet the phenomenon of the *pharmakos* insisted on the presence of the alien as the mechanism to in some way, restore order to the *polis* and therefore it could not and must not be merely excluded.<sup>57</sup>

The risk of being creative and therefore the potential definition of creative man, exploits the limit as that by which the contentious proposal that potential and possibility are essentially issueless and placeless. As Heidegger stated in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*:

What thus comes up and becomes intrinsically stable [Ständigkeit] encounters, freely and spontaneously, the necessity of its limit, *peras*. This limit is not something that comes to beings from outside. Still less is it a deficiency in the sense of a harmful restriction. No, the hold that governs itself from out of the limit, the having itself, wherein the enduring holds itself, is the *Being* of beings; it is what first makes a being into a being as differentiated from a non-being ... Limit and end are that where with a being begins *to be*.<sup>58</sup>

He also remarked in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' that:

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57 I would also like to note here that, as mentioned in Chapter 2 of this text, when Adorno commented in 1955, 'After Auschwitz, to write a lyric poem is **barbaric**' (added emphasis), the implication is that Celan, the 'lyric poet' when involved in the realisation of his poetic voice, was in fact (in the eyes of Adorno) precipitating an act of 'barbarism'. The parallels between this creative potential and its link to the barbaric should not be lost here (the Dionysian as the exteriority of barbaric *ecstatic* hedonism repressed by the internal order of the Apollonian).

58 Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 62.

A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary. A boundary is not that at which something stops, but as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing – *Peras*.<sup>59</sup>

From early pieces like *Time Well/Cherry Tree*, through the more explicit violation of the architectural educational establishment of *Window Blow-Out* (1976) where he gained the authorities' somewhat reluctant permission to shoot out windows of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in New York with a borrowed revolver, the violence of the transgressive operation inevitably drew attention to that against which it was directed. As Marianne Brouwer describes: 'directed against the Institute as the sign of repression: Matta-Clark's provocative act confronts those secret fears that won't be sublimated into the dialectics of interior and exterior.'<sup>60</sup>

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59 Heidegger, 'Building Dwelling Thinking', p. 154. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze states: "To the limit", it will be argued, still presupposes a limit. Here, limit (*peras*) no longer refers to what maintains the thing under a law, nor to what delimits or separates it from other things. On the contrary, it refers to that on the basis of which it is deployed and deploys all its power: hubris ceases to be simply condemnable and *the smallest becomes equivalent to the largest* once it is not separated from what it can do'(p. 37).

60 Brouwer, 'Laying Bare', p. 364.

precise splitting of  
demolition, at 322



house prior to its  
New Jersey, in 1973.

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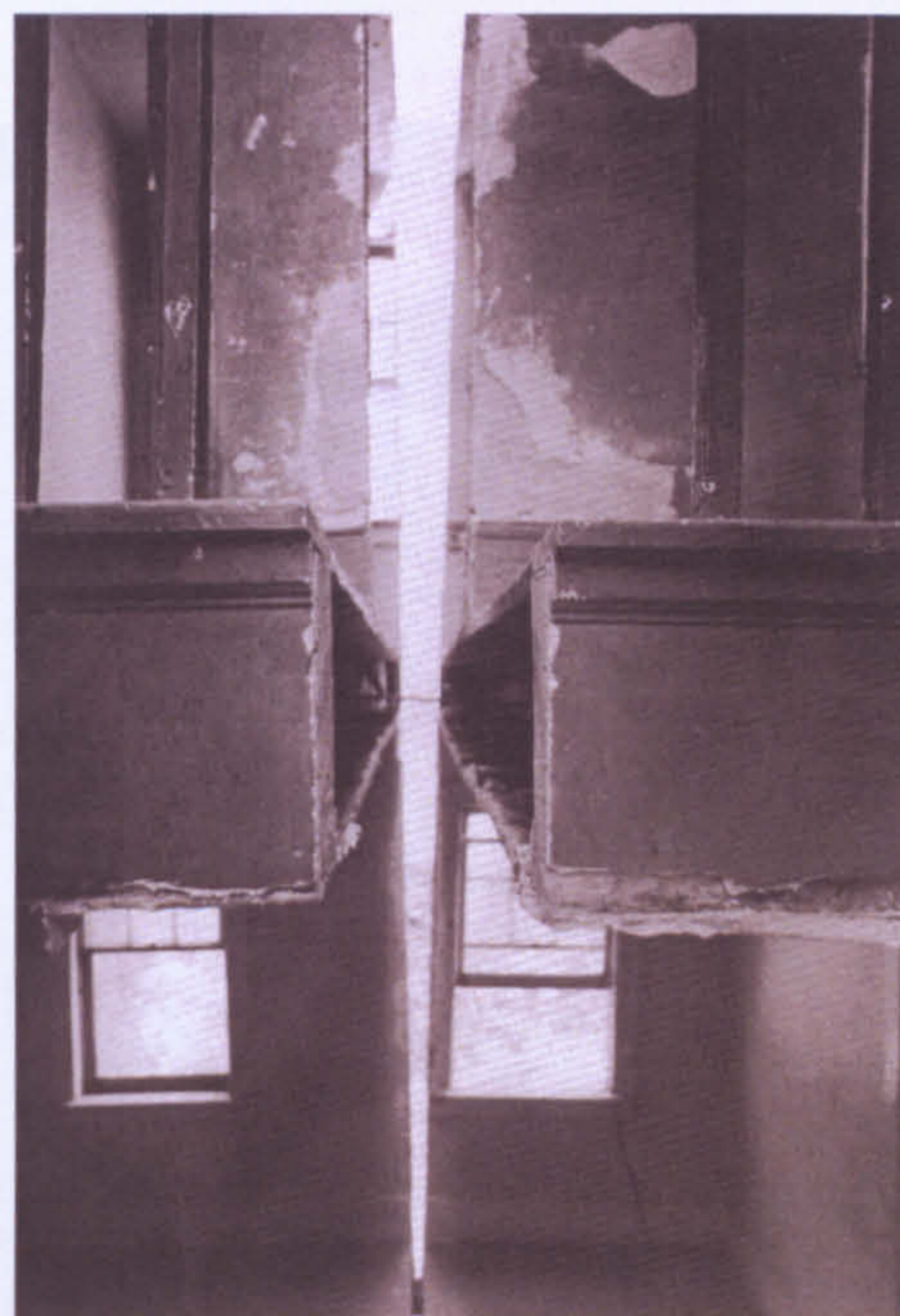
Other works involved more specifically domestic (*Splitting* and *Conical Intersect*) and corporate spaces (*Circus* or *Caribbean Orange* and *Office Baroque*), albeit derelict and abandoned, and make a strong case for Matta-Clark's continued imperative to use his work to comment on the inherent injustice of formal structures.<sup>61</sup> It is significant, however, that *Splitting* as both intervention/event and Matta-Clark's most noted (and recognised) work is grasped through its provisional interpretation as an enforcement of exterior over interior. In its aftermath, the recognition of a more complex encryption of exteriority is noted that is already implicit within domestication and identified in the

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61 John Rajchman also points out that Kant viewed architecture as the lowest form of the *beaux arts* as it was the most constrained by money interests and as such was 'genius fettered and unable to create freely and purely'. The project *Time Well/Cherry Tree* (1971) can be seen in the canon of Matta-Clark's work as a key *punctum* piece that engages with entropic force as a measure of disorganisation and degradation. The degenerative presupposition of the work's own destruction (already articulated in other works like *Photo-Fry*) is built into the 'removal' of historical loss – a *non-ument* which emphasises Robert Smithson's contention that the site/non-site 'rises into ruin'. From 'A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey', and taken from *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, p. 54.



precise splitting of an ordinary suburban house prior to its demolition, at 322 Englewood Street, New Jersey, in 1973.



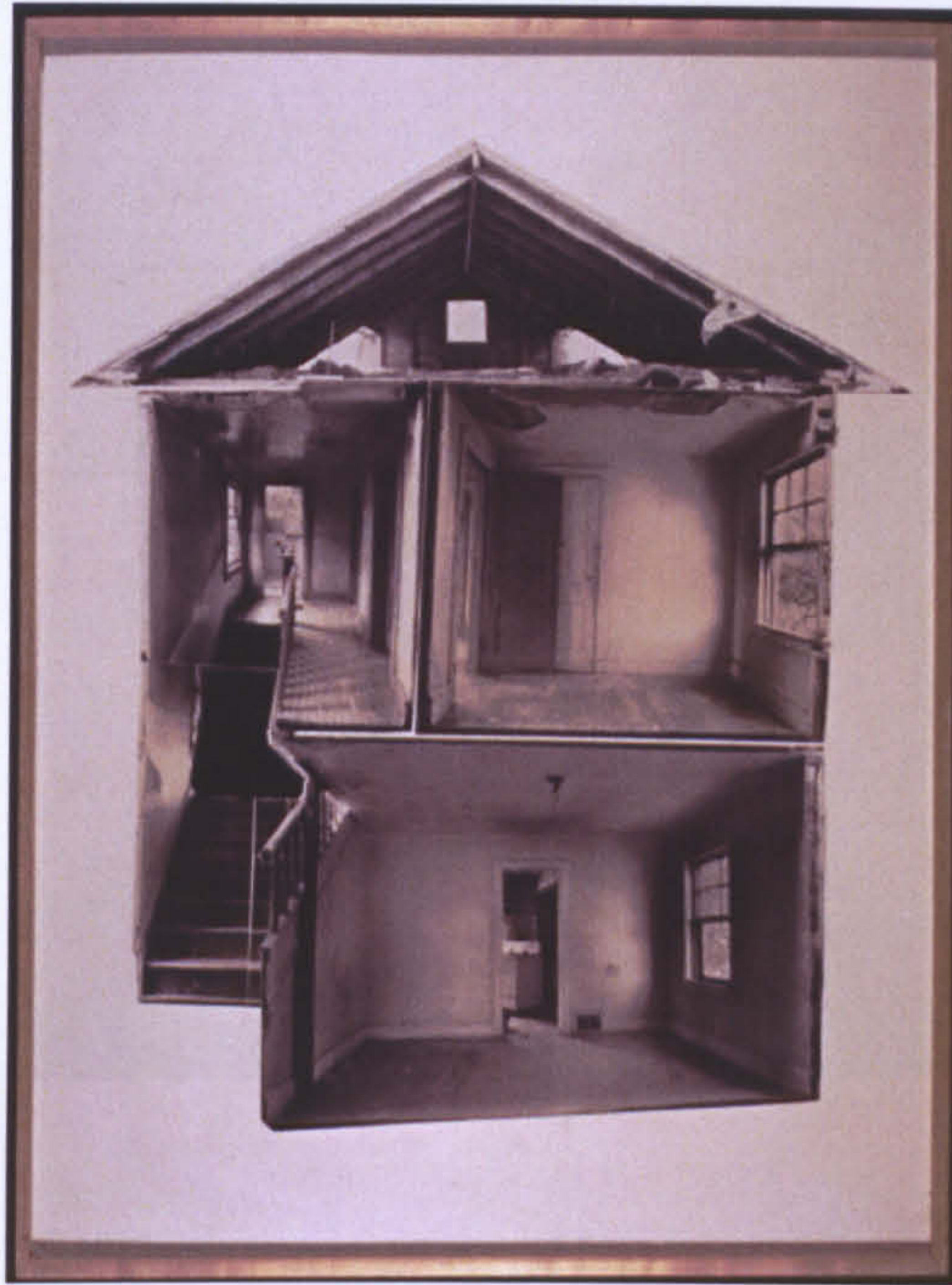
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A central cut was augmented by the careful removal of part of the foundations at the rear of the building to open the split.<sup>62</sup> Also of importance is that the event of *Splitting* was not in the enforcement of the reversal of a dialectic, whereby exteriority sublimated interiority, which made manifest an inversion of the metaphysical trope of presence/absence, but the aftermath of an encryption of

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62 Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting*, that the 'implication of size' (*taille*) is also the mark of a line or cut: 'the cutting edge of a sword, all the incisions which come to broach a surface or a thickness and open up a track, delimit a contour, a form or a quantity (a cut(ing) of wood or cloth' (p. 120). The 'play' that Derrida finds in the ambiguity of meaning and translation is also noted in his *Memoirs of the Blind*, where he notes: 'The *trait* is not then paralyzed in a tautology that folds the same onto the same' (p. 2). The translator has noted that they have left the word *trait* untranslated to preserve its range of meanings, from a *trait* or *feature* to a *line*, *stroke* or *mark*. This articulation of variant meaning is also operated by Pierre Joris in his translation of Celan's poem 'Todtnauberg', where he leaves the word *Hütte* untranslated (see Chapter 2 of this text).

exteriority already implicit within the domesticated interior and manifested in what we might call the 'no-where' of its foundational integrity.



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The foundations of buildings always remain absent, in the sense that the integrity of their structural value is rarely seen. If they are operating successfully, they remain undisclosed, their essence translated into that which they support. The double concealment exploited in *Splitting* was firstly, in the absented value of the foundations in the structural/domestic sense, and secondly, in their literal absence as a *removal* by Matta-Clark to initiate the split in the building. What is also of significance, and will be touched on later, is the intrinsic coeval relationship between, what I will call the 'closed domesticated/hestial verticality' of the split with the open 'formal/hermetic horizontality' of the removal to initiate the event of the

work. As already indicated in Matta-Clark's earlier projects, *A W-Hole House: Atrium Roof* followed a similar methodology that combined verticality with horizontality as the means by which the work was realised.

Mark Wigley, in *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*, suggests that what is implicit in architectonic figuration can be characterised as an essential deception which determines our perception of logic and reason. He states:

The figure of architecture acts as a *veil*, enabling philosophy to disguise its active ordering of the world as the neutral discovery of the worlds pre-existing, as the dispassionate 'discloser' order.<sup>63</sup>

Wigley's contention, that the architectural figure might function as an active yet deceptive organiser of the world, proposes what we might call an intriguing dwelling model for the exploration of the perceived familiarity of order and principle as not only the foundation for metaphysical

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63 Added emphasis. Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 66. Dan Graham's *Alteration to a Suburban House* project sought to 'lift the veil' via the introduction of a transparent yet reflective surface, replacing the usual suburban façade and in so doing, made manifest the disguise of the architectural. In the short story, 'Councillor Krespel', E.T.A Hoffmann has the professor say of Krespel, 'There are people ... From whom nature, or some special fatality, has drawn away the *veil* under the concealment of which the rest of us pursue our follies. Their inner workings are visible. What with us remains thought, becomes with Krespel – deed' (p. 173, added emphasis). I would also note here Derrida's remarks in *The Truth in Painting* regarding *parergon* or the veil (the function of clothing in sculpture and painting and the column in architecture; both can also function as ornament) as a kind of framing device. He notes: 'The *parergon* inscribes something which comes as an extra, *exterior* to the proper field ... but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the extent that the inside is lacking. It is lacking *in* something and it is lacking *from itself*' (p. 56).

thought, but also in an archaeological sense and illuminator and arbiter of pre-established orders.<sup>64</sup>

However, it would only require only a minor deviation from this recognised framework of thought to begin to find mechanisms by which it is possible to implicate through the identification and scrutinising of a form of alteric explication as indicated, which is at work in any domestic order. From this we might be able to explore this model from the inside as it were, through the reconsideration and reinterpretation of the means by which this model was first made manifest.<sup>65</sup> The historical language of architecture demands a certain kind of structural continuity (by which we mean the already indicated linearity of what we might describe as the appropriate structure of a building), which can only function through the integrity of the recognised directional verticality of construction methods – from ground/foundation via edifice to decoration.<sup>66</sup> A project like *A W-Hole House*:

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64 In *The Introductory Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel states, 'God enters in the lightning-flash of individuality, which strikes and permeates the inert mass, while the infinite and no longer merely symmetrical form belonging to mind itself concentrates and gives shape to the corresponding bodily existence' (p. 91).

65 Wigley determines that the limit defined by the territorialisation of the house is not one of the dialectic of interiority and exteriority as much as that of encryption. He states: 'The line drawn by the house is not that between what appears as an inside and what appears as an outside, but the less clearly defined and much more convoluted one between the visible and the invisible. The security of a house is not its capacity to enclose or exclude, but its capacity to conceal' (*The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 131).

66 I would like to note here the 'unorthodox' construction methods employed by the character Councillor Krespel in E.T.A Hoffman's short story of the same name (published in the Penguin Classics edition of *Tales of Hoffmann*): the 'planless' house (no architectural drawing was provided for the building), but merely Krespel shouting instructions during the construction process. However, as the storyteller describes: 'The difficulties which this peculiar mode of construction could not fail to produce were thus overcome, and after a short while a completed house stood there: from the outside it possessed the craziest appearance, since none of the windows, for instance, was of the same size or shape as any other, but once inside you were filled with a quite unexampled sense of wellbeing and comfort' (p. 161).

*Atrium Roof* realised in Genoa in Italy in 1973 complicates any clear distinctions between verticality and horizontality from which a precedent of one over the other might be accorded.

Prior to Matta-Clark's intervention, what preceded it was an act of domestication by the previous occupants, who organised the interior space by progressively splitting its openness with stud walls.<sup>67</sup> Matta-Clark's initial reaction to such an act of hestial/domestication was to remove the centre of the pyramidal roof, exposing the labyrinthine interior, whereby the verticality of the removal simultaneously determined and critiqued domesticity. This was followed by further incisions which dissected the interior with two parallel horizontal lines (one demarcated three feet from the floor on the interior walls and the other 18 inches above it) and which might be considered as an act of de-centred hermetic de-territorialisation.

The precedent of ground as the essential a priori for the determination of any vertiginous posture remains the consistent factor in the architectonics of the edifice.<sup>68</sup> Equally, the proposition is made that the language of edifice of thought – metaphysics – demands a similar ordering, but as Wigley states, this figuration should perhaps be interpreted as merely the disguise by which

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67 The metaphor of enframing is not lost here – domestication taking the form of the particularity of hestial organisation that Matta-Clark's exploited through a vertical removal. There is also perhaps something about the specificity of this removal in that it identified the hestial/hearth by drawing attention to a historical architectural mechanism for ventilation (the hole in the roof). I also draw attention to earlier remarks made about the *parergon* in Derrida's *The Truth in Painting*.

68 Bachofen's 'Sanctum and Sacrum' argues: 'The traditional mind saw walls "rising from the earth" as offspring, issuing from the "maternal womb". Walls as "children" of mother earth even after birth are connected to the "maternal womb" by foundations' (p. 42).

reason and logic enforce the mechanisms of control and reduction of all outside the conformity of reasonableness to a kind of universality while couching such an enframing in the archaeological uncovering of what might be interpreted as almost the fictional re-discovery of a foundational, pre-existing order.

Our predisposition to indicate a language for architectonics already submits it to a scrutiny that not only recognises its historical status but also simultaneously and perhaps surreptitiously argues for a rethinking of its lingual articulation.

When Derrida argues that the philosophical tradition privileges the immediacy of speech over the mediations of what is written, he expresses a subordination of the spatial using the concept of the unmediated presence of speech as a sublimation of the space of inscription or the spatial distribution of signs.

Metaphysics as the mechanism by which the *logos* resists the interruption of the containment of self-presence, takes mastery of the spatial by exclusion – by keeping it outside.<sup>69</sup> In ‘On the Question of Being’ Heidegger asked the question:

What if the language of metaphysics and metaphysics itself, whether it is that of a living or a dead god, in fact constituted as metaphysics that limit which prevents a transition over the line, i.e. the overcoming of nihilism?<sup>70</sup>

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69 In metaphysics, speech ‘precedes’ space and therefore is able to ‘control’ it. Writing, with the ambiguity of its dangerous spatiality, is cast out to the subordinate exterior. When Bachofen sited the form of letter writing at the hearth of the Asiatic queens (see Chapter 2 of this text), he implied that the inferiority of the text was not merely resigned to the subordination of its exteriority but was fundamentally ‘found’ at the hearth.

70 Heidegger, ‘On the Question of Being’, p. 304.

However, speech does not occupy interiority as it were, by merely *not* falling into the exteriority of space. This might indicate that speech operated as a negation – as merely what is not spatial. The privileged interiority of speech is contingent on an absence of space and as such, is that which is without space.<sup>71</sup> Mark Wigley proposes:

The exclusion and subordination of space produces an orderly façade, or, rather the façade of order to mask an internal disorder. The traditional anxiety about space marks a forbidden desire that threatens to collapse the edifice of philosophy from within.<sup>72</sup>

Space, however, is essentially not just the receptacle of inscriptions, as in Derridian terms writing does not have a site, but the specificity of sites and locales are an effect of what is written therefore the spatial is an effect of the event of ongoing inscription and is perhaps more appropriately defined as spacing.

The term *spacing* is used by Derrida to identify the event of speech fissured by space and rather than instigate a mere reversal of an existing tradition, seeks to connote that tradition in some sense, while also carrying senses which cannot be recognised by that tradition and are therefore exterior to it. Wigley makes the point that space is not merely a negation or misfortune that befalls the purity of the *logos* (the pure voice sought by philosophy), but suggests that it is its very possibility. He argues: ‘There can be no voice, let alone the philosophical desire for such

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71 In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida argues: ‘Spacing is the impossibility for identity to be closed on itself, on the inside of its proper interiority, or on its coincidence with itself. The irreducibility of spacing is the irreducibility of the other’ (p. 27).

72 Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 71.

a voice, with out the spatiality that appears to contaminate it.’<sup>73</sup>

Spacing, then, is conceived not as a pure presence but is in effect, an operation or manoeuvre – an event of interval which functions as a *no-thing* articulating the impossibility for an identity to be closed in on itself. It is no longer recognised as *space* but rather a becoming *space* of that which traditionally was meant to be without space (presence, speech, spirit, ideas, etc.) and as such, opens up in the sense of fissuring an established structure by the division or complication of its limits, but also in the sense of producing space itself as an opening in the tradition.<sup>74</sup>

Marianne Brouwer says of Matta-Clark:

[he] does not undo a building, he undoes the architectural analogy that is contained within it. In fact he describes his first cuts as ‘extractions’. Words are removed from the edifice of language in a movement that works its way through the building as if it were carefully removing its *semantic* backbone.<sup>75</sup>

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73 Ibid., p. 70.

74 In *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger states: ‘The Greeks had no word for “space”. This is no accident; for they experienced the spatial on the basis not of extension but of place (*topos*); they experienced it as *chôra*, which signifies neither place nor space but that which is occupied by what stands there’ (p. 66).

75 Added emphasis. Brouwer, ‘Laying Bare’, p. 363



Derrida argues that Heidegger, by employing the metaphors that surround the house (*dwelling, enclosure, shelter, abode, lodging, proximity* and *neighbourhood*), remains constrained within the metaphysical edifice, and his extensive use of the thematic of the house remains an organising principle that fails in its attempts to dismantle.<sup>76</sup>

His advocacy of the imperative to return to a primal shelter (*dwelling*) as a means of taking refuge from the modern/technological age of the consummation of nihilism and its generalised sense of homelessness, remains trapped in the a priori pre-fix of a site of unmediated presence and therefore the secure, interiority of logocentrism.<sup>77</sup>

Heidegger's determination towards authenticity through language is found at its most specifically architectural in 'Building Dwelling Thinking'. He poses two questions in the introduction, which remain pertinent to any discussion of his proposition that 'language is the house of *Being*'. His first question – What is it to dwell? – is further qualified by a second: how does building *belong* to dwelling? It is crucial to bear in mind here that dwelling remains the essential a priori term and, as such, locates it at the heart of Heidegger's discussion of *being*. However, in seeking to explore the fundamental relation of these terms,

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76 Heidegger's understanding of *familiarity* and *propriety* stem from the link/root between the Greek terms *oikos* (household) and *oikeios* (proper) and are bound together in a consistent thematic trajectory, which is linked to the concept of appropriation. Wigley argues: 'Language is a house because it is a mode of appropriation whereby thought recovers presence in the face of alienating representation. It is a house because it appropriates making proper by excluding representation and establishing a *proximity to presence*' (p. 102).

77 Heidegger argues in 'Building Dwelling Thinking', that: 'Man acts as though *he* were the shaper and master of language, while in fact *language* remains the master of man. Perhaps it is before all else man's subversion of *this* relation of dominance that drives his nature into alienation' (p. 146).

Heidegger looked to the German word *bauen* (to build) to find what he described as a covert trace of an appropriate meaning for 'to dwell' and in citing such a spectrality focused on an intrinsic haunting of language in as far as something is 'not said', as a means by which one might explore the lingual edifice.<sup>78</sup>

In the activity of dwelling, Heidegger 'heard' *bis* (to be) but in so doing distinguished between the 'active' and 'authentic' verb and the notion of dwelling as a mere 'act of inactivity'. Similarly, he noted the distinction between an understanding of 'building' as construction and also as what he defined as a 'not-making' and by which he meant a nurturing and preserving.

In this sense *house* is the metaphor that precedes metaphor by determining the condition of what is proper and which remains detached from the 'inferior' metaphorical – the presence (interior) of the *proper* excluding the metaphorical exterior. For Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit*, anxiety was one manifestation of *Dasein's* concern for the familial while lost in the *they* (*das Man*) of inauthentic *Being*. It was also the realisation of what he referred to as 'authentic care' (*Sorge*) as that which made manifest the uncertainty of *Dasein's* possibilities of 'being-in-the-world'. Therefore, *Dasein's* fall into the 'they-ness' of concerned

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78 The essence of Heidegger's argument is centred on finding in the Old English/High German word for building (*buan*) the meaning *to dwell, to remain, to stay in a place*. Although he argues that its 'true' meaning is now lost, a trace of it is preserved in the German word *Nachbar* – neighbour (Old English: *neahgebur*, meaning near-dweller). In *Nachbar* and *nachgebauer* Heidegger heard both *near* (*nach*) and *bar* and *bauer* (*dweller*) and the latter words stem from *huri, buren, beuren* and *beuron*, signifying *dwelling, the abode or the place of dwelling*. 'The old word *bauen*, which says that man *is* insofar as he *dwells*, this word *bauen* however also means at the same time to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine' ('Building Dwelling Thinking', p. 147).

familiarity, was a flight from the 'authenticity of all real possibilities and as such cut *Dasein* off from an authentic world experience and the abyss of possibilities which always threatened *Dasein*'s self-certainty.

Edward S. Casey in *The Fate of Place* argues that later analysis of *the uncanny* (*das Unheimlich*) continues to explore what he refers to as the loss of 'home-world' via the form of *Dasein*'s ineluctable 'not-being-at-home' (*un-heimlich*) in the world. He goes on to propose that the *unheimlich* is not only *nothing* (by which he means nothing substantial in the Heideggarian manner of *zuhanden* (present-at-hand) or *vorhanden* (ready-to-hand)) but *nowhere*.<sup>79</sup> As such it represents what Casey defines as a 'radical absence' without the particularity of the placial or regionality and invokes a sense of anxiety through atopia.

*Dasein*'s defensive and reactive flight from nowhere and nothing seems provisionally to be one towards what Casey understands as concern and, more importantly, absorption with other entities. However, in this rush to assimilate and, more significantly, to be assimilated, what arguably *Dasein* misses is that which grounds both anxiety and the *unheimlich* – the world – and therefore its own authentic 'being-in-the-world'. *Dasein*'s (and Heidegger's) ontic manoeuvre was to flee into the *gemütlich*<sup>80</sup> of what might be described as a familial practicality (*zuhanden* and *vorhanden*) and demands a question of Heidegger as to whether he persistently held back from a confrontation with the abysmal in favour of absorption in the familial.

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79 In *The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche states: 'Man would sooner have the void for his purpose than be void of purpose.'

80 As previously mentioned, this translates from German as *snugly*, *comfortable*, *cosy*, *homelike* or *homely*.

*Dwelling*, for Heidegger, remained the most proximal *essence* of man; as he stated in 'Building Dwelling Thinking': 'building is not merely a means and a way toward dwelling – to build is in itself already to dwell'.<sup>81</sup>

In *Sein und Zeit*, he attempted to tackle the oppositional difficulty of the metaphysical strategy of interior/exterior by working on the density of the placial and its relationship with the more overtly shapelessness of regionality, while attempting to avoid falling into the trap of understanding the spatial as pure homogeneous exteriority. In the sense of *spatium* and *extensio*,<sup>82</sup> specific places became the foci or indicators of wider, shared parts of an environing world understood as a pre-given, public regionality so that what we might call regional emplacement proposed an unmetric and temporal involvement between closeness and distance.

Deleuze indicates that such points of view do not contradict any notion of the continuous but argues that Leibniz defined *extensio* as continuous repelation of *situs* or position (understood as 'point of view') bearing in mind that *extensio* was an attribute of that point of view but one of *spatium*, an order of distances *between* points of view makes repetition possible.<sup>83</sup>

In 'Building Dwelling Thinking' Heidegger cited the precedent of *spatium* as an 'an intervening space or interval' whereby such an interval and its dimensional

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81 Heidegger, 'Building Dwelling Thinking', p. 146.

82 We may wish to consider the parallels between *spatium* and *extensio* and place and region in Heideggerian thought; particularly with regard to what has already been discussed in Chapter 1 of this text.

83 'When inclusion is accomplished, it is done so continuously, or includes the sense of a finished act that is neither the site, the place or the point of view, but remains in point of view, what occupies point of view and without which point of view would not be' (Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 22).

characteristics (which were no longer distinguishable through what Heidegger termed *nearness* and *dis-tance*) reduced spatial interventions to measurable distances – what he referred to as mere position and which meant that as such, were potentially replaceable by any other mere marker. This reduction to dimensionality allowed for the abstraction of ‘interval’ into the manifold dimensions of height, breadth and depth and which determined the expression of the spatial as no longer through the provision of proximity (*nearness* and *dis-stance*), but through the evolution of *extensio*. This is further abstracted into what he terms ‘analytic-algebraic relations’, which made room for the manifold of mathematical constructions based on arbitrary dimensions and which could be understood as one space but without the specificity of a location.<sup>84</sup>

Heidegger indicated that such locations while providing the space for *spatium* and *extensio* maintained the predilection that as essentially universal and therefore transcendent, in that they were arbitrary and therefore applicable to anything, they could not be the ground for the specifics of the proximal density of a particular location.

Like Heidegger, Deleuze understood *spatium* as the primal groundless space from which issued all dimensional and representable space (*extensio*) with its identifiable coordinates of height, width and depth. However, in *Difference and Repetition* he distinguished *spatium* as essentially an implicate space in that it traits common to a metastable substance. If we recall from Chapter 1 of this

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84 In *Bunker Archaeology*, Paul Virilio notes: ‘Historically, if the *reduction* of obstacles and distances has always been the central problem of military space, we have reached today **the rupture point**: the distinction between vehicle and projectile has ceased’ (p. 18, added emphasis).

text, a metastable substance has enfolded (*implicated*) into itself its capacity for difference in itself and from which is unfolded (*explicated*) in *extensio* the specificity of individuation.

He argued that the space we perceive is that of *extension* in that as the faculties fall under the regulation of common sense, a passive synthesis of the *spatium* is performed and whose existence can only be revealed through the transcendental analysis of the ground – *an ungrund*.

The categorisation we perceive in the specific examples of matter and form, individual and environment, species and individual are essentially products of individuation and, as such, are the masks in which pre-individuation, articulated by Deleuze as the metastable differences appear to us.

The ground [*fond*] as it appears in a homogeneous extensity is notably a projection of something 'deeper' (*profound*): only the latter may be called *ungrund* or groundless.<sup>85</sup>

The passage from metastable (*spatium*) to stable (*extensio*) is made manifest in the implicate difference as energised intensity and which is explicated in the specificity of qualities and quantities.

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85 Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 229.

However, this resists any determination to indicate such intensity as a mere physical force but as a dimension of the idea<sup>86</sup> in that (within the idea) it causes virtuality to pass into actuality. Deleuze made clear that this causal change of the virtual into the actual must not be confused with the application of a scientific concept, as it remains essentially a transcendental principle that enfolds from the implicate energy of the *spatium* and *not* in the explication of the *extensio* – whereas the scientific principle as empirical energy resides only in the ‘commonsense’ of explicated *extensio*.

Heidegger, in ‘On the Question of Being’, quoted Nietzsche from his posthumously published notes, *The Will to Power*, in describing nihilism as ‘this most uncanny of all guests’ because when manifest as ‘unconditional will to will’, it ‘willed’ homelessness; was not in itself ‘diseased’ but as what he described ‘corporeally’, as a ‘cancer-causing agent’, made ‘visible through its agency’.<sup>87</sup> For Derrida, the outside of the house continues to be organised by the house’s logic and so therefore remains in some way inside. In this sense the *other*, in being placed outside, is domesticated and therefore kept ‘inside’.

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86 Deleuze argues that the idea (of which intensity is a dimension) has three dimensions:  
 (i) Singular points embodied in quantities/parts.  
 (ii) Relations between singular points embodied in qualities/species characteristics.  
 (iii) Intensities which effect the spatio-temporal actualisation of singular points and their relations.

*Intensity* is that which the faculty of sensibility (the five senses) can alone experience and although the ‘idea’ is not associated with any particular faculty, it provokes each into what Deleuze describes as ‘disjunctive functioning’, which communicates a kind of violence from faculty to faculty. Intensity is identified by Deleuze as the simulacrum (the true character or form of that which *is*), which, possessing no identity of its own appears by disguising itself.

87 Heidegger, ‘On the Question of Being’, p. 292.

In *Margins of Philosophy*, Derrida provides a warning against the appropriation of shelter and the hestial as the foundation of any notion of spatiality:

To attempt an exit and a deconstruction without changing the terrain, by repeating what is implicit in the founding concepts and the original problematic, by using against the edifice the instruments or stones available in the house, that is, equally, in language. Here one risks ceaselessly confirming, consolidating, relifting [*relever*], at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs. The continuous process of making explicit, moving toward an opening, risks sinking into the *autism* of the closure.<sup>88</sup>

The subversion of the a priori of interior/presence over exterior/representation does not take place by the usurpation of one over the other but by the implication that exteriority as representation structures the interior as an effect of that representation. In a sense, the house is the metaphor that precedes metaphor by determining the condition of the proper, which remains detached from the inferior metaphorical. This is interpreted as the interior presence of the proper operating as that, which excludes and negates the metaphorical exterior. Such would be this condition of violence that is implicated in the positing of the architectural edifice as not only the figuration of a mechanism of control but also the conditional arbiter of how order might be determined.

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88 Added emphasis. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy* ('The Ends of Man'), p. 130. Wigley argues in *The Architecture of Deconstruction* that, 'language is a house because it is a mode of appropriation whereby thought recovers presence in the face of alienating representation. It is a house because it appropriates, making proper by excluding representation and establishing a "proximity" to presence' (p. 102). I am also reminded here of what has been earlier remarked about a 'change in terrain' requiring a 'new language'. See earlier references to Heidegger, Jünger and Bachofen.



It sets a tone for the interpretation of the metaphysical edifice in thought which, having been built on violence of repression, can only be indicative of another kind of violence through the posture of a visceral intervention as the means by which the structure can be undermined and reconfigured.

When Derrida, in 'Violence and Metaphysics', questions the continuity of the thinking of Heideggerian *being* and Husserlian phenomenality, he does so via the process of dismantling and dispossession that he indicates is proffered by the work of Levinas.<sup>89</sup> Derrida argues that what he defines as Levinas's eschatology is never literal, but is:

a question of designating a space or hollow within naked experience where this eschatology can be understood and resonate. This hollow space is not an opening among others. It is opening itself, the opening of opening, that which can be enclosed within no category or totality that is everything within experience which can no longer be described by traditional concepts and which resists every philosopheme.<sup>90</sup>

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89 Derrida also suggests in 'Violence and Metaphysics' that the security of the Greco-European tradition is a knowledge that is neither 'habitual or comfortable but permits us to experience torment or distress in general' (p. 82).

90 Ibid., p. 83. *Eschatology* is defined as the doctrine of death, judgement or heaven and hell. A *philosopheme* is a philosophical proposition, doctrine or principle of reasoning.

The method and process by which a building/edifice is provisionally realised is generally understood through the preliminary organisation of an architectural plan which ordinarily takes the form of a drawing or sketch.<sup>91</sup>

The word *sketch* can be translated into German as either *Riss* or *Grundriss*, but it remains pertinent to consider that the dictionary definition of both these nouns not only means a *sketch, ground plan* or *design*, but also a *tear, laceration, gap* or *outline*.

Heidegger in his text of 1936, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', exploited this double connotation of *Grundriss* as both *plan* or *design* and *crack* or *tear* to define the difference he believed inherent in the art work, between the *revealing* of world and the *concealing* of earth. For him, truth establishes itself in the work of art as the strife between what he referred to as 'clearing' and 'concealing' – the opposition of world and earth, but significantly indicated that: 'This rift does not let opponents break apart; it brings what opposes measure and boundary in its common outline.' Later in the same text, he stated: 'The rift must set itself back into the gravity of stone, the mute hardness of wood, the dark glow of colours.'<sup>92</sup>

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91 The significance of drawing as a means of remembering should not be lost here. Derrida's *Memoirs of the Blind* reminds us that the origin of graphic representation was supposedly inaugurated in antiquity by a young Corinthian woman, Butades, who, faced with long-term separation from her lover, notices on the wall his shadow thrown by the lamplight and, inspired by love and a fear of his withdrawal from her sight, traces the outline. Derrida notes, 'the narrative relates the origin of graphic representation to the absence or invisibility of the model. Butades does not see her lover either because she turns her back on him ... or because he turns his back to her ... it is as if seeing were forbidden in order to draw, as if one drew only on the condition of not seeing', p. 49.

92 Both quotes from Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art' (published in *Basic Writings*), pp. 139–212. Heidegger later states: 'This rift does not let opponents break-apart, it brings what opposes measure and boundary into its common ground' (p. 188).

The work of art is disclosed, for Heidegger, in the necessary two-fold (double) operation/manoeuvre of *world revealing* and *earth concealment* and is not a cleft ripped open, but a carrying of opponents into unity by virtue of their common ground. What is integral to this mapping (here I use the term advisedly and with reference to what has already been said about the sketch as both plan/map or tear/gap), is that the rift of locale not only operates as that which separates world and earth, but also that which holds them together while maintaining their distinctiveness – the orientation of their essential difference. For Heidegger, the revelation of worldliness can only take place in the work of art if the materiality (its *thingliness*) of the work is maintained in its obscurity, its resistance to the pervasive realisation or grasp of it as mere material and therefore the understanding of the imperative of that resistance, is the essential role of the artist in the realisation of any art work.

Any attempt to qualify or quantify materiality by scientific means continually founders in materiality's resistance to be understood in those terms – it reveals nothing of its essential nature if, as Heidegger argued, its essential nature is to obfuscate. However, there remains in Heidegger's interpretation of the relation between worldliness and materiality in the artwork, a very specific directionality which continued to conform to the already indicated arbitration of order found in the architectural model. Essentially, earth imposes itself upon world, and this verticality can only move in one direction.

There is no mechanism in Heidegger's thinking whereby the inversion of such an operation; where worldliness might impose itself on materiality and with this in mind, the parallels with the already identified hierarchy of metaphysical order are self evident.<sup>93</sup> The essential double operation at work in any true art work was, for Heidegger, the reconfiguration of the previously stable dialectic of pure presence over its negation as pure absence, which also introduced a further complication that was made manifest in the inherent phonetic concealment implicit in materiality.<sup>94</sup> The ability of the true artist was not only to recognise this resistance as essential to how materiality must operate in the realisation of the artwork, but in making a virtue of such stubbornness, identify worldliness as the model for articulating the appropriate circumstances (the spacing) whereby it must be allowed to 'be itself'.

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93 Heidegger argues that the Greek temple as an architectural edifice made visible the ground on which it stood and, as such, 'produced' the site through the constitution of a 'ground' by what appeared to be added to it. He states: 'To locate the ground is therefore to construct an edifice' ('The Origin of the Work of Art', p. 61). His appropriation of the temple was significant for two reasons; firstly as a historical precedent which cited the particularity of its Greek context as fundamental to any understanding of *Grund* ('ground') and *Abgrund* ('abyss'), and secondly, as an attempt to reconfigure the metaphor of the implicit verticality of the edifice as a metaphysical framing device. Edward S. Casey determines from Heidegger's use of the temple metaphor that it encloses and conceals the figure of the god and as such, makes the god *present*. It also gathers to it the unity of paths shaping the destiny of the human being (by this he means the paths of birth, death, disaster and blessing, disgrace and endurance). The 'building's rest' draws up the obscurity of the bulky spontaneous support of the rock on which it rests, and therefore illuminates and draws attention to its surroundings in which, for Heidegger, man bases his dwelling.

94 As already indicated, Heidegger used a phonetic term to describe the appropriate resistance of materiality in the artwork by describing the 'mute hardness of wood'. This has a strong resonance with what has been already articulated regarding silence and the poetic in the previous chapter and may enlighten further Heidegger's determination and insistence towards silence.

Heidegger also argued: 'The founding of truth by art, which is exemplified by a building, becomes the establishment of the *unfamiliar* rather than the *familiar*.'<sup>95</sup>

The Freudian trope of the uncanny/unheimlich articulates this doubling through interval and as pointed out by Pamela M. Lee in *Object to be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark*:

The sensation of unease founded upon the doubled, shifting implications of the German *heimlich* and *unheimlich* – at once *native, belonging to the home* and shaded by an almost palpable feeling of dread – the *uncanny* is freighted with both *architectural* and *spatial* implications.<sup>96</sup>

The contention that the *unheimlich* functions as the interval that distinguishes 'at-home' from 'not-at-home', draws attention to the possibility of familiarity effacing the possibilities of what is essentially unfamiliar. Freud, in his essay 'The Uncanny', also drew attention to this as a potential for spatiality. The *unheimlich/uncanny* can be identified by its capacity for dislocation motivated by an inherent and persistent lack of orientation at work within it. This capacity for disorientation may well conceal a more destructive repression operating within the architectural 'model' as that which conditions through violence.<sup>97</sup>

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95 Added emphasis. Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p. 65. In *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, Mark Wigley suggests that the *unfamiliar*, as is indicated by Heidegger in 'The Origin of the Work of Art', is the overflowing of the *familiar*. The *familiar* institution of philosophy seeks to efface any *unfamiliarity* and in so doing, block out any possibilities.

96 Added emphasis. Lee, *Object to be Destroyed*, pp. 8–9.

97 Orientation and the labyrinthine will be considered in greater depth in Chapter 4 of this text.

As already indicated, the concealment by which the metaphor of architectural figuration veils the characteristic universalising of the metaphysical project under the auspice of a revelation of pre-determined order, essentially represses through violence and deceives through subterfuge. Mark Wigley argues:

The tradition of metaphysics institutes itself by concealing its own violence. The architectural figure of the grounded structure sustains this violence by affecting concealment. The vertical hierarchy it configures is a mechanism of control that dissimulates its own strategic violence. Its familiarity marks the extent of its control.<sup>98</sup>

Violence begetting violence calls into question firstly the integrity of that which comes first – is in a sense a priori – in that the repressive nature of metaphysics brings upon itself the visceration of discontinuity through its own determination to repress by subterfuge.<sup>99</sup> Secondly, that which refutes assimilation does so through the violence of a determined resistance and, as such, could well be placed in advance of any notion of the imposition of a pre-existing order.

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98 Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 60. In his foreword to *The Wolf Man's Magic Word* ('Fors'), Derrida determines that 'the crypt itself is *built* by violence' (p. xv).

99 In the text 'Sanctum and Sacrum', Bachofen states: 'A guilty man's chains are removed after he has undergone punishment, those of a man whose innocence has been established are cut through with a file. What has been fastened by violence must be loosed by counter violence' (p. 42).

Heidegger argued in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*:

We are taking the strange, the uncanny <das unheimliche>, as that which casts us out of the 'homely', i.e. the customary, familiar, secure. The unhomely <Unheimliche> prevents us from making ourselves at home and therein it is overpowering. But man is the strangest of all, not only because he passes his life amid the strange understood in this sense, but because he departs from his customary, familiar limits, because he is *the violent one*, who, tending toward the strange in the sense of the overpowering, surpasses the limit of the familiar <das Heimliche>. <sup>100</sup>

The ambiguity of this double invocation of over-powerment with particular reference to a conduct of violence inherent in the surpassing of any recognised limit of familiarity, further complicates any interpretation of violence as either merely the suppressing of exteriority or the eruption of an outside at the site of the hestial. Heidegger determined that the terror of such over-powerment was found in the compelling panic of true fear – 'a silent awe that vibrates with its own rhythm'. <sup>101</sup> Also it meant powerful in the sense of an individual who 'uses' power and whereby it insists (through the disposition of that power) through action but also as a condition of *being-there (Dasein)*.

As such, there is an implication that the *unheimlich* property of architectonics operates as consistent characteristic of the model, but through the alteric deviance

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100 Added emphasis. Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, pp 150–1. Earlier in the text Heidegger quotes from Sophocles' *Antigone* (lines 332–75) but highlights the first two lines: 'There is much that is strange, but nothing that surpasses man in strangeness.' *Man*, for Heidegger (and therefore his interpretation of Greek thinking), is *deinotaton* – the strangeness that transgresses the contending separation of *being* (by which is meant the ontological difference).

101 Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 149.

of a kind of ontological subterfuge it appears to function as a kind of invisible topological invariant.

If we understand topology as the branch of mathematical geometry generally understood to be the study of invariant or permanent characteristics or ‘thingly’ properties within the continuous surface of a shape or form, we might begin to find in a kind of spectrality that is contemporaneous with the scientific. These invariant characteristics are studied in the sense that the connectedness of any continuous surface allows for the distortion of that surface without disconnecting what is already connected or connecting what was previously unconnected. Such characteristics operate as *punctum* within the language of the event of mapping of a surface and through their invariant status within the continuity of that surface, persist and survive any distortion.

A topology of the other may then be provisionally interpreted as the study of characteristics or properties of the architectural surface that are pertinent to, and map the edifice, yet remain other to it – outside of it, yet integral to it. In the section entitled ‘Taking Shelter in the Uncanny’ in *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, Mark Wigley states:

For Derrida, the ‘outside’ of a house continues to be organised by the logic of the house and so actually remains inside it. By being placed outside the ‘other’ is placed, domesticated, kept inside.<sup>102</sup>

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102 Ibid., p. 107.



I would like to suggest that the complication of this topology is that the clarity of a binary opposition of clearly defined metaphysical distinctions between interior (*presence*) and exterior (*absence*), the hestial (*domestic*) and the hermetic (*nomadic*), and the exclusivity or a priori of metaphysical presence as an a priori, is usurped and complicated by an alteric operation.

### THE ENCYST-ENCE OF THE NON-UMENT<sup>103</sup>

The fantasy involves eating the object (through the mouth or otherwise) in order *not* to introject it, in order to vomit it, in a way, into the inside, into the pocket of a cyst.<sup>104</sup>

In an early project like *Time Well/Cherry Tree* (1971),<sup>105</sup> Matta-Clark's 'act of liberation' demonstrated a paradoxical approach to the buildings ostensible support through what the artist described as a 'permanent non-structural sub-basement burial'.<sup>106</sup> In excavating beneath the edifice, Matta-Clark's subtending conveyed the foundational as

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103 The term *non-ument* is borrowed from Judith Russi Kirshner's essay 'Non-uments', published in the Serpentine Gallery catalogue, *Gordon Matta-Clark*, 1993, pp. 365–8.

104 See footnote 45 of this chapter.

105 *Time Well* was begun on New Years Day 1971 and was originally entitled *Cherry Tree*. The work involved the planting of a cherry tree sapling in a hole excavated in the floor of 112 Greene Street, New York. Measuring 8ft long by 4ft wide and 6ft deep, it allowed only the crown of the tree to remain visible, resulting in a failure to take root and the sapling's demise after three months in the dark, airless environment. It was latterly replaced by mushrooms and finally, after six months, its 'presence' was memorialised by *Time Well*, whereby a ceramic pipe was placed in the now vacant hole in which was housed a bottle in which the remains of the original tree had been placed. The pipe was 'crowned' by a 1ft square zinc well cover, set in concrete and the remaining cavity was filled, while the original cavity was delineated by the pouring of molten lead into the expansion joint of the concrete slab.

106 Gordon Matta-Clark, notebook and cited in Serpentine catalogue, p. 369.

essentially a virtual absence represented through the figure of the *hole*.

The impossibility of such an enterprise is instructive because it indicated that what in a sense 'held up' 112 Greene Street, could neither be contained or articulated by the integrity of architectonics but was conditioned, as Pamela M. Lee points out, 'by something deeply inaccessible, *offsite* even'.<sup>107</sup>

Matta-Clark said of the project:

I dug a deep hole in the basement of 112 Greene Street. What I wanted to do I didn't accomplish at all, which was digging deep enough into the foundations so that a person could see the actual foundations, the 'removed' spaces under the foundation, and liberate the building's enormous compressive, confining forces simply by making a hole.

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107 Lee, *Object to be Destroyed*, p. 67.



8

This operation, which I now proffer as a manoeuvre of spacing, not only includes what is historically recognised as subordinate exteriority – an inferior absence encrypted in the ordered house of a proper unmediated metaphysical presence – it also maintains it in its detachment – the alien retained within the corporeal edifice as a kind of operation of parasitic introjection now interpreted as *encyst-ence* through the eventuation of symbiotic morselation. As Mark Wigley states in *The Architecture of Deconstruction*:

Metaphysics is that which subordinates space, associating it with 'death', 'decay', 'degeneration', 'representation', 'dissimulation', 'interruption', 'seduction', 'materiality', 'sensuality', 'monstrosity' and so on.<sup>108</sup>

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108 Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 68.

The project entitled *Descending Steps for Batan* was a work by Matta-Clark and realised in the Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris 1977. Matta-Clark was one of twins (Matta-Clark was the elder by five minutes). His younger brother Sebastian (known as Batan), who had a history of depression, had apparently committed suicide by jumping from the window of Matta-Clark's studio in New York the previous year. Their mother, Anne Albert (née Clark), interviewed in October 1980 said of Batan:

From the age of 4 he was constantly drawing. There was never any doubt about what he would do. Gordon would tell stories and make sounds and Batan would draw and illustrate them. I think Gordon was set back by Batan. Batan felt superior about his art, and Gordon had to overcome that.<sup>109</sup>

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109 Taken from an interview conducted by Richard Armstrong and published in the Serpentine Gallery catalogue, p. 393. On a biographical note, Derrida comments in his text *Memoirs of the Blind* that he suffered from a 'wounded jealousy before an older brother whom I admired, as did everyone around him, for his talent as a draftsman ... His works, I must say in all fraternity, were merely *copies*: often portraits done in black pencil or India ink that reproduced family photographs ... or pictures reproduced in books.' And later in the same text: 'I suffered seeing my brother's drawings on permanent display, religiously framed on the walls of every room. I tried my hand at imitating his copies: a pitiable awkwardness confirmed for me the double certainty of having been punished, deprived and cheated, but also, and because of this even, secretly chosen.' He further remarks that: 'as if in place of drawing, which the blind man in me had renounce for life, I was called to another *trait*, this graphics of invisible words, this accord of time and voice that is called (the word) – or writing, scripture' (p. 37).



9

The twins' Father, the artist Roberto Matta, developed this analysis of their relationship in interviews conducted in January and February 1981. He said:

Batan couldn't articulate what he had. He always would tell things in a complicated way, never straight, always a circuitous route ... with twins you must divide affection equally between both. It is very difficult. We registered them as 'A' and 'B', then we gave them Kachina names – 'Xibal' and 'Numbac' or we called them the 'one' or the 'other', Batan was thin, very pretty, the fat one was 'Gordo'.<sup>110</sup>

Freud said of the phenomenon of the double,<sup>111</sup> or the twin, in the essay 'The Uncanny', that it originally begins as an insurance against the destruction of the ego – an energetic denial of the power of death, but that such ideas have sprung from:

[the] soil of unbounded self-love, from primary narcissism which dominates the mind of the child and of primitive man.

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110 Added emphasis. Roberto Matta interview published in Serpentine Gallery catalogue, 1993, pp. 395–6.

111 The significance of the double or twin resonates across not only this text but also the following chapter. The *phi-creatures/visitors* that appear in Tarkovsky's film (and Lem's novel) *Solaris* are simulacra drawn from the memories of the scientists on the space station orbiting the planet, and Mark Z. Danielewski explores the relationship between Will and Tom Navidson (also twins) in *The Navidson Record* strand of his novel *House of Leaves*.

But when this stage has been surmounted, the 'double' reverses its aspect. From having been an assurance of immortality, it becomes the uncanny harbinger of death.<sup>112</sup>

Pamela M. Lee in *Object to be Destroyed* described the excavation project, *Descending Steps for Batan*, thus:

Through the simple ritual of digging he [Matta-Clark] collapsed the work of art in the present with a figure who was now part of the past. In a place conventionally reserved for the new, a memorial to his brother was staged and was subsequently absorbed into the gallery.<sup>113</sup>

Here, the assured domesticity of the ordered architectural place of the gallery is called upon to include the alien via the object (by which I mean Matta-Clark's completed activity – the *non-ument* of his excavation) of mourning through an act of architectural ingestion. What persists as the phantom part of this inclusive event is an understanding that the incorporation of the memorial or *non-ument* in the structure of the gallery does not connote an act of absorption. The architectural body of the gallery finds what is inherent in the exclusive otherness of death impossible to assimilate and, as such, foreign to its own security. Wigley indicates that Derrida, in 'Limited Inc., abc ...', remarks:

The object is appropriated to keep it as other, as foreign, as a foreign body within one's own body, taken into the body precisely to stop it from contaminating and disfiguring the body by keeping it withdrawn in indefinite quarantine: retaining the

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112 Freud, 'The Uncanny', p. 357.

113 Lee, *Object to be Destroyed*, p. 207.

object within itself but as something excluded, as a foreign body which is impossible to assimilate and must be rejected.<sup>114</sup>

Coming at almost the end of Matta-Clark's working life, and just before his own death, *Descending Steps for Batan* was not as already indicated, an isolated event of memorial but had been preceded by a project with similar concerns and in particular, the cogency of the entropic (*Time Well/Cherry Tree*)<sup>115</sup>.

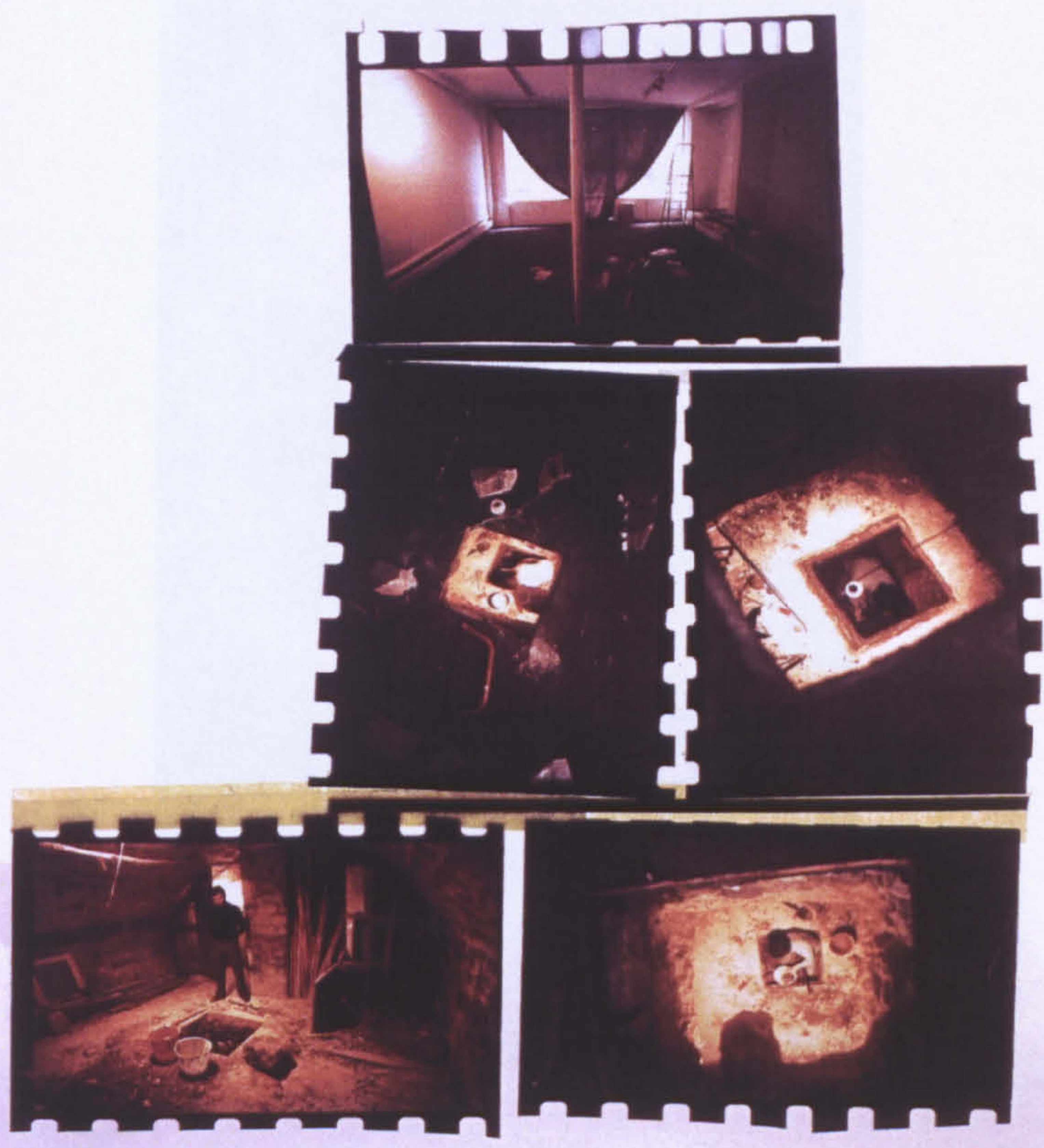
As the excavation of the gallery floor it followed the provisional trajectory of the earlier project, diverging only to reconsider the entropic integration of an entity, a 'something' secreted in the foundations of the building, in order to articulate the peculiarity of the void as the antithesis of stability and the principality of all that is explainable through reasonableness. Caution is noted here when considering the seeming inversion of the *foundational* with the abysmal by following Derrida's precept of *tracing* which draws attention to what he describes as 'the bottomless pit of failed chronologies'.

The project not only mirrors (possibly the term *inverts* is more appropriate) Matta-Clark's brother's precipitous fall from the studio window but in some way extends the trajectory of the body beyond its inevitable contact with the ground (the obdurate materiality of the telluric).

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114 Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 144, quoted from Derrida, 'Limited Inc., abc...' (& found in Derrida, *Limited Inc.*, trans. S. Weber, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press 1988. p.77).

115 Entropy as the measurement of energy in a mechanical or chemical system identifies a force which is significant because it remains unavailable for the performance of work but exists as the internal motion of the molecular. It is generally interpreted as a measure of loss of order or decay through degradation, and understood in thermodynamic terms, proffers at most, a kind of stasis which may be perceived as in some way increasing only through a cold or lethargic dissipation, which is understood as a progressive disintegration of form that is seemingly irreversible.



10



In excavating a stairwell the artist makes provision (or perhaps a post-preparation) for extending Batan's 'fall' beyond the 'ground' through the realisation of a tangible mechanism by which a fall might be averted (a set of stairs).<sup>116</sup> With this in mind, we might also consider that the introduction of any means of traversing from one level to another mediates for the possibility of such a perambulation operating in both directions.

Does the construction/excavation of a stairwell into the floor of Galerie Yvon Lambert, Paris in 1977 operate as

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116 Note here that the significance of the 'stairwell' extends into Mark Z. Danielewski's text *House of Leaves*, where it is the most significant element of the labyrinth which changes dimensions throughout the exploration. This will be considered more fully in Chapter 4 of this text. The form of the stair is also explored in a further project realised at *Documenta 6* in Kassel in Germany in 1977 by Matta-Clark: *Jacob's Ladder*\*.

\*Note here the fraternal rivalry and deception (of the younger brother at the expense of the elder) at the core of the biblical story of Jacob and Esau from which the story of *Jacob's Ladder* originates. In the Book of Genesis, Jacob dreams of a ladder while sleeping in the desert, on which angels ascend and descend\* and at the apex of which Jehovah expounds on Jacob's future as the 'father' of Israel. It is noted in the monograph, *Gordon Matta-Clark*, that: 'He chose *Jacob's Ladder* for its title, which calls on the Old Testament for an analogy not only to a striving for redemption but also a disastrous rivalry between brothers with one falling from grace of both his father and his god' (p. 106). The project was originally conceived as a five-armed rope structure strung between three smokestacks 300 feet high and 460 feet apart. Supporting steel cables stretching from the base of one stack to the apex of another enclosed a mesh which 'hovered' some 15 stories from the ground. However, practicalities prevailed and Matta-Clark settled for a single stack with a descending mesh which visitors were invited to climb down.

The section of *House of Leaves* where the relationship between Will and Tom Navidson is discussed is broken into sections (forming the configuration of a ladder) by the elongation of the word *rzz*. It is noted that the word *rzz* is etymologically rooted in the Hebrew word *yitrozzu* (meaning *to tear apart* and *to shatter*) in order to emphasise Jacob and Esau's struggle. Derrida comments in *Memoirs of the Blind*: 'How does one choose between two brothers? Between two twins, in sum, since Jacob was Esau's twin, even though he was born after him and his brother sold him his birthright (he "despised his birthright")'\*\*\* (p. 23). What we might recognise as the seeming assurance of a stairway as a means of safely traversing a 'verticality' is called into question in Danielewski's *House of Leaves* through a discontinuity of dimensionality based in psychological *spacing*.

\* *Ascent and Descent* will be discussed further in relation to *Descending Steps for Batan*.

\*\*\* Quoted by Derrida from the Book of Genesis, 25:34.

both a means of alleviating Batan's fall beyond the mere restrictions of corporeal contact and its inevitable consequences as well as offering a way out or a means by which he might return?

That the excavation is not merely a hole – an abysmal incursion into the floor of the gallery space, but significantly a means by which a 'some-body' might affect a traversal in either direction is pertinent to the reading of the work and extends the interpretation of Matta-Clark's transgressive events of visceration beyond that of a socio-political act against any prevailing system. However, the specificity of this particular work (its location) in a gallery rather than in Matta-Clark's preferred locations in derelict buildings should not be lost here. The fact that this work very deliberately and very literally undermines the mechanism by which artworks can be exhibited (the gallery) already implicates the project as an act of violence against a system by which artists and their work are organised and marketed. The work itself, though poses a problem for such a system in that it refuses to conform to the recognised parameters by which the private gallery system operates and funds itself.<sup>117</sup>

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117 It is noted here that Corinne Diserens, in 'The Greene Street Years' (published in the catalogue to the 1992–3 exhibition, *Gordon Matta-Clark*, and presented at the Serpentine Gallery), comments that: 'Matta-Clark tried to go along two roads – *ecstasy ascending or the mystic way, and ecstasy descending or the civic way* – in order to create his work for the city. *One might speak of a double transcendence*' (p. 360, added emphasis).

Let us consider for a moment that the work as an event – a performance by the artist that exists for a period of time (the process of its making *and* the duration of the exhibiting of the work) which cannot be commodified in the way that directly profits the gallery itself unless it is in some way transposed from pure event into a documented resource which falls in to line with the system which might profit from it.<sup>118</sup>

Not only would this act of violence stake a claim for it as a critique of the gallery's status as the arbiter of and temple to artistic endeavour, but also introduce an alteric non-element – the so-called *non-ument* into the preserve of conservation and aesthetic stability. As Pamela M. Lee points out in *Object to be Destroyed*: 'In a place conventionally reserved for the new, a memorial to his brother was staged and was subsequently absorbed into the space of the gallery.'<sup>119</sup>

The fact that the work existed within the specificity of a temporal framework should not exclude an interpretation which draws on further anomalies, by which its credibility as a memorial might be addressed outside that structure and

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118 It is noted here that all Matta-Clark's projects survive largely as documentation (there are some exceptions where fragments (what Robert Smithson would term *non-sites*) were retained and exhibited from particular interventions; sections of *Splitting* and *Bingo* (both 1974) were later shown in galleries), and therefore the means by which we can even begin to discuss his work is based in the intangibility of this kind of recollection. I also mention here two comparable works by Yves Klein (1958) and Michael Archer (1974). The former realised a piece entitled *The Void (Le Vide)*, which consisted of an empty exhibition space heralded by a private view at which guests imbibed blue-coloured cocktails (the result being that any 'evidence' of the exhibition was manifest in the colour of the urine of all who attended and drank and which remained blue for days afterwards). Archer's project involved the removal of a wall in the Claire Copley Gallery in Los Angeles which revealed the office space whereby the 'business aspect' of the gallery mechanism was exposed to the scrutiny of the audience.

119 Lee, *Object to be Destroyed*, p. 207.

with which undecidibilities might inform a reading of the project.

Matta-Clark's relationship with his brother must remain at the forefront of any interpretation of *Descending Steps for Batan* and the significance of the biological proximity of that relation (the knowledge that they were twins) appears to be crucial. As already stated, Batan was the younger of the two and, according to their mother, was the most conspicuously artistically talented as a child. A suggestion of sibling rivalry is perhaps not without some merit and the growing recognition of Matta-Clark's creative work against the evident historical eclipse of Batan's artistic aspirations may have some bearing on the latter's eventual suicide and his choice for the location of that successful attempt (the window of his brother's studio).<sup>120</sup>

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120 The issue of sibling rivalry is brought into sharp focus in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* and will be considered further in Chapter 4 of this text. Suffice to say that Danielewski explores the Navidson brothers' (Tom and Will) relationship with regard to the evolving complexity of the house and the subsequent explorations of its labyrinthine hallways. Both brothers are in some way literally ingested or swallowed by the house but only Will is 'vomited' back *out* into the world, as it were, whereas Tom is 'vomited' *into* the body of the house and is 'retained' by it. (The word house is continually printed in blue (a light grey in the paperback) and this formatting is never clearly explained. The implication is of some kind of hyperlink that may refer to the text's original publication on the net, but perhaps more significantly, as the text unfolds, it refers to the link of the house with the alteric labyrinth that emerges – what we might refer to as a *hyperlink to the unheimlich*.)

His early artistic precociousness identified by their mother was undermined by mental instability (and his elder brother's developing career), and therefore a literal interpretation of *Descending Steps for Batan* might infer some kind of fraternal exorcism on the part of the elder brother, while in some way simultaneously proffering a portal by which the spectral younger sibling might navigate to and from the abysmal.<sup>121</sup>

The particularity of Matta-Clark's entitling of the work *Descending* makes clear a directional imperative in the piece which does not necessarily imply some kind of concurrence with a decision which led towards the termination of life, but in its aftermath, an attempt to identify a conduit by which and for which that life might resonate.

The precariousness of the edifice/corporeal is brought into sharp focus when attention is drawn by this most dissective scrutiny to the formulations which underpin and, as such, are open to such violent transgressions on the understanding that the begetting of any formal architectonics (body or otherwise) must be forged in the violence of a kind of repression. That Matta-Clark's

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121 I would also like to note here a work by Matta-Clark realised in 1973 and entitled *Threshole-Bronx Floors: Double Doors*. This work consisted of a series of removals which opened up the cubicle-like interiors of urban domiciles that had formerly been sequestered from one another (specifically in this piece, the removal of the floor on either side of an interior door). Matta-Clark is quoted in the recently published monograph of his work as saying that these transgressive acts were: 'Completion through removal. Abstraction of surfaces. Not-building, not-to-build, not-built-space' (*Gordon Matta-Clark*, p. 58). Note here earlier remarks made about sibling rivalry as broached by Derrida in *Memoirs of the Blind*. In a letter of 5 July 1992 quoted by Corinne Diserens in her essay, 'The Greene Street Years', and sent to IVAM by Matta-Clark's former partner Carol Goodden, she comments: 'Gurdjieff was the philosopher he was enamored of. Duchamp was a silent force. Matta (father) was his psychological drive. *Batan was his guilt*' (p. 359, added emphasis).

subversive and almost guerrilla-like activities drew attention to the inconsistencies in a historical rhetoric of urban social architectural practice is concomitant with a wider challenge to the systemisation of the domicile to the advantage of corporative enterprise and at the expense of the particularity of individuation and need.<sup>122</sup>

Equally, a project like *Descending Steps for Batan* not only questions the status of the gallery space as an appropriate location for the viewing of the artwork, but also in some way draws attention to the social condition whereby mental instability might be considered and ingested (and not necessarily absorbed) into the social system. It also questions how such psychological criteria proffer a critique of the mechanisms for assimilation through the consistency of social exclusion and alienation.<sup>123</sup>

In interrupting the recognised order of the exhibition space, Matta-Clark not only addresses the issue of how that space functions and who it is for, but in excavating a memorial as an inscription of the void to commemorate the untimely demise of his younger brother, he also scrutinises the social imperative to locate mental illness.

The particularity of his own act of mourning implies a wider perception of the problematic demarcation of interiority and exteriority by not only identifying

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122 Paul Virilio notes in *Bunker Archaeology* the shift in military architecture from the geometric organisation of the landscape to the construction of subterranean excavations – fortified *non-uments*. He states: 'It was no longer in distance but rather in burial that the man of war found the parry to the onslaught of his adversary; retreat was now into the very thickness of the planet and no longer along its surface' (p. 38).

123 Michel Foucault in *Madness and Civilisation* makes the point that the eruption of skin diseases such as scabies, eczema or small pox 'put an end to a fit of madness; the corruption that left the *viscera* and the brain, to spread on the surface of the body, where it was released *externally*' (p. 164, added emphasis).

commemoration as the complication of the rational relation between presence and absence, but also through the conditional arbitration of mental illness as essentially alteric, and therefore sustained and maintained socially and geographically on the periphery of the organised state (the *polis*).

Matta-Clark's abysmal fenestrating encryption of the memory of his brother into the foundational determination of not only the literal structure of the gallery building but also into the metaphorical framework that the figure of the gallery implied (its social status as part of the wider organisation of the *polis*), introduced the commemoration of the crypt and its spectral articulation as an integral aspect of the phenomenon of architectonics. The key issues prevailing in much of Matta-Clark's oeuvre addressed the condition of a kind of wholesale social injustice which mediated the inherent violence complicit in the organised infrastructure and determination of social space by corporate bodies. As such, this violent repression of individuation in favour of the imposition of an interpretation of a common good through the hierarchical dispensation of predetermined order was ripe for critique.

Rather than set about demolishing these values, Matta-Clark's interventions set about to engage in an almost dissective scrutiny via the operation of the hand (the manoeuvre) that is perhaps less of an operative procedure to navigate the carnality of the *polis*, uncover the canker and remove it, but more a topological determination to draw attention to the parasitic cystitis as concomitant to that order as not merely determined by it but determinant to any ordering (its spectrality).

Through the articulation of a visceral event, Matta-Clark did not seek to uncover what is necessarily unknown in the sense of a fundamentally new discovery but rather to illuminate through a seemingly violent act what has perhaps been forgotten, repressed or merely dismissed as irrelevant. The opening up through the revelation of the cut can be seen as instructive, in that it reveals the skeletal organisation that determines structure at its optimum as a structure. However, I would propose that this manoeuvre is perhaps more complex than the fenestration of a membrane, which would merely lead to the observation of what lies beyond that perimeter.

A more appropriate term might perhaps draw on the inherent characteristics of both a rift, in the sense of a cut or rupture in the fabrication of an ordered edifice, a break in its continuity, and a fold, in the sense of a change or a ruck in what is continuous (an aleatory point or *fraenum*)<sup>124</sup> that is part of any continuity without merely being an absorbed into it – what I will cautiously term a *ructure*.

Matta-Clark's interventions do not encise to draw attention to an alterity that is merely transcendent in the

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124 A *fraenum* is a fold of mucous membrane or skin, especially under the tongue, checking the motion of an organ. The significance of this as a corporeal mechanism for articulation (speech) should not be lost here. I would also like to mention here the tympanum (as discussed in Derrida's essay 'Tympan', found in *Margins of Philosophy*) as the means by which sound resonates in the eardrum (via interaction with the hammer) as well as being intrinsic to balance. Its membranous structure functions as a kind of perimeter which allows sound to resonate off it so it can be heard. In a footnote in *Tympan*, Derrida states: 'The hammer, as is well known, belongs to the chain of small bones, along with the anvil and stirrup. It is placed on the *internal* surface of the tympanic membrane. It always has the role of mediation and communication: it transmits sonic vibrations to the chain of small bones, and then to the inner ear' (p. xiii). The paradox (as Derrida points out via Bichat) is that the hammer protects the tympanum while at the same time acting upon it – without it the tympanum could be damaged by the powerful vibrations set off by louder noises, so the hammer muffles and weakens while simultaneously transmitting sound.



sense of the revelation of what is essentially unattainable, but to recognise any corporeality as integral to the observation of what appears to be outside. This is not metaphysically exclusive, or understood as merely excluded, but inclusively exclusive understood as encryptive. It does not say that there is *other* that is always already *other* – an exclusive alterity beyond all predetermined remits, but that the *other* is always already ‘here’ (not in any sense of a presence and therefore *not* occupying any locale that might be understood as fundamentally topographic). It is encrypted into any architectonics as part of its determination to function as a structure without conforming to any structural motifs that might merely restrain it from what it can do. The ructure is neither just a hole in the sense of a rupture or a fold in the sense of a ruck.

The crypt in Derridian terms does not set about to bring mourning and the dead into the house, but to suggest that the event of mourning and the manifestation of the dead (the spectre) were always and already integral to the formation of the house and were not later appendages to be bolted on, as it were. As Mark Wigley states: ‘The effects of place and taking place depend on the *parasitic*<sup>125</sup> rules of the crypt, by which that which is officially expelled over the line is secretly appropriated in order to hold the line.’<sup>126</sup>

Matta-Clark’s removals (the parts of his interventions which became ‘non-sites’) do not just demolish but relocate,

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125 The parasitic occupier of the cyst suggests a further reading of the operation of *encyst-ence*. It is no longer mere ‘morbid matter’ but has the appearance of something far more sinister – the double manoeuvre of host and parasite engaged in an ‘alien symbiotic event’ of sustenance and introjection.

126 Added emphasis. Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction*, p. 184.

extending the plane of immanence of each project to encrypt themselves in other unexplored locations that articulate possibilities beyond the sum of their parts. That *Descending Steps for Batan* is in one sense a literal *non-ument* to commemorate the demise of his sibling should not necessarily be the exclusive interpretation of this project whose potential extends (as with all his projects) beyond the individual conglomerations of Matta-Clark's life. It not only says something about his memory, and is in some way the realisation of how that memory might function in corporeal terms, but demands scrutiny of a wider locale for the memorial – a question of *where* that event of commemoration might take place.

This might take the form (and I use this term cautiously, given that what is essentially taking place here is without form, in any historical recognition of the word) of what we might refer to as an *encyst-ence* and which we might define as the event of or the spacing of the ructure.<sup>127</sup> Here, the corporeality of the *cyst* provides a useful analogy with the encryptive dissection of Matta-Clark's various projects and interventions.

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127 *Encyst* is defined as the event of enclosure in a cyst.

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dead.<sup>10</sup>



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Mattia Clark's

11 • unheimlich

manoeuvre from the top of a non-ument via the duration  
of the cinematic form. They refuse linearity and narrative to  
explore stratification with all the implication and explication  
of temporality. Here the myriad pathways (Horzweg) of the  
labyrinthine thread stair way through the tomblike  
substructures of the homey, undermining the heath with the  
evaluation of death. The momentary aspect of Time

100 Of historical note here, the French revolutionary leader of the 1793 in Montegard factory, Jean Paul Marat (1743-93) hid in the sewers and  
sewers of Paris where he contracted the horrible skin disease which  
forced him to spend a great deal of time in a water bath to soothe the  
condition and in which he was murdered by the right-wing Girondin  
sympathiser, Charlotte Corday. The character Will Richardson in Mark  
Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* also suffers from a serious skin  
condition and in his excursions into the house, which unaccountably  
disappears (a 'curse') after his last excursion, he is  
missing brother John. On camera, he is seen to be what he refers to  
as 'his rotten feet'. As we can clearly see, the feet are puffy and in  
some places he had sores. Furthermore, all his toe nails are  
horribly crooked, distorted and yellow. 'Perforated.' 'Davidson  
[John] is 'by a daisy I guess I've decided with of doctors finally  
ended up calling it 'H-O-S-E.' Sitting by himself on the edge of the  
bed, blood-stained socks draped over the edge, he carefully spreads  
a shiny ointment around what he politely calls his 'right testicular toe.'  
(Mark Z. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 87).

The operation of spacing, as previously discussed, introjects a lingual reading of the artwork that significantly blurs any boundaries which might differentiate between a clear distinction of temporal and spatial motifs.<sup>128</sup>

By defining Matta-Clark's operations by the terms of the *unheimlich* manoeuvre as already indicated, we anticipate a complication which recognises the cystic as

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128 Note here the significance of the cyst and its parallel with the historical alteric rhetoric of the mandorla. This is the egg- or almond-shaped aureole (from the Italian, *mandel* for *almond*) around the figure of the resurrected Christ or the Virgin at assumption, and portrayed in many painterly representations to indicate their *otherness* once they have transcended earthly corporeality. However, they maintain a connection with humanity by retaining the outward appearance of the body and can be recognised as such. The mandorla indicates difference/separateness while simultaneously articulating similitude.

The significance of the almond is also found in Celan. John Felstiner comments in his text, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*, that: 'the oval-eyed sweet or bitter fruit had signalled Jewishness – his mother's or his people's' (p. 260). The significance is clearly indicted in the poem 'Mandorla' (1957):

In the almond-what stands in the almond?  
The Nothing.  
In the almond stands Nothing.  
There it stands and stands.

In Nothing-who stands there? The King.  
There stands the King, the King.  
There he stands and stands.

Jewish curls, no gray for you.

And your eye-where to stands your eye?  
Your eye stands opposite the almond.  
Your eye, the Nothing it stands opposite.  
It stands behind the King.  
So it stands and stands.

Human curls, no gray for you  
Empty almond, royal blue.\*

\* Felstiner notes that what stands in the almond is not mere *nothing* (*Nichts*) but *das Nichts* – *Nothingness* or 'the Nothing'. What is heard here is the paradox of emptiness and pure Being in Heidegger's question in *What is Metaphysics?* – 'How stands it with the Nothing?' He suggests that the Nothing here is the Nothing of God and for Celan, is transformed into an annihilated people (the Jews) and an unknowable God. He also notes that Celan's use of *Menschenlocke* (human curls) shifts the emphasis from specifically *Juden* (Jewish) to *Menschen* (human) as an attempt to work against the Nazis' racist split-off of the Jews from all humanity (*ibid.*, pp. 180–1). We may wish to remind ourselves here of earlier remarks made in Chapter 2 of this text, regarding Heidegger's humanism and the so-called 'agricultural remark'.

firstly, an event linked to the metaphor of corporeality and therefore its association with a structural integrity concomitant with the architectural that it also seeks to critique, and secondly, an appraisal of the encryptive as fundamental to the realisation of any operation. The ructure articulates an event or operation that is essentially one of continuity rather than fracture, and the integrity of any continuous surface (whether it be architectural or otherwise), remains a crucial to its determination. In carnal terms, that which is parasitic cannot function without the continuation of a symbiotic relationship with the host and, as such, the host is similarly dependent on that equality.

*Descending Steps for Batan* and *Time Well/Cherry Tree* offer a kind of temporal bracketing which punctuates Matta-Clark's artistic career and in some way locate that period in a larger cystic operation that encompasses the complete oeuvre. Matta-Clark's play with the seeming assurance of corporate and domestic determining is concomitant with our earlier definition of *unheimlich*, in that what makes the *unfamiliar* so strange is its very *familiarity*. The *cystic* relation (what I now term *encyst-ence*) is essentially parasitic and therefore symbiotic, and the *unheimlich* manoeuvre as the complication rather than the juxtaposition of familiarity with its other poses a series of questions about the nature of the ructure. In some way the introjection of the temporal as a guiding principle for any *unheimlich* operation would seem to be not only relevant but also significant.

The entropic condition of a work like *Time Well/Cherry Tree* literally motivates the work as a continuous activity (even seemingly once entombed in the basement of Greene

Street). The dissipation of its provisionally heightened energised status at the commencement of the work (the operation of the artist being the most identifiable manifestation), does not merely reduce to mere nothing but follows an entropic cipher that is intrinsic to the evolution of the work, which understands it as not completed by a kind of reduction of any visual record of the piece (see illustration) which demeans its process to merely a kind of cystic entombment of morbid matter as the closure of the project. This morselation as in some way incomplete indicated a further, perhaps uncharted trajectory, which may have been anticipated by Matta-Clark and he may have engaged with its entropic force in ways that earlier works like *Photo-fry* (1969)<sup>129</sup> had alluded to. *Descending Steps for Batan* made the seeming endlessness of the activity of mourning the explicit theme of the work largely by undermining the redemptive overtone of the memorial through the abysmal burrowing to nowhere.<sup>130</sup>

In the way that Paul Virilio suggests that the bunkers of the Atlantic Wall are the monuments to the decline and demise of the Nazi dream, whereby the military and political offensives were relinquished in favour of a strategic defence, so the coherence of the *non-ument* is not founded in the foundational which emphasises the prerogative of the

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129 Realised in 1969 as part of the exhibition, *Documentation*, and consisting of a performance by Matta-Clark who fried Polaroid photographs of a Christmas tree, culminating in frying pan and 'fried' photos staying in the gallery for the duration of the exhibition.

130 *Jacob's Ladder's* articulation of descent differed from *Descending Steps for Batan*, in that it provided a speculation on redemption which was questionably different from the encryptive *encyst-ence* of the latter as an alteric excavation of the gallery floor.

summit-base relationship, but in the balance of the centre of gravity.<sup>131</sup>

The function of this very special structure is to assure survival, to be a shelter for man in a critical period, the place where he buries himself to subsist. If it thus belongs to the crypt that prefigures resurrection, the bunker belongs too to the ark that saves, to the vehicle that puts one out of danger by crossing over mortal hazards.<sup>132</sup>

Throughout the years beginning with the entropic Greene Street projects until his untimely death in 1978, Matta-Clark made films and videos that highlighted what have been described as ‘his continual investigations into and obsessions with window and wall space, light, trees and the cities underground, always *thinking in three dimensions at once* and dealing with movement from dark to light, heaven to hell.’<sup>133</sup> Corinne Diserens comments that Matta-Clark’s film projects drew attention to actual duration as a means of eliminating the illusion of another form of duration realised via a more traditional notion of narrative exposition:

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131 Virilio argues in *Bunker Archaeology* that the substitution of concrete for the ‘discontinuous’ construction methods of bricks and mortar in the realisation of the bunker indicates that the structure ‘floats’ on the ground. ‘In concrete casting there are no intervals, joints – everything is compact; the uninterrupted pouring avoids to the utmost the repairs that would weaken the general cohesion of the work’ (p. 45).

132 Ibid., p. 46.

133 Diserens, ‘The Greene Street Years’, p. 360. (Italicised portion of the text is a direct quote from another interview with Jene Highstein, a colleague of Matta-Clark’s from the *Anarchitecture* group.)

The process of shooting became the structure of the film, the use of editing or montage being minimal ... The power of real time becomes paradoxically disorientating and bewildering. We have to orientate ourselves to what we already know.<sup>134</sup>

The two films, *Substrait* (1976) and *Sous-sol de Paris* (1977), set the precedent for Matta-Clark's subterranean cinematic perambulations as a negotiation of both resistance and mourning. As transgressive events that resist linear focus and narrative progression, they embrace the stratification of historical detritus and its cyclical horizontality by navigating the topological characteristics of the urban sub-structure, anticipating the labyrinthine as an architectonics of encryption.

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134 Added emphasis. Ibid., p. 360. In her essay 'Laying Bare', Marianne Brouwer discusses Matta-Clark's films: 'In his movies of the underground spaces of New York and Paris, Matta-Clark explores the subcity's excavated tunnel spaces: aqueducts, storm sewers and pumping stations, the Catacombs, the tracks of Grand Central Station and the foundations of the cathedral of St John the Divine ... Again and again, there are references to the "underground" ("the city's sexual underground") as sexually related to the house seen as "the body's shell as well as a metaphor for both body and psyche"' (p. 364).



In particular, Paris as the torsion of a locale of revolutionary urbanisation is presented as a *polis* determined by the catacomb where the foundational topos are the (com)plication of the lacuna by which the leakage of waste matter is directed away ('swept out'), and the flexure of the tomb, where lie the mortified remains of the long dead.<sup>135</sup>



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Matta-Clark's experiments with film develop the *unheimlich* manoeuvre from the topos of a non-ument via the duration of the cinematic form. They refute linearity and narrative to explore stratification with all the implication and explication of temporality. Here the myriad pathways (*Holzweg*) of the labyrinthine thread their way through the tomblike substructure of the homely, undermining the hestial with the eventuation of death. The momentary aspect of *Time*

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135 Of historical note here, the French revolutionary leader of the Montagnard faction, Jean Paul Marat (1743–93) hid in the cellars and sewers of Paris where he contracted the horrible skin disease which forced him to spend a great deal of time in a warm bath to soothe the condition and in which he was murdered by the right-wing Girondin sympathiser, Charlotte Corday. The character Will Navidson in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* also suffers from a serious skin condition prior to his excursions into the *house*, which unaccountably disappears (is 'cured') after his last exploration/search for his missing brother Tom. 'On camera, Navidson treats what he refers to as "his rotten feet". As we can clearly see, the tops are puffy and in some places as red as clay. Furthermore, all his toe nails are horribly cracked, disfigured and yellow. "Perpetuated," Navidson informs us, "by a nasty fungus two decades worth of doctors finally ended up calling S-T-R-E-S-S." Sitting by himself on the edge of the tub, blood-stained socks draped over the edge, he carefully spreads a silky ointment around what he glibly calls his "light fantastic toe" (Mark Z. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 83).

*Well/Cherry Tree* and *Descending Steps for Batan* refute the closure of the monumental (the restitution of the hearth via the structuring of the hermetic) but persist in the apparitional shadow of documentation – the temporality of past event haunting present and future. Matta-Clark's films extend the trajectory of the *unheimlich* manoeuvre into a more specific interrogation of the temporality of the tomb as a de-centered labyrinthine complication. This poses a question of orientation that cannot be understood through machination of spatiality, but via the spectre of alterity (the 'outside' of duration interrupting chronological linearity determined by the spatial).

## Chapter 4

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### The Orientation<sup>1</sup> of the Labyrinthine

The direct time-image is the *phantom* which has always *haunted* the cinema, but it took modern cinema to give body to this phantom.<sup>2</sup>

[T]he compression of space, the power of the imagination to decompress that space the house as a trope for the unlimited and the unknowable etc., etc. On a strictly *visceral* level, they provide ample shocks and curiosities.<sup>3</sup>

Man has gone out to explore other worlds and other civilisations without having explored his own labyrinth of dark passages and secret chambers, and without finding what lies behind doorways that he himself has sealed.<sup>4</sup>

To comprehend the labyrinthine is perhaps to misunderstand its true integrity as its very condition articulates a plurality, which aggravates sense and the senses to the point where any attempt at orientation falls into a kind of disequilibrium.

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- 1 Orientation – the act or process of orienting or being orientated via arrangement or alignment or the change of position of organs, organelles or organisms in response to external stimuli. Its etymology is found in the French word *orienter* – to cause to face or point east, specifically to build a church or temple with a longitudinal axis pointing eastward with the chief altar at the eastern end; to ascertain bearings in relation to points on a compass: to cause the axes of molecules to assume the same direction.
  - 2 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 41. In *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky*, Mark Le Fanu refers to cinema (seemingly referencing Derrida) as the science of ghosts.
  - 3 Added emphasis. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 6. It is worth noting here that throughout the text, the word house is continually printed in blue (a light grey in the paperback) and this formatting is never clearly explained. The implication is, however, of some kind of hyperlink that may refer to the text's original publication on the net, but perhaps more significantly, as the text unfolds it refers to the link of the house with the alteric labyrinth that emerges – what we might refer to as a *hyperlink to the unheimlich*.
  - 4 Added emphasis. Lem, *Solaris*, p. 164.

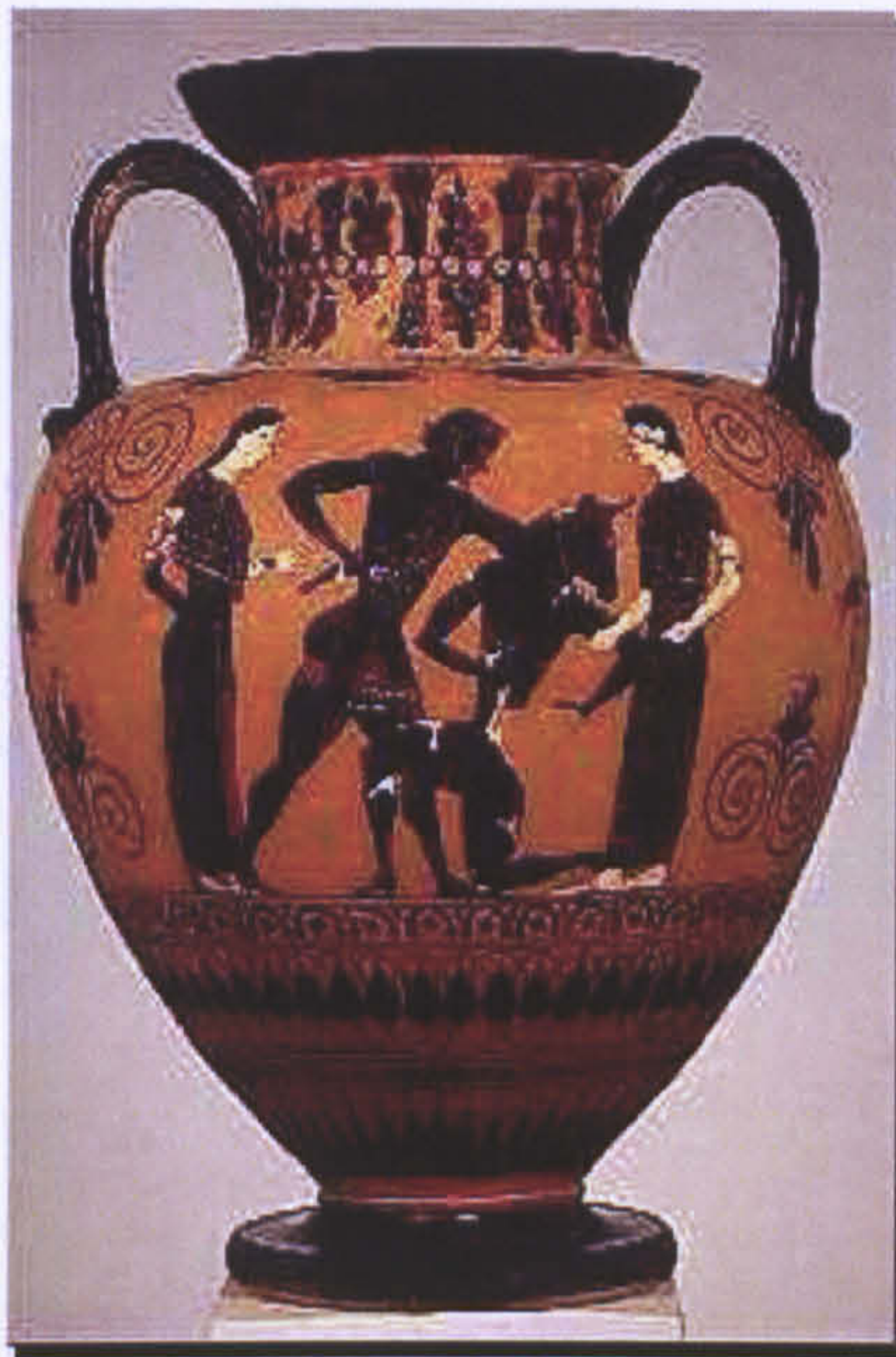
If comprehension is about a certain kind of completion and finitude as a means of navigation precludes ambiguity, then perhaps the insistence of plurality in any labyrinthine determination demands recognition of *encyst-ence* as its most cryptic possibility. The Labyrinth is also the lair of an alteric ‘monster’ which haunts the myriad of passageways and dead ends as a transgressor of stability – a quotient spectre interrupting ratio and universality.

The form of the labyrinth first appears in antiquity through what we might refer to as the ‘mythological architectonics’ of what can be seen simultaneously as the undisturbed rest of the sepulchre or tomb<sup>5</sup>, the secrecy of the maze and also the unresolved conundrum of the puzzle. What is consistent with all such realisations, and is fundamental to any interpretation of the labyrinthine, is the significance of the disruption of sensibility – the essential disequilibrium of its variant possible manifestations – and which indicates an alteric multiplicity of potential routes and passages (*Holzweg*) that initiate a topology of non-linear relations. The aspects of incarceration and imprisonment that are also concomitant with such a (dis)location should also not be

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5 Sepulchre, a place of burial or tomb, a receptacle for religious relics (especially an altar); Middle English, *sepulchre*; from old French/Latin, *sepulcrum* or *sepulchrum*; from *sepelire*, to bury and akin to Greek, *hepein*, to care for; and Sanskrit *saparyati*, he honours. The pertinence of the chthonic should not be lost here in the tellurian aspect of the crypt. In ‘Mother Right’, Bachofen argues, ‘mourning is itself a religious cult dedicated to Mother Earth, practiced by barbarian peoples in *subterranean, sunless chambers*’ (p. 155, added emphasis). Tomb: an excavation in which a corpse is buried; a place of internment; a house, chamber of vault for the dead; a building or structure resembling a tomb. Etymological root in Middle English *tombe*, from Anglo-French, *tumba*, meaning a *sepulchral mound* (from the Greek *tymbos*, which is perhaps akin to the Latin *tumere*, to be swollen (I note here the link between *swolleness* and the *cyst*; see Chapter 3 of this text, with particular reference to *encyst-ence* and the mandorla).

overlooked.<sup>6</sup> What is required is to exact a thread or, more appropriately, a plurality of threads by which to commence the topological operation of an ambulation of its myriad pathways.



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6 In *Inside the Third Reich*, Albert Speer stated that: 'Later, in my many years of imprisonment, I discovered what it meant to live under great psychological pressure. Only then did I realise that Hitler's life had borne a great resemblance to that of a prisoner. His bunker, although it did not yet have the *tomblike proportions* it was to assume in July 1944, had the *thick walls and ceilings of a prison*' (p. 302, added emphasis).

These, however, are never merely enunciations of the reliability of what might be conceived as a rational navigation that is reliant on the organisation of what would be grasped topographically as a certain kind of cartography: the knowledge and skill of a particular kind of guide.<sup>7</sup> As will be indicated, to negotiate the labyrinth is to anticipate a certain sensory disruption as part of the operation by which it must be, traversed. Once it has been (re)solved (that is, the puzzle of its complex of passageways and the confrontation with its 'monstrous occupant'), its threat is lifted and its cryptology no longer a precipitant risk.

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7 Herodotus (c. 484–430BC) gave an account of the labyrinth in his second book of history: 'I saw a series of chambers myself, passing through, and speak from my own observation, whereas I learned of the underground series by report. For the Egyptian authorities were utterly unwilling to show them saying they contained burials both of the kings who had caused the labyrinth to be built, and of the secret crocodiles' *History*, Book II, 148). Manetho, writing in the third century BC, noted in his list of Egyptian kings the fourth, called Lamares, who 'built the Labyrinth in the Arsinoite Nome as a tomb for himself'. *Nome*, from the Greek *nomos*, a pasture or an administrative district (note the link here with *nomad* and therefore Deleuze's and Guattari's term *nomadology*). Pomponius Mela, writing in the first century AD, described the building of Psammetich (a late Egyptian king according to Pliny) thus: 'It has one descending way into it, and contains within almost innumerable paths, which have many convolutions twisting hither and thither. These paths, however, cause great perplexity both because of their continual winding and because of their porticoes which often reverses their direction, continually running through one circle after another and continually turning and retracing steps as far as they have gone forwards with the result that the Labyrinth is fraught with confusion by reason of its perpetual meandering' (*Chorographia*, Book I, 9, 55). The significance of a guide with specialised knowledge of the topological potential of the labyrinth is clearly linked to the character of the stalker in Tarkovsky's film of the same name. Also, in *Stalker*, the room at the heart of the zone functions as the unnatural locale: as with the Minotaur, that which is encrypted in its passageways. With reference to the tomb, Albert Speer, in his memoirs *Inside the Third Reich*, referred to Hitler's bunker under the chancellery in Berlin thus: 'the main bunker, whose rebuilding had caused Hitler to be in my barracks that fateful day of July 20,\* was completed. If ever a building can be considered the symbol of a situation, this bunker was it. From the outside it looked like *an ancient Egyptian tomb*' (p. 391, added emphasis).

\*This date refers to the attempt on Hitler's life in 1944, known as 'the July Plot'.

In the case of the Minoan labyrinth, as purportedly designed and constructed by Daedalus, its threat was as the habitation (incarceration) of the unnatural Minotaur, and once that threat was lifted (the violent demise of the half-man, half-bull at the hands of the Athenian hero, Theseus), its potential (its force) was diminished.

How this predicate force was realised became a question of the inauguration of a fear of that which was considered most unnatural and the maintaining of what was most fearful as the encrypted heart (the de-centre) of the labyrinthine structure. In the case of the labyrinth of Minos, it was constructed to house the unnatural offspring of an illicit encounter between the king's wife, Pasiphae, and a bull. The architectonics of the labyrinth as a structural provision of the edificial aesthetic, was constructed to house an unnatural alteric 'apparition' – that which should not exist, stalking its hallways as a ructure of sensibility and ratio. The minotaur is simultaneously neither bull nor man and yet is also **both** animal and human (*différance*) – a spectral anomaly haunting the complex of matrixal order.

Latterly, it became the site of an ordered ritualistic revenant sacrifice every nine years to sustain (and maintain) what was unnatural.

This was seemingly the preferred option, and that which superseded what might be considered the logical path of obliteration (annihilation) and absorption of the alien.<sup>8</sup>

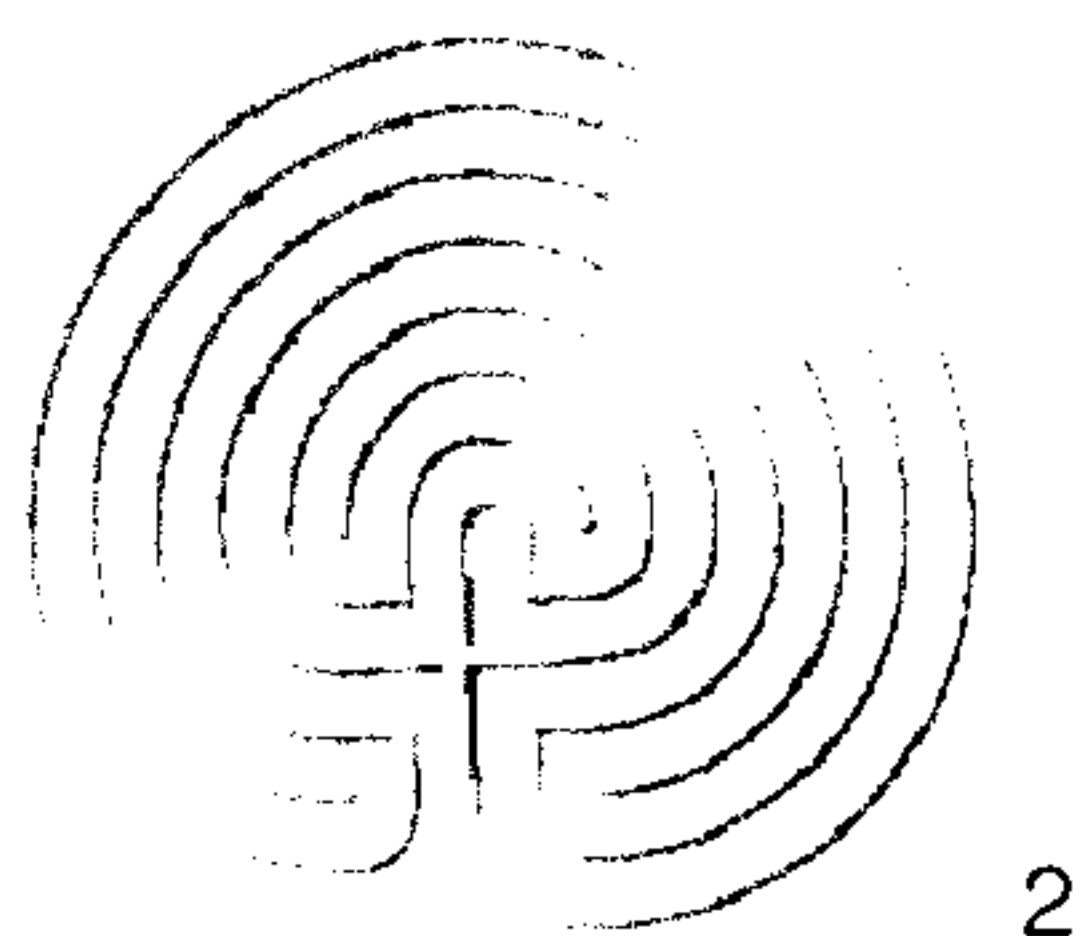
This chapter seeks to take an errant trip through the variant articulations of the labyrinth in an attempt to comprehend it as labyrinthine. In so doing, it seeks to negotiate a traversal directed by a Deleuzian image of time as an interstice, which defies the subordination of temporality to movement and the spatial (what might be interpreted as the a priori of Kantian space). It identifies a plane of immanence, which will be recognised as not merely an indeterminate field of possibilities, but as a plane where the so-called genetic conditions, in which and by which possibilities are created, exist. John Flaxman, in his introduction to the collection of essays

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8 It is worthy of note here that Deleuze points out in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that the destruction of the Minotaur at the hands of Theseus; the representation of the so-called higher man (the sublime), was a triumph of the heroic over the tellurian and illustrates very clearly Bachofen's historical point as extrapolated in 'Mother Right', that the matriarchal/tellurian world (represented by the Minotaur as not merely a creature of the earth confined to a subterranean world, but also the assertion of matriarchy as a sexually potent force conceived through the unnatural lust of Minos' wife for the bull – the Minotaur's 'father') was usurped, superseded and undermined by the later ideality of Apollonian/heroic era of Hellenic Greece (personified by the heroic Athenian, Theseus). The Dionysian strand linked to the myth via Ariadne is identified by Deleuze, via Nietzsche, to be the ratification of the ultimate triumph of possibility and the affirmation of becoming (the Dionysian) over reason and logic (the Apollonian). Also of mythological note here is that the sexual encounter between Minos' wife and the bull that resulted in the birth of the Minotaur was a punishment meted out to King Minos by the god Poseidon when the king refused to sacrifice a great white bull that had been sent to him. The god made Minos' wife Pasiphae fall in love with a bull (it is noted here that some sources not only cite Daedalus as the architect of the labyrinth but also the designer of the hollow wooden cow used by Pasiphae to entice the bull into a sexual encounter). The *encyst-ence* of the labyrinthine borne from an imperative for disguise in which to deceive, whereby Daedalus is no longer just the creator of the sepulchre to house the unnatural Minotaur (the shame of Minos and Pasiphae), but also complicit in the original deceit that brought that which must become a secret into being before its determination as a secret. The retention of the alien as alien through introjection has already been discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this text – it suffices to reiterate here the discussion of the *pharmakos* as scapegoat, the secret of the *polis* in Chapter 2, and introjection in Chapter 3.



titled *The Brain is the Screen*, argues that cinema augers a path to such a plane, which supersedes the limits of normal perception – what he refers to as ‘the deterritorialising of the classical coordinates of philosophy’. What I will seek to exploit here through extrapolation on Tarkovsky’s films *Solaris* and *Stalker* and Danielewski’s novel, *House of Leaves*, is Deleuze’s wish to transform film theory into a philosophy whose rigor is in some way localised, in that it reflects the emergence of rules that are immanent to each given zone of indetermination. Such a system (if the term *system* can continue to be appropriate here) is poised between order and chaos in that it does not give order to or stamp an authority on chaos, but delicately navigates the rift between them. As such, cinema’s power is found in this operation, which exiles us from the familial conceptual terrain leading us to the prospect of a ‘becoming system’ – an *unheimlich* transgression (dis)located by the *encyst-ence* of the labyrinthine. This indicates a certain kind of cinematic aesthetic; a certain cinematic requirement, whereby the systemisation through temporal de-coordination usurps through anomaly (a hauntological revenant), and where the prospect of action (no longer merely (re)action) of the futural is saturated by the past.

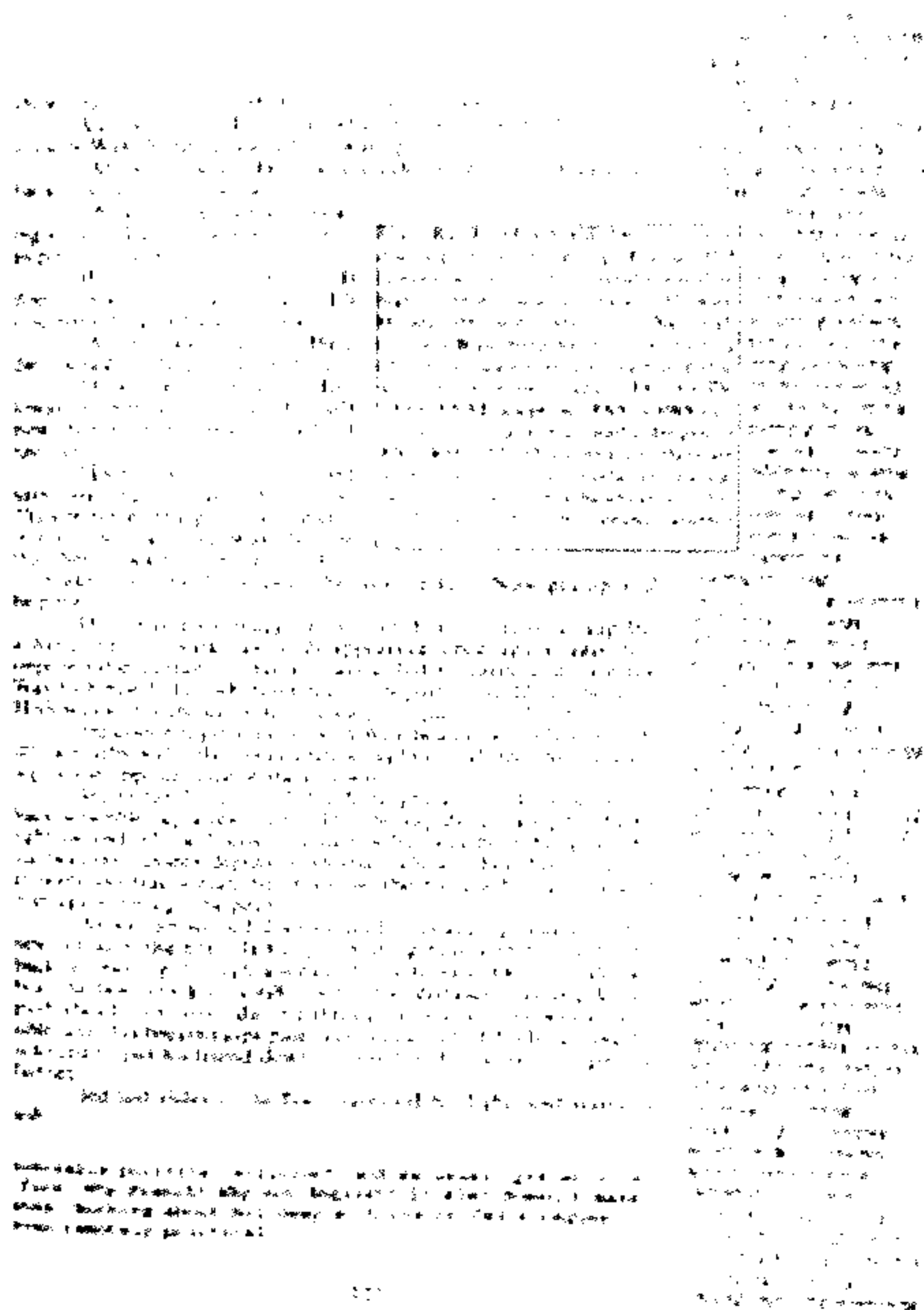


Deleuze comments in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that the 'mystery' of Ariadne<sup>9</sup> is uncovered in the plurality of senses.<sup>10</sup> The labyrinth is firstly interpreted as the unconscious (the secret of the internal self) and designates the continuity of eternal return; its circularity is not the traversal of a necessarily lost way, but a route that leads back to the same point and which exposes it as the affirmation of becoming. This understands *becoming* as that from which *being* comes, overturning the recognised *doxa* in such a way that objects now find their identity swallowed up in difference. With this in mind, a labyrinth is said etymologically to be a multiple because it contains many folds. As such a multiple, it is not only made up of many parts, but is also active in that it is folded in many ways. As already indicated, it is always in some ways all, but simultaneously more than either a mere tomb, sepulchre or puzzle – the diversity of a resting place for the corpuscular, a location for the enactment of rites or a mere conundrum to be solved. It is an aesthetic locale – a hauntological *topos*.

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9 In his book, *The Book of Imaginary Beings*, under the section 'The Minotaur', Jorge Luis Borges states: 'The idea of a house built so that people could become lost in it is perhaps more unusual than that of a man with a bull's head, but both ideas go well together and the image of the labyrinth fits with the image of the Minotaur. It is equally fitting that in the centre of a monstrous house there be a monstrous inhabitant' (p. 100). Note here the indeterminate occupant of the house in *House of Leaves* who is only heard ('the growl') by the explorers and whose presence also *haunts* Johnny Truant through its transgression into the footnoted text.

10 Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 187.



Ariadne's proximity to Theseus in the Minoan labyrinth maintained an interpretation of that structure as in some way the wrong way round, in that this view substantiates a moral thread, which can only lead to negation and *ressentiment*.<sup>11</sup>

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11 As already indicated, the contention that the Apollonian hero Theseus is dispatched to eradicate the tellurian Minotaur in Daedalus' labyrinth, ratifies the developmental historical imperative of Hellenic culture which Bachofen identified as the precedent of ideality through the patriarchal transcendental hero as the suppressor of the earth-oriented matriarchal. Ariadne loved Theseus as he represented the sublime and higher man (but lacking the virtue of the bull with its capacity to throw off burdens), and as long as she was in love with him was fettered to him as merely the feminine image of man. Legends differ as to Ariadne's fate once Theseus escapes the labyrinth; one suggests that he abandons her and she hangs herself, another that he takes her to Naxos where she either dies or marries Dionysus. Deleuze argues that Dionysus (the barbaric interloper) teaches Ariadne that the true labyrinth is not found in negation and *ressentiment*, but in affirmation: 'The labyrinth is what leads us to being, the only being is that of becoming, the only being that of the labyrinth itself' (*Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 188).

If we understand affirmation and negation as qualities of the will to power we see that they do not have a univocal relation. Negation is *opposed* to affirmation but affirmation *differs* from negation. We cannot think of affirmation as 'being opposed' to negation: this would place the negative within it.<sup>12</sup>

The thread allowed Theseus the opportunity to return from dispatching the Minotaur, and operated as a topographic means of escape (as against a topological one) in that it relied on the consistency of the labyrinth (a questionable assumption given all we have previously stated and given what will be later observed about the house in *House of Leaves*) to maintain its shape so that the retracing of steps was merely that and no longer the uncertain navigation of that which was still unknown. It was the strand, which stretched back like an umbilical cord from the pure possibility of a forward traversal, allowing the hero to orient himself with the benefit of a continual connection to what was passed through a tangible link with what he already knew. Here there is already an indication of movement as merely the *sensori-motor schema*, no longer the determining factor in any direct provision of the temporal via the bifurcate divergence of the labyrinthine. In comparison, the character of the Stalker in Tarkovsky's film orients himself in the zone by the dispersal of weighted threads, which he throws ahead and horizontally to ensure safe passage. This indicates that the pattern of potential safe routes by which one may navigate the zone is bifurcate, and therefore fundamentally inconsistent, unpredictable and open to constant variation. The threads are used to determine a safe passage (enforcing or replicating continuity through a straight line of causality) into and

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12 Ibid., p. 188.

out of the zone through the understanding that a traversal must always move forwards. The threads are retrieved only to precipitate such motion. The contribution of what has passed into virtuality alleviates not only the actuality of the moment of decision, but also what is immanent by recognition of its inconsistency – the anxiety that no expectations can be fulfilled in mere reflection and that certainty in the way forward cannot necessarily find comfort and assurance in what has gone before.

In the Minoan labyrinth, the destruction of what is essentially at its centre (the alteric spectre of the unnatural Minotaur – the Derridian de-centre) offers Theseus in some strange way the opportunity to orient himself through the assurance that the demise of the encrypted horror marked the alteric point of focus of the labyrinthine (the ‘room’ at the heart of the ‘zone’ in *Stalker* fulfils a similar ‘function’ – ‘Scientist’[the ‘Apollonian hero’], as a contemporary ‘Theseus’, journeys’ to it with specific intention of destroying it). With its death (annihilation), it was no longer capable of enforcing its potency and, as such, of undermining the assurance of the rational through its deviant introjective operation.

But it demanded the conciliation of a shift of status (from a tomb for the sacrificial victims proffered by the Athenians every nine years – a locale for their certain death and a remedial assurance for the Minoans) of the variant hallways and passages to the specificity of an introjective tomb for the uncanny (the unnatural).

It is the realisation of the emergence of the alteric, recognised as the figure of Minotaur itself.<sup>13</sup>

Any preparation that we might wish to make is therefore complicated and in some way disoriented by any suggestion that negation is merely the opposition to affirmation, on the understanding that such a dialectical opposition might compound affirmation as in some way post priori to negation.

The mythological precedent of the Minoan labyrinth superficially compounds such an interpretation, but a more fundamental perception might consider how this *urdoxa* could be critiqued.



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13 In Derrida's introductory essay to *Margins of Philosophy*, entitled 'Tympan', he comments: 'Tympanum, Dionysianism, labyrinth, Ariadne's thread. We are now travelling through (upright, walking, dancing), included and enveloped within it, never to emerge, the form of an ear constructed around a barrier, going round its inner walls, a city, therefore (labyrinth, semicircular canals – warning: the spiral walkways do not hold) circling around a stairway winding around a lock, a dike (dam) stretched out toward the sea: closed in on itself and open to the sea's path. Full and empty of its water, the anamesis of the choncha resonates alone on the beach' (p. xiv). The pertinence of the sonic should not be lost here. Firstly, in the literal form of an echo as a means of evaluating, physical, emotional and thematic distance (the distortion of such mechanisms by the divergence of the labyrinthine structure, through interference and confusion, invalidates echo as an authentic determination of such spaces). Secondly, echo can only be effective when confined to large (and consistently measurable) spaces – this is the predicament of the explorers of the house. However, a more effective use of sound is more closely linked to the tympanum as a form of resistance to which another agency might be applied to create sound. In *House of Leaves*, the explorers of the house draw attention to their presence and increasingly desperate predicament by knocking on the internal walls of the labyrinth in almost a reversal of the operation of the ear. Internal sound directed into the exterior as the raising of an alarm.

In 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences', Derrida states:

The function of (a) centre was not only to orient, balance, and organise the structure – but above all to make sure that the organising principle of the structure would limit what we might call the play of the structure. By orienting and organising the coherence of the system, the centre of a structure permits the play of its elements inside the total form. *And even today the notion of a structure lacking any centre represents the unthinkable itself.*<sup>14</sup>

If we take a moment to consider and distinguish between what we might call 'maze-treaders' and 'maze-viewers', we grasp that the former's vision is always impaired by constructed views and fragmentation, which cause confusion and disorientation.<sup>15</sup>

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14 Added emphasis. Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, pp. 278–9. Derrida is one of the hidden references in *House of Leaves* as Danielewski develops a myriad of true and bogus academic footnotes throughout the text. With this in mind, he later quoted from the same source: 'This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the centre is paradoxically *within* the structure and *outside* it. The centre is at the centre of the totality, and yet, since the centre does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality) the totality *has its centre elsewhere*. The centre is not the centre' (also found in footnote 129, *House of Leaves*).

15 In the introduction to *House of Leaves*, the fictitious narrator, Johnny Truant says of the writer of the main body of the text, *The Navidson Record*: 'Zampanò writes constantly about seeing. What we see, how we see and what in turn we can't see. Over and over again, in one form or another, he returns to the subject of light, space, shape, line, color, focus, tone, contrast, movement, rhythm, perspective, and composition. None of which is surprising considering Zampanò's piece centers on a documentary film called The Navidson Record made by a Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist who must somehow capture the most difficult subject of all: the sight of darkness itself' (p. xxi).

The latter see the pattern as a whole,<sup>16</sup> as in a diagram (from above) and this suggests that what is seen depends on position ('point of view'). A labyrinth is, in a sense, a singularity,<sup>17</sup> in that it is arguably one physical structure, yet also a doubling in that it incorporates order and disorder, clarity and confusion, unity and multiplicity, artistry and chaos.<sup>18</sup>

As noted in Chapter 3 of this text, Deleuze speaks of the labyrinth in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* as corresponding to two floors. The continuous labyrinth is the relation of the porous and spongy cavernous texture that is without emptiness, of matter (the lower floor) *and*

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16 It is noted in *House of Leaves* that Will Navidson's final journey into the labyrinthine hallways of house in search of his brother Tom, culminates in the confrontation with a window (a fenestration). The text comments: 'windows offer vision' and 'a chance to reach a *place of perspective* and perhaps *make some sense of the whole*'. Ultimately on climbing out onto the ledge beyond the fenestration, Will only '*confronts that grotesque vision of absence*' (p. 464, added emphasis). What is useful to remember here is the Heideggerian notion of the rift as outlined in Chapter 1 of this text, whereby the translation of the German word *Riss* has both the connotation of a cut or tear and also that of a ground-plan or drawing. The double meaning of *scission* and *overall view* (a perspective) identifies a difference that resonates in the labyrinthine singularity.

17 In his essay 'Catastrophe' (published in *Word Traces*), Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe directs our attention to Celan's comment in 'The Meridian' speech that: 'The poem is alone.' He argues that the poem is only effectively a poem insofar as it is absolutely singular: 'This is undoubtedly a definition of poetry's essence (that which, by itself, is decidedly nothing "poetic"); there is no poetry, poetry does not occur or take place, and is therefore not repeatedly questioned, except as *the event of singularity*' (p. 131, added emphasis).

18 With reference to the navigation of the labyrinth, Diodorus Siculus wrote in the first century BC regarding the appointment of the king Mendes, that although he was responsible for no significant military achievements, 'he did build himself what is called the labyrinth as a tomb, an edifice which is wonderful not so much for its size as for the inimitable skill with which it was built; for once in, *it is impossible to find one's way out again without difficulty, unless one lights upon a guide who is perfectly acquainted with it*' (I am thinking here of the need for a profession of guides in *Roadside Picnic* and *Stalker* – the stalkers); (*History*, Book 1, and found at [www.casa.ucl.ac.uk/digital\\_egypt/hawara/bibliography\\_old.html](http://www.casa.ucl.ac.uk/digital_egypt/hawara/bibliography_old.html)). Pliny notes in his book on natural history that Daedalus' labyrinth, though modelled on the one constructed some 3,600 years prior to his time, only imitated a hundredth part of the original Egyptian project (*Natural History*, Book 36,13). The notion of 'fragmentation' will be discussed further in relation to the crystal-image.



the freedom in the soul and its predicates (the upper floor) – the pleats of matter and the folds in the soul. It also designates the eternal return, in that its circularity is not merely a lost way but a labyrinthine perambulation of that which leads back to the same point/instant, which is, was and will be. This duality (the two floors) identifies a discrepancy – the difference of the *vinculum* in which we may begin to recognise a scission, which determines the integrity of such an architectonics of the ructure.

In *Difference and Repetition* he critiques representation by suggesting that any interpretation that compounds the uniqueness of the singular perspective and its receding and ultimately false depth, maintains its condition of all-embracing mediation while actively mobilising nothing. He argues that:

modern art tends to realise these conditions: in this sense it becomes a veritable *theatre* of metamorphosis and permutations. *A theatre where nothing is fixed, a labyrinth without a thread (Ariadne has hung herself)*. The work of art leaves the domain of representation in order to become experience, transcendental empiricism or science of the sensible.<sup>19</sup>

This sense of movement implies the interruptive distortion of aesthetic representation through plurality, divergence and de-centring. It is the recognition of a superposition of perspectives and a tangle of viewpoints which, in a temporal sense, reveals a coexistence of moments as not only what might be conceived as the essence of the labyrinthine, but also an arguably Deleuzian interpretation of a cinematic form. This embraces a fractured and non-linear temporality as

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19 Added emphasis. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 56.

extrapolated in the crystal-image.<sup>20</sup> The conflagration of non-linear relations, which Deleuze identifies in his interpretation of the crystal-image, is determined cinematically through the bifurcation of flashback. This operates outside the conventional chronology of a commonsense through what is tantamount to a figurative leap from the actuality of the present into the virtuality of the past. This spectral operation seeks in the past a virtual memory-image, which it can retrieve and bring to the actual present. Ronald Bogue notes in *Deleuze on Cinema* that:

What we see in flashbacks are the *residual traces* of a branching time, the actual paths taken of a virtually forking labyrinth of coexisting paths. It is this bifurcating maze of time that gives the flashback their inner logic, their 'necessity', their 'reason'.<sup>21</sup>

My intention in this chapter is to consider not only this theatricality of diversity and possibility as the determination of the labyrinthine, but also explore through the analysis of three specific examples (arguably, two cinematic examples with literary roots and one literary with a cinematic perspective), the emergence of the figure of the labyrinth as a pre-emptive condition of the agency of temporality through which and by which the encryption of the spectral might continue to be articulated and reconfigured aesthetically.

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20 With regard to the 'tangle of viewpoints', I note here that Danielewski's *House of Leaves* is perhaps a literary construct of such confusion and discontinuity whereby the house as an interactive locale which transgresses the bounds of orthodox literary organisation (literally through the use of different typefaces to connote different characters and source material) and where the events of one section of the text (the so-called *Navidson Record*) impose themselves on others. The most significant transgressor (perhaps the true manifestation of the horror of the house) is represented by the trace (scratch marks and wilful destruction of any means used to quantify the labyrinthine – markers for navigation and equipment) of violence and the auditory imposition of 'the growl'.

21 Added emphasis. Bogue, *Deleuze on Cinema*, p. 116.

The two cinematic works to be considered will be Andrei Tarkovsky's *Solaris* and *Stalker* (both loosely adapted from novels drawn from the genre of science-fiction: Stanislaw Lem's *Solaris* and Boris and Arkady Strugatsky's *Roadside Picnic*).<sup>22</sup> The literary work is the recently published novel by Mark Z. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, which arguably falls into the genre of horror. I have already posited an interpretation of the labyrinth as something that not only proposes a problem of orientation, but also a more complex sepulchral question of entombment. Implicit in both interpretations is the already discussed notion of an active cryptology that articulates a propriety indicated by a cystic modality of mourning and loss.

The exclusion of any detailed analysis of Tarkovsky's film *Mirror* in the discussion that follows is not to dismiss the import of the film which falls chronologically between *Solaris* and *Stalker* in Tarkovsky's body of cinematic work, but is a considered exclusion that directly engages with the specificity of the literary adaptation of the previously mentioned works in relation to *House of Leaves* as already stated, as a literary work *about* a film.

*Mirror's* intrinsically autobiographical subject matter (although a strong affinity can be drawn between the opening and closing sequences of *Solaris*, in particular the parallels between Kelvin's relationship with his father

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22 Tarkovsky's screenplay of *Stalker* (from the Strugatsky brothers' novel *Roadside Picnic*) is freely adapted from only the last 25 pages of the book. With Stanislaw Lem's novel *Solaris*, '[t]he essential point of change is that he [Tarkovsky] furnished Chris Kelvin with a family home, full of memories: family photographs; the whole physical texture of earthly life; the sound of the rain, the dawn chorus, the flowing of the river, the damp of the garden, the spreading crown of the oak, the living flame of the bonfire, the bent back of the father and the gingery-grey of his temples – everything, in short, which we normally take for granted *until the loss of it haunts us*' (Turovskaya, *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*, p. 54, added emphasis).

and Tarkovsky with his, as portrayed in *Mirror*) distinguishes it from the freely adapted sources of *Solaris* and *Stalker*. Therefore, for the benefit of this discussion, I will focus my attention on the alteric spectrality of the labyrinthine at work in the chosen films in relation to a comparable thematic in *House of Leaves*.

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In Danielewski's novel, the character Zampanò offers a series of brief speculations, prior to the lengthy description of the descent of the staircase in the purportedly fictitious cinematic realisation entitled *Exploration#4* (and which make up part of the larger film project known as *The Navidson Record*), as to the purpose of the labyrinth.

Is it merely an aberration of physics? Some kind of warp in space? Or just a topiary labyrinth on a much grander scale? Perhaps it serves a funeral purpose? Conceals a secret? Protects something? Imprisons or hides some kind of monster? Or for that matter, imprisons or hides an innocent?<sup>23</sup>

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23 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 111. Pliny (AD 23–79) proffered three possible meanings for the labyrinth in his natural history, Book 36, 13: a palace or tomb for its constructor or perhaps most strangely, a temple to the sun, '[which] contains twisting paths and passages which advance and retreat-all impossible to negotiate ... frequently doors are buried in it to beguile the visitor into going forward and then force him to return to the same winding paths'. And later: 'Men are already weary with travelling when they reach the bewildering maze of paths: indeed, there are also lofty upper rooms reached by ramps and porticoes from which one descends on stairways which have 90 steps; inside are columns of imperial porphyry, images of the gods, statues of kings and *representations of monsters*.' Abridged from [www.casa.ucl.ac.uk/digital\\_egypt/hawara/bibliography\\_01d.html](http://www.casa.ucl.ac.uk/digital_egypt/hawara/bibliography_01d.html) (added emphasis).

Deleuze's detailed observations on cinema, in his two texts *Cinemas 1* and *2*, proffer the temporal extrapolation of the crystal-image<sup>24</sup> as a definition of a differential unity which identifies the praxis of the cinematic shot as a fusion of the pastness of a recorded event with the presentness of its viewing – the conglomeration of virtual with the actual. It is the indivisible unity of virtual image and actual image, if we understand the virtual as subjective or in the past – a pure recollection that exists outside consciousness in time but somewhere in a temporal past, and which is, in a sense, still alive and ready to be recalled by the actual. What is crucial to any understanding of the crystal-image is the fragmentariness implied by its crystalline condition – whereby illumination as consciousness is not understood as merely an exteriority (a flashlight) shedding light upon a world of shadow, but as a constituent component of that luminosity.

In short, it is not consciousness that *is* light, it is a set of images, or light that *is* consciousness, immanent *within* matter.<sup>25</sup>

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24 Donato Totaro, in 'Deleuze's Bergsonian Film Project (Part 2: The Time-Image)', suggests Deleuze uses the crystal-image as an aesthetic rather than a theoretical tool, 'by ascribing stylistic qualities to it' ([www.horschamp.qc.ca/9903/offscreen\\_essays/deleuze2.html](http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/9903/offscreen_essays/deleuze2.html)).

This is qualified by Ronald Bogue in his text, *Deleuze on Cinema*, where he draws attention to the four forms of the Deleuze's crystal-image as:

- (i) Perfect
- (ii) Cracked
- (iii) Formation or Growth
- (iv) Dissolution

These designate four kinds of film identified by their directors; respectively, Ophuls, Renoir, Fellini and Visconti.

25 Added emphasis. Deleuze, *Cinema 1 (The Movement-Image)*, 90:61. In his text *Deleuze and Cinema*, Ronald Bogue states (in the last section, quoting Deleuze): 'if present images are light, *representations are subtractions* of quantities of light, or selective filterings of light. When we perceive objects, it is "as if we reflected on their surfaces the light emanates from them, light which would never be revealed if it passed on unopposed"' (p. 31, added emphasis).

In accounting for the past/presentness of the cinematic image, the crystal-image functions as a two-way mirror,<sup>26</sup> which operates as a kind of fluctuation between virtual and actual splitting the screen into two heterogeneous directions – launching into the future *and* falling into the past, a confusion of mental and physical time.<sup>27</sup> Deleuze's appropriation of Bergsonian *durée* critiques the chronology of temporal linearity by way of memory. Initially, this proposes that memory is distinguished by two types: *habitual* and *pure*, and ratifies the former as stored in the brain. *Habitual* is the more pragmatic and generally dominates the latter, which resurfaces during moments of disinterestedness or dreaming and is stored in consciousness.<sup>28</sup> Duration was understood by Bergson as a dynamic movement of passing, yet continuous time, where the qualitative expression of our dynamic psychological time (of continuity of past into present and towards future), remained distinctive from the quantitative succession of discrete elements or intervals.

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- 26 I am reminded here of Dan Graham's *Alteration to a Suburban House* (see Chapter 3, this text). In the novel *Solaris* by Stanislaw Lem (from which Tarkovsky adapted his screenplay), the character Snow, when speaking to the recently arrived Kelvin about man's urge for space exploration, says, 'We are seeking man. We have no need of other worlds. We need mirrors' (p. 75). It is worth noting here that Tarkovsky's follow-up to *Solaris* was entitled *Mirror* and that Deleuze notes that the *vinculum* in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* is understood as 'a reflective surface'.
- 27 I note here that Tarkovsky makes use of the particularity of this cinematic confusion in the film *Mirror* by casting the same actress to play both the contemporary wife and the historical mother throughout the production.
- 28 The theory of pure perception and pure memory must take into account the fact that perception affected by memory remains dependent on the brain for materialisation. Bergson argued that in dreams we have glimpses of the true nature of memory and the virtual past as it is when the sensori-motor system is at its most relaxed and therefore images from various past moments can coexist simultaneously in a single domain.

In *Cinema 2*, Deleuze states:

there is no present which is not *haunted* by a past and a future, by a past which is not reducible to a former present, by a future which does not consist of a present to come.<sup>29</sup>

Bergson proposed that the fundamental concept of *durée* expressed the dynamism of an indeterminate future as essentially open and unforeseeable, and therefore any impression of the temporal must be grasped through an essential difference, whereby each moment or succession of moments brought something that was qualitatively new. The essential dualism of Bergsonian *durée* is found in the combination of duration as a dynamic continuation and the succession of the momentary.<sup>30</sup>

Deleuzian dualism designated a supposed opposition between ideality and sensibility but no longer as the historical duality of essential and accidental, but as a more fundamental (and more complex) distinction

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29 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 37. We may also wish to consider here earlier remarks made about disinterestedness in Kantian aesthetics in Chapter 1 of this text. Derrida notes in *The Truth in Painting*: 'Now the question of knowing whether I can say of a thing that it is beautiful has, according to Kant, nothing to do with the interest that I do or do not have in its existence. And my pleasure ... requires an *indifference* or more rigorously an *absolute lack of interest for the existence of the thing*' (p. 44, added emphasis). It is also noted here that Tarkovsky's *Solaris* was introjected by the familial through the sublimated desire to make a film about his own family. The domestic sequences in *Solaris* (the opening section at Kelvin's family home and the closing section where he is seemingly reunited with his father at that same home) predate *Mirror* in such a way that the familial terrain explored by Tarkovsky in the later film haunts the former.

30 Ronald Bogue, in his commentary *Deleuze on Cinema*, suggests that Deleuze attempts to bring coherence to this 'dualism through the complexity of sensation. He develops Bergsonian analysis from what he refers to as illusory dualism to a clarifying dualism, through a higher monism to a generative dualism and pluralism. Bogue argues that Bergson's view of the universe is one of "flows", "modifications", perturbations and "vibrations". This dynamic always entails a retention of past into present with an impulse towards future. The vibration is simultaneously mind and matter and as such presents Bergson as essentially a monist. However, Deleuze notes that this monism is fundamentally a kind of dualism, or even pluralism, as it is the realisation of a differentiation of speeds and degrees based on the complexity of the event.

between virtual and actual (the complexity of the Minotaur).

Deleuze argued that the ontological hierarchy, whereby the spatiality of distribution is conceived as a dividing up in the divine/Apollonian sense, is concomitant to a sedentary limit that operates as either a limitation due to the proximity to the particularity of a principle, or the power of that limit as a single maximum, equalising all in the similitude that refuses the separation of a thing from what it can do. His introduction of a concept of *any-spaces-whatever* (*espaces quel-conque*) proffers a new cinematic pedagogy that disrupts any unity of space by drawing attention to the disparate scissions that fragment it, and whose character is haunted by the traumatic branchings of memory.<sup>31</sup>

Immanence as diversity proffers the single maximum as an immeasurable state rather than a measurable one, which expresses the disjunctive as the particularity specific to individual faculties and which it alone can experience. This particularity undermines the historical imperative of a commonsense by only revealing itself at what we might interpret as moments of disequilibrium and contradiction, where memory articulates experience through the enigma of a disjuncture from commonsense. Diversity, as the fundamentally immeasurable, in a sense haunts the measurable as an immanence or potential. Its paradox is always that as an entity it has never been present but exists *only* as past – a spectre.

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31 John Flaxman notes in the introduction to *The Brain is the Screen*: 'These "any-spaces-whatever" ... irrational, disconnected, aberrant, schizophrenic spaces – no longer obey laws of traditional, commonsensical causality. At every turn, the hope for resolution is frustrated' (p. 5).



This raises the question of whether such diversity and variation is this concomitant with the interruptive Derridian spectre as a historical (both past and futural) non-present?<sup>32</sup>

Such a *dérèglement* of sensibility critiques the Kantian faculty as essentially passive, and therefore shaped by the a priori forms of *space* and time by determining a transcendental empiricism which indicated its objectivity as real experience but also transcendent because, as Deleuze stated, such empirical principles 'leave outside themselves the elements of their own foundation'.<sup>33</sup> The opposition of consciousness, as conceptual representations of commonsense, and the subrepresentative, as essentially unconscious intensities, articulates the premise that ideals are no longer just simple essences in the Kantian sense, but what Deleuze defined as problems without solutions. What in a Bergsonian sense might be defined as an ideal limit can be interpreted as the most relaxed approach of concomitance between inert matter and extensionless mind. Problems are immanent within, yet irreducible to, their solutions and are implicit in the creation of a realm where a solution might take place, but remain outside that realm. What remains paradoxical about this capacity is that as virtual and therefore not actual, they occupy a

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32 We may wish to think here of the Minotaur as a present/past. In the context of earlier remarks regarding the tellurian nature of the half-man, half-bull, the myth of the labyrinth places the result of matriarchal transgression in a Hellenic present and which required a heroic personification of the then current aspiration towards Apollonian ideality to vanquish an unnatural past. This symbolic transition from matriarchal to patriarchal is complicated further when the Dionysian affirmation enters the mythology when Ariadne is abandoned on Naxos by Theseus and in one strand of the myth, rescued and married by Dionysus. The labyrinthine is no longer confined to the physical architectonics of Daedalus' structure, but transgresses the temporal bounds of future and past as the indiscernible link of what can never be merely assigned in a relation.

33 Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 328.

place that is neither existence nor non-existence – a spectral locale.

The problem for Deleuze is concomitant with an understanding of genetic structure, in that it bears no resemblance to that structure of actual embodiment but is also not just an amorphous undifferentiated mass. As a distribution, it is without identity, function or location, but should rather be seen as a differential relation, which, with other singularities, is realised as a potential for various forms of embodiment. Conceived as a domain or plain of scattered points around which a nebulous vortex of possible actualisations are continually forming and un-forming, this location of the problem can only be realised through the conglomeration of possible actualisations and embodiments.

The passage from virtual to actual is affected by what Deleuze terms an 'intensity', which we understand to be the essential activity of energising individuation.<sup>34</sup> Metastability and intensity are states of what we might term *pre-sense*, in that they are essentially outside commonsense and cognitive understanding. As such, they can only be experienced in the disjunctive use of the faculties and distortion of the senses in moments of disequilibrium and vertigo.

As already indicated in Chapter 1, an a-dimensional depth of depths, implicit in the constitution of the

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34 I refer here back to Chapter 1 of this text, and the discussion on crystalline structure, the metastable and pre-individuation. We might also note here the comparison of the nebular and metastable with the ocean, which makes up the surface of Solaris. Bogue notes: 'Deleuze speaks of the crystal-image rather than a simple mirror image' because 'the crystal-image serves two additional purposes. The surface of the crystal may be reflective, yet they may also be glasslike and transparent; they may refract light and reflect it, filter, tint, cloud or block it. The crystal's facets thus may be said to possess varying degrees of limpidity or opacity, the state of a give facet varying with its surrounding conditions (such as temperature), becoming transparent one moment and opaque the next' (*Deleuze on Cinema*, p. 12).

recognised dimensionality of the spatial, reveals the existence of a primal groundless space (*spatium*). This is articulated through explication from which the dimensionality of a re-presentable space and the energised intensity of individuation is manifest in the traversal from metastable to stable. Ronald Bogue argues in *Deleuze on Cinema*:

Our inherent tendency is to use visual spatial imagery to speak about time, and hence to think of bodies as entities distinct from their movements. But movement is inseparable from that which moves and as soon as we speak of a thing distinct from its action we reinstate a division between movement and the moving entity.<sup>35</sup>

This indicates that the *idea* becomes a provocation of the faculties into disjunctive functioning via the intensity of sense experience and from this disruption of sensibility, other faculties are likewise, disturbed.<sup>36</sup> The concept of cinema becomes no longer what might be defined as ‘an undertaking of recognition’, but ‘a science of visual impressions, forcing us to forger our own logic and retinal habits’.<sup>37</sup>

For Deleuze, thought begins with a contradictory experience – an encounter with a simulacrum. Given that the simulacrum has no identity, it is the manifestation of difference in itself and can only appear in disguise as distinct categories of individuation, which mask pre-individual, metastable differences.<sup>38</sup>

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35 Ibid., p. 19.

36 In the novel *Solaris*, the character of Rheya describes herself and the other visitors/*phi*-creatures as ‘passive instruments of torture’.

37 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 18–19.

38 In *Solaris*, Kelvin admits to Rheya that they are not alike – and after her attempt to take her life by ingesting liquid oxygen, suggests that it is the difference between them that saved her life.

The specifics of a cinematic and literary illustration of such a proposition might be found in Andrei Tarkovsky's cinematic adaptation of Stanislaw Lem's science-fiction novel, *Solaris*. In both film and book, the visitors/*phi*-creatures<sup>39</sup> are simulacra formed from the subconscious/memories of the surviving crewmembers of a space station orbiting the planet Solaris.<sup>40</sup>

This proximity to the planet (the forces of which seem to exist as a vast imaginative resource) and its ocean plays a significant part in the manifestation of these visitors, and links the specificity of individual memory to the realisation of an influential pre-individual condition manifest in the planet itself.<sup>41</sup> Are these creatures understood as simulacra in the sense of disguised distinct categories of individuation disguising/masking the pre-individual, metastable state of the planet Solaris and its ocean?<sup>42</sup>

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39 *Phi*-creature: *phi*, from the Greek *philia*, meaning *brotherhood*. This notion of brotherly affiliation will be taken up further when looking at Will Navidson's relationship with his brother Tom in *House of Leaves*. I also note here the significance of the fraternal relation in the work of Gordon Matta-Clark and already considered in Chapter 3 of this text.

40 In his essay 'The Film History of Thought' (published in *The Brain is the Screen*), András Bálint Kovács remarks: 'According to Deleuze, modern cinema means, on the one hand, the different variations of composition of abstract time (in this respect he is in complete agreement with Tarkovsky who calls film "sculpting in time"); on the other hand, it means a variable formation of images of subjectivity' (p. 161).

41 Gibarian's visitor temporarily survives his death – in Tarkovsky's film she is encountered by Kelvin in the corridor of the space station and entering the cold store where Gibarian's body is stored, and is the first evidence of the extraordinary events unfolding on the space station. In Lem's novel Kelvin is horrified by this encounter – a horror that is compounded when he examines Gibarian's body in the cold store and finds the visitor apparently sleeping next to the corpse, seemingly unaware of Gibarian's demise. It is worth noting here that in Lem's novel, this visitor is a black woman in a grass skirt. Tarkovsky, however, presents the visitor as a red-haired girl.

42 In the Strugatsky brothers' novel, *Roadside Picnic* (on which Tarkovsky based his screenplay for *Stalker*), a group of creatures are also said to inhabit the zone and are referred to as 'zombies' or 'moulages' – re-constructions on the skeletons, dummies. The scientist Pilman states: 'We can't imagine anything scarier than a ghost. But the violation of the law of causality is much more terrifying than the stampede of ghosts' (p. 109).

In the novel, Lem catalogues in some detail the different kinds of phenomena experienced by the earliest Solarists (the name given to the scientific community who expressly concern themselves with the study of the planet – the implication being that the study of the planet has become a branch of science in its own right). The psychologist Kelvin spends time in the station's library, and looks in detail at these phenomena and the attempts made by previous Solarists to explain them scientifically, only to be confronted by realisation that it is evident they defy scientific logic.<sup>43</sup>

The description of Solaris's ocean in Lem's novel might indicate an almost Leibnizian/baroque implication and explication of folding, unfolding and refolding. The topological singularities of the ocean as part of its continuity/multiplicity that the scientific manuals, found in the space station's library, try to explain through the logic of scientific reason.

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43 For example, *mimoids* are understood as simulacra in that they copy inanimate man-made objects. The mimoid structure is described as a labyrinth requiring specialist equipment to explore, and the scientific evidence housed in the space station library proposes that they have 'off days' and 'gala days'. On gala days the mimoid 'can produce "primitive" simplifications, but is just as likely to indulge in "baroque" deviations, paroxysms of extravagant brilliance' (Lem, *Solaris*, p. 121).

These individuated beings (given names: *mimoids*, *extensors*, *symmetriads* and *asymmetriads*) are identified as scientific phenomena and their differences are understood as primordially different in the same way that the *phi*-creatures/visitors are differentiated from firstly, the residents of the space station and secondly, from the ideals from which they are simulated.<sup>44</sup> Bogue comments that in developing the triad of crystalline motifs (actual/virtual, limpid/opaque and seed/milieu), Deleuze does not intend to isolate specific shots or sequences but to indicate entire films as essentially crystalline.

Each film, we might say is like an astronaut crew's exploration of a multifaceted, gemlike planet. The crewmembers orbit the planet, taking various shots of its surface. They land, traverse different planes, then penetrate the planet's outer surfaces and film shimmering and prismatic reflections from within the planet, the facets of changing tints, growing foggy, opalescent, silvery, or transparent. They follow the process of crystallization as a seed crystal spreads into a milieu; they record the shattering of a facet, the powdery disintegration of another, the liquid dissolution of a third.<sup>45</sup>

Kelvin's dilemma is brought in sharper focus when he can no longer distinguish between the simulacra and the

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44 As Ronald Bogue quotes *Deleuze on Cinema*, Deleuze characterises what he refers to as Bergson's primal cosmos as a gaseous state, (a) world of universal variation, universal undulation, universal rippling: there are neither axes nor center, neither right nor left, high or low', *Cinema 1*, p.58. This combination of image-movement and matter-flow, Deleuze suggests, constitutes the 'plane of immanence'. I also note that in 'Mother Right', Bachofen proposed an intermediary between the extremities of what he refers to as 'pure tellurian' and 'pure uranian luminaries': 'Between the two extremes, the earth and the sun, the moon takes the middle position which the ancients designate as the borderland between two worlds. The purest of tellurian bodies and the impurest of uranian luminaries. It becomes the image of maternity which attains its highest purification in the Demetrian principle; as a heavenly earth it contrasts with the chthonian earth, just as the Demetrian matron contrasts with the hetaeric woman' (p. 115). Bachofen identified the lunar celestial body (the Moon) as the intermediary between the tellurian and the uranian.

45 Added emphasis. Bogue, *Deleuze on Cinema*, p. 124.

real/historical (present-ness and past) Rheya/Hari. There is perhaps an issue between the real Rheya/Hari and the facsimile that begs the question, is the *phi*-creature/visitor in fact the real Rheya/Hari absolved of responsibility and reasoning for her suicide?<sup>46</sup>



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46 In *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*, Maya Turovskaya comments: 'The main thing for him [Tarkovsky], however, was something else; the way in which Hari, finding herself at the centre of the clashes of personality and *point of view* on the station, having started as a *ghost*, gradually becomes a human being' (p. 56, added emphasis).

The planet as an intermediary can only communicate with the scientists through the various initial somnambular<sup>47</sup> visitations of the simulacra. Kelvin's visitor (a simulation of his wife at the time of her suicide 10 years earlier)<sup>48</sup> is a manifestation of an intensity of his memory and, as is made clear, has no identity of her own. She is unable to exist without remaining in relative proximity to him – relying on him to form her identity. Kelvin's commonsense tells him that this phenomena is *not* his wife and crucially, also not a spectre. He takes a blood sample, which provisionally shows him what he would expect to see – red corpuscles. However on closer scrutiny under the microscope, and looking further into the depths where he anticipates a view of the atomic structure at the limit of his exploration, he finds nothing but a dazzling white light. He asks the question, is this frail yet seemingly indestructible body 'actually made of nothing?'<sup>49</sup>

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47 Somnambulism – sleepwalking. Kelvin's visitor appears after he has slept and itself appears in a dream state, as yet without a rounded character of Rheya/Hari. Kelvin refers to the female visitors as 'succubi' and which are recognised as a kind of mythological female demon who attempts to have intercourse with sleeping men. Hoffmann's use of the metaphor of sleep in his short story 'The Sandman' should be noted here, particularly with reference to the inarticulate automaton Olympia. Nathaniel justifies her lack of communication by saying, 'What are words? The glance of her heavenly eyes says more than any speech on earth. Can a child of heaven accommodate itself to the narrow circle drawn by the wretched circumstances of earth?' (p. 118). She appears in the latter part of the story and with whom character Nathaniel falls in love and is eventually driven to madness over: 'Then madness gripped him with hot glowing claws, tore its way into him and blasted his mind. "Ha, ha, ha! Circle of fire, circle of fire! Spin, spin, circle of fire! Merrily, merrily! Puppet, ha! Lovely puppet, spin, spin!"' (*Tales of Hoffmann*, p. 120).

48 In the novel, the ghost of Gibarian (a father-figure to the younger psychologist Kelvin) visits Kelvin in a dream to warn him of Snow and Sartorius's intentions to build a magnetic field disruptor and bombard Solaris with radiation. The ghost also informs Kelvin that Rheya, his wife/visitor, will always remain at the age she died – a disruption of temporal linearity. It is important here to note the distinction between ghost and simulacra. In Tarkovsky's film version, the ghost of Gibarian appears as a recorded message left for Kelvin to view.

49 Lem, *Solaris*, p. 103.



Everything looks normal, but it's a camouflage. A cover in a way, it's a super-copy, a reproduction which is superior to the original ... there exists, in man, an absolute limit – a term to structural divisibility – whereas here, the frontiers have been pushed back.<sup>50</sup>

Snow and Sartorius attempt to explain her in scientific terms as something beyond atomic structure and the corporeal – the realm of the *neutrino*, constituted of sub-atomic material and its capability for endless rejuvenation.<sup>51</sup> That realisation that the *phi*-creature/visitor is more than just a spectre makes its manifestation all the more fearful.

When it arrives, the visitor is almost blank – only a *ghost* made up of memories and vague images dredged out of its ... source. The longer it stays with you, the more human it becomes. It also becomes more independent, up to a certain point.<sup>52</sup>

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50 Ibid., p. 105. In *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*, Maya Turovskaya states: 'It is she [Hari] who strives to understand her earthly experience by understanding man with the aid of an *external point of view* – the viewpoint of space' (p. 55).

51 Kelvin argues: 'the cell and the nucleus of the cell are nothing but camouflage. The real structure, which determines the functions of the visitor, remains concealed' (Lem, *Solaris*, p. 106). In *House of Leaves*, Billy Reston, one of the investigators brought in by Will Navidson to explore the house, comments on the accuracy of scientific equipment to solve the dimensional discrepancies of the house: 'That should put the ghost in the grave fast' (p. 38). In *Deleuze on Cinema*, Ronald Bogue notes that the implication of consciousness as dynamism can even be interpreted at a subatomic level through differentiation of velocity and degrees (the size of interval) and based in the complexity of any event.

52 Added emphasis. Lem, *Solaris*, p. 157. In *Death and the Labyrinth*, Michel Foucault states: 'From the *hollow opening inside words* are fashioned beings endowed with *strange characteristics*, which *seem to have been part of them since the beginning of time* and forever inscribed in their destiny, yet are *nothing more than the wake of the motion of words*' (p. 36, added emphasis).

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze analysed meaning as the contradictory simulacra within language that jolts thought into a transcendental speculation on *grounding* as the condition on which language rests – a *loquendum*.<sup>53</sup>

Latterly in *Cinema 2*, he argued that a cliché was a sensory-motor image of a thing, which, according to his reading of Bergson, is based in our perception of things through the particularity of interest. We do not perceive a thing in its entirety, but always less of it.

[W]e perceive only what we are interested in perceiving, or rather what it is in our interest to perceive, by virtue of our economic interests, ideological beliefs and psychological demands.<sup>54</sup>

When the sensory-motor schemata is disrupted or interrupted, we are confronted by another kind of image – that of the optical-sound, which Deleuze argues is without metaphor and is unjustifiable.<sup>55</sup>

Narration is never a given of images but a consequence of the visibility of images, and Deleuze cites the difficulty rooted in what he refers to as the ‘assimilation of the cinematographic image to utterance’, where a false appearance is given through the precedence of utterance over image and any authentically visible characteristic – movement – is taken from it.

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53 From the Latin *loquendi*, meaning *a rage for speaking*. Deleuze understands this as the contradictory simulacrum within language jolting thought into a transcendental analysis of the ground on which language rests.

54 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 20.

55 In *Cinema 2*, Deleuze argues: ‘Sometimes it is necessary to restore the lost parts, to rediscover everything that cannot be seen in the image, everything that has been removed to make it “interesting”. But sometimes, on the contrary, it is necessary to make holes to introduce voids and white spaces, to rarefy the image, by suppressing many things that have been added to make us believe that we were seeing everything. It is necessary to make a division or make emptiness in order to find the whole again’ (p. 21).

He proposes that 'it is necessary to move towards a limit, to make the limit of before the film and after it pass into the film'.<sup>56</sup> The direct time-image is virtual as opposed to the actuality of the movement-image, but it is important to remember here that virtuality in opposition to actuality does not infer, for Deleuze, any opposition to reality.

Danielewski has the character Zampanò state in *House of Leaves*: 'Strangely then, the best argument for fact is the absolute unaffordability of fiction. Thus it would appear the *ghost haunting The Navidson Record* continually bashing against the door, is none other than the recurring threat of its own reality.'<sup>57</sup> In *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze considers meaning by exploring the stoical terms 'bodies' and 'incorporeal' rather than 'actual' and 'virtual', but he made the point that bodies, as a realm of causes and effects, exist as subsistence, and that insistence exists as incorporeality. They are the result of causes and therefore have a minimum of being and no true existence. This understands meaning as an ephemeral attribute or event rather than a state of things – a way of being rather than a state of being.

If we consider the *phi*-creatures/visitors in *Solaris* with reference to this interpretation of meaning, we could argue that firstly they are bodies, in that they assume a bodily form and in so doing disguise their difference through corporeality. Secondly, they exist as a surface to the bodies of the scientists on the space station – a temporal/ephemeral attribute of the infinite.<sup>58</sup> The *phi*-creature/visitor might then be interpreted as the surface meaning of incorporeal on the corporeal.

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56 Ibid., p. 38.

57 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 149.

58 In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze interprets the Stoical view of time as *incorporeal* on two levels:

(i) The finite present  
(ii) The infinite past and future.

Kelvin's visitor/wife could be conceived as the realisation of an incorporeal event from his past – she has the mark of the fatal injection on her arm (a key moment in the narrative of both novel and film is Kelvin's recognition of Rheya/Hari<sup>59</sup> via the tear (a scission) in her dress and the puncture wound of the hypodermic needle – visceration as the event of acknowledgement). Later when Rheya/Hari voluntarily submits herself to annihilation, she arguably, through such a sacrifice, achieves a kind of human stature.

It is significant that both Tarkovsky and Soderbergh<sup>60</sup> portray the *phi*-creature's/visitor's need for proximity to the corporeal body (the scientist's). Rheya/Hari injures and then reconstitutes herself in an attempt to maintain proximity to Kelvin when he attempts to leave her to consult with Snow and Sartorius. Are Tarkovsky and Lem indicating that Rheya/Hari is the meaning of Kelvin's existence, or is she the problem/result/after-effect?

As Deleuze comments, Stoic philosophy gives a priori to corporeal cause over incorporeal effect, and a reading of the relationship between Kelvin and Rheya/Hari might indicate that Kelvin, the corporeal cause, is the instigator of Rheya/Hari as incorporeal effect. Where Deleuzian interpretation of the Stoical concepts of cause and effect may prove a useful tool here is in the shift from a reading that emphasises the theological content (the a priori of body over effect) to consider the incorporeal/effect as essentially transcendental.

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59 In the novel Kelvin's visitor is known as Rheya; in Tarkovsky's film she is referred to as Hari.

60 Stephen Soderbergh remade *Solaris* in 2003 with George Clooney taking the role of Kelvin. Soderbergh's film makes a radical shift at the end of the film by suggesting (unlike both book and film) that Kelvin remains with the visitor/*phi*-creature Rheya/Hari in 'virtual' proximity to the planet.

Rhey/Hari is not only a product of Solaris, but is also an effect of Kelvin's proximity/interaction with the planet. For Rhey/Hari to exist, Kelvin as a body (a corporeal event) needs to be close to Solaris, and therefore Solaris could be conceived as a transcendental pre-sense that precedes the corporeal Kelvin and the incorporeal Rhey/Hari.

When Kelvin attempts to instigate good sense as that which underlines truth via scientific means, that truth being that Rhey/Hari cannot exist as she has previously died, her presence on the space station is not a corporeal present of finitude, but an incorporeal infinitude of how she is/was as recollected by Kelvin. Rhey/Hari is a simulacra of the historical Rhey/Hari projected by Solaris via the particularity and specificity of Kelvin's recollection – a fragmentary, proximal facsimile capable of a kind of evolution base in Kelvin's memory.

She is an infinite possibility that is no longer fixed in a finite present, yet she is fixed to a combined proximal location of Kelvin as the specific source of the manifestation of the event of simulation and Solaris as the transcendental pre-sense instigating an involuntary memory. This might indicate that Kelvin is in fact the screen onto which and also from which the projection of Rhey/Hari is realised.

The complication made manifest in the realisation of the *phi*-creature/visitor is that the recognition of the duality of interior/exterior is undermined in that absolute interiority (the monadic condition) is at work. The visitor determines the differentiation that refuses to maintain any clear duality, in that its realisation is the interaction of a multiplicity whereby it can no longer be interpreted as the action of the subjective upon the objective.

The parameters by which such directional substantiation might take place are significantly undermined by the complication of recognition as to what might be essentially subjective, and likewise what might be essentially objective in the relation.

One might argue that precedent of Kelvin's proximity to the planet determines his subjective priority in the relation, and that the appearance of Rheya/Hari as a specific historical manifestation substantiates such an interpretation. However, *Solaris* can also be seen as that which articulates this event and from which the realisation of the visitor takes place.

We should also note here that in *House of Leaves* the evolutionary deployment of the labyrinthine capaciousness of the house is in some way a response to the proximity of the Navidson family and their associates. In this way the peculiarity of individual interaction with the unknown of house, planet (in *Solaris*) and zone (in *Stalker*) are essential characteristics of their operation.<sup>61</sup>

Deleuze interprets the subjectivity of the fragmentary vision (the crystal-image) that he argues is synonymous with European post-war cinema as inherent in particular characteristics that are manifest in 'the disturbances of memory and the failure of recognition'.<sup>62</sup> The character Zampanò postulates on the possibility of realising a ground-plan of the house based on the footage of *The Navidson Record*, only to come to the conclusion that it would be impossible due to the constant wall-shifts and the film's 'constant destruction of continuity, frequent jump cuts prohibiting any sort of

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61 Derrida comments in *The Truth in Painting*: 'A piece of waste land [*terrain vague*] has no fixed limit. Without edge, without any border marking property, without any nondecomposable frame that would not bear partition' (p. 93).

62 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 55.

accurate mapmaking'.<sup>63</sup> It is also clear that Kelvin recognises the *phi*-creature/visitor as a facsimile of his wife, but the disruption of his memory is heightened by her provisional blankness. As their relationship evolves, her memories are filled in by persistent exposure to Kelvin, but the most significant one (her suicide) remains disturbing (a disturbance of memory) and elusive until the *phi*-creature/visitor Rheya/Hari seemingly re-enacts that attempt on her life. Each time she is rejuvenated, her memory/recollections of the real Rheya/Hari improve/expand so that although the seemingly infinite capacity of the *phi*-creature/visitor to regenerate itself indicates a kind of corporeal stasis (an eternal return of the body), the temporally linked aspect of memory is continually changing and in flux.<sup>64</sup>

What is provisionally conceived in the first visitation as almost a barely evolved fragment of recollection develops through the cipher of proximity and nearness.

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63 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 109. The interpretation of the schematic of the house is schismatic in that in that it renders the architectural spatiality (the empty rooms, long hallways and dead ends) as 'perpetually promising, but forever eluding the finality of immutable layout' (ibid., p. 109).

64 It is worthy of note here that Kelvin's first attempt to deal with the visitor is not to explain it scientifically but to make it invisible by launching it into orbit – to dispose of it: 'I felt I was justified in thinking that I had defeated the "simulacra", and that behind the illusion, contrary to all expectation, I had found the real Rheya again – the Rheya of my memories, whom the hypothesis of madness would have destroyed' (Lem, *Solaris*, p. 68).

As already noted, this is most clearly identified when the *phi*-creature/visitor repeats the real Rheya/Hari's attempt at suicide through the ingestion of liquid oxygen.<sup>65</sup> This seemingly happens as the *phi*-creature/visitor accumulates more and more memory data through proximity to Kelvin, and therefore becomes familiar with the psychological trauma from Kelvin's past, which drove the real Rheya/Hari to end her life.

What is also significant here is that such recollection is indiscriminate, in that the facsimile of Rheya/Hari cannot choose which memories inform her development in Kelvin's presence, and equally the planet's involvement cannot differentiate good memory from bad (this raises the question; is Rheya/Hari a 'good' of a 'bad' copy – a *phantasme*?).

It could be argued that the capacity for the planet to read and interpret memory does not include an ability to differentiate between what might be considered a 'good' or a 'bad' recollection for the one who is visited, and that therefore this increases the possibility of a kind of repetition.

The repetition would be steeped in the potential trauma of the original relationship. In the novel, Snow interprets the process by which the planet manifests the

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65 Rodowick notes in *Deleuze's Time-Machine* that Walter Benjamin focused on the problem of time in his essay, 'A Short History of Photography'. Rodowick comments that Benjamin's fascination with the transition of the interval of time marked by exposure from requirements of several hours to latterly, mere fractions of a second. Benjamin's concept of aura is entirely dependent on the longevity of exposure: 'the longer the interval of exposure, the greater the chance that the aura of an environment-the complex temporal relations woven through its represented figures-would seep into the image', p. 8. Rheya/Hari develops her aura through prolonged contact/exposure to Kelvin – expanding her memory capacity/recollection from her first appearance as a snapshot from Kelvin's memory. The affiliation to a pharmacology interpretation should also not be lost here. Sense is called into question and complicated here when Rheya/Hari chooses to terminate her existence with liquid oxygen, which in another corporeal/material manifestation (its gaseous state) is life giving.



phenomena of the *visitors* as one that 'probed our brains and penetrated to some kind of psychic tumor'.<sup>66</sup> Later in the same passage he states that it:

isolated psychic processes, enclosed, stifled, *encysted* – foci smouldering under the ashes of memory. It deciphered them and made use of them, in the same way one uses a recipe or *blueprint*.<sup>67</sup>

This amoral condition of an outside agency is something Tarkovsky explores again in *Stalker*. During the traversal of the zone, the three travellers discuss the demise of another stalker named Porcupine who entered 'the room' and was seemingly granted his wish.

On his return from the zone he suddenly became very wealthy but within a week he had committed suicide. The implication is that the room does not read and act upon the superficiality of any surface desire but rather delves deeper and interprets darker subconscious wishes.

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66 Lem, *Solaris*, p. 77. The interruptive aspect of undifferentiated amorality has a strong parallel in *Stalker*. The reading of Kelvin's memory by the ocean to facilitate Rheya/Hari does not distinguish between good and bad memory in the same way that the wishing room in *Stalker* does not fulfil merely conscious desire but grants and interprets the unconscious wish regardless of the repercussions to the wisher maker.

67 Added emphasis. *Ibid.*, p. 77. It may be worth reiterating here Danielewski's use of a blue typeface for the word *house* throughout *House of Leaves* and the suggestion that it indicates an alteric hyperlink to the *unheimlich*. I draw attention here to the use of the word *encysted* explored in Chapter 3 of this text as the event of the *ructure*. The term *blueprint* also has architectonic connotations that also link to earlier remarks about the rift in its German translation indicating both *cut* or *tear* and *ground plan*. The correlation to the *abysmal* is also pertinent here.

What is important to glean from this apparent dilemma is that which is essentially and fundamentally alteric though the nature of its alterity cannot be expected or anticipated to conform to any prescription of regulation imposed upon it. It is not merely amoral, but by its very definition outside the conceptual framework by which and for which morality can stake a claim. The stalker identifies the risk of the wish-fulfilment aspect of the room, not through the consciousness of such wishing but through the unconscious desire of the visitor – hence the cautionary tale of Porcupine. What is intolerable about the room is that it represents unbearable possibility – hence the scientist's desire to destroy it with an explosive device. However, the stalker might also be seen as a grail knight – a visionary not caught up in the status of his role, and who continually underplays his worthiness, yet it is he who is seemingly granted his unconscious wish as he is uncontaminated by a corrupted desire (unlike 'Writer' and particularly 'Scientist', whose intent is to destroy the room with an explosive device so as to extinguish false hope in others).

Rheya/Hari is no longer fixed in a finite present but is the manifestation of an infinite possibility (this is evident in her capacity to continually rejuvenate herself), and is Kelvin's memory of his wife interpreted by Solaris and projected from Kelvin's past.<sup>68</sup>

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68 Ronald Bogue, in *Deleuze on Cinema*, argues: 'The present image becomes representation when it is isolated from other images, not by more light being cast on it, but by the diminution of light, a darkening of its contours. Hence if present images are light, representations are subtractions of quantities of light, or selective filterings of light' (p. 31).

The Solaris effect (the incorporeal infinitude), understood as a kind of thaumaturgy,<sup>69</sup> precedes and anticipates interaction with a cause (a corporal finitude) in the personages of Kelvin, Snow and Sartorius. But they do not act as merely the source of the simulacra but rather also as the 'point of view' from which the simulacra might be viewed – the screen.<sup>70</sup>

The effect of the simulacra as arguably a spectral manifestation of memory would suggest that in a way Rheya/Hari is already immanent as a problem within Kelvin in two aspects; firstly, as a transcendental ground of possible actualisations, and secondly, as a secondary effect or simulacra. In the sense of the first view, Rheya/Hari could be conceived as a point of immanence specified by the proximity of the corporeal Kelvin and, most importantly, his memory of his wife at the time of her death, to the pre-individuation manifest in Solaris as a kind of transcendental ground.

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69 Thaumaturgy – the act of performing miracles (a combination of the scientific with a magical outlook). From the Greek *thaumatourgos*, *thaumatos* – marvel, and *egos* – working. This concept is discussed in by Frances A. Yates in *Theatre of the World* in relation to what is termed a *thaumaturgike*, which is understood to be either a mechanical toy or a strange theatrical effect. She quotes Dr John Dee, one of two of the great magical scientists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (the other being Robert Fludd), when describing the *thaumaturgike* as: 'that Art Mathematicall which giveth certaine order to make straunge workes of the sense to be perceived, and of men greatly to be wondered at' (p. 30). Derrida, in *The Truth in Painting*, quotes Kant in discussion of the *parergon* (the supplement outside the work of art) when he states that because reason is 'conscious of its impotence to satisfy its moral need', it has recourse to the supplementary work of the *parergon*. The fourth *parergon* (illumination) has a correspondent danger or detriment cited as *thaumaturgy* (*The Truth in Painting*, p. 56). I also refer again here to E.T.A Hoffmann's short story 'The Sandman', where the leading character Nathaniel falls in love with the automaton, Olympia and, as a result of which, is driven mad and finally to suicide.

70 Bogue argues in *Deleuze on Cinema*: 'an object (a merely present image) emits light and that some rays of light pass through unnoticed, while others are reflected back onto the object. Our representation of the object consists of rays of light we reflect, that is, the object's total number of rays minus the rays we ignore or do not reflect. An organ of perception functions as the mirror that reflects the rays that interest us and that serve our future actions' (p. 31).



The ability of the planet to continually replicate Rheyra/Hari illustrates and articulates the notion that at the heart of infinity is repetition. Each 'new' Rheyra/Hari is physically the same as the previous one (a simulation of Kelvin's recollection of her at the time of her physical death), and clearly that sameness is based in Kelvin's memory as interpreted by Solaris.

Yet that sameness is inherently different from the source Rheyra/Hari, in that Solaris creates this particular *phi*-creature/visitor not from a first-hand or ideal person, but from the memory of another (Kelvin) whose recollective idiosyncrasies must inform the simulation. The implication here is that repetition is not grounded in similitude as a replication understood through mere sameness, but that it is contingent on an essential difference.<sup>71</sup>

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71 In both the film and the novel when Rheyra/Hari first appears, Kelvin notices, in attempting to remove her dress (he asks her to don a spacesuit seemingly to go on a reconnaissance mission but in reality it is his first attempt to rid himself of the *phi*-creature/visitor) that there are no fastenings. This implies that Solaris, in reading his memory, has been selective (the *phi*-creature/visitor Rheyra/Hari is not a complete facsimile). In the novel, on Rheyra/Hari's return when she undresses again, Kelvin notes: 'The sight of the two identical dresses *filled me with horror* which exceeded anything I had felt hitherto. Rheyra was busy tidying up the medicine chest. I turned my back and bit my knuckles. Unable to take my eyes of the two dresses – or rather *the original dress and its double*' (pp. 78–9, added emphasis).

We understand meaning as an incorporeal attribute to words (it is also produced *through* language and therefore a mere after-effect of the lingual) and yet presupposed in every statement as an antecedent condition.<sup>72</sup> The paradox of meaning for Deleuze is both in after-effect and something that is always already there but which is also a transcendental condition of possible meanings and becomings that have an infinite number of embodiments. In linguistic terms, the ideal matter of words is essentially not linguistic and the singular point of things is not essentially physical, but implicates centres of virtual difference before being explicated or actualised in specific forms. This indicates what we might term a 'transcendental field' of *both* meaning *and* events, which might proffer a metaphysical surface that is manifest in paradox and simulacra.<sup>73</sup>

Generally, the rational meaning of logical propositions is referred to as common or good sense and this infers that nonsense is therefore paradoxical and contradictory to the rational. Deleuze argues that, in this way, nonsense gives a full and unrestricted dimension of sense, which is both corporeal and incorporeal.

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72 In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze indicated four categories of incorporeals:

- (i) Time (*aion* and *chronos*)
- (ii) Place
- (iii) Void
- (iv) Expressible – *Lekton*

For the Stoics, one and four were the most important – *Lekton*, as what is expressible operates as a 'between' (what Deleuze refers to as *extra-being*) which is neither subjective nor empirical. Time is understood as the variable present of bodies (*chronos*) **and** the unlimited time of past and future, which has no real existence (*aion*).

73 It is important to remember here that Deleuze's conception of the transcendental *is* in a sense metaphysical without falling into the trope of the transcendental as either an abyss without differences or possibilities *or* a sovereignly individuated being.

Words as bodies (physical sounds devoid of meaning) are non-sense but have an important psychological function.<sup>74</sup>

Incorporeal nonsense is an ever-elusive paradoxical entity that traverses the metaphysical surface of meaning and establishes what Deleuze describes as a structure of singular points. The psychological model is a primal experience of a corporeal plenum of non-individuated bodies from where emerge the agencies of ego and superego, fantasy and thought – corporeal nonsense/words as bodies.

Schizophrenics<sup>75</sup> confuse words and things (similarly to writers like Lewis Carroll)<sup>76</sup> but the latter's wordplay involves the incorporeal surface, whereas the formers' verbal constructions are embedded in the 'corporeal depths of bodies without surfaces'.<sup>77</sup>

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74 In 'The Transcendence of Words', Levinas wrote: 'Non-sense is the most evenly distributed thing in the world' (*The Levinas Reader*, p. 145). In *House of Leaves*, Danielewski comments: 'Strangely then, the best argument for fact is the absolute unaffordability of fiction. Thus it would appear the *ghost haunting The Navidson Record* continually bashing against the door, is none other than the recurring threat of its own reality' (p. 149).

75 The 'idiot' is understood as a conceptual persona who departs from any scholastic definition of man as rational animal, dramatises the unlearned and untutored in thinking.

76 The concept of 'non-sense', as illustrated by Lewis Carroll in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, is integral to Deleuze's *The Logic of Sense*. I draw attention to Deleuze's remarks on the object in the Sheep's Shop in *Through the Looking-Glass* (Chapter V, pp. 170–80) later in this chapter.

77 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 74.

Deleuze argues that schizophrenics experience words as 'devouring, lacerating or jubilant physical entities' but also as a collection of dissociated 'body parts, dismembered, interpenetrating and mutually devouring' and as what he terms 'a body without organs'.<sup>78</sup>

The transgressive movement of a kind of bifurcation of the lingual operates, for the schizophrenic, as either the dismembered body entered by exploding words, wounding and rending phonetic elements devoid of meaning or issuing forth from that body without organs as 'glorious unarticulated sonic blocks'.<sup>79</sup>

In the endnotes to Chapter Six of *House of Leaves*, the character Johnny Truant comments on entering Zampanò's apartment and discovering his writings and some unaccountable marks on the floor:

for I saw the impossible marks near the trunk, touched them, even caught some splinters in my fingertips, some of their *unexpected sadness and mourning* which though dug out later with a safety pin, I swear still fester beneath my skin, reminding me ... just like other splinters, I still carry, though these much deeper, having never been worked out by the body but quite the contrary worked into the body, by

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78 Foucault argued that, historically, madness was reduced by the age of reason to the status of a mere disease and was no longer dignified as meaningful unreason. The consideration that such *non-sense* was in fact the mind having wings was undermined (the wings were clipped) by the disposition of reason as an educational programme of psychiatric discourse which put the patient on trial as it were, and from which the only respite would be sincere remorse. I draw attention here to what has already been remarked on the *phi*-creatures/visitors in *Solaris*. Under microscopic scrutiny, Kelvin discovers that Rheya/Hari is not constituted of recognisable body parts, but *nutrinos* and when he has focused the microscope to its optimum setting, discovers not an atomic structure but pure white light.

79 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 75. Earlier in the text he argues that: 'Sense is never only one of the two terms of the duality which contrasts things with propositions, substantives and verbs, denotations and expressions; it is also the frontier, the cutting edge, or the articulation of the difference between the two terms, since it has at its disposal an impenetrability which is its own and within which it is reflected. For these reasons, sense must be developed for its own sake in a new series of paradoxes, which are now internal' (ibid., p. 28).

now long since buried, calcified and fused to my very bones.<sup>80</sup>

As stated in Chapter 1 of this text, incorporeal non-sense functions for Deleuze as the structuring force of the transcendental field of singular points and is a stable intrinsic meaning that can never be found in mere deferral. Here he differs from and critiques Derrida by suggesting that deferral, understood as a perpetual regress of one word defined by yet another prevents the discovery of a linguistic ground; as a paradoxical element, it is never where it is sought and always where it cannot be found. In *Stalker*, the character of the stalker is blessed with the idiocy of a kind of schizophrenia, in that he negotiates the zone by finding paths with a zonal topological pre-sense founded in the adaptability of his experience and intuition, and takes charge of the rational and scholastic (identified in his fellow travellers, 'Writer' and 'Scientist').<sup>81</sup>

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80 Added emphasis. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 78.

81 Tarkovsky's representation of the zone in *Stalker* indicates the remnants of the Great Patriotic War (the Soviet Union's fight against Nazi Germany, 1941–5) with the inclusion of derelict tanks, concrete bunkers etc. This suggests that the zone had already been a locale fraught with potential dangers prior to the alien visitation. It implies a layering of temporal events whose connection is the risk and danger inferred by their demarcation. Paul Virilio, in *Bunker Archaeology*, states: 'The art of warfare aims at the constitution of an unhealthy, improper place for men just where he used to dwell' (p. 37).





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Mark Le Fanu proposes that Tarkovsky presents the stalker as a holy fool and this is done through gesture. For Tarkovsky, cinema had become a quasi-silent medium and the stalker's vulnerability resists being pinned down – 'he is muscular but at the same time "neurotic": masculine but with feminine characteristics.

In sum, *he is opaque and ungraspable* – an apparition.<sup>82</sup>

In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault argued that:

The madman's voyage is at once a rigorous division and an absolute Passage. In one sense, it simply develops, across a half-real, half-imaginary geography, the madman's *liminal* position on the horizon of medieval concern – a position symbolised and made real at the same time by the madman's privilege of being *confined* within the city *gates*: his exclusion must enclose him; if he cannot and must not have another *prison* than the *threshold* itself, he is kept at the point of passage. He is put in the interior of the exterior, and inversely.<sup>83</sup>

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82 Added emphasis. Mark Le Fanu, *The Cinema of Andrei Tarkovsky*, p. 98. Deleuze indicated a new kind of character that inhabits 'new' cinema: 'It is because what happens to them does not belong to them and only half concerns them, because they know how to extract from the event the part that cannot be reduced to what happens: that part of inexhaustible possibility that constitutes the unbearable, the intolerable, the visionary's part' (*Cinema 2*, pp. 19–20). The confusion and ambiguity of gender is perhaps concomitant with what has been previously stated with regard to Ariadne's relationship with Theseus (the feminine image of man) as noted by Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Also note here Tarkovsky's extended scrutiny of the physical profile of the stalker once he has guided Scientist and Writer over the border and into the zone. Le Fanu argues that this extended shot resists the portentousness of the anticipation of a profound oration in favour of a study of vulnerability, which, rather than resort to mere pathos, emphasises the afore mentioned opaqueness of the fictional protagonist. This differs from the original conception of the character in the Strugatsky brothers' novel as a tough, streetwise character. In this sense, the anticipation of possible readings of the character mirrors the navigation of the zone (a reading on the stalker's face of the uncertainty of the possible directions that might be taken). I also mention here Deleuze's cinematic reading of the close-up as part of his work on the affection-image, of the framed head as the deterritorialisation of the face in *Cinema 1* (as noted in a film like Carl Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc* – a silent film where the film is made up extended close-ups). The separation is from what he argues are the three conventional functions of the face:

- Individuation – the distinguishing of characteristics of each character
- Socialisation – the relation of the social role through character interaction
- Communication – interaction, not only between two persons but also what he calls the internal accord between character and one's role.

83 Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, p. 11.

Foucault pointed out that with the withdrawal of leprosy<sup>84</sup> from the Western world at the end of the Middle Ages, the figure of the leper (and the communal sites they occupied outside urban centres and on the margins of the community) was reassigned so that the values and images previously attached gave meaning to a more general kind of social exclusion.<sup>85</sup>

In particular this meant that the fearful figure of the madman was not merely driven off as an act of total exclusion, but inscribed with a peripheral role and, in that sense, kept at a sacred distance.<sup>86</sup>

John Rajchman, in *The Deleuze Connections*, argues that *noo-ology*, as the image of thought, proposes an undogmatic way of approaching philosophy, which is not to be confused with what he terms a pre-comprehension of being (in the Heideggarian sense) or in a *gestalt* as a sphere of spirit (in the Hegelian sense), but is fundamentally against any intrinsic narrative,

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84 It is worth reiterating here that in *House of Leaves*, Will Navidson suffers from an indeterminate skin disorder (see footnote in Chapter 3 of this text), which is miraculously cured after his final excursion into the house. However, it might be argued that there was a physical cost for such a cure: 'Navidson began to recover, but the price he paid for living was not cheap. Frostbite claimed his right hand and clipped the top portion of one ear. Patches of skin on his face were also removed as well as his left eye. Furthermore his hip had inexplicably shattered and had to be replaced. Doctors said he would need a crutch for the rest of his life' (p. 523).

85 In the Strugatsky brothers' novel, *Roadside Picnic*, they not only identify the zone as an area of exclusion, but also a plague quarter also contaminated in the aftermath of the visitation which created the zone: 'Almost everyone who lived in the neighborhood was hit, that's why we call it the Plague Quarter. Some died, mostly old people, and not too many of them. I, for one, think they died from fright and not the plague. It was terrifying. Everyone who lived there got sick. And people in three neighborhoods went blind ... They didn't go completely blind, but got a sort of night blindness' (p. 19). This blindness was apparently not caused by a bright light but a loud noise.

86 'In the margins of the community, at the gates of cities, there stretched wastelands, which sickness ceased to haunt but had left sterile and long inhabitable. From the 14th to the 17th century they would wait, soliciting with strange incantations, a new incarnation of disease another grimace of terror, renewed rites of purification and exclusion.' Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation*, p. 3.

historicism and sequentialism. This philosophical theatre argues for the precedent of juxtaposition, layering and stratigraphic montage, no longer tied to the hermeneutic universality of historical linearity, and where links are made across strata; where newness and the untimely transgress established stratifications in shifts which open up new fault lines and possibilities through the continual event of mutation. The cinematic resonance of this conception of temporality and montage should not be lost here, and the pertinence of complication as the overarching thematic at work here is further articulated by the reconsideration of sense and event as the motivation of thought, rather than the historical imperatives of truth and proposition.

As Deleuze states:

The cinematographic image is always dividual. This is because, in the final analysis, the screen, as the frame of frames, gives a common standard of measurement to things which do not have one – long shots of countryside and close-ups of the face, an astronomical system and a single drop of water – parts which do not have the same denominator of distance, relief or light. In all these senses the frame ensures a deterritorialisation of the image.<sup>87</sup>

The freeing of the time of philosophy from any epochal temporality (in the sense of a self-realisation of spirit or a destining of the West) also insists that thought should have no intrinsic home – no homeland or civilisation.

Deleuze proposes a geophilosophy that rethinks borders based on odd potentials, different circumstances and contingencies rather than origins – a deterritorialisation, a nowhere not covered or compensated by an imagined community, nation or utopian condition where there is no imperium of truth, no

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87 Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 14-15.

transcendent law or Apollonian ideal city.<sup>88</sup> What matters is not a single unchanging relation to truth but the differences of orientation that suggest the image of thought (Deleuzian *noo-ology*) operates as an orientation tool in that it is prior to argument (for example, Descartes would argue differently from Plato) and selection is made through relation to a negative that is no longer meant in the sense of something to be corrected or overcome, an error, but rather a stupidity to be exposed and attacked.

This notion of stupidity suggests any philosophical conflict is no longer based in a propositional error of ideality, but in taking on the intractable, not as irrational, but as involving the thinker in a relation with something inhuman and intolerable – the ‘bestiality of thinking’.<sup>89</sup> Problematisation pushes outside without any assurance of a superior first knowledge, which has a consensual agreement and engages with the shock of working with something for which there is no prior learning method. We are no longer in the realms of mere correction of error through the beatification of a higher science, but extrapolate beyond the natural light of good will and knowing to make visible new forces through experimental activity.<sup>90</sup>

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88 Deleuze proposes a ‘Spinozian city’ that allows for the movement of free thought and social diversity. This movement always has an outside for which the private thinker refuses to place him/herself prior to truth. Deleuze and Guattari argue that ‘the relation to truth in philosophy is neither stable nor constant, which is why it cannot be defined by it’ (*What is Philosophy?*, p. 54).

89 I would like to make a link here between the ‘bestiality of thinking’ and the ‘barbarism’ of post-Holocaust/Shoah writing of lyric poetry as indicated by Adorno in relation to Celan (see Chapter 2 of this text). In the novel *Solaris*, Snow comments to Kelvin with reference to man’s first contact with the planet: ‘contact with another civilization. Now we’ve got it! And we can observe through the microscope as it were our own monstrous ugliness, our folly, our shame!’ (p. 76).

90 Deleuze proposes a worldly thinking against the urdoxa of transcendent ideality.

Deleuze proposes an amorphous unformed space as shown through the anexact diagrams of pre-geometric figures, critiquing Husserl's *The Origin of Geometry* by suggesting that Husserl, in not extending his phenomenality to include the affirmation of such spaces, undermines their significance in favour of good geometric figures.

Intensive space is not grounded in good form or the synthesis of a manifold, and departs significantly from the recognised constitution of objects-with-properties and a divisible space of mere extension. Deleuze argued that the perambulation of space refuses any concept of mapping and rather posits a condition of filling out, which refutes any determination towards unrestrained organisation while also indicating the inseparability of space and movement.

David Gross, however, points out a third type of memory that is hinted at by Bergson (but not significantly expanded upon), which he understands to be involuntary memory and by which it is understood that memories are unsolicited or disengaged from immediate action or perception and become an overwhelming flood of images which hinder any ability to cope with reality. In historical terms, these 'disturbances of memory and (the) failures of recognition'<sup>91</sup> not only draw parallels between Bergson's involuntary memory and Deleuze's time-image, but also articulate what we have already defined as a fragmentary vision, which became synonymous with a perception of European cinema where subjectivity resisted the domination of an *objective* vision

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91 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 55.

concomitant with what Deleuze describes as the action or movement-image of American cinema.<sup>92</sup>

In classical cinema, the laws of motion function independently of time and, as such, the dynamics of such a form subordinate the temporal to movement. Modern cinema pulverises chronology so that the temporal is no longer subordinate to the integrity of movement as mere physical actions, but remains fragmented like the parts of a broken crystal.

The distinction made by Deleuze is that between the frame as a provisionally closed and artificial set, and the shot as open and essentially variable. In *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*, D.N. Rodowick argues that the former 'detaches objects from pro-filmic space, grouping actions, gesture, bodies and decors in a motivated ensemble'.<sup>93</sup> If this is correct, the parallel is perhaps between the habitual memory of pure recollection, arguably concomitant with the realism of the movement-image, and the involuntary memory of the modernist art film and the time-image.

Deleuze argued that the significant difference between the classical cinema of the movement-image and the modern cinema of the time-image is the non-rational or irrational link and cut.

The so-called classical cinema works above all through the linkage of images, and subordinates cuts to this linkage. On the mathematical analogy, the cuts which divide up two series of images are rational, in the sense that they constitute either the final image of the first series or the first image of the second ... rational cuts always determine

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92 It is argued by Deleuze that the cinema of the time-image promoted an empiricist conversion in the era of post-war trauma. This refers to a belief or trust in the world that is prior to any divine calculation and judgement and interpreting the world as ever still making itself and never formulated mere goodness and truth – a belief in future as future (an *aesthesis*).

93 Rodowick, *Deleuze's Time Machine*, p. 11.

commensurable relations between a series of images and thereby constitute the whole rhythmic system and harmony of classical cinema ... Time here, is therefore, essentially the object of an indirect representation, according to the commensurable relations and rational cuts which organise the sequence or linkage of movement-images ... modern cinema can communicate with the old, and the distinction between the two can be very relative. However, it will be defined ideally by a reversal where the image is unlinked and the cut begins to have an importance in itself. The cut, or interstice between two series of images no longer forms part of either of the two series; it is the equivalent of an irrational cut, which determines the non-commensurable relations between images.<sup>94</sup>

Modern cinema then (by which Deleuze specifically refers to the European films of the post-war era) proffers the discontinuity of the irrational as the means by which the smooth running of any variation on movement as essentially continuous and legible is undermined. Donato Totaro argues that movement-image is a form of spatialised cinema, whereby time is determined and measured by movement (characters placed in narrative situations, perceive, react and take action in a direct linear way).

The breakdown of what Deleuze calls the sensor-motor system happens when direct action and reaction are undermined by the discontinuity of temporal shifts and the appearance of vacant and disconnected spaces (he terms these 'any-space-whatevers'), which disrupt continuity, pushing the characters into a more passive role.

As already suggested, this pre-geometric spatiality is essentially transgressive, in that it escapes division and topographic determination to exploit an intensity

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94 Ibid., p. 213.



beyond the limit of the lived body of phenomenological properties. The shift in cinema is, for Deleuze, a slackening of sensory-motor connections, replacing them with a purely optical and sound situation that he identifies with the role of the child in neo-realist cinema. He argues: 'in the adult world, the child is affected by a certain motor helplessness, but one which makes him all the more capable of seeing and hearing'.<sup>95</sup>

In Tarkovsky's film *Stalker*, the stalker's child Monkey could be interpreted as an illustration of a pre/post sensory condition that is not only heightened by her motor helplessness (it is made explicit that she literally cannot walk) but also, as indicated at the end of the film, by the fact that she is telepathic – perhaps a gift/curse of the zone/room.



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95 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 3

There is an implication in both film and novel<sup>96</sup> that the stalker's forays into the zone and any resulting contamination<sup>97</sup> are responsible for Monkey's condition. The trip which takes place in Tarkovsky's cinematic adaptation, indicates that a wish is fulfilled by the room on the stalker's return, in that it appears that Monkey is now mobile. However, the shot later reveals that she is in fact 'walking' on her father's shoulders.<sup>98</sup>

Navidson's children in *House of Leaves* are denied the paradox of the closet by 'swallowing it whole'.<sup>99</sup> Zampanò later comments on Daisy's demand to play a game that she seems to refer to as 'always' as perhaps just a childish neologism, yet the sinister overtone is maintained in the text by proposing that the title of the game may in fact be a mispronunciation of the word hallways and that the children fail to recognise the *unheimlich* potential (the *non-sense*) of the house in the same way as the adults do, preferring to interpret the disorienting changes taking place as part of a game.

Navidson's wife Karen reacts differently.

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96 The novel written by the Strugatsky brothers is entitled *Roadside Picnic* and is so named to suggest the temporary incursion of aliens thirty years prior to the commencement of the narrative and who picnicked on earth and then left leaving a series of locations permanently contaminated by their debris. In the novel this residue is very real and the source of an underground economy for stalkers in alien contraband. In Tarkovsky's film, what is desired is wish fulfilment from the room. In her essay, 'Art for All 'Time'' (*Film-Philosophy*, Vol. 4, No. 4, February 2000), Donato Totaro comments: 'Tarkovsky is not interested in external, scientific truth or reality, but an inner subjective truth. The room granted the truth of the deeper self and not the apparent reality of the surface self' (p. 4).

97 In the novel, this is referred to as the 'mutagen effect': 'Everyone who spends time in the zone undergoes changes, both phenotype and genotype' (p. 109).

98 Tarkovsky expands this idea of the miracle by suggesting at the end of the film that Monkey has telepathic powers. In a seemingly repetitive sequence which mirrors the opening shot of the film, objects move across a surface in the stalker's apartment as the result of the vibration of a passing train. In the final sequence Monkey appears to be watching a similar event, but it is only after the train has passed and the noise dies away that we are aware that the objects continue to move and that Monkey (evidenced by her facial reaction) is manipulating them.

99 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 39.

Karen's project is one mechanism against the uncanny or that which is 'un-home-like'. She remains watchful and willing to let the bizarre dimensions of her house *gestate within her*.<sup>100</sup>

The discrepancies that unfold in the *Navidson Record* are concomitant with the Deleuzian view of the time-image. This is centred on the purely optical and sound image, which articulates more indeterminate themes of mental imagery and emotional and psychic breakdown – a direct image of time.<sup>101</sup> Danielewski's account of a fictive documentary film entitled *The Navidson Record*, as described by the deceased Zampanò in his surviving notes published as the main body of text in *House of Leaves*, states that:

If finally catalogued as a gothic tale, contemporary urban folk myth, or merely a ghost story, as some have called it, the documentary will still, sooner or later, *slip the limits* of any one of those genres.<sup>102</sup>

The possibility inherent in this slippage that recognises the 'between' of any formal genres as integral to a new

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100 Added emphasis. *Ibid.*, p. 37. Karen's project is putting up some shelves, which highlights the first noticeable discrepancies in the dimensions of the house. Earlier remarks indicate the ambiguity of the transgression of the corporeal articulated in the event of gestation, its temporal dimension and potential parasitic consequences. This presents a psychological trauma of simultaneously being 'in' the house while at the same time, recognising that the house is also 'in' the body. Gestation is an attribute of, amongst other life forms, the parasite.

101 In his introduction to Foucault's text on Raymond Roussel, *Death and the Labyrinth*, John Ashbery comments that Roussel's poem *Nouvelles Impression d'Afrique* (1932) has a narrative constantly interrupted by parenthetical thought and where sometimes five pairs of parentheses 'isolate one idea *buried* in the surrounding verbiage like the central sphere of a Chinese puzzle' (p. xxv, added emphasis). The visual similarity between these parentheses and a labyrinthine structure should not be lost here. He later argues that the poem is pieced together by moving backwards and forwards through the text – to turn ahead to the last line of the canto in order to be able to finish the first line as a means of piecing the poem together.

102 Added emphasis. Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 3. The two fictitious films mentioned in *Five and a Half Minute Hallway* and *Exploration#4* are described by Zampanò as structurally 'highly discontinuous, jarring' (p. 5).

understanding of how a structure might be recognised, identifies complication and interruption as the essential schematic of mutability. As stated above, Danielewski exploits many recognised forms, but the fundamental structure of the novel links main text and footnotes (via the disjunction of any intrinsic temporal continuity) by developing, provisionally at least, two narratives simultaneously (operating as two pasts, as it were), on the same page.

The ongoing desire is to find continuity in the shift from what we might call the main narrative, understood as Zampanò's account of the *Navidson Record*, to the footnoted text of Johnny Truant's personal memoir. Chronology as a clear path through the text is blurred by the novel's structure and page layouts where the issue is raised that the novel is in fact not a novel at all but a documentary account of not only the edited notes of a person called Zampanò but supplemented by the diary of a further seemingly real character called Johnny Truant.

182 Obviously, the tradition of documentary ethnography is a long and valuable one, especially when considered in conjunction with the tradition of ethnography. The following list of names is intended to be a partial list of those contributing to the tradition of ethnography, including those contributions made by Robert Flaherty, Esther Shoup, Warren Wallace, Edmund Barry, Herbert Kline, Ernest B. Schuchman, Paul Rotha, Tom Hayden, David Lurie, Neil Chalmers, Mary Lampson, Stuart Legg, D. W. Griffith, Henri Busch, E. Smedley, William J. Hall, Walter Dill Scott, John Frost, Burton Benjamin, Ken Felt, Shobha Apte, Barbara Ehrenreich, Paul Freston, Jan Kucera, Henry Selman, Alberto Cavalcanti, Weiss, Thorold Dickinson, Roy Kinnear, Peter Menan, Cooper, Jerome Hill, Walter Heynewski, Leo Seltzer, Bonnie Sherr Klein, Edward Mornin, Boris Barnet, Leacock, Skanata, Rouch, Paul Strand, Jill Godmilow, Jerry Hoffman, Ion Botan, Tadeusz Jaworski, Carol Reed, Michael Rubbo, Humphrey Jennings, Shirley Clark, Ilsa Trauberg, Mananne Szemes, Pat Jackson, Alan Winton, King, Arthur Barron, Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Kratochvíl, Michael Latham, Nicholas Wessely, Sissy Skanata, Mikhail Shufsky, Agoston Kollanyi, Barb, Yukesack, Walter Ruttmann, Federico W. Cava, ara Koppé, Marvin Lichter, Erwin Leser, John Perraulli, Henry Kiss, David Greig, Steve Reichert, Graeme Ferguson, James Klein, Edward Kalabasz, Estvan Ujmar, Sol Knause, R. Murray, Noel Coward, Noyana Toshiro, Basil Balthus, Leni Riefenstahl, Emma Vasquez, Wright, Adrian Brunel, Willard Van Dyke, Joris Ikkabiko Kamma, Walter Cooper, Steve Kama, Evans, Anatole Litvak, Ben Maddow, Wilt Doney, Joseph Krumpholtz, Douglas, Lillian, ...

abacms, peristylums, vestibules, arcades, tpses, naves, naos, pronaos, opisthodomos, nymphaeum, internal crepidoma, courtyards, paradegrounds, bailey, demilune, zaponiere, tenaille, flank, postern, rampart, face, bastion, embrasure, curtain, keep, prattice, merlon, or battlement, nor—obviously—pilasters, pillars, friezes, entablatures, architraves, facades, pediments, stylobates, triglyphs, scotia, torus, fillers, finials, and flutes, capitals, whether Ionic, Doric, or Corinthian, with volutes, abacuses, rosettes, acanthus leaf, or metopes, guttas, mutules, acroterions, dentils, or

The account of Truant's life runs concomitantly with the first throughout the body of the text and specifically

indicates the progressive deterioration and disorientation of that life. In the introduction, the character Truant comments that he lost all sense of time while reading Zampanò's text and: 'Slowly but surely, I grew more and more disorientated'.<sup>103</sup> This indicates a direct affect by his involvement with Zampanò's account of yet further lives (the characters of *the Navidson Record*) and further temporal shifts.

As the narrative unfolds, a group of associates (Holloway's exploration team) are drafted in to enforce a further 'scientific' diagnostic by exploring the shifting anomalies of the house. The exploration culminates in the tragic consequences of the latter part of the novel and which exacerbate non-linear relations, and along with the other concomitant narrative (Truant's increasingly convoluted trajectory through Zampanò's journal and notes) find the text becoming progressively more labyrinthine. It defies a clear linearity by predicating disorientation with all its incumbent complications and uncertainty of what *is* virtual and what *is* actual.

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103 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, introduction, p. xviii. In a later section of the text, Truant comments: 'No one wanted the old man's words -except me' (p. 20). The strong association between the characters of Truant and Zampanò is almost as that between absent father and son (note here the affiliation between Matta-Clark, his brother Batan and their absent father, the Chilean surrealist painter Matta). This link that Danielewski makes in the footnoted text also brings to light a certain fraternal relation between Truant and Lude (comparable with the one between Will and Tom Navidson in the main text). This relation reaches its zenith when the distinction between the appearance of what we might deem 'reality' and 'fantasy' is blurred where Truant describes the demise of Lude (the diary entry at the beginning of Chapter 21 states: 'October 25, 1998, Lude's dead.') This is supposedly at the hands of 'Gdansk man' as the first reprisal for Truant's affair with Kyrie (one of Zampanò's 'readers'). Also note here that Danielewski's sister (stage name, Poe) released an album in 2001 entitled *Haunted* and which particularly references this affair in the last track entitled 'Hey Pretty' (drive-by mix 2001) and uses an extensive quote from the novel (pp. 88-9) and read by the author. Other tracks made reference to the novel ('Exploration B', '5 & ½ Minute Hallway', 'Dear Johnny' and 'House of Leaves') but the predominant theme of the recording is a daughter's relationship with her recently deceased father.

Danielewski's own account of the novel and the theatricality of its construction began through the coalescence of a series of essays on how text could be explored in more cinematic ways. In an interview with Brian Logan, he stated:

I've always had a fondness for the way the page, when wrapped in footnotes and marginalia seemed to come to life. It was like some strange two-dimensional stage. Our words and phrases have all been influenced by the writers that come before us. I thought this was a more honest way of relating how stories are told.<sup>104</sup>

In *Sculpting in Time*, Tarkovsky argued that the adaptation of Bogomolov's novel into his first major feature film as a director (*Ivan's Childhood*) released the hidden cinematic potential of the novel.

It opened up possibilities for recreating in a new way the true atmosphere of war, with its hyper-tense nervous concentration, invisible on the surface of events but making itself felt like a *rumbling beneath the ground*.<sup>105</sup>

For him the poetic links found in the logic of poetry in cinema were 'extraordinarily pleasing',<sup>106</sup> and in this sense he argued that he found himself to be more at home in the poetic than in the traditional theatrical writing linking images through the linearity of a rigidly logical development of plot.

Some works have a wholeness and are endowed with a precise and original literary image; characters are drawn in unfathomable depths; the composition has an extraordinary capacity for enchantment, and the book is indivisible: through the pages comes the astonishing, unique personality of the author: books like that are masterpieces,

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104 Danielewski, interviewed by Brian Logan for the *Guardian*, 13 July 2000.

105 Added emphasis. Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, p. 17.

106 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

and only someone who is actually indifferent both to fine prose and to the cinema can conceive the urge to screen them. It is all the more important to emphasise this point now, when the time has come for literature to be separated, once and for all from cinema.<sup>107</sup>

Deleuze suggested that Tarkovsky's interpretation of time and how it flows through the shot was essentially through tension and rarefaction – the pressure of time in the shot. He argued that Tarkovsky denied the notion of a language of cinema working with units – the distinction between 'shot' as a framing device for the temporal, and 'montage', which articulates and expresses the pressure of time to exceed the limits of any shot.

The movement-image can be perfect, but it remains amorphous, indifferent and static if is not already deeply affected by injections of time which put montage into it, and alter movement.<sup>108</sup>

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107 Ibid., p. 15.

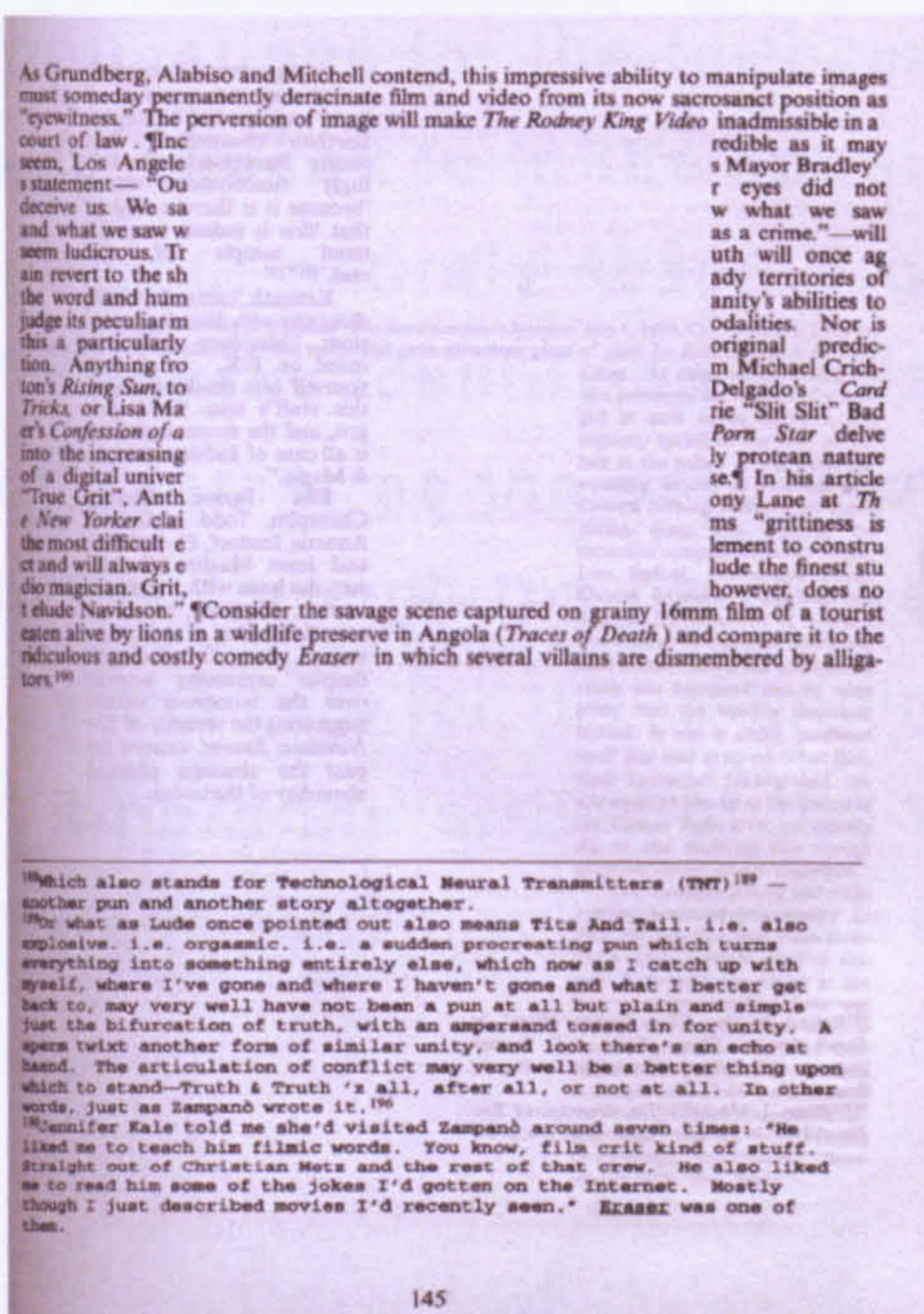
108 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 42–3.

In Danielewski's introduction to *House of Leaves*, the character Johnny Truant's discussion of the task confronting him when dealing with Zampanò's papers about *The Navidson Record* is a montage of recollections that press the boundaries of legibility and demand of any editing process a discernability of appropriateness.<sup>109</sup> Truant/Danielewski includes a number of Zampanò's notes, which are essentially illegible (the text is literally obliterated), as part of the montage of the text as a mechanism of disruption that does not follow a clear imperative towards mere exclusion, but in some ways articulates the continuity of limit by consistently exceeding it.

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109 I note here the publication at the end of *The Navidson Record* an array of appendices (pertinent to both Zampanò and Johnny Truant) that include visual material (Exhibits One to Six) and various information the author deemed relevant as evidence of the events at Ash Tree Lane. Note here the choice of Ash Tree Lane as the address of the house. Danielewski indicates (noted at the close of the novel), a reference to the Nordic mythological tree, the ash-tree *Yggdrasil*, which was believed to support the universe while maintaining its roots in all worlds. The Nordic tradition depicted the entire world as a tree of prodigious proportions and whose foliage was always verdant. It was rooted firstly in the subterranean kingdom of the underworld (*Niflhal*) and where its root penetrated, the fountain *Huergelmer* rose. The second was rooted in the land of the giants and from which the fountain *Mimir* spouted (the water of which was where all wisdom dwelt and cost the god Odin an eye for the privilege of drinking there). The last root ascended to the heavens and from which the fountain of the wisest Norn, Urd, rose. This was the source of water, which kept the tree from withering through the daily attention of Norns.





The varying scale of these omissions reflects the dimensional discrepancies at work in the house and add to the mystery and ambiguity of any definitive reading of the events of *The Navidson Record*.<sup>110</sup>

110 It is worth noting here that all the detailed notes (and footnotes) made by Zampanò and corresponding to the mythology of the Labyrinth and the Minotaur are conspicuously and consistently obliterated. Mythology encrypted into the text, pp. 109–11. The presence of a monster/Minotaur is strongly alluded to by Danielewski (via the sonic presence indicated by individuals hearing various animalistic sounds inside the labyrinth) and also noted inside the hallways by physical manifestation; the destruction of markers and equipment left by the exploration team – the ambiguity of these actions remains unresolved as there is further indication that it is not necessarily the act of an individual entity but the entropic condition of the labyrinth itself. The transgressive nature of these acts is not confined merely to the narrative of *The Navidson Record*, but crosses into the footnoted text where Johnny Truant also finds himself haunted as he negotiates Zampanò's labyrinthine notes. This is first indicated when Johnny and Lude first enter the old man's apartment and note the four gouge marks near where the body was found: "Right next to the body," Lude continued, "I found these gouges in the hardwood floor, a good six or seven inches long. Very weird. But since the old man showed no sign of physical trauma, the cops let it go" (p. xv). 'Sure enough, just as my friend had described, on the floor, in fact practically *dead center*, were four marks, all of them longer than one hand, jagged bits of wood clawed up by something neither one of us cared to imagine' (p. xvii, added emphasis).

The literal interpretation of the house as a mythological metaphor is conspicuously undermined by this unexplained obfuscation, yet in a similar way to Heidegger in 'On The Question of Being' and Derrida in *Of Grammatology*, plays with *sous rature* as a mechanism for identifying a discrepancy whereby any literal interpretation of what has been erased accepts the need, in the act of erasure, to identify what has been removed in such a way that its spectral trace remains as part of the event of erasure. Truant's introduction contextualises this inclusion by listing the variety, breadth and condition of Zampanò's notes and therefore expressing the scale of his task as editor:

As I discovered, there were reams and reams of it. Endless snarls of words, sometimes twisting into meaning, sometimes into nothing at all, frequently breaking apart, always branching off into other pieces I'd come across later – on old napkins, the tattered edges of an envelope, once even on the back of a postage stamp; everything and anything but empty; each fragment completely covered with the creep of years and years of ink pronouncements; layered, crossed out, amended: handwritten, typed; legible, illegible; impenetrable, lucid; torn, stained, scotch taped; some bits crisp and clean, others faded, burnt or folded and refolded so many times the creases have obliterated whole passages of god knows what-sense? Truth? Deceit? a legacy of prophecy or lunacy or nothing of the kind?, and in the end achieving, designating, describing, recreating – find your own words; I have no more; or plenty more but why? And all to tell – what?<sup>111</sup>

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111 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, introduction p. xvii. I draw attention to the specific act of folding, unfolding and refolding that Truant identifies as 'an act of obliteration'. In *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, Deleuze states: 'Thus a continuous labyrinth is not a line dissolving into independent points, as flowing sand might dissolve into grains, but resembles a *sheet of paper divided into infinite folds or separated into bending movements, each one determined by the consistent or conspiring surroundings*' (p. 6, added emphasis).

For Deleuze, cinema is not strictly speaking a language, but rather a semiotic in the sense of a semiology steeped in the structuralism of a system of signs that exist as a universal and unchanging linguistic structure. However, his development of such a structural determination is through the reintroduction of the notion of a signic temporality in relation to thought.<sup>112</sup>

Deleuze does not dispute the narrational, historical possibilities of the cinematic, but prefers to consider mobility of the materiality of the image through the relation of immanence as the motivation for any definition of image and narration. The unchanging ahistorical narrative function conceived by the structuralist model imposes a grammar or language that determines via externality and therefore proposes (and imposes) any analysis in such a way that takes no regard of the specificity of the medium in which it is realised. This linguistic origin merely compounds the problem by in one way insisting that filmic signification is essentially non-verbal and operates outside and independently of any fixed language, yet insists on expounding cinematic signification via a linguistic model.

Deleuze argues that a structuralist approach cannot avoid basing the theory of signification on a verbal model

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112 A brief diversion is appropriate here. Deleuze critiques the film theorist Christian Metz's structuralist approach in two ways; firstly by observing Metz's contention that cinema has 'no language' in the sense of a determinate structure, but is codified by narrative form and the adoption of novelistic practices (I draw attention to earlier remarks made with regard to Tarkovsky's 'free' adaptation of literary material releasing its 'hidden cinematic power'). Secondly, Metz argued that cinematic shot has a relation to linguistic analysis, in that it cannot be conceived as merely an arbitrary sign since there is what he calls a motivated relation between an image and what it signifies and therefore 'shot' cannot be characterised by this 'double' operation. However, it does have some unity that is comparable with linguistic notions of 'utterance', but which cannot be further divided by morphemic or phonemic analysis. Metz argued that film must be conceived as an organisation made up of distinct narrative segments that were linked and had spatiotemporal characteristics, which could be analysed as a distinct and discrete set of codes.

and therefore a structure, which is seemingly both inside and outside of the image. This form of semiology remains essentially reductionist in that it indicates filmic image and narrative are modelled on external forms, which are not fundamental to the materiality of the image. The camera might be conceived in sculptural terms in that it carves out via the frame a portion of space-time but such a framing device is usurped by a further event by which that which is framed by the mechanism of the camera is further required to be projected onto a screen of specific dimensions as the frame of frames (note here the title of Tarkovsky's text, *Sculpting in Time*). In Deleuze's words, it provides 'a common measure for that which has none'.<sup>113</sup> Danielewski draws attention to what we might term, the parergonal sublimity of the events at Ash Tree Lane through the complication of scale that is concomitant with the paradoxical transition of a kind of depth of field.

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113 Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, 27:14.

In other words, the immen[ ]ity of Navidson's house eludes the frame. It exists only in Holloway's face, fear etc [ ] deeper and deeper into his features, the cost of dying paid out with p[ ]un[ ]s of flesh and e[ ]ch s[ ]allow breath. It is painful[ ] obvious the creature Holloway hunts has already begun to feed on him.<sup>114</sup>

However, this common measure rather than provide continuity and stability, tends towards disorientation rather than unification forcing together what Ronald Bogue refers to as 'qualitatively different views of things within an arbitrarily delineated surface area'. From camera to screen there is a destabilisation of the image – a deterritorialisation.

Sometimes it is necessary to restore the lost parts, to rediscover everything that cannot be seen in the image, everything that has been removed to make it 'interesting'. But sometimes, on the contrary, it is necessary to make holes to introduce voids and white spaces, to rarefy the image, by suppressing things that have been added to make us believe that we were seeing everything. It is necessary to make a division or make emptiness in order to find the whole again.<sup>115</sup>

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114 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 334. Note that the physical breaks in the text (the parentheses) indicated by the brackets not only emphasise the disorder and disorientation experienced inside the labyrinth of the house but also imply through the absence of specific letters and word fragments the possibility of:

- An(other) text to be read *in absentia*.
- The literal consumption of the text by the creature Holloway is hunting.

I draw attention here to the description of 'close-up' with regard to what has previously been remarked on via Deleuze and Tarkovsky (see footnote 82). Richard Polt in his essay, 'The Event of Enthinking the Event' (published in *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy*), identifies Heidegger's description of the work as essentially preparatory or transitional: '*Contributions* claims to fall short of the status of work: they are merely a *premonition of a phantom text* that would be titled *Das Ereignis*, a text that exists only as a possibility opened by this one' (p. 96, added emphasis). I also comment here on the description of Holloway as a literary 'close-up', which has parallels with earlier remarks made about the close-up of the stalker in Tarkovsky's film.

115 Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 21.

In classical film the laws of motion function independently of time in a Newtonian sense, so that the dynamics of such cinema subordinate the temporal to movement. Modern cinema is distinctive because it essentially pulverises chronology so that the temporal is no longer subordinate to movements or linked to physical actions but is fragmented – like a broken crystal. ‘Shot’ defines, for Deleuze, a relatively open and variable space and is distinct from frame, which D.N. Rodowick describes as a provisionally closed and artificial set: ‘It detaches objects from “pro-filmic space”, grouping actions, gestures, bodies and decors in a motivated ensemble.’<sup>116</sup>

When Bergson indicated that the idea of the image was already in the very interior of things, it was an attempt to overcome the dualism of realism and idealism,<sup>117</sup> object and subject, etc. Since the eighteenth century image was considered a representation of matter: an internal and more importantly secondary rendering or supplement of what exists outside of consciousness.

Both realism and idealism require through the speculative interest of pure knowledge, a divorcing of the mind from both matter and spirit on the understanding that the latter exists outside both matter and time. Bergson proposed to re-establish a kind of continuity between consciousness, matter and time. This would rethink the notion of human contemplation that divorced mind from reality to proffer a perception of image and matter that was essentially identical.

If matter were already image in the sense of a fundamental appearing, it becomes luminous in that all

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116 Rodowick, *Deleuze's Time Machine*, p. 11.

117 In realism, one represents to oneself what actually *is* according to the presumed laws of nature. In idealism, one represents to oneself what *is* according to the presumed laws of thought.

that could be perceived would be already inherent as the replete state of the image. Deleuze referred to this condition as the 'plane of immanence' and this is essentially virtual to the extent that the requirements of the corporeal (the body) demand that limits are put in place on what can actually be apprehended in matter.

Matter and image are continuous with yet distinctive from human perception on the understanding that the picturing of matter limits via its human/corporeal role and acts as a filter which relays specific information on specific wavelengths. This indicates two systems of images: one that is universal and immanent and the other, which is bodily and filtered by the physiological limits and human requirements.

In *Bergsonism*, Deleuze distinguishes between discovery and invention by articulating that the former is the uncovering of what already exists, whereas the latter gives being to what may not exist and may never happen. Donato Totaro argues that Deleuze's introduction of the crystal-image as the indivisible unity of the virtual and the actual maintains the virtual-image as essentially subjective and in the past – a pure recollection that exists outside of consciousness but alive in the temporal past and always ready (immanent) to be recollected by an actual-image. If memory is commonly conceived as a quantitatively or qualitatively impoverished version of the actuality of a present sense experience – a mere failed perception: it demands the question as to where memory is formed? As Bogue points out in *Deleuze on Cinema*, Bergson does not conceive memory as inside the individual mind and therefore determined by such individuation, but suggests a complication that usurps

any subject/object, interior/exterior relation by suggesting that each mind is in fact inside memory.<sup>118</sup>

There must, then be, a 'memory of the present', a virtual memory image that coexists with each perception image in the present, a virtual double that is like a reflection in a mirror.<sup>119</sup>

The metaphor of the trinity plays a significant role in Tarkovsky's interpretation of time and, with particular reference to *Solaris* and *Stalker*, transgresses even the tangible finitude of the cinematic composition. At the end of Tarkovsky's previous film, *Andrei Rublev*, the director creates a montage of Rublev's surviving icons (the only sequence of the film shot in colour),<sup>120</sup> one of which is perhaps his most famous and enduring image – *The Trinity*.<sup>121</sup>

A facsimile<sup>122</sup> of this painting appears briefly in shot on the space station in *Solaris* – a temporal shift from fifteenth-century icon painting to modern space station which begs the questions of firstly, whether this is merely a discrete allusion to his previous work, or does it have

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118 'Time is not the interior in us, but just the opposite, the interiority in which we are, in which we move, live and change.' (Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 82).

119 Bogue, *Deleuze on Cinema*, p. 118.

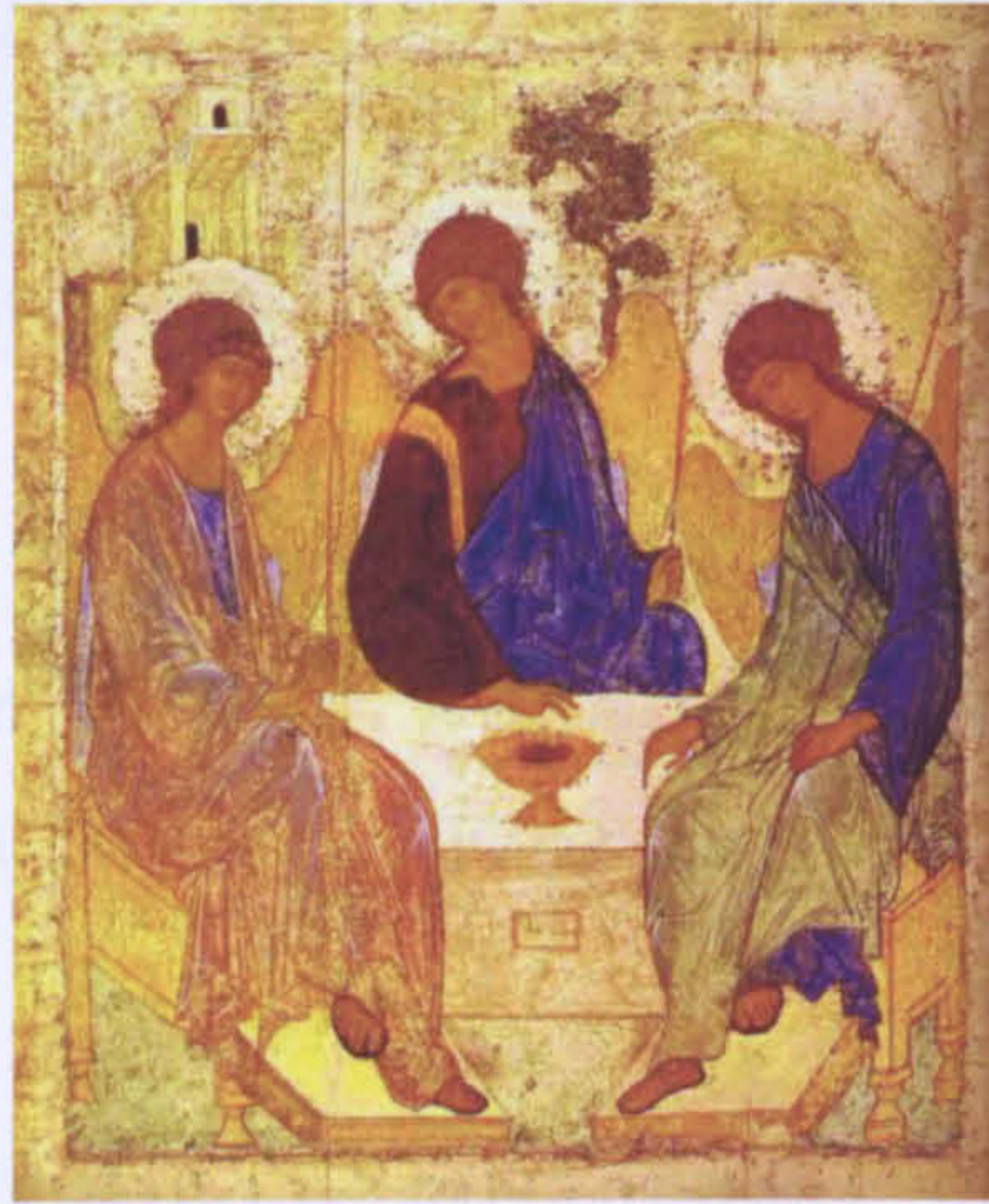
120 It is worth noting here that in *Stalker*, Tarkovsky introduces colour *only* in the sequences inside the zone; the sequences that parenthesise the trip into the zone are shot in a sepia-tone which appears almost black and white.

121 I note here the significance of the concept of trinity as a thematic across all the discussed works. In *House of Leaves* there are variant possibilities – the relationship between Will, Karen and Tom; Johnny Truant, Lude and Zampanò; the three explorers, Holloway, Wax and Jed; the rescuers, Will, Reston and Tom. There is an obvious trinity in *Stalker*: that of the stalker, Scientist and Writer as well as the stalker, his wife and Monkey. In *Solaris* we have the three scientists on the space station and the relationship between Kelvin, Rheya/Hari and Kelvin's father. In her text, *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*, Maya Turovskaya draws attention to the trinity as an artistic three-in-one', in relation to the distinctive characters of three monks/icon painters in *Andrei Rublev* – Rublev, his mentor Daniil Chorny and his rival Kirill.

122 The significance of the appearance of a facsimile of the Rublev icon should be noted here as almost a precursor to events on the station (the appearance of the *phi*-creature Rheya/Hari) and latterly, Kelvin's apparent reunion with his father.



far reaching implications for the forthcoming climax of this film (already alluded to in the opening sequences of Tarkovsky's opus but entirely absent from the novel)? Secondly, is Tarkovsky identifying the trinity of Kelvin, Hari and Kelvin's father as the psychological thread drawing the viewer through the narrative in a way that places Kelvin as the foci for the unfolding of events (the 'point of view') where the arrival of the visitor/*phi*-creature Hari forces Kelvin to reappraise his past and his future?<sup>123</sup>



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Kelvin's eventual redemption with his father at the end of the film (an almost biblical image of the return of the prodigal son) is undermined by the final moments of the film where the camera pulls back to reveal that this moment of reconciliation is actually taking place on an island set in the ocean of the planet and not back on Earth. With reference to time he states:

123 Tarkovsky also uses Bruegel's *Hunt in Winter* as a mechanism by which he can explore Kelvin's past and introduce the ambiguous relationship between mother and wife which he develops further in *Mirror*.

Our awareness of that time is totally different from that of the people who lived them. But nor do we think of Rublev's 'Trinity' in the same way as his contemporaries, and yet the 'Trinity' has gone on living through the centuries; it was alive then, and is so now, and it is a link *between* the people of that century and this.<sup>124</sup>

The complexity of time which defies orthodox linearity is equally prescient in *House of Leaves* with particular reference to the disorientation of the labyrinthine through the progressive explorations from the arrival of Holloway Roberts and his team to the final excursion of Navidson himself.<sup>125</sup>

As is noted, the impact of sound in the form of echo might serve as an effective way of evaluating the spatiality of physical, emotional and thematic distance, but as Danielewski speculates, this is generally confined to the definition of large spaces.<sup>126</sup>

The distortion of distance through what we might see as the complex ideation of convolution, interference and confusion is the fundamental condition of the labyrinth and poses the possibility of de-centring in the Derridian sense already outlined earlier in this chapter as

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124 Added emphasis. Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*, p. 79.

125 I am reminded here that Danielewski exploits the condition of maze-treaders and maze viewers in a temporal sense in the text by following both Karen and Will's activities during Navidson's final visit to the house. Sequentially the growing anxiety of Karen's despair at Navidson's disappearance is not relieved until the following narrative of Navidson's journey into the labyrinth, which we accept as events, which are running concurrently with the previous narrative concludes with Karen and Navidson reunited at the entrance to the hallway. Here Danielewski exploits the concept of 'point of view' as outlined previously in this chapter.

126 I note here what has been mentioned earlier with regard to the so-called body without organs – a cavity of sorts. The echo of the labyrinthine cavity in some way might define its spaciousness but is continually undermined by the continual renegotiation of the labyrinth's dimensions to the point where dimensionality is refused by the alterity of the hallways. Also the sound of the occupant of the labyrinth conforms to 'glorious unarticulated sonic blocks which haunt the hallways and transgress into the footnoted text.

not only an essentially spatial commodity, but also a temporal one.

The mechanism by which an echo<sup>127</sup> might define a spatial entity can only do so with the inclusion of a temporal element in that sound can define scale through temporal measurement.

By the same token, the variant capaciousness of the labyrinthine house persists in the determination of a notion of the de-centred as the overarching thematic through the continuous variation of scale and proximity that navigation appears to initiate. As Danielewski has the character Zampanò comment, postulating on the possibility of transcribing a ground plan based on the film footage:

the schematic then, is a schismatic rendering of empty rooms, long hallways and dead ends ... perpetually promising, but forever eluding the finality of immutable layout.<sup>128</sup>

Navidson's navigation of the labyrinth in the final section of the novel is provisionally preoccupied with instrumentation by which and for which he believes he can describe the scale of the underground passages by measurement of distance and time.

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127 Echo was a Greek nymph (technically known as an *Oread* – a nymph of the mountains and grottoes) who followed Hera but distracted her whenever Zeus paid court to a nymph with constant chattering and singing. On discovering this, Hera deprived her of the ability to speak and condemned her to be only able to repeat the last syllable spoken in her presence. When she fell in love with Narcissus, she was unable to declare her love and was rejected, dying of a broken heart in solitary caverns where she went to grieve. Her bones turned to stone and all that remained of her was the echo of her disembodied voice.

128 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 109. He emphasises this impossibility by drawing attention to the fictitious film's 'constant destruction of continuity, frequent jump cuts prohibiting any sort of accurate mapmaking' (p. 109).

However, it becomes clear that such attention to rigorous scientific methodology cannot give shape to the topology as through the process of navigation the variant capacity of the labyrinth takes affect and changes begin to take place. It is possible to suggest that these changes only take place as it were with the inclusion of a human presence or presences within the hallways and Danielewski intimates that the psychological dimension (the labyrinth as a manifestation of Navidson's state of mind – think back here to the labyrinth as a manifestation of the unconscious as indicated by Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*) is not without some credibility. It was noted earlier in the chapter that the horrors encountered by him at Ash Tree Lane are the manifestation of his own troubled psyche and the physical incarnation of psychological pain.<sup>129</sup>

The unevenness that constitutes the spatio-temporal relation in the house suggests a composite which articulates a combination allowing the spatial to introduce its forms of what Deleuze would term, extrinsic distinctions of sectional homogeneous discontinuity, while duration contributes a kind of internal succession that is both heterogeneous and continuous.<sup>130</sup> Deleuze states in *The Logic of Sense* that there is no stranger element than a double-headed entity with two unequal or uneven halves, where perpetual displacement and empty place combine through the experiential to transcend lived

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129 The variant possibilities for Navidson's psychological problems are identified by Danielewski as, for example, that of the strained relationship between him and his partner Karen, the problematic fraternal relation between Will and Tom, and the more elusive one on which Navidson made his name, which is manifest in the Pulitzer Prize winning photograph of 'Delial'. What is of interest here is that the former is the only relationship that survives – Tom is ingested by the house and 'Delial', although recorded in the photo, could not be saved by Navidson at the time the shot was taken, and dies.

130 This composite, which associates duration with immediate datum, is concomitant with the 'right' or the 'good' side.

experience through a process of 'going beyond', which not only suggests an enlargement of that experience, but proposes that such expansion is always and already a condition of that experience.



12

As he observed in the nonsensical world that Lewis Carroll created in *Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass*:

'The most provoking of all' (oddest: the most incomplete, the most disjointed) was that 'whenever Alice looked hard at any shelf, to make out exactly what it had on it, *that particular shelf was always quite empty*, though the others round it were crowded as full as they could hold.' How things disappear here, says she finally in a plaintive tone, after having spent about a minute in a vain pursuit of a large bright thing that looked sometimes like a doll and sometimes like a work-box and *was always on the shelf next above the one she was looking at ...* I'll follow it up to the very top shelf of all. It'll puzzle it to go through the ceiling, I expect! But even this plan failed: *the thing* went through the ceiling as quietly as possible, as if it were quite used to it.<sup>131</sup>

131 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 41. Extract taken from *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll, p. 171. Note here that the Navidsons first become aware of the shifting anomalies of the

The puzzlement experienced by Alice in the Sheep's Shop is not only identified in the objects resistance to the stability of a specific location concomitant with other surrounding locations similar in form, but also that it transgresses those other locations (the other shelves) by its very continual nature of refusal to conform to a placial integrity of thereness based in presence. This discontinuity of recognition through familiarity identifies the rigour of logic and sense as in some way integral to that discontinuity in that they proffer parenthetical conditions by which and from which the elusiveness of non-sense can emerge.<sup>132</sup> That the object itself is in no way clear to Alice (her indecision as to what she recognises the object to be), suggests that such disintegration of the language of logic by which she might express the clarity of the object, already dislocates it from a reality of logical preposition. The process by which the object might assert itself as an object through

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house when Karen's homely project of putting up shelves alerts them to the evolving dimensional discrepancies (Karen latterly learns more of the history of the house prior to her final visit in search of Navidson, when visiting the estate agent Alicia Rosenbaum, who originally assisted her in putting up the shelves). The suggestion that an act of homeliness should draw attention to the realisation of un-home-like variants as they emerge implies, as indicated in Chapter 3, that *familiarity* is presupposed by the *unfamiliar* and that as such, the more one suppresses the *unheimlich* with the *heimlich*, the more the former emerges and is maintained as *unheimlich*. Danielewski quotes Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* when describing the first sense of intrusion in the house by indicating that what had taken place 'amounts to a strange spatial violation' (*House of Leaves*, p. 24). 'In anxiety one feels uncanny. Here the peculiar indefiniteness of that, which Dasein finds itself alongside anxiety, comes proximally to expression: the "nothing and nowhere". But here "uncanniness" also means "not-being-at-home"' (Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 233). Equally, Will Navidson's attempts to finally map the house result in the realisation of an abysmal anomaly which refuses both spatial and temporal alignment. This is mirrored in the footnoted text initially by the discovery (by Truant and Lude) of measuring tapes bisecting Zampanò's apartment; and later in the text, Truant's own growing obsession with scale resulting in similar behaviour.

132 In the introduction to Foucault's *Death and the Labyrinth*, John Ashbery comments that Max Müller's theory of myths was that they were borne out of what he describes as a sort of 'disease of language' (p. xxiv). We may note here a comparison with what has been earlier discussed with regard to language in Chapter 2 of this text.

unmediated presence is rejected (perhaps more appropriately disrupted) in favour of the ongoing potential and discontinuity of its elusive becoming (it is there in that Alice recognises it to be an object of some kind, but it is also 'not', in that it refuses the sensibility of being continuous as a certain kind of specific object). While this operates within the confines of subjective familiarity (the *heimlich*; the operation takes place within the recognisable environ of a shop – albeit a shop with a sheep as its proprietor),<sup>133</sup> it is not restricted by such specific parameters of expectation (and anticipation) based in the understanding of the shop as a place of commerce and therefore likely to be stocked with recognisable objects for purchase.

The object's ability to escape not only the confines of the shop by transgressing the architectonic (literally, to go through the ceiling 'as if it were quite use to it') but also Alice's expectations that in the world of *the Looking Glass*, any exterior rule of logic might be applied or imposed, argues for the law of alteric de-territorialisation where objectivity defies objectification and the spectrality of the *unheimlich* interrupts the organisation and restriction of continuity. The shop understood as ordered commercial edifice transgressed by the extraordinariness of its proprietor *and* the elusiveness of particular stock items.

Similarly, in *House of Leaves* the unnamed and undefined monster that haunts the house cannot be expected or anticipated to restrict itself to the labyrinthine containment of *The Navidson Record* section

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133 See illustration number 12 of this chapter. Maya Turovskaya notes, regarding the final scene in *Solaris* in *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*: 'It is the image of a familiar yet strange *looking-glass world* called into being out of nothingness by the living and mysterious Ocean of Solaris' (p. 57, added emphasis).

of the text (the traditional form of the body of the text). By escaping and transgressing into the footnoted passages, a further undermining of the familiarity of lingual order takes place. This distinguishes itself from a perceived hierarchy of the precedent of the body of the text from the footnote through the radicality of an alteric de-territorialisation. Likewise, the room at the centre of the zone in *Stalker* permeates the consciousness of not only all who seek it, but all who are aware of its mythology – all who aspire to visit it but are fearful of its power and the risks involved in taking on such a journey.<sup>134</sup>

[A]s if to imply in a larger way that there are some places in this world which no one will ever possess or inhabit.<sup>135</sup>

The seeming restrictions of the labyrinthine house cannot contain the possibility for the horror of that which it imprisons from escaping confinement through the fundamental disruption of the order by which that restriction is imposed.

The mere determination and imposition of a science of geography and topography (what we might refer to collectively as a certain kind of cartographic ratio) can no longer proffer the mechanisms by which one might not only navigate its locale but also escape its unrestrained imposition as it can no longer be confined to the rudiments of the architectonics of pure containment.<sup>136</sup>

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134 Its possibility, in that it offers the risk of possibility, encourages 'scientist' to seek its destruction by taking an explosive device into the zone to annihilate it. The parallels with Theseus and the Minoan labyrinth should be considered here.

135 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 414.

136 As they become more involved in the study of *The Navidson Record*, both Truant and Zampanò resort to attempting to stabilise their immediate environments by imposing mechanisms of measurement (tape measures tacked to wall and floor). This is paralleled in *The Navidson Record* itself as the explorers attempt to define and describe the house (impose their laws upon it) through measurement of both time and space.



Where such devices fail to reconcile such reasonable markers<sup>137</sup> with that which refuses to be identified in such a manner, then perhaps the only means available lie in the topology of a kind of metastability of the event of haunting where the spectral destabilises and the enforcement of determined orientation crumbles in the face of disequilibrium.<sup>138</sup>

In the case of fraternal continuity in which hope might be found in the familial of the family, the *unheimlich* imposes its most rigorous demands. Danielewski, via Truant's hastily reconstituted text of Zampanò's, considers the question of birthright and sibling rivalry in the complex relationship between Will and his brother Tom.

As has already been discussed in Chapter 3, the biblical narrative of Jacob and Esau<sup>139</sup> takes on a specific discursive posture with regard to the relation between Will and Tom and in forming the basis for this series of speculations. This might equally and, with the same credulity, be applied to the already noted similarity in what I will term 'fraternal complexities' between Gordon

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137 The markers laid by the explorers to find their way back, when found, have either been violently damaged or have been gripped by some kind of entropic dissipation within the confines of the house.

138 Danielewski notes: 'of course real horror does not depend upon the melodrama of shadows or even the conspiracies of night' (ibid., p. 415).

139 As is noted in *House of Leaves*, the names Jacob and Esau derive from two pertinent roots. The former comes from Ya'abov (Jacob) the root of which is *akav* – to delay or restrain; and the latter is from *ash* – to hurry (I also note the connection here with the address of the house: *Ash Tree Lane*). It is also noted here that Esau also means *hairy* and Jacob *heel holder* or *supplanter*. We might draw attention here to a potential link between the characters of both sets of brothers and what has been remarked earlier about Bachofen's concepts of *matriarchy* and *patriarchy* in *Mother Right*. The theory of the telluric usurped by *ideality* (the *Hellenic* determination of the Apollonic) could equally be applied to the story of Jacob and Esau (the telluric Esau cheated out of his inheritance by the 'restraining' and 'luminosity' of the 'spiritual' Jacob) – the immortality of the Uranian Solar hero (Jacob) against the materiality of the chthonic and telluric figure (Esau).

Matta-Clark and his brother Batan (Sebastian) in Chapter 3 of this text as an *en-cystic* interruption of the familial. In both cases the loss of one of the siblings is arguably consequential of the actions of the *other* or perhaps, questionably a (re)action to introjective events.

In *House of Leaves*, Tom, as the reluctant rescuer mans the base-camp at the top the staircase while his brother Will and his disabled companion Reston go in search of Holloway<sup>140</sup> and his team after they fail to return from *Exploration#4*.

He is the locale (an intermediary link), which connects the thread by which and for which Will and Reston can not only traverse the hallways with some confidence (in the sense of moving forward), but also retrace their steps once they have achieved their aim of retrieval and rescue of Holloway and his compatriots.

By his own admission, Tom is nothing like his brother. He has neither the fierce ambition nor the compulsion for risk taking. If both brothers paid the price for their parents'

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140 It is noted in the afore-mentioned biblical/fraternal relation that Tom could be seen as Esau to Will's Jacob, however, a complication is introduced which suggests that in fact the explorer Holloway appears to be a more appropriate Esau (his physicality as literally 'more hairy' (see footnote 120) and the fact that at the commencement of *Exploration#4* he arms himself like a hunter (with fatal consequences for his companions)) and arguably reflects a more dynamic, tellurian character against the text's descriptions of a largely passive Tom. This suggests that the real fraternal conflict is between the tellurian Holloway and the transcendent Will. It is also noted at the end of Chapter XIII (subtitled *The Minotaur*)\* that even though Holloway is armed and hunting the creature: 'It seems erroneous to assert, like Pitch, that this creat[ ]e had actual teeth and claws of b[ ]e (which myth for some reason[ ] requires). [ ]t d[ ]d have claws, they were made of shadow and if it did have te[ ]th, they were made of darkness. Yet even as such the [ ] still stalked Holl[ ]way at every corner until at last it did strike, devouring him, even roaring, the last thing heard, the sound [ ]f Holloway ripped out of existence' (p. 338).

\*Note here earlier remarks about the use of striking out in the text of *The Navidson Record*, apparently by Zampanò and with regard to *all* references to the myth of the labyrinth of Minos. In so doing, the myth is no longer merely obliterated but is retained via such exclusion – held *in absentia* within the body of the text as both trace and spectre (like the creature resident in the house).

narcissism,<sup>141</sup> Will relied on aggression to anchor the world while Tom passively accepted whatever the world would give or take away.<sup>142</sup>

To be exiled from the familiar terrain of fraternal support – orphaned at the age of forty,<sup>143</sup> both in the ordinary circumstances of the familial *and* in the extraordinary circumstances of the house, results, ultimately, in Tom's demise, whereby he is swallowed as the edifice collapses. This is described in the chapter 'Escape', and could be interpreted in two ways; firstly, as a tellurian return to the matriarchal womb for the orphaned Tom, and secondly, as the entombment of an untimely burial for the unhappy twin. Will's (ultimately unsuccessful) search for him in the final part of the book shifts the emphasis of the earlier explorations from, firstly the determination to impose a mapping on the house to secondly, Holloway's hunt for its elusive alteric occupant which results in the death of Holloway and (at Holloway's own hand) of one of his own team.

In Will's last exploration (which is both a search for the ingested Tom and an ultimate attempt via various technological means to finally describe, transcribe and ultimately, control the house) he appears as Apollonian/Uranian hero attempting, via all technological means at his disposal, to restrain the labyrinthine with *ratio*. The house defies such conflation of its properties by reducing its continual refutation of the frameworks of recognised spatiality and temporality to a 'grotesque vision of absence.'<sup>144</sup> This final confrontation of man and

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141 See earlier remarks on the Greek myth of Echo and her abortive relationship with Narcissus.

142 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 246.

143 It is commented in the text that Tom's relationship with Will and Karen is almost that of a child with its parents. Tom's fortieth year is also the year of the birth of Navidson's son, Chad, hence his 'being orphaned'.

144 Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, p. 464.

house is reduced, through the edificial collapse (already premeditated as a possibility in the earlier chapter 'Escape'),<sup>145</sup> as Navidson continues to traverse its passageways and halls shedding the vast array of technological paraphernalia he entered with, as it ceases to function and becomes detritus, progressively hindering his passage and becoming useless to him.

Very soon he will vanish completely in the wings of his own wordless stanza.<sup>146</sup>

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*Escape* appears to be the final operation of those who transgress the labyrinthine. Any attempts to transcribe its circuitous passages and tame its alteric (de)centre, are hopeless and are bound to fail in the futility of the attempt to enforce rationality where *ratio* can never hold sway. Theseus returns, having vanquished the Minotaur, to a temporary (a moment) of harmony with Ariadne, which is a mere respite before he descends into further mythological trauma that may or may not result, for example, in Ariadne's death.

Likewise, Rheya/Hari's sacrifice (her achievement of human stature) allows Kelvin what appears to be an opportunity to resolve his problematic relationship with his father, only for a change of perspective on the part of the viewer (a development of shot – an overview) to realise that Kelvin has been unable (or unwilling) to escape Solaris.<sup>147</sup> The trinity of stalker, scientist and writer return from the zone unscathed, and false hope is

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145 Ibid., pages 339–46.

146 Ibid., p. 484. The structure of the text parallels the reduction and compression of the house in the final pages describing Navidson's journey and giving a strong sense of physical conflation. This also bears comparison with earlier remarks in Chapter 2 of this text on disfluency and Celan and the seemingly inevitable reductive process towards silence.

147 In Soderbergh's version, Kelvin and Rheya/Hari are reunited on Solaris.

raised that a reward has been bestowed when it appears that the stalker's child is now able to walk. However, as in *Solaris*, as our perspective changes (again the camera pulls back to open up the shot) and we are able to survey the whole terrain, it is not as it first appeared and the child is not walking unaided but is being carried on her father's shoulders. Will Navidson's escape is ultimately without his brother or Holloway, who cannot be found: but at what cost is his escape? Danielewski indicates a number of possible end scenarios (Karen and Will both reunited and not – although Chapter XXII, the final chapter, ends with an apparent interview with Karen where she describes the house dissolving after she has pulled Will free), which link to similar possibilities in the footnoted text (appearing in the form of a diary) on Johnny Truant as he appears to travel east from California in a vain search for Navidson, his family and the inexplicable house at Ash Tree Lane, only for the reader to be confounded at the end of Chapter XXI with the realisation that Truant's apparent recuperation and reintroduction into the world is a fantasy and that for him too there is no solution, no happy ending, no conclusion. The text spirals on into appendices and the images of what are titled exhibits that are presented as evidence or proof (a 'final' proof?) of what we have read.

What remains is possibility (the possibility of impossibility in the abysmal) – the thread that is predisposed to navigation without itself condoning the transcription of what appears to be navigable or seemingly requiring navigation.

*Orientation* presents the quandary in which the combination of compression and release in the crystal-image are found. The turn of breath of the labyrinthine – its continuous discontinuity – determines a ructure that

encysts, always encrypting through a combination of disclosure and undisclosure which, though marked by, and defining illumination *and* shadow, remains *other* to both and therefore spectral. Its bestial heart refutes through introjections – vomiting inward and outward – at once the uncanny operation of both expelation and implication. Orientation of the labyrinthine is always and already disoriented and interred in the rules of navigation as its secret arbiter. It is the apparitional operation with which the aesthetic of the cinematic escapes the spatial and the confinement of its sequential spatiality through the temporal deterritorialisation of discontinuous fragmentation and as yet unknowable and unforeseen combinations.



13

## Conclusion

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When John Rajchman draws attention to the figure of the 'experimenter' in *The Deleuze Connections* (2000) as the perpetrator of the shift of the work of art from the realm of representation to that of experience, he notes that aesthetics ceases to be judged in the Kantian sense, but becomes a matter of experimentation – a 'science of the sensible'.<sup>1</sup> In the preceding chapters, I have speculated on the aesthetic forms of poetry, the artwork, film and the novel, to extract a notion of sensation from a tradition of representation and subordination to the prior discourse of conceptual enframing through the uncovering of the spectral. These *holzweg* are linked across the terrain of the text via what I term the operation of the apparition or the event of the spectre through the strangeness of what is essentially continuous about discontinuity. However, the operation, *to conclude* indicates a procedure, which culminates in a certain kind of *finitude* – the 'completion' of an interrogation, which connotes the possibility or more appropriately, the probability of a certain kind of *resolution*. In commencing such a traversal, we place such conclusivity of information as in some way encrypted into its predication. However, what I have sought to question is not what we already 'know' in the sense of either a confirmation or a denial but rather to thread a way between what might be considered 'indicative to' yet 'exclusive of' mere affirmation or

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<sup>1</sup> Rajchman comments in *The Deleuze Connections* that: 'Artworks are composed of sensations, prelinguistic and presubjective, brought together in an expressive material, through an anorganised plan, with which we have peculiar relations. They are not to save us (or to damn or corrupt us), but rather to complicate things, to create more complex nervous systems no longer subservient to the debilitating effects of clichés, to show and release possibilities of a life.' P. 138.

negation – the conception of the spectral through hauntology. To negotiate such an ambulatory operation demands that movement is no longer predicated in the ‘purely’ spatial as a calculation or machination but is ‘appropriated’ by a spectral determination (if this is not a contradiction) that is (dis)located in temporality. Here a ‘locale’ is found where chronology is no longer the mechanism by which and for which the (non)sensibility of time can continue to be articulated. It is an anomaly of simultaneity which is ‘at once’ both and neither purely spatial nor temporal – the interruptive spectral ‘operation’ of the apparition; the science of the spectre; hauntology. I have proposed that this tracing (the Derridian *trait*) is no longer merely outside (as an exteriority – a lingual ‘scrawl’ on a surface which bounds and keeps safe an interior through exclusivity) and so determined by subordination to what demands incorporation ‘into’ the inside, but proposes a more complex and ‘insidious operation’ of encyst-ence of which the operation of introjection is now the active functor.

If all terminologies must be considered provisional, any topographic realisation shifts through a twist of surface (a ‘fold’) into the recognition of the *fraenum* as no longer the ‘locale’ with which the substantiation of the intransitive determines navigation, but indicates a conflagration of variation and experimentation through ‘active’ perspectival junctures (*topos* or *Wegmarken*) which resist the enforcing of the mechanistic tropes of the cartographic and introduce the ructure as the *Holzweg*. This realisation of a ‘new’ language of cryptology is not at the expense of predicated lingual continuity (in the sense of a usurpation of one system by another) or the enforced repression of its determining agencies (a ‘violent’ infraction of ‘historical’ trajectories),



but the recognition of a (dis)ordered intervention that is not the product of either the exterior enacting upon an interior or vice versa, but through the *cystic symbiotic* 'relation' of a kind of parasitic morselation. Here the term *Holzweg* allows for the variant trajectories, which determine the labyrinthine and its tomblike encryption and which refutes the imposition of order or ratio on the risk of its myriad of possible pathways, escape routes and dead ends.

In making the selection of areas of study undertaken in this text, an aesthetic approach was determined via the particularities of poetry, artwork, novel and film. This also formed the thread by which such a trajectory was possible and again indicated the variation and discontinuity and labyrinthine possibilities of the *Holzweg*. It began with a specifically un-chronological confrontation of aesthetics and hauntology via *différance* as a philosophical mechanism for uncovering the rift. This led to a discourse on the specificity of the poem 'Todtnauberg' as the variant (dis)location of haunting through the silence of insatiated anticipation and as a *topos* of poison and cure. From here were considered the encryptive operations of introjection and encyst-ence as the realisation of the *unheimlich* manoeuvre as simultaneously the creation of a work of art and the event of mourning (the realisation of an absence) in the artistic practice of Gordon Matta-Clark. Finally the labyrinthine as both the locale within which a secret is kept and the eventuality (haunting) of the maintenance of that secret as *secret*.

In uncovering a discourse which articulates the spectre as not merely the realisation or manifestation of difference, but as that which haunts a locale (the rift) that is no longer outside an inside, but in some way

inside an inside while still remaining essentially outside, 'pure' spatiality is interrupted by alterity. As neither 'transcendent' *spirit* (the 'infinite') nor mere 'facsimile' of the corporeal or 'morbid matter' (the 'finite'), the ghost finds its *peras* 'in' the *abysmal* – the *alteric no-where of a no-thing*. This is the determining agency that refutes mere negation as the subordinate 'inversion' of 'affirmation' by excavating possibility and variation from the obdurate universality of metaphysical systemisation. Such an insinuation ('the operation of the apparition') has been the overarching thematic of this text and in recognising the import of the rift in the articulation of this discussion we have not merely exploited the 'condition' of *absence* so determined by the a priori of a *presence*, but uncovered the complication of the rift as immediately, a 'relation' through *différance* and as indicative of the *trait* in the Derridian sense.

As has been noted, the term rift ('borrowed' from the Heideggerian treatise on aesthetics, 'The Origin of the Work of Art') does not merely operate as a 'gap' in the sense of a straightforward *caesura* distinguishing *between* identities without questioning the principles of identity (but remains what *is not* and *cannot* be identified through the mere scrutiny of what is merely identifiable). It exploits the variant meaning in the term (in translation, as Heidegger notes the German word *riss* meaning *both* tear or break and ground plan or drawing) as the methodology for a discussion, which places variation and the topological as the 'new' pedagogy and aesthetics as the terrain through which such a study could take place.

Commencing from the outline of the rift ('the plan') in chapter one through the specificity of the exemplars of the poetic, the work of art, cinema and the novel, it is evident that the traversal undertaken does not lead to conclusivity (a solution to a puzzle) but finds itself literally lost in the labyrinthine and confronted by yet further possible *holzweg*. Here the real possibility is continuing to fall, like Alice into an indeterminable abyss for which there is no preparation; no map, except to recognise what it means 'to fall', and how to do so appropriately.

That into which one falls, is the risk of variation and the ghost, which haunts such a *topos*, is not a reminder of termination but the affirmation of possible beginnings.

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