

An Open-ended Song of the New International: (How) Can It Be Invented?

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Focusing on the paradoxical refrain in Derrida's autobiographical text, Monolingualism of the Other, namely, 'Yes, I only have one language, yet it is not mine (Je n'ai qu'une langue, ce n'est pas la mienne),' this article sets out to unravel points of connection between formal logic, natural language, bureaucratic violence, imperial politics and, most importantly, emancipatory practices and possibilities musically sustained by the contrapuntal temporality of postcolonial future and hope; demonstrated, with and against Derrida, is a way in which performative self-contradiction becomes a textual prosthesis for the originally dispossessed that, this article stresses further, embody the psycho-political topos of inventive life. A certain philosophical freedom from position and possession, this very 'excluded middle': that is something else.

Framing the Contrapuntal Subject: *Plus d'une langue*

One and the other; or, one of the other. Of that difference.

One of the other: what do we make of this generic contradiction? How is this move to be understood? This mobile overriding 'of', this heterogeneous parasitic grafting of 'of', this riddle of prosthetic origin, this one whose origin is the other, this shift of focus from one to the other still belonging to, hanging onto and travelling with, one: that will be our guiding concern. Or insistence. Of the other. Writing, inscribing. However familiar its spectrality (Derrida & Dutoit, 1995, p. 20) might be to us (Derrida, 1994, p. 35), or are we?

Oneness, of the other, *plus d'un*, is an image-concept that stays most 'enduringly (*à demeure*)' in the *Monolingualism of the Other* (Derrida, 1998) (hereafter abbreviated as MOE; MOE, pp. 2, 17, 21, 25, 33, 39, 56, 64, 69),² Jacques Derrida's autobiographical text on the love of language, a language, more precisely, as in '*plus d'une langue*: both more than a language and no more of a language' (Derrida,

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1989, p. 15). The heterological—viz., the other logic, the other language, the other law, etc.—disrupts the organised seriality of thinking, of formalised infinity. The other, in this case, is not one of many but outside of. Something more surprising than a surprise is at stake. For *plus d'une langue* is to arrive at a certain point. The idiomaticity of a language, its idiotic jealousy, which Derrida calls passion, or the unanalysable, or the untranslatable, is evidence of its temporal openness as well as opaqueness. How open?

One notable element in the *Monolingualism*, which I set out to unpack in this paper by giving a fugue-like form to the series of thoughts, is such a powerful endurance . . . of the other. As in musical composition and appreciation, one waits intransitively: one does not wait for the other, but rather awaits the coming of the other. One who endures is one who experiences time. When waiting, one is displaced by the other to come: the other that may not come, or has already come. I zero in on that turn that is 'promised rather than given' (MOE, p. 66). The waiting in *Monolingualism* that is writing, is inaugural. It is improvisational rather than teleological, not so much a reflexive act of projection as an act of participating. It expects the unexpected and invites the uninvited. So one could say, 'the book is not so much an attack on the narrowness of monolingualism as it is a recognition that monolingualism is more hospitable to otherness than we might at first assume' (Rapaport, 2003, p. 40). That is to say, *Monolingualism of the Other* is not a monologue, even of the other. Nor is it a book about monologue. Yes, this autobiographical tale mobilises 'I' as its narrative generator, along with its memory as its narrative resources, but it is a de-familiarised, hyper-individuated I. For '*Tout autre est tout autre* (every other is totally other)' (Derrida, 1995, pp. 87–115), the enunciative I included. Not exactly a dialogue, it is rather a book of 'messianic' (MOE, p. 66) waiting. It attempts to articulate the other's singularity and the singular's otherness. It seeks to create room for the singular other in and through a quasi-dialogue with the other, 'in me', that may not be listening (for being monolingual) but keeps happening, 'to me', whether as an enabling condition for life or as a death-threat. 'This inexhaustible solipsism is myself before me. Lastingly' (MOE, p. 2), as and 'with someone in me who feels things in that way. In that way and no other' (MOE, p. 50), headlessly (Derrida, 2002a, p. 397).³

Obscurely.⁴

Or obsessively. One could read this book as one of the late Derrida's near-obsessive meditations on the originary otherness of one, of one life that is not and cannot be 'one's own'. Such an irreducible and 'irrefutable' (Derrida, 2002a, p. 380) other whose invasion is marked and re-marked by the Franco-Maghrebian Greekjew autobiographising himself as the unlocatable other of the other, is a certain *logos*, of *Ecce animot*, 'deprived of the word':

Ecce animot . . . In order not to damage French ears too sensitive to spelling and grammar I won't repeat the word *animot* too often. I'll do it several times but each time that, henceforth, I say the animal [*l'animal*] or the animals [*animaux*] I'll be asking you to silently substitute *animot* for what you hear. By means of the chimera

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of this singular word, the *animot*. I bring together three heterogeneous elements within a single verbal body... The animal would in the last instance be deprived of the word, of the word that one names a noun or name. (Derrida, 2002a, pp. 370–71)

The nameless *logos*, 'which appears in its being (as in the Heideggerian moment in the demonstration that we are coming to be)' (Derrida, 2002a, p. 371), would be an originary logic, law and language of historiographical contradictions and paradoxes, a language of 'animated', bloody history. À la Marx, a historical being is a walking contradiction: 'a self-refuting thesis is not a paradox, but the persons who propose it do thereby contradict themselves' (Davis, 2001, p. 32). The text bearing Derrida's signatory body carries such personified truths of paradox at work. Even monolingual solipsism (MOE, pp. 1–2, 13, 20, 25), or precisely that, is already touched by ex-appropriation happening 'between terror and promise' (p. 72) in me, the terror of negation and the promise of affirmation that is somehow—how? we shall see shortly—divorced from dialectic's demand for synthesis. It is that animal pulse of on-going paradoxes that punctuates the autobiographical time and space of the *Monolingualism*:

'Yes, I only have one language, yet it is not mine'.

You speak the impossible. Your speech does not hold water. (MOE, p. 2)

One of his (Derrida's) most intriguing essay-monographs, *Monolingualism of the Other; or, the Prosthesis of Origin* . . . , like some other books of the 1990s, was more explicitly organised around a formalised rhetoric of paradox than writings of previous decades. While an earlier full-length book, *The Politics of Friendship* (1994, 1997), negotiated the contradiction that by definition the friend is someone who is and isn't our friend, a later book, *Le Toucher, Jean-Luc Nancy* (2000), explored the touch as a paradox in which touching does and does not occur, since it is *at once* conjunction and disjunction. In *Monolingualism*, Derrida introduced the paradox that formed what he called a rule of language. (Rapaport, 2003, p. 26, emphasis added)

One tongue is, and should be, always already bilingual. No one *owns* a/his/her tongue; one only carries one.⁵ The tongue that is at once colonising and colonised, whether of Homer the blind bard orchestrating Greek characters including mistreated foreigners, or Joyce the exiled moderniser of the Irish Greekjew, harbours such a double, exclusive rule of language. A language of colonialism or the language that is colonialism risks, guards, and expands this logic of inclusion/exclusion. In other words, it is in possession of something, and is also possessed by it (as in possessive). First, possession:

The rather juridical circuitousness of the following definition is the price of terminological precision: A *colony* is a new political organization created by invasion (conquest and/or settlement colonization) but built on pre-colonial conditions. Its alien rulers are in sustained dependence on a geographically remote

'mother country' or imperial centre, which claims exclusive rights of 'possession' of the colony. (Osterhammel, 1997, p. 10)

And possessed/possessive:

The possessive instinct never stands still. Through florescence and feud, frosts and fires, it followed the laws of progression even in the Forsyte family which had believed it fixed forever. Nor can it be dissociated from environment any more than the quality of potato from the soil... Imperialism—in other words, the 'possessive' instinct of the nation on the move—... was with the Forsyte family. They were spreading not merely on the surface, but within... that, as it were, Colonial disposition to own oneself, which is the paradoxical forerunner of Imperialism, was making progress all the time. (Galsworthy & Harvey, 1999, pp. 339–51)

The tongue, encased yet mobile, is the breeding ground for both the resistance to and the reception of a new truth, a new mother, a new order and necessity. The tongue grounds the possibility of the weaponisation of the 'tongue in(side the) cheek(s)', invisible and indivisible from significations. One tongue speaks *plus d'une langue*; one lives *plus d'une vie*.

First Move: (Dis)locating the Language Within a Language

One would experience such an insidious rule, or ruse, of language as a dual state, or condition, of one's linguistic deprivation *and* liberation. Derrida, thus 'deprived' (MOE, p. 60), mobilises his own tongue, and that is the case on which we are focusing in this essay: 'summarily, I only have one language; it is not mine'. The consistent yoking of two forms of exclusionary thinking, the *only* one but *not* mine, illustrates the way in which the double logic of colonial law, the 'antinomical duplicity of the partitioned clause of belonging' (MOE, p. 8) unfolds, repeatedly: I must use only one language, which cannot be mine: injunction on the one hand, and interdiction on the other hand. Presented as the theme song of the text, this aporetic refrain, or train, achieves and 'marks' (MOE, pp. 16–17, 24, 27) its haunting singularity not through its mechanical sameness but through the experiential integrity it pronounces, through the pain and pleasures it generates. To say (r)enunciatively 'I only have one language; it is not mine' in the very language that the I is supposed to dispossess, is a logical self-violation that is absurd, even impossible: 'the performative gesture of the enunciation would in the act prove the opposite of what the testimony claims to declare, namely, a certain truth' (p. 3) that one speaks the unspeakable in the language she speaks.

We only ever speak one language...

(yes, but)

We never speak only one language. (MOE, p. 10)

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Within this frame, writing, namely, the n say, convertibility. 'The responsibility, inscribe but/yes, inscribing cha Derrida forward, I sha that still gives one a h perhaps in the name o language which is not r

What are 'we' saying above? This disjunctive truth of 'Yeah but', 'the block', which Roland Barthes calls 'a diary disease' (1983, p. 493), is the writer's immediate and only defence (King, 2000, p. 229). It is that banal. 'It is desperate' (MOE, p. 3). Such a private and privative self-contradiction, 'a formalised rhetoric of paradox', indeed communicates 'a certain truth', an existential pathos, a lived-in story, through the very staging of the impossible thus marked, inseparable from the necessary 'yes, but'. It says nothing, and nothing but the cutting truth 'of the double edge of a sharp sword that I wished to confide to you almost without saying a word' (MOE, pp. 2, 11); of the 'scars and marks' (MOE, p. 27); of 'the screaming silence of no's knife in yes's wounds' (Beckett, 1974, p. 115). Such a

discourse on the ex-appropriation of language, more precisely, of the 'mark', opens out onto a politics, a right and an ethics: let us even go as far as to say that it is the only one with the power to do it. (MOE, p. 24)

We are, yes already in but, to explore this knotted, cluttered space of communication, of unreciprocated, inventive but not regressive desire on which Derrida dwells. This rhetorico-political space of language is evoked by his confessional mantra, and envisaged under the heading, *Monolingualism of the Other*. Such a paratextually prosthetic non-language, of the possessed dispossessed, the language of pauses, 'is never enough to conceal protests, cries of anger or suffering, the noise of weapons, airplanes and bombs' (MOE, p. 11).

One will hear such a non-language of protest, prosthetic protest. But *how* exactly? In what follows, I seek to show not only that, but more specifically how, the experience of a logico-semantic impossibility can be translated or transarticulated into that of an ethico-political necessity. The key idea concerns the originary complicity between 'formal logic and political discourse',⁶ which in itself is hardly new but what I am trying to work out is its detail, especially its potent detail: its modalities and performative possibilities. Given that Derrida's twofold 'demonstration' of logical self-contradiction and linguistic desire, his theatrical 'marking of the self-referential dilemma, is not only logical but also, and more importantly and poignantly, pragmatic, ethical and political, what interests me further is the concrete realities of his textual remonstrance: the very vulnerability of a discourse that must (logically and ethically) take responsibility for its incompleteness' (Davis, 2001, p. 35).

Within this frame, I shall focus on the ex-propriative economy of proliferated writing, namely, the movement of the undecidable from such vulnerability to, let's say, convertibility. 'The undecidable, as a condition of the decision as well as that of responsibility, inscribes threat in chance' (MOE, p. 62): yes/but and *vice versa*, i.e., but/yes, inscribing chance in the very threat. With Derrida yes, but also pushing Derrida forward, I shall be writing on the 'art of the possible', a definition of politics that still gives one a hope. Taking Derrida one tiny step further, I shall be exploring, perhaps in the name of my 'own' project, the generic freedom of 'I only have one language which is not mine (and I am always already inventing my own language that

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remains open to the other). That is, while writing sympathetically on the *mise en scène* (theatrical production) of Derridian double writing that is always already anchored in the logic of *mise en cause* (calling into or pointing a finger at something) temporally yoked to a *mise en demeure* (summoning or formal demand), I shall try and work out, more positively, more radically futural possibilities of *mise en cause/demeure*: in short, a possibility of invention that draws on the benefits of appropriation and the freedom of renunciation at the same time. Oh, did you hear that, freedom?

In this picture, the speaking subject is monolingual not because she speaks only one language or is unable to speak others, proudly or not, but rather because she has a freedom to use a language without owning it, that is, because her desire for her own language, her own idiom, remains inexhaustible as much as inauthentic:

One never writes either in one's own language or in a foreign language. Derive all the consequences of this: they involve each element, each term of the preceding sentence. (Derrida, 1979, p. 101)⁷ (*Journal de bord*⁸)

So

Invent in *your* language if you can or want to hear mine: invent if you can or want to give my language to be understood, as well as yours, where the event of its prosody only takes place once at home, in the very place where its 'being home' (*son 'chez elle'*) disturbs the co-inhabitants, the fellow citizens, and the compatriots. (MOE, p. 57)

'Yes, I only have one language, yet it is not mine' (MOE, p. 2), nor is it yours.

Whose then? Why does one, how could she, insist that it is 'our common language' (MOE, p. 2)? If it is irreducible to a kind of meta-logical language, the modern language of reflexive reason *à la* Descartes and Kant who seek to found their kingdom under the flag of united—natural/delimited—reason that is now in the post-Husserlian crisis, what is it?

Where then *are we*? Where do we find ourselves? With whom can we still *identify* in order to affirm our own identity and to tell ourselves our own history? First of all, to whom do we recount it? One would have to construct oneself, one would have to be able to *invent oneself* without a model and without an assured addressee. This addressee can, of course, only ever be presumed, in all situations of the world. (MOE, p. 55)

Since the prior-to-the-first time of pre-originary language does not exist, it must be invented. Injunctions, the summons (*mise en demeure*) of another writing. But, above all, it must be written *within* language, so to speak. One must summon up writing inside the given language. From the cradle to the grave, that language, for me, will have been French . . . Lastingly (*à demeure*). (MOE, p. 63)

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Well, why French? For instance, my very first, now re-membered experience of a logical tongue-twister: What is 'Moo-ut'? 'What' is *Moo-ut*?—it is, let's say, Kyoo Lee's 'Nostalgeria' (MOE, p. 52) in Konglish (Korean + English). Yes, from the cradle to the grave, that language, for me, would have been that; but it might turn out to be Singlish or Japolish or even British! Or French—who knows?

'Curiouser and curiouser!' cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English); 'now I'm opening out like the largest telescope that ever was! Good-bye, feet!' (Carroll, 1895, Chapter 2)

One must and does forget naïveté, at least for a while. I mean, Derrida could have been more affirmative and less equivocal in articulating the disjunctive possibility of invention; still bound up, I must say, with the logic of simulation rather than stimulation, e.g. the quasi-Hegelian economy of mastery and rigour, 'the inaccessible authority of a master who lives *overseas*' (MOE, p. 43) in a metropolis, and by extension the quasi-theological ethos of fear and reverence, Derrida seems to deprive himself of simply fantastic, not merely phantasmagorical, chances of exploring and enunciating 'the other' sense in which everything becomes radically possible. But yes, I must acknowledge, it is Derrida who indicates just that (MOE, pp. 32, 38, 44), from whom I seem to be learning all the good tricks:

It could not not be the experience of an overstepping the limit. I am not saying 'transgression'—the word is at once too facile and too loaded—but one understands better why I was speaking a while ago about a wave (*déferlement*). In this overstepping of the limits, I would also see a writing (*écriture*), in a sense of that word around which I have been lurking for decades.

But then again, as I said, he retreats almost immediately that is reflexively, by saying

Yes, by this word *écriture* we would indicate, among other things, a certain mode of loving and desperate appropriation of language and through it of a forbidding as well as forbidden speech (for me, the French language was both), and also through it of any forbidden idiom—the loving and jealous vengeance of a new work of training, which attempts to restore the language and believe it is at the same time reinventing it, finally giving it a form (deforming, reforming and transforming it) ... (MOE, pp. 32–33)

And this formalised desire and necessity for self-invention, I should like to suggest, the contemporary context of glocalised inter-culturalism and multi-lingualism does and should nourish rather than neutralise or nullify. That which is 'one' is not only an empire or a nation or a market bound by one and the same language, be it English or the US dollar, namely 'the hegemony of the homogenous' (MOE, p. 40), but, let me stress again, a person, an idiotic being who shares with an idiom a desire for an idiolect, a genealogical memory unique to each idiom subject to constant and violent transarticulation including a transformative critique. When, to (this very) day for instance, George W. Bush Jr, delivers a pro-democracy foreign policy speech only to

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tell people of Taiwan they cannot elect a president who reflects their will, (t)his language of democracy, of 'one, we the world', in view of its radical self-contradiction, remains untranslatable: who is responsible for or could be responsive to (t)his exemplary idiocy, (t)his contrapuntal irony? When, again, we see Osama Bin Laden with a Timex watch on his wrist lecturing on the time of retrograde revolution, what kind or line of chronology are we supposed to follow? Indeed 'the monolingual remains incalculable' (MOE, p. 30): it harbours and grounds the secrets of '(ac)countability'. But yes, again, insofar as there is a desire for a life examined and enunciated, a life shaped by unique memories and failures, each life excavated as such will become a site that testifies to the inaugural inventiveness of the linguistico-cultural subject whose amnesia (MOE, pp. 28–45, 44–58, Chapters 5 and 7) remains the very source of performances of historical beings that are self-contradictory through and through. With and against Derrida, I am exploring such a possibility that is also a risk. So yes.

One wonders. And worries about the other meaning; or, the meaning of the other. Uniquely and perpetually. An inventive—originary, residual—pervertibility⁹ of the relation between one and the other guides this essay, of mine, on contrapuntal time, that thematises the demonstrative force embryonically potentialised and multiplied in the *Monolingualism*, this contradiction-driven text read as a political piece, a song. Of hope.

Second Move: Ma(r)king a (W)hole

*I – mark(s) first of all a division in what will have been able to appear in the beginning.*¹⁰

But—I mark(s) the division— . . .

But—again, I mark(s) and multiply/multiples (multiplie) the division.
(Derrida, 1982, pp. 327–28)

Derrida is a French philosopher; or, is he?

Derrida is both using and used by the French language and logical rules/ruses at once; here, and he, is a subjugated subject who must and does conjugate. That is, 'for Derrida, . . . reflexivity points to . . . the medium and practice of writing itself' (Wood, 1990, p. 145): since he uses an 'I' and mentions or refers to that at once, 'Je—*marque*'; 'A dirty Jew'¹¹ marked me, like 'a nigger' attached to my skin.¹² Thus joined or 'hooked' (*entre crochets*, 'between brackets') (Derrida & Weber, 1992, pp. 17, 13–36; Derrida & Weber, 1995, pp. 9, 5–29), the 'I (*id*)' of the author, of a sudden however, finds himself deprived of those conditions. The problem is: 'it (*ça/id*)'¹³ is still there *and* not there any longer: it 'gets unhooked (*ça décramponne*), like hooks that unhook, like pliers or cranes . . . that grab in order to loosen the grasp' (Derrida & Weber, 1992, p. 17; Derrida & Weber, 1995, p. 9). Derrida's point of contention is: upon reflection, an 'immediate adherence to' the 'I' that both hooks and slips,

this type of act does oneself-speak in order to the phantom, the doubt reducible to that of an (MOE, pp. 25–26). The n'ai qu'une langue, ce n'est pas MOF; MOF, p. 1).

What? Does he have it's undecidable . . . *who* determination!

Stop. Do not play this because you are quite nihilist; you are not a department of rhetoric condemnation or exit

We the post-Nietzschean auto-deconstructive discourse 49; Behler, 1991, pp. aestheticises ontology.¹⁸ hole of equivocal cogitation or lexicographical fusion referential¹⁹ defamiliarisation and secure natural meaning evidence by having the 'convention violates itself this immanently, logical disclaimer, 'it is not mirrored viewed separately, those clearly either true or 'performative' value, the either shifty like a lie²¹ or left wondering about the proposition. «Je n'ai qu'une contradiction?

This battle,²² written in history, is 'Rome again greater event than this contradiction. Rome antipodal monstrosity

Where exactly is the hylologos allows the user to

this type of act does and must take place.¹⁴ For 'the phenomenon of hearing-oneself-speak in order to mean-to-say (*pour vouloir dire*), ... as *phantasm* ... , is also the phantom, the double or the ghost. We are there ... In a *situation* ... no longer reducible to that of an example in a series ... Rather it is remarkable and remarking (MOE, pp. 25–26)'. There unfolds again that internal polemic: Prière d'insérer,¹⁵ «Je n'ai qu'une langue, ce n'est pas la mienne» (Derrida, 1996) (hereafter abbreviated as MOF; MOF, p. 1).

What? Does he have it, *or* not? Is it his, *or* not? True *or* false? Well, you know, it's undecidable ... *what?* The same old trick! Another pre-text! Cunning over-determination!

Stop. Do not play that trick on us again, please ... What you are saying is not true because you are questioning truth. Come on! You are a sceptic, a relativist, a nihilist; you are not a serious philosopher! If you continue, you will be placed in a department of rhetoric of literature. If you push the matter further, the condemnation or exile could be more serious. (MOE, p. 4)

We the post-Nietzscheans are familiar, all too familiar, with the 'Derridian' slippage of auto-deconstructive discourse. Its hauntology is Nietzschean (Wood, 1990, pp. 132–49; Behler, 1991, pp. 107–36)¹⁶ in its stylised¹⁷ duplicity that subversively aestheticises ontology.¹⁸ Indeed, careful!, we might and did get 'sucked' into a black hole of equivocal cogitation that is hardly distinguishable from categorical confusion or lexicographical fusion that is either ignorable or even idiotic. This technique of self-referential¹⁹ defamiliarisation, this artificial 'set-up', dislocates the otherwise sound and secure natural meanings of the words. The 'trick' is to oppose the claim and the evidence by having the former contradict the latter instantly, inwardly. In Derrida, 'convention violates itself *within* itself' (Dupuy, 1994, p. 89, emphasis added). Is not this immanently, logically²⁰ ironic, 'tongue-in-cheek consistent' (Hoy, 1982, p. 5) disclaimer, 'it is not mine', playing some kind of sinister game? Useless even? Yes, viewed separately, those two incompatible propositions, joined by a mere breath, are clearly either true *or* false 'constatively'; but annexed that way, their total 'performative' value, the illocutionary or perlocutionary status of that locution, is either shifty like a lie²¹ or at best unclear like the liar's secrets, such that the reader is left wondering about the 'in/felicity' of the 'F(p)', that is, the force of that singularised proposition. «Je n'ai qu'une langue, ce n'est pas la mienne.» What is the force of *that* contradiction?

This battle,²² written in a script that has so far remained legible across all of human history, is 'Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome': so far there has been no greater event than *this* battle, *this* formulation of the problem, *this* mortally hostile contradiction. Rome sensed in the Jew something like anti-nature itself, its antipodal monstrosity. (Nietzsche, 1989, p. 31)

Where exactly is the hook? What activates and disrupts that breath? What kind of logos allows the user to own and disown it at once? What could be this other,

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suddenly 'foreign'²³ language and logic that enables this one sentence, 'there is no such a thing as X, there is nothing but X' (MOE, p. 21)? What is the genealogical origin of this *ur*-contradiction that 'prohibits and requires' (Mader, 1999, p. 88) X at the same time, itself shiftily, either in the name of 'the law of contradiction' or in that of 'the law of non-contradiction'? What motivates and sustains this 'crafty logic', this 'tropical structure' (Derrida, 1995, p. 8) of double gesture—as illustrated literally and most dramatically by *Glas* (Derrida, 1974), the monstrous Hegel-Genet duet—that inscribes in the same space one thing with one hand, and the other with the other? What creates and effects this knotty equivocality, this bubble? What is its 'demonstrative' (MOE, pp. 5–6) value? What is that sentence *doing*? Why read on?

Nothing will prevent me from repeating to whoever wants to hear it—and from singing this public declaration: 'It is possible to be monolingual (I thoroughly am, aren't I?) and speak a language that is not one's own'.
 —That remains for you to demonstrate.
 —Yes, indeed. (MOE, p. 5)

Third Move: Bifocal Remonstrance of (T)races

Tenacity alone can't and won't do. What else matters? What works?

Engaging productively, each time anew, with Derrida the auto-de-constructive engineer, on the question of il/legitimacy and un/originality of 'the so-called performative self-contradiction' (MOE, pp. 4–6) requires a certain thinking of the outside, thinking outside the neatly boxed questions of 'logic' or 'type' or 'form' of cogitation:

In order to demonstrate something, it is first of all necessary to understand what one wants to demonstrate, what one means . . . , it would be necessary to think a thought that has *no* meaning.
 —Yes, indeed. But grant me that to 'demonstrate' will also mean something else, and it is this something else, *this other* meaning, *this other* scene of demonstration, that is important to me.
 —I am listening. What is the meaning of this attestation you are claiming to sign? (MOE, pp. 5–6, emphases added)

But first let us, we must, agree that

The starting-point for all such arguments [that 'question the apodictic character of the principle of contradiction'²⁴] is not the demand that our opponent shall say that something is or is not,²⁵ but that he shall say something which is significant both for himself and for another; for this is necessary if he really is to say anything . . . The person responsible for the proof, however, is not he who demonstrates but he who listens; for while disowning reason he listens to reason. And again who admits this has admitted that something is true apart from demonstration.²⁶ (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book IV, 1006a, pp. 17–23) (Aristotle & Lawson-Tancred, 1998)

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Every sentence is sentence, but only falsity in all sentences to the study of rh Thomas *et al.*, 19

The specificity of that text, as I have been discourse: that which embodiment of log *Monolingualism*, does contextual exemplarism discount. The power reflexively-inscribed in personal memory ret mnemonically textualized and the lesion, terror language in the case of the French colonial 'r

differs from Derrida how the indeterminate attention has shifted with respect to the social contract of l

Demonstration, in implicit border. It is a twofold manifestation of language of civic and as in 'insidious Christ purism Jacques the boy key word/act in the *M* rhetorical. The site of prosecutor²⁹ converge Derrida's waiting-writer (2000),³¹ all three draw one another's diseases becoming *the* Messianicity without *l* *l* of Derrida's *o* momentum, a paralytic powerful musicality.

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Every sentence is significant . . . , but not every sentence is a statement-making sentence, but only those in which there is truth or falsity. There is not truth or falsity in all sentences: a prayer is . . . is neither true nor false . . . , belonging rather to the study of rhetoric or poetry. (Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, 17a, pp: 1–5, in Thomas *et al.*, 1962)

The specificity of that aural outside in the case of Derrida is the digressive double-
 as I have been suggesting. And it is to be found in politics or politicised
 discourse: that which shows in every single detail the rhetorico-aesthetic behaviour or
 embodiment of logic. The political specificity and poignancy of this text,
Monolingualism, does not lie simply in its autobiographical traits or twists, the
 contextual exemplarity or explanatory power of which the author does and must
 discount. The power of this text is rather in the testimonial politicisation of the
 reflexively-inscribed historiographical conditions for the performative 'now', such as
 personal memory retrieved anew most personally and impersonally at once: the
 mnemonically textualised 'experience of the mark, the injury, the offence, vengeance
 and the lesion, terror and trauma' (MOE, pp. 26, 27); the reflected experience of
 language in the case of Derrida, the philosophical writer with an idiosyncratic style, is
 the French colonial 'rule'. That text, as Herman Rapport says discerningly,

differs from Derrida's early work of the 1960s in that instead of focusing chiefly on how the indeterminacy of the border affects the question of *écriture*, Derrida's attention has shifted to the simultaneity of contrary constructions—in particular, with respect to questions of the social relation insofar as it is predicated on the social contract of language. (Rapaport, 2003, p. 28)

Demonstration, in that sense, is a creation as well as confirmation of the implicit border. It is the explication as well as experience of the fold, the rule. It is a twofold manifestation²⁷ of internalised, or conditionalised, contraction which the language of civic and colonial justice calls 'contract' and Derrida 'contamination' as in 'insidious Christian contamination' (MOE, pp. 48, 54), or as in the French purism Jacque the boy 'contracted' (MOE, p. 48) at school.²⁸ 'To demonstrate', a key word/act in the *Monolingualism*, is evidently both formal-logical and politico-rhetorical. The site of demonstration is where the professor of logic and the prosecutor²⁹ converge in solidarity or confrontation with the protesters. In Derrida's waiting-writing game of polyphony³⁰ or 'double tonguing' (Bennington, 2000),³¹ all three *dramatis personae* interact ceaselessly, energetically contracting one another's diseases, preventing one another that are (in) themselves from becoming *the* Messiah to come, one day. The oneness, of the other, of 'messianicity without messianism' (MOE, p. 68)³² bi-focalises the spatio-temporality of Derrida's oneric narratives which would otherwise lack internal momentum, a paralogical consistency that is their demonstrative power and powerful musicality. Deconstruction's novelistic hyperbole that stages the

hypothetical transgression of the 'line' that would otherwise remain indemonstrable, creates 'a magnetic field of a character' (Kundera, 1988, p. 82) whose capacity for hyperreflection keeps the troubling duality productive.

Immediately and repeatedly therefore, in the textual arena of the *Monolingualism*, this 'one', to which the linguistic subject is subject, cuts an ambivalent figure. On the one hand we see the crushing oneness of the language of an oppressive coloniser, e.g., the French language as the master-colonial language taught and used in Algeria where Derrida who had to internalise it was born, raised and schooled to become a globalised demonstrator of and against contemporary French intellectualism, exemplary and deviant, more French than the French. Similarly, we note the forbidding oneness of the language of an all-work-and-no-play logician working in the 'Oh Aristotle!' (MOE, p. 11; White, 1992) mode, from which the disciplined subject constantly and necessarily derives an unhappy sense of unachieved ideal, such as math anxiety.³³ On the other hand we hear the open-armed-and-eared oneness of the language of poets, translators, Eleatic/Asiatic strangers, those who, impoverished by the colonised present literally or metaphorically, turn themselves into the unnoticed thieves of time to come, whose monolingualised activities for and with 'the other', 'obstinate (MOE, p. 57)' and endless, signal the improvisational convertibility of 'intervention into invention' (Bennington, 2000). Such is the remonstrative force of the pressurised tongue that seeks liberation. The colonised tongue stimulates its own passivity, while simulating it. Its capacity for musical polyphony is for that reason monstrously monolingualised: it demonstrates the contrapuntal strength of Kafkaesque minor literature, where the survivability of the underdog hinges on nothing but its independence as an underdog thus inscribed and exposed. Such a transformative openness of the alienated other to itself is the singular itself: singularity without singularism, shall we say? Like a tooth that bites; a tongue that moves; a hand that touches. Like these fingers addressed somewhere, confined in a window that generates desert delirium (MOE, pp. 72–73).

Compatriots of every country, translator-poets, rebel against patriotism! Do you hear me! Each time I write a word, a word I love and love to write; in the time of this word, at the instant of a single syllable, the song of this new international awakens in me. I never resist it, I am in the street at its call, even if, apparently, I have been working silently since dawn at my table. (MOE, p. 57)

The 'one' in the second, weaker sense lends itself more readily to a topographico-physiological modification, for 'in a sense, nothing is untranslatable; but in another sense, everything is untranslatable; translation is another name for the impossible' (MOE, pp. 56–57). The impossible is no longer the absolutised negation of the possible. Instead, it moves to a site of thinking on which the invention of future itself is made possible: it is the 'becoming possible of the impossible' (Derrida, 2003b). What remains, untranslatable yet translated, is 'the passion for the impossible', which one could understand either in terms of the quasi-religiosity of singularised desire,

'a(h)' ((Caputo, 1999) a being, a being, to The 'degree zero-minute is more or less one, a time.

Obscure?

Slowly, the memoir day in 1942 is unfolding, pointing to:

a 12 year old boy. Semitism is, or was *surveillant général* explain it to you. the place where colonial dominant model:

French is the one sensation that this 38) (minor, complete)

It is the eventual accident (319–20), that we are something significant to touch or approach Bernasconi, 1988, pp Algerian-born French *différance*, inaudible Michelet Amphitheat

Jeanne Hersch: V rather on the language you, I had the distance you mean (*valuez* you employ lead le ... Your difference and you have said

... In your work, constantly divided other, to what you that your way of the contrary, it is a sign of a certain presence

Derrida: Undoubtedly text 'does not pass if 'that' is not the

'a(h)' ((Caputo, 1997), my addition) or, more secularly, a hyper-reflexive resistance of a being, *a* being, to a digitalised nullity. Yes, 'I digitise like a madman' (MOE, p. 65). The 'degree zero-minus-one of memory' (MOE, pp. 64–65): a material memory that is more or less one, or rather, more and less than one: the unforgettable—punctuated time.

Obscure?

Slowly, the memory of a 12 year old Jewish Algerian boy, expelled from school one day in 1942 is unfolding, in front of us. It is that event in that person we are singling out, pointing to:

a 12 year old boy, here we have, who, without anyone explaining to him what anti-Semitism is, or what is happening politically, is kicked out of school one day by a *surveillant général* who tells him 'you are going to go home, your parents will explain it to you'. A crack is opened in the relative security represented by school, the place where culture is offered him, where languages are taught—especially the dominant models of the French language . . .

French is the only mother tongue I have, but while still a child I had a vague sensation that this language was not really my own. (Derrida *et al.*, 2001, pp. 37–38) (minor, compositional relocation of passages³⁴)

It is the eventual accidentality of this time, this secret 'mystery' (Ulmer, 1989, pp. 319–20), that we are trying to reconstitute—frame and claim (Derrida, 1987)—as something significant worthy of, as well as in need of, translation. What we are trying to touch or approach at least is the origin of 'the sign of a certain posture' (Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, pp. 88, 87–89), distracting and distracted, of a thirty-eight year old Algerian-born French citizen presenting his case of *différance* in the language of *différance*, inaudible idiolect of deferred difference, 4:30–6:00pm, 27 January 1968, Michelet Amphitheatre, Sorbonne:

Jeanne Hersch: What I would like to say does not bear on the fundamentals but rather on the language, the means and the manner of expression . . . Listening to you, I had the distinct impression that, even if I do not see exactly what, in the end, you mean (*voulez dire*), you certainly want to say it (*voulez le dire*) . . . The means you employ lead me to question a certain contemporary philosophical style . . . Your difference between the differences with a and e is strictly French. Besides, and you have said as much in passing, it is untranslatable . . .

. . . In your work, the expression is so important that the attention of the listener is constantly divided and directly, on the one hand, to your way of talking, and on the other, to what you want to say, whereas it seems preferable, for what you are saying, that your way of saying it should pass unperceived as we listen to you. And yet on the contrary, it constantly draws our attention; I wonder whether that is not the sign of a certain posture.

Derrida: Undoubtedly . . . If I have understood you properly, you regret that my text 'does not pass unperceived', that 'it constantly draws the attention' and you ask if 'that' is not the sign of a certain posture. In fact, I try to place myself at a certain

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point at which—and this would be the very ‘content’ of what I would like to ‘signify’—the thing signified is no longer easily separable from the signifier. Clearly if this motive is repudiated there would be yet another reason for regretting, at every point, that my text does not pass unperceived.

Yes, at ‘a certain point’ or even ‘at every point’, this is something to do with ‘playing the card of the exile and immigrant worker’ (MOE, p. 5) by playing on the margin; also with centralising the biography of an ex-child *homo sapiens*, ‘successive bumps against reality that is a series of accumulated contradictions’, ‘driven by some demon whom you can neither resist nor understand’ (Orwell, 1948); even about me, yes. More significantly, however, it is about the relation and more importantly disrelation, ‘a certain systematic relation’ (Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, p. 93) that remains disjunctive, between the 12 year old boy and the 66 year old man, an ex-38 year old, still thinking of that boy whose world cracked open one day, who ‘does not come from a certain past as future, as still to come (*a certain passé comme à venir*)’ (Derrida & Stiegler, 2002, p. 69). It is about how this man, clearly to this day still confused,³⁵ apostrophises this very ‘excluded middle’, neither-nor/either-or/both-and, which make him, nay, them, come again anew. ‘It is not what is perceived but what *conditions* our perception’ (Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, p. 92, emphasis added) that matters to us, more; ‘and I have never said that ‘there is no subject’. True.

Let us remind ourselves of this, that a political question is impersonally personal. ‘My father beat me’ is personal, whereas ‘a child is being beaten’ is impersonal (Deleuze, 1997, p. 3). What is political by virtue of being ‘literary’, in the given example from the mystery/mystory of Jacques, is the perspectival shift of narrative focus and the consequential opacity of it. What we witness here is ‘the power of an impersonal that is not a generality but a singularity at its highest point’ (Deleuze, 1997, p. 63). Who, or what, is *that* child? Psychoanalysis or psychologising discourse tends to equate those two sentences too quickly by privileging the ‘me’ (Deleuze, 1997, p. 65) retroactively objectified and traumatised by the adult subject that knows. In contrast, literature differentiates them by both giving itself up to and creating a gap within such projects of analytic enlightenment and self-understanding; or differentiate, in the case of Derrida’s arch-text that is a deferred case that resists being categorised as such. Such is the parasitic, residual power of the imperfect, incomplete and infinitesimal I (of I think/remember/feel/write) of testimony whose recourse to a neutralised molecular singularity is an aporetic need. Let that work as a cross-temporal index to the ‘earliest’ Derrida (1950s–60s),³⁶ that is, his post-phenomenological battle with Husserlian transcendental subjectivity. The point is that ‘in a *minimal* autobiographical trait can be gathered the greatest potentiality of historical, theoretical, linguistic, philosophical culture—that’s really what interests me’ (Derrida, 1992, p. 43, emphasis added).

What concerns us in the end is the ‘activation’ (Derrida, 1991, p. 1; Derrida, 2003a, p. xvii)³⁷ of origin that is always already, as Derrida saw from day one, a re-activation—of ‘indicative’ signs buried in one’s historical memories. What we have

been exploring is philosophy that is together, a movement of this life, insofar (Derrida *et al.*, 200

in my own history store by, with a break with that

What we have been between Derrida the origin, again *à la* the other hand Derrida of the possibility of or cultural or linguistic complicity that mirrors (3) A ‘certain’ non-transcendental subject converge *and* diverge the general economy

My central questions such appear to intersect itself in an origin Derrida’)

But is it not question philosophy? Witness and dissolve the moments of emergence to difference. (Discussion of ‘D

Notes

- [1] Along with, especially Mader and Arvid writing this piece.
- [2] See translator’s r

To shed a (*demeure*), Galilée, 199

been exploring is the question of what it means to, and what it is like to, *do* philosophy that is, as Derrida says *à la* Nietzsche, 'psychology and biography together, a movement of the living *psyche*, and thus of individual life and the strategy of this life, insofar as it assembles all the philosophemes and all the ruses of truth' (Derrida *et al.*, 2001, p. 35). Indeed,

in my own history, I have always had to reconcile this motif, which I still set great store by, with a basically Husserlian one, namely the critique of psychologism—the break with that element of psychology which runs the risk of contradicting . . .

What we have been tracing is is threefold or many, still. (1) A reciprocal contiguity between Derrida the contaminator who debunks the white myth of immaculate origin, again *à la* Nietzsche 'the Polish Gentleman',³⁸ on the one hand, and on the other hand Derrida, the contaminated, whose condition, both historical and clinical, of the possibility of thinking is the very autobiographical inscription, racial or sexual or cultural or linguistic or otherwise, singular each and every time. (2) The complicity that mirrors colonial contradiction as a form of contractual contraction. (3) A 'certain' not/knot/nought of ineluctable contradictions at which the transcendental subject, of one, and an empirical ego, of more or less than one, converge *and* diverge, i.e., bifurcate, in impossible escape made possible . . . through the general economy of hospitality that risks, enfolds, hostility within. (4) . . .

My central question is: *from* what site or non-site (*non-lieu*) can philosophy as such appear to itself as other than itself so that it can interrogate and *reflect upon* itself in an originary manner? (Kearney & Ricœur, 1984, p. 108, 'interview with Derrida')

But is it not quite clear that the questioning of truth does not develop *within* philosophy? Within philosophy, empirical or sceptical discourses are incoherent and dissolve themselves, following a well-known schema. Nonetheless, the moments of empiricism and scepticism have always been moments of attention to difference. (Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, p. 94; Jacques Derrida, 'Original Discussion of 'Difference')

Notes

- [1] Along with, especially, Robert Bernasconi, Jacques Derrida, Paulo Gonçalves, Mary Beth Mader and Arvind-pal Singh Mandair; all of their comments and support in the course of writing this piece have been vital.
- [2] See translator's note:

To shed a little light on this insistent use of the idiom linked to 'dwelling (*demeure*)', I refer the reader to '*Demeure*' in *Passions de la littérature* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), pp. 13–74. (MOE, p. 77)

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p. 1; Derrida, 2003a,
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- [3] 'Who? But, *Who* then? For I no longer know who I am (following) or who it is I am chasing, who is following me or hunting me, who comes before and who is after whom? I no longer know where my head is. Madness ...' (p. 379).
- [4] 'The first few months after my expulsion was a very bad time; I had begun to experience anti-Semitism outside, in the streets, in my circle of friends, my old playmates who treated me like a 'dirty Jew' and wouldn't talk to me any more. And, paradoxically, the feeling of not belonging came to affect my relationship with the Jewish community ... In that period an obscure feeling arose in me that has, I think, remained to this day—a trauma that caused me not only to cultivate a sort of non-belonging to French culture and to France in general, but also, in some way, to reject my belonging to Judaism ... In those few months, in 1942–3, certain things jelled and became a permanent part of me. My spontaneous or infantile reaction to anti-Semitic violence consisted in saying, "no, I am part neither of this nor of that", neither of this anti-Semitism nor of its victims—a haughty and affected gesture, without sympathy for the self-protective attitude of the Jewish community, which tends to close ranks when endangered' (Derrida, *et al.*, 2001, pp. 39–40).
- [5] 'A majority of the world's population is at least bilingual ... In a sense, every speaker is translanguing, moving with if not through languages'. It is a structural and generic issue, as we will see (Kellman, 2000, p. 8).
- [6] During a private conversation in March 2003, when this article was at the formative stage, Derrida kindly and insightfully contributed his thoughts precisely to this point: deconstructive attention to the originary complicity between 'formal logic and political discourse' is not exactly new, but the analytic task of disclosing its mechanism remains plural, insofar as its phenomenological manifestations remain multifaceted.
- [7] This quotation from 'Living On/ Border Lines', published first in an English translation and later in French as '*Survivre*', uncannily rehearses the through-line of the *Monolingualism*; see Derrida (1986).
- [8] 'Ship's log; brinkmanship; tracing of the frontier between inside and outside' (Wills, 1995, p. 133).
- [9] The appropriate, strategic half-employment of bi-logical devices such as both/and, (n)either/(n)or,

however "playful" or "perverse", is always to be qualified or justified as though they were only ostensibly dialectic. *This* undecidable that "opens up the field of decision" is not a contradiction. (Davis, 2001, p. 40)

- [10] «Je—marque d'abord une division dans ce qui aura pu paraître au commencement.»
- [11] See my footnote 4.
- [12] This is my own appropriative addition: simulation, speculation and formulation.
- [13] Quite literally:

The withdrawal of French citizenship from the Jews of Algeria ... this 'disorder of identity' ... I was very young at that time, and I certainly did not understand very well—already, I did not understand very well—what citizenship and loss of citizenship *meant to say*. But ... I do not doubt ... that such 'exclusions' come to leave their mark upon this belong or non-belonging of language, this affiliation to language, this assignation to what is peacefully called a language. (MOE, pp. 16–17)

- [14] Unlike René Descartes, for instance, Derrida focuses on the alienating and alienated otherness of the self, the 'I' experienced as '*moi*' as opposed to '*Je*'. This otherness of 'me' is the source of metaphysical schizophrenia, a cure of which, the traditional

Cartesian philosophy granted the immediate object of phenomenon a 'general sucker' insists, by subjectivity (*le crampon*), the happenings around Weber, 1992, pp. 5, 33–34.

- [15] 'From/before the beginning' (1–4), has not been
- [16] One could Derridian contradiction itself.

the good fortune to express it in mother I am

could be transformed; dead; yet still living relevant here is the

- [17] 'Fashions' as Jean C

may have suffered from Peculiar fashion

One prominent definition, or propose, a

- [18] More specifically, or
- [19] Something resembling runs through Derrida from itself'. Put more the 'postmodern self' (1985); a formal-logic splendidly by Jean-F referentiality of Derrida

For a discussion of theoretical paradox, see pp. 235–45. For a second-order awareness Kearney (1991), pp.

- [20] Salman Rushdie, for collective schizophrenia
- [21] 'It is as if, in one and on incredible that the
- [22] 'The two opposed worlds long battle on earth; time, even so there is in the meantime become more spiritual; so the

Cartesian philosophy suggests, is phenomenological suspension. Instead of taking for granted the immediate familiarity of the natural pre-critical I, Derrida treats it as an object of phenomenological analysis, the Husserlian 'I' caught up in 'the double horns' of a 'general sucker (*ventouse*)' of 'the madness *itself*. *Itself*'. One must begin, Derrida insists, by subjecting oneself to the maddening force of *entre crochets*, 'this hook (*le crampon*)', the word itself; or the world—of I. One must, he stresses, be vigilant to the happenings around the word, 'I'. Why? We will see. The citations are from Derrida & Weber, 1992, pp. 5, 6, 14; Derrida & Weber, 1995, pp. 2, 7, 15; Derrida & Bass, 1978, pp. 33–34.

- [15] 'From/before the beginning': this part, the double-sided and folded A 4 sheet (MOF, pp. 1–4), has not been reproduced in translation.
- [16] One could Derridianise Nietzsche whose announced principle of life, his existential truth, is contradiction itself. For example, the opening line of 'why I am so wise' in *Ecce Homo*,

the good fortune of my existence, its uniqueness perhaps, lies in its fatality: I am, to express it in the form of a riddle, already dead as my father, while as my mother I am still living and becoming old,

could be reformulated into the Derridian idiom of 'double ends' of life, i.e., 'I am already dead; yet still living'. But the formal similarity is not a key concern of this essay; more relevant here is the context-specific politics of style. See Nietzsche (1989), p. 222.

- [17] 'Fashions' as Jean Cocteau observes,

may have surprising origins. A bald man set the fashion of wig; a princess suffering from pimples, of the beauty-spot; a pregnant empress, of crinoline. Peculiar fashions come very often from the need to hide deformities.

One prominent deformity Derrida inherited from Nietzsche would be the sheer inability to think, or propose, a single thought that is identical to itself. See Cocteau (2000), pp. 109–10.

- [18] More specifically, onto-biology; 'otobigraphy'. See Derrida & McDonald (1985).
- [19] Something resembling the Russellian problem of meta-set theoretical paradox generates and runs through Derrida's text that draws on the logic of *différance*, 'the difference that differs from itself'. Put more loosely, the second-order awareness of self-referential paradoxes causes the 'postmodern self-reflexive predicament', of which Derrida's text is a symptom (Lawson, 1985); a formal-logical analysis of Derrida's 'logic of supplement' has also been undertaken splendidly by Jean-Pierre Dupuy (1990, 1994) mentioned above, who focuses on the self-referentiality of Derridian deconstruction that is structurally 'autonomous'.

For a discussion of formal affinity between Derridian deconstruction and meta-set theoretical paradox, see Lawson (1985), pp/ 90–124; Priest (1994), pp. 25–34.; Priest (1995), pp. 235–45. For a more literary or rhetorical analysis of Derridian deconstruction and second-order awareness of self-referential paradox, see Bennington & Derrida (1993), p. 19ff; Kearney (1991), pp. 170–211; Luhman (1993), pp. 763–82.; Wood (1980), 225–38.

- [20] Salman Rushdie, for instance, who claims *in* English that his mother tongue *is* Urdu causes a similar collective schizophrenic disorientation, which is however contextual and not logical.
- [21] 'It is as if, in one and the same breath, you were lying by confessing the lie. A life from then on incredible that ruins the credit of your rhetoric' (MOE, p. 3).
- [22] 'The two opposed values "good and bad, good and evil", have fought a terrible millennia-long battle on earth; and as certainly as the second value has had the upper hand for a long time, even so there is still no shortage of places where the battle goes on, undecided . . . It has in the meantime been borne up ever higher and precisely thereby become ever deeper, ever more spiritual: so that today there is perhaps no more decisive mark of the "higher nature",

of the more spiritual nature, than to be conflicted in that sense and still a real battleground for those opposites. The symbol of this battle . . . in Rome the Jew was held to have been "convicted of hatred against the entire human race": rightly so, insofar as one has a right to tie the salvation and the future of the human race to the unconditional rule of aristocratic values, of Roman values' (Nietzsche, 1989, pp. 30–31).

- [23] ' . . . you want to mislead us. And now in order to stir us and win us to your cause, there you are, playing the card of the exile and immigrant worker, there you are, claiming, in French, that French has always been a foreign language to you! Come off it! If that were true, you would not know how to say it; you would not know how to say it so well! (I draw your attention to a first slippage: up until now, I have never spoken of a 'foreign language'. When I said that the only language I speak is *not mine*, I did not say it was foreign to me. There is a difference. It is not entirely the same thing, we shall come to it.) That this scene is as old as the world—at any rate, as old as philosophy—does not bother the prosecutors' (MOE, p. 5).
- [24] Citing the passage above as *the* reason for questioning the hermeneutic premise of Derrida's logic that, as the critique goes, still draws on the 'classical' reason, David White, 'threatened (p. 126)' by Derrida's misappropriation of Aristotle, cuts (t)his passage short at the point where Aristotle starts speaking about the 'responsibility of the listener': my own extension begins with 'the person'. See White (1992), pp. 120–26., p. 124ff
- [25] For this one might perhaps take to be a beginning of the question.
- [26] So that not everything will be 'so and not so'.
- [27] I thank Mary Beth for alerting me to a French meaning and usage of this word, closer to 'political demonstration' in English. Derrida also notes, in the Epilogue:

Perhaps I have just made a 'demonstration'; it is not certain, but I no longer know in what language to understand that word. Without an accent, a demonstration is not a logical argumentation that imposes a conclusion; it is, first of all, a political event, a demonstration in the street . . . a march, an act, an appeal, a demand. That is, one more scene. I have just made a scene. In French, too, the *démonstration*, with an accent, can be, first and foremost, a gesture, a movement of the body, the act of a 'manifestation'. Yes, a scene. A street scene without a theatre, yet a scene all the same. (MOE p. 72)

- [28] Derrida's ironic, Fanonian reversal of the colonial colour hierarchy (white soiled by black) could easily be mistaken for the assimilationist's aspiration; his expressed, hyperbolic fetishisation of the 'pure French accent' 'ruined, in no small measure' Willy Maley's 'youthful admiration for Jackie'. See Maley (2001), pp. 15, 123–34., esp., pp. 127–29.
- [29] See my footnote 28.
- [30] 'M.K.: Polyphony in music is the *simultaneous* presentation of two or more voices (melodic lines) that are perfectly bound together but still keep their relative independence . . . open rifts in the continuous narration of a story . . . To borrow Shklovsky's terminology, these are stories 'packed inside' the 'box' of the novel . . . One of the fundamental principles of the great polyphonic composers was the *equality of voice*: no one voice should dominate, none should serve as mere accompaniment . . . Like Kafka (and like Novalis), I feel that same desire to bring dream—dream imagination—into the novel. My own way of doing is not by a 'fusion of dream and reality' but by polyphonic confrontation . . . Digression enhances the discipline of the composition rather than weakening it' (Kundera, 1988, pp. 76–86).

'C.S.: So there are two archetype-forms in your novels: (1) polyphonic composition that brings heterogeneous elements together within an architecture based on number seven; (2) farcical, homogeneous, theatrical composition that verges on the improbable' (Kundera, 1988, p. 97).

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- [36] One of Derrida's
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- [31] The title of Geoffrey Bennington's reading of the *Monolingualism*, aptly captures both the musicality of 'rapid successive alternation of two strokes, T and K', and the idiomaticity of the (British working-class's labially-mediated tactile) desire for the other.
- [32] Here is a useful gloss on this notion, first substantially thematised in the *Spectres de Marx* (1993):

We're waiting for the arrival of an unpredictable one, and that we must be hospitable to the coming of this one . . . This is a form of what I'd describe as messianicity without messianism, and we are by nature messianic and we are by nature messianic. We cannot *not* be, because we exist in a state of expecting something to happen. Even if we're in a state of hopelessness, a sense of expectation is an integral part of our relationship to time. Hopelessness is possible only because we do hope that some good, loving someone could come. (Derrida, 2002b)

- [33] I have a math inferiority complex; but it is not mine:

Keep in mind that a mathematics inferiority complex is just that, *a complex*. A complex is a set of ideas, *not* a fact. Your complex may tell you that you are incompetent in mathematics, but this does not mean that you are actually *are* incompetent. You have to examine the ideas in the complex and ask yourself, 'Are these *really* true about me? Or are they just old ideas that carry over from bad experiences in the past?' It will help you to reduce anxiety by saying to yourself, 'I may have a math inferiority complex, but it doesn't have me. (Bruno & Arco Publishing, 1995, p. 89)

- [34] 'If I use current, immediately available language, what is there for me to say about the intellectual aspect of my story? Here we have a 12 year old boy who . . .'
- [35] 'Q: *At what point did you become an adult?*

Derrida: This is an intriguing question. I've always believed everyone has more than one age, and I carry three ages within myself. When I was 20 I felt old and wise, but now I feel like a child. There's an element of melancholy to this, because although I feel young in my heart, I know objectively that I'm not young. The second age I carry is my real age of 72, and every day I'm confronted with signs that remind me of it. The third age I carry—and this is something I only feel in France—is the age I was when I began to publish, which was 35. It's as if I stopped at 35 in the cultural world where I work. Of course that's not true, because in many circles I'm considered an old, well-known professor who's published a lot. Nonetheless, I feel as though I'm a young writer who just started publishing, and people are saying, 'Well, he's promising'. (Derrida, 2002b)

- [36] One of Derrida's first major, 'tripartite' publications in 1967, *La Voix et le phénomène: Introduction au problème du signe dans la phénoménologie de Husserl* (*Speech and Phenomena*), carries the traces of his even earlier 'originary' works that concern, more or less, origination. Worth recalling here is his doctoral research that was initially on literary object and ideality in Husserl, recast in 1953–54 (*mémoire*, doctoral thesis) and published in 1990 as a study on *Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl*; edited chapter fragments had, however, already started appearing in the mid-1960s (e.g., 'Sur Phänomenologische Psychologie de E. Husserl' in *Les études philosophiques* no. 2,

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1963, and 'Sur E. Husserl theory of meaning de J.N. Mohanty' in *Les études philosophiques* no. 4, 1964); this also coheres with Derrida's first book-length publication, in 1962, an introduction to and translation of Husserl's posthumous work, *L'Origine de la géométrie* (*Origin of Geometry*).

- [37] Another reflexive riddle of 'entre-crochet': the first section of the *Avant-Propos* (the Preface to the 1953/54 Dissertation, *The problem of genesis in Husserl's philosophy*) titled 'La thèse de la genèse et la genèse d'un thème', is subtitled <<HISTOIRE DE LA PHILOSOPHIE ET PHILOSOPHIE DE L'HISTOIRE >>. Again, the opening line: «*Tout au long de ce travail, deux problématiques ne cesseront de se mêler et de s'impliquer*» (Running through this work, there will be two sets of problems that will continually mix with and imply each other)'.
 [38]

'I touch here the question of race. I am a Polish gentleman, *pure blood*, in whom not a drop of impure blood is mixed, not the slightest. If I seek my most profound opposite . . . —I always find my mother and my sister: to see myself allied with such German riff-raff was a blasphemy against my divinity. The ancestry on the side of my mother and sister to this very day—was a monstrosity' (One of Nietzsche's last fragments cited in Klossowski, 1997, p. 250).

This 'partly mutilated' fragment

declared that his *natural allies* were Jewish officers and bankers—who were, he says (according to the meaning of what remains of the mutilated sentence), the sole power capable of doing away with 'nationalist' arrogance and the politics of popular interest. (Klossowski, 1997, p. 250)

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Re-enchanting Englishness: the Matter of Navdeep

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Introduction

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