

**Antigone Figures: Performativity and Rhythm in the Graphics of the Text**

**A Commentary on Texts by Carol Jacobs, Martin Heidegger,**

**and Jacques Derrida**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis contributes to critical theoretical interpretation of Sophocles' *Antigone*. Analyzing texts by Kelly Oliver, Jacques Lacan, and Judith Butler, the thesis demonstrates how the work of these writers re-installs oppositional binarism, the form of thought that undergirds the hierarchical structure of Western metaphysics as exemplified in the dialectical philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel. Focusing on texts by Carol Jacobs, Martin Heidegger, and Jacques Derrida, the thesis analyzes the performative effect of *Antigone*, as sister figure, in the graphics of these works. Employing a deconstructive critical approach, the thesis explores the theoretical productivity of the analysis of a "sororal" graphics that, dispersing and subverting binarism, opens the texts and their interpretation to alterity. The thesis argues that critical reading of the performativity of *Antigone* as sister figure implicates ethicological discussions on justice in relation to family, genre/gender, classification, and inheritance.

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## Introduction

Recurring commentary on Sophocles' play *Antigone* and its eponymous dramatic character forms an axis around which an expanding number of contemporary critical writings revolve. George Steiner's *Antigones*, Jacques Lacan's *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, Jacques Derrida's *Glas*, Luce Irigaray's *The Ethics of Sexual Difference*, Kelly Oliver's "Antigone's Ghost: Undoing Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," Judith Butler's *Antigone's Claim*, Carol Jacobs' "Dusting Antigone," David Farrell Krell's "Antigone's Clout," Bonnie Honig's "Antigone's Laments, Creon's Grief: Mourning, Membership, and the Politics of Exception," Cecilia Sjöholm's *The Antigone Complex*, and Tina Chanter's "Antigone's Dilemma" testify to the recent avid engagement with the play and its interpretation. In *The Tragic Absolute* David Farrell Krell writes, "Concerning Antigone, no one will ever have written or said enough..." (344).

In the *Poetics* Aristotle avers that the number of households suited for dramatic portrayal in tragedy is small. Few are the houses whose members "happen to have had dreadful things done to them, or have done them themselves." Where love should thrive, violence abounds, shocking the audience. Aristotle writes, "The poets went in search of these families in order to render such situations in their plots; they found them, not by means of their art, but by good fortune. They saw themselves constrained to return always and again to those same households, the ones that happened to suffer these same passions" (*De arte poetica liber* 1453a 21-22, 1454a 9-13).

The selection of houses for tragedy comes about then as a result of two happenings, two instantiations of chance: One, that certain families happen to suffer grave conflict and violence among their intimately connected members; and two, that the poets “picked up” the stories of such families “wherever by good luck they found them” (*De arte* 1453a 18-19). The production of tragedy, then, is doubly embedded in a field of play where chance is a factor that sends the personae to their marks. The tragedian engages in a kind of speculation on chance, on good fortune. This thesis problematizes the relation between speculation and tragedy.

In order to speculate on the relation between speculation and tragedy, my thesis joins a long line of tradition, a long line to be continued. It follows paths which turn out to be those of a stranger, of what appears alien, harsh, and raw. It attends to the return of what has been positioned as familiar-familial, but which, returning as the double of the double, turns out to be stranger still.

To engage this “stranger,” this familiar, that, returning as the repressed, becomes uncanny, means to attend to the sutured gash demonstrated in the structuration of *Glas*, the gash which both divides and unites its columns. It means to catch the threads of the sutures inscribed there on the bias, to proceed by embroidering on the oblique, to recognize the effect of side-long glances, to apprehend a rhythm both saccadic and melancholy.

According to Jacques Derrida, Sigmund Freud’s mode of “speculation” in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* entails suspension between “what would come to overflow the logic of the position: without substituting itself for this logic, and above all without being

opposed to it, opening another tradition, as relation without relation, or without a basis of comparison, a relation with what it crosses over via its step or with what it frees itself from at a stroke” (“To Speculate—on ‘Freud’” 260). It involves writing which also “writes itself”—neither the passive nor the active voice applies—inscribing what Derrida refers to as the *mouvance* of the text. To “speculate” as Freud does, to inscribe a “speculation” that differs from the mode of speculative philosophy, involves an affective engagement with the fiduciary, with the inheritance of capital. And with the inheritance of a head, suspended, face turned away, neck wrapped in a veil.

Speculation in this mode capitalizes precisely on the matter of capital, the matter of heading up the institution of psychoanalysis, the matter of gaining interest from it. But speculation also involves the element of risk. In my reading it takes risks with what heads up the authority of doxic family relations as well as with the *auctoritas* of the theory Freud signs, inscribing his (proper) name as progenitor and erasing it in the name of the scientific methodology meant to ensure its continuance.

My thesis focuses on one of the households Sophocles had the good fortune to come across: The house of Labdacus, the house of Oedipus, Jocasta, and their children. In particular, it focuses on the figure of the sister, Antigone, of the play of Sophocles which bears her name. In terms of its broad conception, my work addresses the way the Hegelian tradition of *Antigone* interpretation executes a dialectical *coup de grâce* that positions the woman, or the “feminine,” both as (divine) fundament of, and (subhuman) flaw endemic to, the critical edifice of its operation. Relegating her to the field of the “other,” contemporary commentary on the play both domesticates Antigone and banishes her to an “outside.” In doing so it perpetuates a hierarchalizing critical practice that



sublates alterity. The thesis elaborates readings of the play which theorize the “feminine” and the “other” in ways that eschew hierarchalization, sentimentalization, and the *Aufhebung* -consumption of alterity, and which offer alternatives to accepted cultural narratives and practices of gender/genre production and family classification. These alternate readings adumbrate critical-cultural practices that are, if less systematically consistent, more proliferous (that is, irreproducible according to an economy of “insemination”) and more just.

My thesis focuses on four principal texts, which, with others that guard or expose them as satellites, make up a corpus whose intricacies I read. I list the four principal texts in the order that follows their most explicit explication, by chapter: Carol Jacobs’ “Dusting Antigone,” Martin Heidegger’s “Language in the Poem,” Jacques Derrida’s *Glas*, and the latter’s “To Speculate—on ‘Freud.’” The corpus—whose modes my work shows to be in conversation—enjoys a connection whose integuments remain open. The concluding chapter of the thesis offers a commentary on these integuments. It also suggests an interpretation of Antigone as sister figure, an interpretation informed by the modes, the gestures, and the performances of the texts of the corpus whose contours and correspondances my thesis aims to sketch out.

Antigone is the exemplary sister whose mourning, in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel’s account of *Sittlichkeit*, provides passage for the brother from the realm of the family to the realm of the state. In her essay “Antigone’s Ghost,” Kelly Oliver demonstrates that, in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the dialectical passage from family to community depends, not only on the action of the exemplary woman, but on her remaining unconscious of the purport of that action. Oliver argues that, since dialectical

philosophy aims to fully and finally conceptualise the experience of consciousness, without remainder, that its dependency on woman as unconscious undermines Hegel's entire project in the *Phenomenology*. For Jacques Lacan, as for Hegel, Antigone serves as passage between two realms, between that of the family and its *Atè*, or its doomed infatuation; and that of the symbolic. Figuring the passage into the symbolic order of language and culture, Lacan's Antigone remains at the radical limit of both family and *socius*. In her book *Antigone's Claim*, Judith Butler offers a critical reading of both Hegel and Lacan. She shows how Antigone, the sister, performs nearly every "other" familial role, as daughter, granddaughter, aunt, niece, son, and brother. Antigone "performs kinship" in an "aberrant" way, but in a way which remains structured by the "intractable" laws of the symbolic order, laws insusceptible of change.

All three of these thinkers offer a critique of Hegel's account of the relation between family and state, and of Antigone's role within it. In chapter one of the thesis, I argue that each thinker re-instaurates the oppositional structurality of Hegelian dialectics. Antigone, whether positioned as fundament or abyss, as ground or *Abgrund*, remains on the stage of critical performances which succeed in reinstating the binarism they purpose to subvert. The prey gets caught, as in a net, or a noose, or a band.

Chapter two of the thesis focuses on the transforming, perverting, and subverting work that Antigone performs. Starting from a reading of Carol Jacobs' essay "Dusting Antigone," chapter two addresses the way in which the discourse of the play "uses the fragmentation of the body, a transgression of enclosures, a corporeality that threatens simple intelligibility, that makes the Hegelian eye of the observer run for cover" (907). It examines Jacobs' argument that Antigone "takes the place of the mother" in a way which

eschews reproduction and identification, and which “undefines the human as either origin or product” (910). Taking up the question of the modes of ethics the play stages, I consider the way in which its discourse dis-engenders and disperses the formal categories by which its spectators and commentators have traditionally organized its meaning (907-909). Building on Jacobs’ work, chapter two theorizes an ethics in which family matters such as sexual difference, filiation, conception, and genealogy are put into question.

In chapters three and four, I offer an interpretation of the sister figure in Heidegger’s Trakl essay, “Language in the Poem.” Both chapters consider the essay as performance, as a performance that stages a dramaturgical poetics. Chapter three begins by reading the essay in juxtaposition with Heidegger’s discussion of Antigone in his lecture series on Hölderlin’s hymn “The Ister.” In chapter three I demonstrate how the sister figure of “Language in the Poem” intercepts its *nostos*-bound trajectory, articulated in salutary mode, and how she introduces a rhythm that descends away from it, a rhythm inscribed in a melancholy modality. Chapter four elaborates on my interpretation of the doubly-haunted scene the essay enacts. Through a theoretical approach to the role ascribed to the term “pain” in the essay, chapter four offers an analysis of its performative graphics, showing how these operate both to subvert Heidegger’s *Geschlecht* program, and to con-join the familial, otherwise.

Chapter five of the thesis comments on the role of Antigone in Derrida’s *Glas*. According to my reading of this text, Antigone as sister figure performs in a way that sets up a logic of obsequence, a logic that departs from the ascendance of spirit that Hegel’s family-shaped dialectics enacts. She is the sister whose figure I analyze as vector in Derrida’s deconstructive reading of the phantasm of truth in Hegel. If the phantasm of

absolute self-possession produces in Hegel's work a reduction of (sexual) difference to spontaneous reproduction of two sexes, of a father and mother which automatically, and without touching one another, reproduce a return to self, then Antigone is the figure whose effect stages at a deformation of this opposition. In *Glas* the sister performs in rhythms that monstrate the limits of the code that supports both the phantasm, and the limit of its mastery.

Engaging Derrida's work in "To Speculate—on 'Freud,'" chapter six reads Antigone as a figure of atesis. Among the mothers who are also daughters, the sons who are also grandfathers, and the relay between them, the relay constitutive of what Derrida reads as re-binding (*relier*) the elements of Freud's *Selbstdarstellung*, a sister figure operates. This figure moves in the space between what "binds the question of life death to the question of the position (*Setzung*), the question of positionality in general, or positional (oppositional or juxtapositional) logic, of the theme or the thesis" (259).

The work of my thesis takes up and analyzes the saccadic rhythm by which this suspension of the "position" descends, by which the writing proceeds, limping. The thesis offers a reading of the implications of this suspension, saccadic rhythm, and descendance. It connects these modes to my interpretation of the figure of Antigone, the sister who in Sophocles' play says of her commitment to perform the forbidden burial of her brother Polyneices: "It will be fine for me to die in doing that....I know that [by defying her uncle's edict prohibiting the burial] I am pleasing those whom I am chiefly bound to please" (lines 74, 89). Antigone is the sister whose mourning work performs in the mode of binding. She is bound to act in a relation of pleasure. She is also the sister who laments, "Ah wretched as I am ... to dwell not among the living, not among the dead"

(lines 850-851). The work of my thesis on the sister opens onto the question of “*life death*,” a phrase Derrida uses in “To Speculate—on ‘Freud.’” As well, it opens onto the question of *nexum*, of what binds these terms, “life death,” in a chain or *desmos* which, exceeding syntax, does not rest in the positionality of the thetic.

My thesis aims to demonstrate, to make an essay or performance of, the correspondences, the mutual deciphering, the mutual resembling, which occurs, as Derrida says, “without one having to take the slightest initiative” between and among the texts I list above (“To Speculate” 357). I have brought together these four texts, which I read as forming a kind of corpus. The texts whose modes my work in the thesis show to be in correspondance enjoy connections whose integuments remain open, and open onto, the question of “*life death*” and to its many interrelations to the heterology written in/by Derrida’s readings of “Freud,” and “Heidegger.”

At stake in my interpretation of the performance of the correspondances between and among the texts belonging to the corpus is a de-struction of the binary divisions between human and animal, and between man and woman, those divisions on whose scaffolding traditional philosophical discourse hangs. My reading of the sister figure in each text, as well as their “sororal” overflow, aims to unsettle the positioning of these divisions, of these borders. At stake as well, and necessarily, is the way in which my interpretation opens onto the question of “*life death*,” and of its connection to inheritance.

The prevailing discourse in Western thought has structured itself around a thinking that valorizes what it calls “life,” a field whose defining contours are ineluctably grounded in the hierarchies on which its binarism, and its ability to demonstrate

theorems, depend. “Death” then, either homologizes with terms of the denigrated side of the oppositional divide; or is construed privatively, as the lack of the plenitude associated with those of the more highly valorized set; or, is imagined as the confusion or deformation of the divide itself, the chaos considered to result from the invagination or breaching of the boundaries the binarism erects.<sup>1</sup>

Derrida’s concept of *différance* expresses a sense of differing/deferral, a *mouvance* within writing, and within “*life death*.” *Mouvance* is that which moves in a text, and, hence, within “*life death*,” without arriving at an end. Its only teleology is to fail to arrive, to arrive by not arriving. So *différance*, by differing/deferring, opens the binary to an alterity that is nevertheless not opposed to it. In a sense *différance* operates as a third, but neither as third term that functions as mediator between opposites, nor as an agent of relief, sublation, or recuperation. *Différance* becomes what bridges, and divides, the third with (*d’avec*) a fourth. The trait divides, at a stroke; and an (uncanny) fourth appears. I read the sister figure, the one which travels, corresponds, and sends among the texts I have singled out, as the vector or the bridge between third and fourth. The figure performs, not (only) as *différance*, but as a certain effect(ing) of *différance*

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<sup>1</sup> The valorization of “life” over “death” I mention here connects to Derrida’s work in *The Gift of Death*. Analyzing the work of the Czech theologian Jan Patočka, as well that of Heidegger, Levinas, and Kierkegaard, Derrida offers a deconstructive reading of the relation between death, sacrifice, and responsibility in the Western philosophical and religious traditions. With regard to Patočka’s conception of conversion, Derrida comments on the way Christian subjectivity “represses” Platonism “through recourse to a *figure* [*figure*, also “face”]...that inscribes sacrifice within the dyssymetry of looks that cannot be exchanged....This look that cannot be exchanged is what situates ordinary culpability and original sin; it is the essence of responsibility” (*The Gift of Death* 93-94). Significantly, the sacrificial economy which, in Derrida’s terms, Patočka’s work on conversion describes, entails precisely “the sacrifice of the *oikonomia*, namely the law of the home (*oikos*), or the hearth, of what is one’s own or proper, of the private, of the love and affection of one’s own kin” (95).

that stages the breaching of alterity into a body, or corpus, of text or texts, that stages an opening onto an experience of the “impossible.”

My thesis argues that Antigone, a unique sister, but one the resonance of whose mourning attracts a wide and diverse audience, figures the *mouvance* in and among the corpus of the texts whose correspondence I read. Antigone figures “*life death*.” You may recognize here an axiomatic. Whether “accommodated in advance,” as Heidegger might put it, as fundament, ground, or fulcrum; or positioned as abject, *Abgrund*, or abyss, difference in metaphysical discourse gains interest or capital, according to the genealogical program of what Derrida might call its “matricial bed”: binary oppositionality. The alterity which arrives in this scene can only remain “other” by moving, through an interplay of differing/deferring which does not advance the propositional wealth of its legacy.

I suggest that the sister figure is neither fundament nor *Abgrund*. Then, who or what is she? Or, more precisely, how is she? How does she perform so that the oppositional genealogy may open to alterity without either encysting its difference as an illness, or sacrificing it as a dangerous excess, or “repressing” it as a dangerous but necessary enemy? Antigone is the sister figure that impels my reading of the corpus, a corpus wherein each of these modalities operates, and wherein an overflow exceeds them. My interest is in the overflow of the economy that the modalities the corpus exemplifies set in place.

Each text enacts a family scene, each text treats of inheritance, binding, transmission, generation, and death. The effect of the sister figure, in each text, and in the

corpus they together comprise, is to breach the opposition that resolves the problematic of difference by reducing it. The sister does not complete the imaginary genealogy of generation instaurated by Hegel and Heidegger; rather, the sister figure performs by opening it to alterity.

The procedure of the thesis entails then a use of “figure,” the question of the figure in relation to discourse and signification. And the question of the relation between figure and gender. Hegel construes sexual difference as opposition. In “Language in the Poem” Heidegger complicates but does not abrogate this position. What is the significance of the sister as a figure of the feminine? Could a brother perform the same function? According to my reading of Derrida in *Glas* and in “To Speculate—on ‘Freud,’” the answer is: No.

In order to prepare the reader for what follows, I take the opportunity here to discuss the textual procedure this thesis essays. It is a text which, in foregrounding the figure of Antigone, Antigone as figure, aims to inscribe the rhythm and performativity upon which it also comments. The second chapter, which comprises a commentary on an essay of Carol Jacobs that unsettles the categories that organize the influential Hegelian tradition of Antigone interpretation, functions as an analysis of this tradition that questions the notions of “origin,” “reproduction,” and “conception.” The third and fourth chapters show how Heidegger’s essay “Language in the Poem” performs a *nostos*-journey toward a generation apart, toward the purity of what Heidegger reads as the site of Georg Trakl’s poetry, at the same time that it mourns the failure of his destructive project. My thesis essays to remark the strophes, or turns, of Heidegger’s journey while showing how the Trakl text performs in relation to the sister-figure it evokes. Derrida’s



*Glas* performs the aneconomy of affiliation enacted by the role of Antigone both there and in Hegel's family-shaped dialectical philosophy. The fifth chapter of the thesis aims to amplify this role by directing attention to the way Antigone as sister figures suspension and perversion, in the monster cyst formed by Derrida's inclusion of selected letters by Hegel. The sixth chapter pays homage to Derrida's work in "To Speculate—on 'Freud'" through a repetition of the *pas de thèse* he analyzes there.

The thesis does not present an argument. Instead, it follows the *pas de démonstration* that, in Derrida's terms, structures the graphics of Freud's procedure in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. The thesis sticks very close, as if glued, to the texts it engages. In its lack of detachment, it proceeds speculatively, performing in a way exemplary of the athesis that Antigone figures. The thesis has "no object that is detachable from its detaching operation" (Derrida, "To Speculate" 296). It adds no content about Antigone; rather it speculates on the figuration of Antigone which it reads.

## Chapter One

### Responses to the Hegelian Tradition of Antigone Interpretation: Kelly Oliver, Jacques Lacan, and Judith Butler

This chapter examines three critical responses to the influential Hegelian tradition of Antigone/*Antigone* interpretation, that of Kelly Oliver in “Antigone’s Ghost: Undoing Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” that of Jacques Lacan in “The Essence of Tragedy: A Commentary on Sophocles’ *Antigone*,” and that of Judith Butler in *Antigone’s Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*. My approach to the interpretations these writers advance looks through the prism of my reading of Antigone’s role in Jacques Derrida’s *Glas*, a text which has been termed his “masterwork” on Hegel. Key to this reading is the notion that, according to Derrida’s interpretation, in Hegel’s account of the history of Spirit, Antigone functions both as the necessary fulcrum and the unassimilable remains of a family-shaped speculative dialectics whose enveloping movements aim to consume (the limits of) whatever that philosophy thinks as its “other.”

According to Hegel, Antigone exemplifies the ideal sister, the family member the uniqueness of whose mourning work enables human passage from life to death, from family to polis, and from the (female) realm of the pre-ethical to the (male) realm of *Sittlichkeit*. Receiving pride of place in what Derrida terms the family-structured speculative dialectics of Hegel, Antigone is the noble sister who, rescuing her dead brother Polyneices from “lower irrational forces and unconscious desires” by serving at

rites of mourning, assures his passage from the particular individuality of the family realm to the universal individuality of citizenship in the world beyond (life).

In their interpretations of Antigone, Oliver, Lacan,<sup>2</sup> and Butler foreground the activity of mourning and its motive forces and expression as that which subverts the oppositional framework upon which (post-)Hegelian speculative philosophy hangs. At stake in my reading of these texts, all of which revolve around critical thinking in relation to “family,” are the issues of taxonomy, resemblance, oppositionality, systematicity, and hierarchy. I aim to demonstrate that the work of each of these three thinkers, while explicating the way in which Antigone’s mourning subverts the Hegelian oppositional framework, also re-establishes a version of oppositional binarism.

### **Kelly Oliver: Antigone’s Ghost**

In her essay, “Antigone’s Ghost: Undoing Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” Kelly Oliver analyzes Hegel’s discussion of the family in “The Ethical Order” section of

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<sup>2</sup> Lacan’s discussion of Antigone’s mourning in *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis* emphasizes its radical affirmation of the “absolute individual” (278) that Polyneices is. As her brother, Polyneices is irreplaceable, and has value irrespective of the content of his history. As Lacan writes, “...Antigone’s position represents the radical limit that affirms the unique value of [her brother’s] being without reference to any content, to whatever good or evil [he] may have done, or to whatever he may be subjected to” (*Ethics* 279). This “unique value,” according to Lacan, “is essentially that of language.” The limit to which Antigone’s desire attaches her is precisely “the break that the very presence of language inaugurates in the life of man,” “[t]hat purity, that separation of being from the characteristics of the historical drama he has lived through” (279). In Lacan’s analysis, it is Antigone’s position at the limit of the signifying order which allows her desire to return always to the same place, to the being of Polyneices. Antigone’s desire, fixated, returning, comes up against the real, that which in experience, both conscious and unconscious, remains in the same place, that which cannot be moved along any metonymic chain of signifiers.

*Phenomenology of Spirit*. She selects Hegel's work in order to demonstrate that "misogynist elements of the history of philosophy are not accidental to that philosophy" (69). Rather than working to salvage or to distil out aspects of Hegel's philosophy that would serve the construction and elaboration of a feminist ethics of the family, Oliver's reading shows how the movement of his dialectics, which leads to the conceptualization of the real in the ethical life of the community, depends on the suppression of woman. In her essay Oliver devotes particular attention both to the unique and foundational relationship in Hegel's account of the family, the one subsisting between brother and sister; and to the figure who, although unnamed by him in the *Phenomenology*, exemplifies for Hegel the most divinely noble representation of the sister, Antigone.

According to Oliver, the goal of philosophy as represented by Hegel in the *Phenomenology* is "to articulate fully the meaning of consciousness such that there is no difference between that meaning and its articulation." "If this goal is reached," explains Oliver, "nothing [real] remains unconscious or unspoken." The family constitutes for Hegel a uniquely important moment in the development of the meaning of consciousness, since it is the action of the sister on behalf of the brother which assures his passage to the realm of conscious ethical activity. The ethical relation between sister and brother ushers him from the sphere of "the natural, the unconscious," that is, from the feminine sphere of the family, to the properly male realm of the state. By a double operation, the family accomplishes the transition between unconscious nature and conscious culture: "First, paradoxically, the natural blood relations of the family produce ethical duties between some family members.... Second, the family rescu[es] the individual from nature through the rites of burial" (70-71).

As Oliver demonstrates, the sister's "positive ethical action" (*Phenomenology* 271 par. 453), her service of burial and memorialization, functions as the foundation of Hegel's project in *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Yet Antigone, exemplary sister and exemplary woman, representing for Hegel the highest intuitive awareness of the ethical, gets "left behind as the unconscious of the family, upon which all subsequent dialectical movements of the conceptualization of Spirit rest." Never preserved in later stages of the dialectic, unconscious woman is "the one element which cannot in principle be brought to consciousness" (Oliver 70, 71-72).

As Oliver remarks, Hegel's family narrative includes an account of the sublimation of the too "natural" desire of the woman into the denaturalized, and, it seems, ever erect desire of the male. It is in the "desireless" relation between brother and sister, that relation of blood equilibrium, where the ethical relationship within the family achieves consciousness—and where, as Oliver points out, it "behaves like a [male] sex organ" (75). Consciousness associates with verticality, and with the stiff erectness of the monument that the sister prepares for her brother.

In Hegel's account, the state founds itself on the destructive compromise of the family, both through the transformation of the male into a citizen (a transformation that involves the purification of natural desire for home, mother, and wife); and also through the demand for obedience to the call to arms. By so doing, in Hegel's famous phrase, the state creates in what it suppresses an internal enemy: Womankind. The second operation of the family, the protection of the (male) corpse through the rites of burial, must also be accomplished by the female. As Oliver reminds us, in Hegel's account the corpse must be protected from "unconscious appetites." It is the "woman...who is [primarily] identified

with these unconscious...aspects.” Paradoxically then, the sister-woman whose operation guarantees the transition from nature to culture, is responsible to protect the corpse from her own desire. In Oliver’s words, she “protects [the man’s] virility, his potency, by remaining in the shadows” (72).

According to Oliver’s reading, “the feminine does not contain the dormant seed of its opposite[;] [r]ather, the masculine comes to conscious articulation against the feminine which he necessarily leaves behind.” The male attainment to the “properly social and ethical realm” depends upon the natural, unconscious operation of the female. In principle, the operation must retain these qualities. By exiling and repressing the natural, the unconscious, the man defines himself, and protects his masculinity. He assimilates or consumes the woman in order to protect himself and to install himself into culture (72, 76ff). But, if woman is consumed, argues Oliver, there is no dialectic. Does the dialectic thereby stop?

However, later in the essay Oliver argues that since, in Hegel’s account, the dialectical passage from family to culture depends on the woman’s remaining unconscious, *and*, since Hegel’s system requires the experience of (un)consciousness becoming conceptualized, the mourning work of the woman project calls his whole project into question. The real (woman) does not and cannot become the rational (man).

In “Antigone’s Ghost,” Oliver positions herself as a psychoanalytic theorist. Oliver writes that, “Within Hegel’s scenario, the community is possible only by virtue of the sacrifice and repression of the feminine” (80). As Oliver points out, womankind constitutes both a necessity and a threat to the community. I read Oliver to say that, by repressing the (desire) of the woman-sister, Hegel’s account neither removes nor exiles

her. The “repression” of the woman—of her unconsciousness, her lack of access to the true value of her mourning work—does not effect a definitive expulsion. Instead, Hegel’s system, according to Oliver, remains haunted by what it suppresses, by what it represses. However, in my reading, Oliver’s argumentation reinstaurates a binary structuration of thought in that her analysis posits the force of this repression, of the repressive movement consequent in Hegel’s theorization of the necessary suppression of the woman, as a fundament, or Abgrund, to that theorization. Antigone’s ghost “undoes” Hegel’s project in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* at the same time that it founds it. I would argue that, such an application of psychoanalysis to Hegel’s system, suggestive as it is, does not inscribe the kind of movement “beyond” his dialectics. It does not inscribe its de-composition, in the way that Derrida does, in *Glas*, for example.

From the point of view of logic, Oliver’s argument is both cogent and consistent. It holds up. From a rhetorical point of view, the essay stages itself as a story of deprivation and loss. In Oliver’s interpretation of the terms of Hegel’s account, since the woman, whose uniquely suited exemplar is the sister, languishes in her unconsciousness of the meaning of the necessary mourning and memorializing work she performs, she stays behind in the obscurity of the natural realm. Both she and her work are devalued.

In my view Oliver’s argument tends to recapitulate the static structuration that Hegel’s dialectics aims to achieve. Hegel’s interpretation of the brother-sister relation, and of the sister’s role in ensuring the transition from family to state, does not call his project into question according to the terms of Oliver’s logic and rhetoric. Rather, it demonstrates, in an exemplary way, both what is at stake for Hegel, and the matter of

what his dialectical system aims to consume. Antigone is not a surd in the logic of the *Phenomenology* so much as she is the exemplar of its machine, of its necessary operation.

The end of Oliver's essay encourages us to acknowledge the value of woman's work in society, and to attribute to her the consciousness of the meaning of that work. But such acknowledgement and such attribution would not in themselves allow for movement, the movement that re-marks what cannot be held (up), what cannot be contained, in a relation of opposition. Oliver's essay gestures toward a shining depth, an *Abgrund* where the feminine finds her true place. Discursively the essay convinces and persuades. However, the critical gesture by means of which Oliver analyzes the *Abgrund* of Hegel's system inscribes reversal, and hence, re-installation of the binary.

### **Jacques Lacan: Antigone's Transgression**

In their editor's preface to *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the "école freudienne,"* Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose remind their readers of Lacan's having dissolved the *école freudienne* in 1980 and liken this gesture to the manner of his presentation of his work: "[A] challenge to authority, yet at the same time authoritarian and patriarchal" (vii). In the present section I explore Lacan's reading of *Antigone* by reviewing its exposition from the perspective provided by this remark. Lacan emphatically repudiates Hegel's reading of the play, favouring that of Goethe instead; yet Lacan's own interpretation (re)instates a dialectical structure of thought.

My reading is shaped by two guiding leads: One, a question that Dawne McCance has posed, "What is Lacan's reading of Antigone's 'transgression'?" The other, David



Farrell Krell's proposal, which he includes in a footnote of *The Tragic Absolute*, that Lacan's interpretation of Antigone has a disruptive effect on the Lacanian system itself. If I succeed here, the contrapuntal functioning of these two leads will be audible.

From the standpoint of grammar Lacan's analysis diverges widely from that of Hegel. Not for Lacan the relegation of Antigone to the sphere of the household gods and of the obsequies ushering the male citizen into the universal realm; nor of Creon to the sphere of the human law of the polis. Not for him the moralistic inanities offered in succession, after Hegel, extolling one or the other as exemplars of duty. Nor can Antigone's splendour be accounted for by her sometime appropriation of the language of the polis, in her *agon* (debate) with Creon; or by her courage in defying Creon's edict, which entailed behaving in culturally unsanctioned ways. All this is for the humanists to carry on about, says Lacan. In point of fact Antigone is pitiless and fearless, so courage does not enter into the motivation of her defiance.

I read Lacan as announcing to his audience, "If you will stop trying to achieve some *jouissance* by enjoying *Antigone* as a spectacle, if you will focus on what is to be heard, in the play and especially in my lectures, I will by my words open to your sight the telescope whose power makes layers of dramatic action subside, laying bare the blinding splendour of Antigone's image. So listen up." For Lacan, maintaining the family *Atè* (doom, infatuation) is the true axis around which the tragedy of *Antigone* turns. To remain erect in its winds, to remain still speaking, with a word on the lips in the face of the god's oppressive attentions, in the face of the doom that they visit on a few special families—this stance, these powers, constitute the maintenance of family *Atè*. In Lacan's account, it is precisely this stance and these powers that Antigone fails to assume.

Antigone's transgression consists in her desire to go *πρὸς' ἄταν*, beyond the limit of the family *Atè*, into a realm where no one can stay very long. This realm Lacan identifies with a second death. Is this second death a death in life, a life in death, as Krell suggests in *The Tragic Absolute*? Does it pertain to Antigone, who has spent her life serving the doomed and the dead, and who can no longer bear living in the same house with her uncle Creon? Yes, Antigone resides in a realm between two deaths. But Lacan directs his listeners away from what he would term a merely humanist interpretation.

Addressing his audience, Lacan says, "If you have been listening with your usual attention you may be satisfied with that humanist take on Antigone's place. However you will have missed something essential about the dialectic of desire." In Lacan's words: "Antigone reveals to us the line of sight that defines desire" (*Seminar VII* 247). And, in *Seminar II*, Lacan explains, "It is the nature of desire to be radically torn. The very image of man brings in here a mediation which is always imaginary, always problematic, that is never....completely fulfilled" (166). As Lacan explains in his lecture "The mirror stage," becoming a subject, becoming human, entails misidentifying the "I" with the images whose desire it desires. This specular *méconnaissance* ushers the pre-subject into the symbolic order, the order of language. The production of subjectivity, which is an effect of the symbolic, thus also irrecusably produces a tear or cut in the self. The changing march of objects the "I" desires, and desires to identify as the Ego-Ideal, constitutes the Other; which Other therefore is located both external to the subject and within it as an aspect of the unconscious imaginary. The post-specular subject, denied the "original" object of desire, the mother, substitutes that desire with the desire for objects presented to it in social constructions articulated by the lawful ordering of the symbolic. The desire for

the (m)other can never be satisfactorily replaced by an Other. The cut or rupture constitutive of subjectivity the subject tries to suture over with language, in an endless progress along a chain of signifiers that are related metonymically.

I read Lacan to say that Antigone's desire sets her apart from the structure of signification. Tragic heroes are always somehow separate from this structure; and Antigone, in an exemplary way. Antigone shows the way of the gods. What are the signs of this separation, of this *via divina*? In the following section I outline the signs by which Lacan, taking his cue from the Chorus in Sophocles' *Antigone*, delineates the transgressive character of this unique sister.

First, Antigone is *ώμός*, that is, "raw, uncivilized, harsh." She is pitiless and cruel, especially toward her sister Ismene. Her lack of "charity" places her beyond the sphere of the family *Atè*. Grieving over the body of Polyneices, she moans rather than speaks. She cries like a mother bird who returns to an empty nest. Lacan points out that, in the whirlwind in the midst of which she appears to attempt her brother's burial for the second time, Antigone's figure looks "little." Is she overthin, or of oversmall proportions? As though she were a miniature, either child-like or approximating the size of the dogs and birds who feed on the carrion her brother's body has become? Antigone is located, for Lacan, at the boundary between animal and human.

Antigone is *ώμός*: She appears by her brother's corpse at the height of the progress of a dust storm, in the depths of its darkness. Of all the creatures on the plain, she alone appears standing, in upright position, at the cataclysmic moment. Not quite civilized, Antigone resides at the boundary between nature and culture, at the boundary

between the divine and the human. Antigone's speech is harsh, *ώμός*, characterized by disrupted syntactic ordering. Look at her use of *μετα* (with, after, beyond), says Lacan; thereby naming the "beyond" where he claims her desire moves her. Antigone places *μετα* at the end of phrases, straining grammatical intelligibility. Her speech is not childish, merely; it is atrocious, like that of an idiot. For Lacan, Antigone resides at the limit of the signifying order, the limit of its de-formation.

Second, Antigone is *αυτόνομος* (ruled by one's own law): According to Lacan's reading of the Chorus' appellation, Antigone's autonomy amounts to her ignorance of her own law. Her "autonomy" places her at the boundary between consciousness and unconsciousness.

Third, in Lacan's analysis, Antigone's transgression amounts to a crime. In Lacan's account Antigone insists on her desire for the formal surface of Polyneices, for his being as such, without respect for the historical drama of his life. Her desire is fixated on a value inconceivable apart from language and indeed, as Lacan paradoxically avers, apart from history, from the *Atè* of the family. Antigone resides, not outside the structure of language as such, but at the radical limit of the signifying order. In her desire she evokes an unwritten law, a right that emerges at the moment in language "when the emergent signifier freezes into a fixed object, in spite of a flood of possible transformations" (279). Antigone's crime fixates on what in Lacan's dialectic remains mere form, thereby blocking the metonymic-substitutionary movement along the signifying chain.

Not fortuitously, Lacan selects for Antigone the traits that the male Chorus of Sophocles' play, admonishing her, choose to describe her. By this selection Lacan aligns

himself with their position as patriarchal elders, while at the same time playfully assimilating their appellation to the register of a Hegelian philosopheme: The mediatory role of the Egyptian moment in the history of art, philosophy, and religion. This is the moment that represents for Hegel the transition from the religions that elevate nature to those which elevate the spiritual above the natural. According to Hegel, the last “natural” religion is the Egyptian, which reveres animal-headed gods and which knows God “not as spirit” but as something which, like the animal, appertains to unconscious power (*Lectures* 323). The Egyptian moment is also characterized by the qualities in the field of the *ὀμός*. For Hegel the symbol of the Egyptian religion is the Sphinx, a figure colossal, heavy, and, like hieroglyphic writing, remains all but insusceptible of resonating with the *Klang* of Spirit’s realization in true phonetic language.

As *ὀμός*, Antigone, like Egyptian religion in Hegel’s schema, belongs outside the pale of the civic or symbolic order, whether articulated by the law of speculative dialectics or by the Law-of-the-Father. Egyptian art and religion remains on the border of the natural and the spiritual in that it represents, rather than instanciates, the human (progression of spirit). Antigone remains, likewise, at the limit of the symbolic order of language. She lacks that most spiritually human of qualities, “charity”; pitiless and cruel, she can only evoke the pity-catharsis she cannot express. Like the Sphinx, Lacan’s Antigone embodies dis-proportion, animal-human hybridity, and the incapacity to truly “speak.” Egyptian art remains fixed in heavy obscurity; and Antigone remains at the moment in language “when the emergent signifier freezes into a fixed object.” Like Egyptian religion, Antigone represents the limit of the civic, of the *socius*, where the criminality of the *ἀυτόνομος* one prevents entrance into the polis.

I now turn to the question, Does Lacan's reading of Antigone disrupt the Lacanian system itself? The following points build to a demonstration of an affirmative answer of this question:

Antigone's desire is destructive, and disruptive, because it invokes something on the order of a law, but a law which is not developed in any signifying chain or in *anything else*. Hers is the law against which the Lacanian system stumbles. *Quel scandale!*

The dialectic of desire both depends upon and creates an economy in which, thanks to the signifying cut, demand never stops, and neither does the movement along the signifying chain. Yet Antigone is fixated on the "thatness," on the pure being of Polyneices. According to Lacan's account, she steps out of the signifying chain, if only for a moment, into the signifying cut itself. Satisfying neither the human nor the chthonic law, she succeeds neither in demonstrating charity, nor in mourning, nor in (properly) speaking. But she succeeds in attaining her desire: Fixation, unto death.

The following points combine toward a negative answer:

Lacan claims that Antigone's good is different from everyone else's: Her good is to go beyond the family *Atè*. In the next breath however he defines *Atè* as the field of the Other, the field of the dialectic of desire whereby the subject accommodates the Ego-Ideal to the symbolic formations offered to it. This is the field, says Lacan, where Antigone is situated. She is not only in the field, but walled-in, condemned. She may have crossed the line for a time, but, no longer; Lacan's dialectic engulfs her *meta* in a meta-physical gesture.

Located in the place of the signifying cut by virtue of which the dialectical system can function, in Lacan's account, Antigone's beauty, shines as a result of her position as intermediary between two realms, the imaginary and the symbolic. Her mediating role is to usher pre-subjects into the symbolic realm of the Law-of-the-Father (*Seminar VII* 248).

Paradoxically, Antigone's threat is her destructive desire, by force of which no mediation—between the imaginary and the symbolic, presumably—is possible. The trouble is that, when excited by her beauty, *one loses one's place among the power relations one has established*. One loses, not speech, exactly, but the signifying power of language by virtue of which one stands erect in the winds of *Atè*, opposing that power to whatever the gods visit, retaining a word on the lips (249).

Therefore Antigone must be sacrificed, sublated. Lacan is frank about that. I read Lacan to say, “Come closer to Antigone's image, look through my telescope, and I will show you that her beauty is a blinding effect produced as though by an anamorphic (deformative) cylinder, sparkling with radiance. But *mon cher* it is empty after all, phallus shaped; and after all that, *μετα*, as you now can see, the keystone to my dialectics of desire.”

I prefer to keep the question open.

### **Judith Butler: Antigone Confounded**

In her book *Antigone's Claim: Kinship Between Life and Death*, Judith Butler locates her theoretical analysis at the crossroads of two streams of cultural criticism: the influential and entrenched Hegelian tradition of Antigone interpretation, along with its structural

tributary, Lacanian psychoanalysis; and the contemporary feminist critique of structuralist approaches to kinship, and of the ethical and political problematics these approaches entail with regard to social reorganization. Contrasting her work with that of Luce Irigaray, Butler questions whether Antigone, as both the product and performer of incestuous relations, can be made a representative for a feminist politics that challenges the state's role as legislator and guarantor of kinship norms.

Early in the first chapter, Butler canvasses the question of Antigone's exemplarity in a way that acknowledges her discomfort with the fictive nature of her subject: "[T]he 'Antigone' of Sophocles' play...is, after all, a fiction, one that does not easily allow itself to be made into an example one might follow without running into the risk of slipping into irreality oneself" (1). Addressed both to her readers and to herself, this warning against "slipping into irreality" adumbrates the motivation that I read as energizing and shaping her approach to Hegel and Lacan as well as to the figure of Antigone. Butler is concerned to establish clear boundaries distinguishing fiction from reality, static form from dynamic practice, (possessor) of word from (owner) of deed, (object) of desire from (subject) of identification, properly separated kinship relations from confounded and entangled ones, and human being from human exile in a kind of non-being.

Butler's text offers an incisive comparative analysis of the structure of Hegel's syllogistic conceptualization of family and state, on the one hand, and of Lacan's theory of the symbolic and the accession to language as the entry to the sphere of cultural intelligibility, on the other. In both Hegel and Lacan, Butler argues, kinship relations are presented as ideal forms, structured by universal, pre-social, or pre-linguistic, law. Butler also offers a telling critique of the cultural and philosophical presumptions—the



“blindnesses”—which underpin both systems. However, Butler’s account, as I read it, participates in a fictive scenario, proposing an “as if,” by means of which it accomplishes a mimetic gesture: For Butler, as for Hegel and Lacan, Antigone interpretation affords a link between two separable but indissolubly connected spheres. Butler’s criticism strives to bridge the realm of fiction, and the realm of historically constituted “reality.”

Despite Butler’s commendation of a radically transformative praxis of kinship, her work too reductively posits a post-structuralism that, while open to historical contingency, still stops short of critical dynamism and cuts off access to the proliferation of possibilities for rethinking that praxis. Her interpretation of Antigone, as well as her interpretation of Hegel and Lacan, mimetically incorporates the same critical-philosophical axiomatic, an axiomatic that operates to foreclose criticism that could underwrite resistance to state hierarchy by resisting the oppositional forms of thought that justify and perpetuate it. Ostensibly disputing the utility as well as the truth claims she reads as implicit in Hegel’s “interpretive scaffold,” Butler’s text nonetheless reinstalls an oppositionality that is reductive with regard to rethinking kinship practice.

For Butler, the Antigone interpretations advanced by both Hegel and Lacan are not only influential, but also exemplary of a widespread critical approach that domesticates, in advance, its own potential for the radicalization of feminist politics and for the re-formation of kinship practice: “As if troubled by the very deformation of kinship that [Antigone] performs and portends, critics of the play have responded with an idealization of kinship that denies the challenge that is being made against it.” According to Butler, the sphere of kinship is “rigorously dissociated” from the sphere of the social in both Hegel and Lacan. For both thinkers, kinship “constitutes the structural field of

intelligibility with which the social emerges.” Whether placing kinship in the realm of the family and of the divine, as Hegel does; or re-casting it as undergirding an ideal “symbolic,” as does Lacan, both thinkers posit its sphere as the constitutive pre-condition of the emergence of the social. By idealizing the kinship normativity constitutive of the *socius*, both thinkers present it as configured or articulated by “intractable laws” that are insusceptible to reformulation in response to historical contingency and experience (28, 29, 40).

For Butler, Antigone “represents neither kinship nor its radical outside.” Instead, she “becomes the occasion for a reading of a structurally constrained notion of kinship in terms of its social interability, the aberrant temporality of the norm” (29). Butler’s argumentation advances toward a demonstration of the way Antigone allegorizes an aberrant transmission of that paternal word whose force perpetuates unjust kinship normativity. The father’s word—whether that of Oedipus in Sophocles’ trilogy, that of the idealist philosopher Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and elsewhere, or that of the Law-of-the-Father in Lacanian psychoanalysis—structures the law that prescribes heterosexual normativity and proscribes socially inadmissible people, their mourning and their partnerships, to the margins or limits of the *socius*.

Butler’s interpretation foregrounds performance and performativity, a fitting focus for the interpretation of a drama. The view she takes offers a perspective, not of the performance and reception of Antigone in the classical theatre of Athens, but of the performance and reception of Hegel’s conception of the relation between family and state, and of Lacanian psychoanalysis in the field of feminist criticism and in society at large. Butler’s work responds to the question of the way Hegelian and Lacanian

interpretation perform in academy and socius. At the same time it allegorizes both this performance, and Antigone's aberrant practice. According to Butler, the curse of Oedipus bears a force that limits the scope of Antigone's performance of kinship, just as the reception-performance of Hegelian and Lacanian thought bears a curse that de-limits the reformulation of kinship practice. In all of these fields, whether in society or academy, the paternal word performs by naturalizing and perpetuating both heterosexual normativity, on the one hand, and the social death or non-being of those social groups marginalized on the basis of aberrant kinship or sexual practice, on the other. My reading of Butler's Antigone interpretation offers an analysis of her performance here, in this scene of allegory, as cultural critic.

In Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, her father says to Antigone, "From none did you have love more than from this man, without whom you will now spend the remainder of your life" (lines 1617-1619, translation by Grene; qtd. in Butler 60). For Butler, these words, which amount to a possessive, "almost incestuous demand for loyalty" carry the performative effect of a curse, one that "culminate[s] in [Antigone's] own permanent lovelessness." In Butler's analysis, this is the paternal word, which, compounded with the act of incest that engenders her, foredooms Antigone to a wasted, loveless future. The reception of the idealization of kinship normativity in Hegel and Lacan also bears the performative force of a paternal curse that foredooms the effectiveness of feminist political theory and praxis (59ff). At stake for Butler is Antigone's exemplarity, and hence, the potential utility of Antigone interpretation for the radical reformulation of kinship praxis. The way Butler articulates the boundaries of Antigone's exemplarity

redound on her allegorization and her critique, aligning them both to the oppositional binarism of Hegelian syllogism and Lacanian psychoanalysis.

“How surefire is a curse?” Butler asks. “[I]s there...a way in which its own vulnerability might be exposed and exploited?” Does Antigone’s transmission of the curse, her aberrant reiteration, merely “establish the structural necessity of perversion to the law” in a negative dialectics in which perversion and law remain in static oppositionality? Or does it “make possible... other forms of social life” by exposing the pathologization of the non-normative institutionalized by the state, whose sphere of legitimacy founds itself on their exclusion? (65, 67-68).

I want to highlight two allegorizing gestures in Butler’s text, gestures I regard as structuring her reading of the aberrancy of Antigone’s transmission of the paternal curse. This aberrancy, tellingly, produces a crisis of recognition and a tension that exposes the intractability of the law whose legitimacy founds itself on the performative force of the curse. For Butler, Antigone’s aberrant transmission falls short, which she confirms, as though with a backward glance of regret, by stating that Antigone does not approximate to a queer heroine. Neither the force of the law to which Antigone appeals, not that of the law she defies; no public act, whether the assertive act of mourning, or the failure to mourn; no account of her confounded history or origin, is able to *drag* the law of kinship, and its praxis, to a ground exposed to historical contingency. Deformation of kinship proves intractable, insusceptible of social re-form(ul)ation.

First allegorizing gesture: “The agency that performs [the] reiteration [of the paternal word] knows the curse but misunderstands the moment in which she participates

in its transmission.” If Antigone’s is the performing agency, then she, like the ego in Lacan, founds her subjectivity on a “*méconnaissance*” of the historical moment, of the moment of the historical. The predictive force of the paternal word remains in Antigone an “encrypted word that carries an irrecoverable history, a history that, by virtue of its very irrecoverability...bears a force whose origin and end cannot be fully determined” (66, 65). And like the Antigone of Lacan’s commentary, Antigone stays fixated on her (desire for) her brother, rather than moving to exemplify an ethics in relation to his history.

Antigone remains “unconscious” with respect to the momentous value of historical contingency. Neither her public defiance of Creon’s edict, nor her refusal to deny allegiance to unwritten law, nor her adoption of the language of sovereignty demonstrates her arrival at “consciousness.” Butler’s Antigone, like Hegel’s, remains in a shadowy unconscious relative to the historical contingencies she fails to take into account, to recount, to account for. Instead she remains caught in a temporal loop: Her transmission of the “curse” of Oedipus, however aberrant, remains caught within its retrospective force, a force that, paradoxically, *remains* to come. Operating within “an uncertain temporality,” the force of the curse “inaugurates the necessity of its prehistory and of what will come to appear as always already true” (65). Butler’s attribution of unconsciousness, of what I am calling “*méconnaissance*,” a fatal misprision, functions to bar the fictive Antigone from the realm of true representability and of political utility. Antigone lacks the support crucial to the (development) of the subject: A narrative account that provides entrance into the socius. Antigone’s feet swing, and she drops out

of time and narrative, out of the temporal future within which the reformulation of kinship Butler proposes can happen.

Second allegorical gesture: For Butler, the effect of Antigone's performance of kinship is compromised by categorical entanglements. Antigone's words are not clearly separated from her deeds. The performativity of the speech acts in the play depends, for Butler, on the clarity of the (proper) attribution of word and speech to complete or whole or intact subjects. Imbricated with this concern for the propriety of speech and act, for the assignation of their ownership, is the concern for the proper denomination of kinship roles. Although Antigone as figure, by "neither conform[ing] to the [Lacanian] symbolic law, [nor] prefigur[ing] a final restitution of the law" "compels" a reading that challenges that law, she remains "entangled in the terms of kinship." Her crime, explains Butler, is "confounded" by her incestuous origin; and thereby its performative force is compromised (71-72). While Butler commends a radically transformative praxis of kinship, her work in *Antigone's Claim* stops short of post-structural thought, in the sense that it reinstalls a thinking that rests on oppositional binaries. The coherence of kinship, the bounds of the proper relative to speech, to desire, and to gender, concern Butler's critique. In Butler's terms, Antigone can challenge heteronormativity, but cannot provide a coherent alternative.

In Butler's interpretation of Antigone, as in those of Hegel and Lacan, the same critical-philosophical axiomatic operates to close off modalities of thought and praxis that could underwrite resistance to state hierarchy by destabilizing the oppositional formations that rationalize and perpetuate it. Although her work goes some way toward such destabilization, it stops short of dismantling the binarism on which idealized forms and

practice depend. In this way it curtails the possibilities for resistance to the hierarchical and unjust social ordering of kinship relations. By reinstalling oppositionality that insists on categorical propriety, Butler's text functions to reduce possibilities with regard to rethinking kinship praxis and the hierarchical scaffold on which it hangs.

## Chapter Two

### Watching for Antigone: Conceiving, Non-Positively, Ethics

“For millennia now, we have stood sentinel: hoping to see her—to catch her in the act, to say plainly and clearly what Antigone is about,” writes Carol Jacobs. “Yet no vigilance would be adequate to the task” (“Dusting Antigone” 889). In the text of Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, Sophocles’ *Antigone* is the receptacle for effusive encomiums, the exemplar of family virtue and feminine nobility. According to Luce Irigaray, *Antigone* provides an “identification for many girls and women living...today,” as a heroine faithful to “oral law,” and to “maternal ancestry” (*Thinking the Difference* 69-70; qtd. in Jacobs “Dusting” 890, 913-14). According to Jacobs’ interpretation in “Dusting Antigone,” the daughter of Oedipus eludes such representations.

For Hegel, as for Irigaray, at stake in reading *Antigone* is the interpretation of the place of woman in the ethical life of family and community. According to Hegel’s account, the role of woman in the community “leaves something to be desired in the realm of the serious,” as Jacobs puts it. In “Dusting Antigone,” the essay that stages her own interpretation of Hegel, Irigaray, and Sophocles, Jacobs takes up the ironical stance that Hegel reserves for the woman (critic). She does so, not only to offer a reading that interrupts the progressive movement of Hegelian dialectics that fore-determines and tames woman, but also in order to interrogate the opposition between woman as traitor and woman as exemplary heroine which both Hegel and Irigaray erect. Adopting selected interpretive suggestions from each of these writers, Jacobs maintains an ironic distance from “the forms that have enabled [them]...to organize *Antigone*.” Her analysis aims to



demonstrate the way her reading of the play “changes and transforms the concept of ethics,” the way it “perverts the universal and its promise of property,” and the way it “perverts as well any fixed concept of revolution against patriarchy” (889, 910, 911).

In this chapter I offer a commentary on Jacobs’ essay that metonymically juxtaposes her interpretation with Jacques Derrida’s reading of the female-termed *khōra* figure in Plato’s *Timaeus*. This juxtaposition suggests itself for a number of reasons, some of which I will clarify later in the chapter. Jacobs’ text attends “vigilantly” to various juxtapositions, offering what Mieke Bal might call a “surface” reading of the play and of the Hegelian stream of interpretation: to the juxtaposition of speech that demands clarity with speech that interrogates the possibility of clarity; to the juxtaposition of speech where the proper assignation of subject identity and (speech) act remains elusive with speech insisting on such identity; to the juxtaposition of widely divergent representation of gender and genre couched next to one another. Through a “vigilant” reinterpretation of *Antigone*, a reinterpretation that carefully attends to these juxtapositions, Jacobs essay performs a tropological displacement of Hegel’s ethicological schematization of the play. As well, it performs both a continuation and a displacement of the critical categorization that Irigaray employs in her interpretation of *Antigone*.

The *Timaeus*, while it can be viewed as an exposition of Plato’s philosophical-cosmological system as a whole, is framed as the account of Critias, who heard it from a poet of genius called Solon, who learned it from an Egyptian priest in a city located in the Nile delta, called Sais. The citizens of this city, living under the protection of the goddess Athena, considered themselves related to the Athenians (21b). The *Timaeus* thus

enframes its exposition by the account of transmission, an account that Plato's audience can regard as part of their mythic heritage, that is, as both inherited, and at a mythic and generational remove.

The myth surrounding the family of Antigone, the princess of the royal house of Cadmus in Thebes, was already of great antiquity when Sophocles wrote the eponymous play around 441 BCE. Thebes, the Greek city thirty miles to the northwest of Athens, by Sophocles' time the site associated with several myth cycles, had lent its name to the city on the Nile, the Egyptian capital during the Middle and Late Kingdoms. The setting of the play betokened a richness of mythic tradition and directed an orientalisising look backward toward a pre-origin. Written and performed about 130 years after the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes replaced the four *phyle*, the traditional social groupings based loosely on kinship association, with ten new, mixed-class, electoral *phyle*, the play has been read as a representation of the necessity of transition from the decadence of hegemony based on clan loyalty to a more advanced political form. *Antigone* can be read as a drama about the deterioration of an institution, of political power based on family alliance and loyalty to a kinship group. Performed before the citizens of the democratic Athenian polis, does it stage a warning against recidivation?

The mythical status of the family of Labdacus allowed Sophocles some liberty of expression in distancing the action of *Antigone* from the arena of contemporary politics and its critics. If the thematics of the play impinged too closely on a critique of current political leadership, the mythical character of its family could serve to lengthen its fictional remove. The setting of the play serves then to double the "genealogical break," the "estrangement from origin" (Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy" 74) already inscribed there

by Sophocles' treatment of its "subject": an exemplarily transgressively constituted family in relation to a polis also transgressively constituted.

The *khōra* of Plato's *Timaeus* is also presented there in terms which, among several valencies, associate her with myth: Mother or nurse, *khōra* is necessary to its cosmology. Like Thebes, *khōra* assumes the "character" of a mythic, orientalist, pre-origin. However, *khōra*, impossible to classify in the terms of the cosmology, exceeds the category of pre-origin.

For Hegel and Irigaray, *Antigone* dramatizes the conflict between family and state, and puts on display a moment of cultural transition. One interpretive stream within the "succession of separate, disconnected experiences of Antigone, impossible to gather together into a single, completed shape" (Jacobs, "Dusting" 889), places at its centre the defining oppositions that are the scaffold upon which western metaphysics and western political thought hangs and that structures western culture. The Hegelian tradition of *Antigone* interpretation is still so influential that the Segal and Gibbons translation of 2001, for example, begins its introduction with reference to the "dazzling accolade" from *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, where Hegel writes that *Antigone* is "one of the most sublime, and in every respect most consummate, work[s] of art human effort ever produced" (3).

In her essay "Dusting Antigone," Jacobs calls Hegel "the mother of philosophers," referring to his work on the play as the "origin" of an influential reading that examines the ethical implications of Antigone's action in defying the edict of her uncle Creon. As Jacobs reminds us, for Hegel "the stakes are sexual difference, the

relation between family and state, and the movement from matriarchy to patriarchy in the pagan world.” According to Jacobs, in carrying out the burial ritual in defiance of the edict, Antigone performs as mother, but in a way that does not effectuate the accepted functions of a mother, the functions of conception and reproduction (891, 889, 904ff).

In “*Khōra*,” Derrida offers a reading of Plato’s *Timaeus*. The discourse on *khōra*, the cosmological *triton genos*, or “third term,” that Timaeus describes as nurse or mother, constitutes for Derrida an abyssal chasm in the political-ontological discourse of the cosmology. Derrida reads *khōra* as something that is not a “thing,” something that escapes from the order of those distinctions which imply the possibility of a determined existent, the possibility of an order of multiplicities.

In the context of Derrida’s interpretation, *khōra* signifies supplementarity in two related ways: First, supplementarity with regard to the text of the *Timaeus* as logos; second, supplementarity with regard to its cosmo-ontology; and third, supplementarity with regard to the structure of signification. All these modes of supplementarity trouble the oppositional framework which subtends both the ontological conceptual apparatus of identity and difference and the ethico-logical thought that depends on these distinctions. The supplement both completes a signifying structure, and adds to it. Supplementarity signals both completion and overabundance, both correspondence and anomaly, in relation to what signifies.

Here I will proceed, oversimply, by highlighting several interrelated “characteristics” that, in the terms of Derrida’s essay, represent ways in which *khōra* exceeds the ontology it/she supplements. Under each heading I remark some ways in

which, by inscribing a *khōra* rhythm, Jacobs' rereading of *Antigone* demonstrates these characteristics.

### **One: *Khōra* Discourse Requires Impure, Hybrid Reasoning**

In Derrida's words: Since *khōra* "carr[ies] beyond the polarity of sense (metaphysical or proper), it [does not] belong to the horizon of sense" ("*Khōra*" 93). Coming to the philosopher "as in a dream," the discourse on *khōra*, according to my reading of Derrida's interpretation, requires a "'bastard' logos which belongs to the space neither of logical thought nor of *mythos*" (100). I am reading Derrida to say that, although *khōra* is compared to a receptacle in the *Timaeus*, it/she overflows this receptacle nature in an irruption that infects the purity, not only of the ontological discourse, but of that which I read to be its envelope: the polis, the city-state.

Jacobs' interpretation "dis-engenders" the categories, the "forms" that Hegel and Irigaray—and so many commentators in between—have employed to organize *Antigone* ("Dusting" 910). Without denying her character as dutiful daughter and devoted sister, Jacobs shows how, by performing "in the place of a mother," *Antigone* subverts the law of the family as conceived by Hegel and Irigaray. Rather than assuring Polynieces' entrance into the realm of the universal through mourning rites, rather than giving him a "completed shape," rather than closing the gaping mouths of/that feed on his body, *Antigone* seems to have covered it with a light layer of dust that fails to protect it from carrion birds and dogs (908, 910). Rather than "giving birth" to her brother as belonging to the realm of the universal, she gives death, "or if not quite death, then the dispersal of

the corpses' (Hegelian) claim to completeness of shape...and to what Irigaray calls its 'final figuration'" (909). By "giving" death to her fiancé Haemon, she destroys, rather than producing, the most valuable property of the state, the patrilinear heir (907). Rather than offering allegiance to maternal genealogy—whence her treatment of Ismene—Antigone performs in the place of a mother by recapitulating her mother's suicide; not by generating children or by honouring all those who shared her mother's womb, but in a decision that defies and pre-empts her uncle's, and her own, death sentence.

A bastard reasoning seems to be at work, or at play, in Jacobs' rereading of *Antigone*. Adopting selected cues from the texts of both Hegel and Irigaray, Jacobs interprets them "otherwise," attending to "what was said" by them by reading "that which had not been said" (912). Antigone fulfills, and does not fulfill, her father's words. Jacobs adopts selected words or direction from Hegel and Irigaray, while diverging from, recusing her reading from, the logos or form of their discourse on the play.

## **Two: Singular Impropriety**

The discourse on *khōra* disrupts the logical exposition of the cosmology of the *Timaeus*, the order of its ordering. As that which cannot be properly described or ex-posed, *khōra* dirempts the sequential filiation by which the logic of the text proceeds. As *khōra* has no origin, how can a cosmology include it/her? A text with a long history of exegesis, the *Timaeus* represents a founding ontology of Western metaphysics. But how to consider the "being" of something that does not "have," the being of something that lacks the law of the proper, in the terms of an ontology which accounts, as it must, for the properties of

existents, and for the propriety for/as the ground for taxonomy, classification, and familial affinity? Insofar as *khōra* “has,” it/she “has” what Derrida calls “a very singular impropriety, which precisely is nothing,” which “is just what must be kept for it, what we must keep for it” (“*Khōra*” 97). *Khōra* has no “property,” either in the sense of essence, or in the sense of ownership. As Derrida reminds us, the law of the proper relates to “the strategy of marriages,” and to the logos and mythos of *genos* which the *Timaeus* presents (105, 103 et passim).

In Hegel’s account of the law of the family in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, woman is the eternal irony of the community. Woman perverts the aim of the universal by appropriating its property, reducing it to mere ornament destined for private enjoyment (288 par. 475). The universal is the ground which Jacobs, as woman critic, sets out, “if not [to] cover, at least to...touch upon, perhaps to change, transform, or even pervert by casting an eye to the particular” (“Dusting” 895).

As I read Jacobs’ essay, the term “dusting” refers to the tropological slippage that inscribes movement in her interpretation. Assuming the ironical stance of the woman who in Hegel’s account constitutes the suppressed and necessary enemy of the community, Jacobs’ critical reading performs as shadow play before the foil of the Hegelian tradition of Antigone interpretation. Just as the woman “perverts (*verkehrt*) the universal (*allgemeine*) property (*Eigentum*) of the state into a possession (*Besitz*) and ornament for the family,” Jacobs’ interpretation of the speech and figuration in the play perverts Hegel’s categorical account of the family (Hegel, *Phenomenology* 288 par. 475; qtd. in Jacobs “Dusting” 894-95). It shows how Antigone, performing “in the figure of a mother,...shocks us into re-imagining maternity, and, therefore, mankind” (“Dusting”

909). Jacobs' term "dusting" signals the tropological slippage and the categorial perversion her reading of Antigone inscribes. It signals a way of re-conceiving motherhood, conception, and difference.

Jacobs turns her eye to the singular impropriety of Antigone's (speech-)acts. With regard to neither act nor speech can Antigone's crime be inscribed in the realm of the proper. Antigone neither buries nor fails to bury Polyneices. Antigone's "non-marks on the earth" "tell of...another economy" than the furrows in earth that men make while plowing; and Antigone's death "falls to the side of the simple concept of possession and exchange to which Creon obsessively turns" (900).

Jacobs' reading of the guard's account of the first covering of Polyneices' corpse, set in close juxtaposition with the chorus' ode to man, exposes the difference between Antigone and ὁ ἄνθρωπος— whose neuter gender the text of the ode seems to underscore. The man ploughs, leaving furrow-markings in the earth; the man tames and subdues the animals; and both earth and animals are his outside-of-self. His actions belong to him, they are part of his way of being (male). In contrast, neither Antigone's "non-marks" in the earth, nor "her" performance as grieving or carrion bird, nor "her" burial-dusting of her brother's corpse can "properly" be attributed to Antigone. Neither does Antigone approach what is outside herself as a property to be "tamed" or "acquired" (900).

Jacobs contrasts as well Odysseus' *nostos*, and its ramifications, with Antigone's relation to *οἶκος*. Odysseus' return leads to a violent reaffirmation of the proper shape of the family. Antigone's "conception" of Haemon as bloody and of herself as mother



through suicide results from her suspension in the tomb which is at once her womb and her bridal chamber. Antigone “conceives” the incomplete, improper form of family (905-906). She is the mother of that which is “irrecuperable unwhole”; she steps into the place of one whose offspring is, necessarily, the unreproducible” (909-910).

But, as Jacobs’ reading makes clear, it is the “impropriety of language” that both guard and Tiresias perform, the “menace to intelligibility, to the interpretation of signs of which Tiresias speaks,...surely already at play in the guard’s figural production of motherhood” that carries the image of motherhood that “shocks us into re-imagining maternity, and therefore, mankind” (909). It is a question of language, of the movement of tropes, of “the figure,” a matter to which I later return.

### **Three: Oscillation Rhythm**

As Derrida explains, *khōra*, which the *Timaeus* names as the Necessary as and the Straying Cause, can be contained neither within an “either-or,” nor a “both this and that” logic of opposition. Oscillating between “two types of oscillation,” neither can it be contained within the opposition between these two schema-tologies (“*Khōra*” 91).

Since we can never grasp an “essence” of *khōra*, since we can never call it/her “this” or “that” (*Timaeus* 49d-50a), we can only discern its influence by looking back or looking again (ana-) at a structuration of thought or discourse. I read Derrida to say that what *khōra* “gives” is spacing: the spacing necessary for metonymy and homonymy, the spacing necessary for the ana-, again...and again. So *khōra* gives space for tropism and for its slippage and movement. *Khōra* cannot be measured, does not mete out, the beat

that structures tropology. It/she can only be “heard,” as tropic or tropological shift. It/she can only be “seen,” through the rhythm of the ana-, the again that refers, multifariously and indirectly, to what was conceived as both hybrid and pre-original.

As Jacobs notes, thanks to the figural language that both “blind seers” of the play use to describe her putative actions and their consequences, Antigone appears to the audience as both human and bird, as both protector and predator, as both feeding by closing the gaping mouths of the corpse and as feeding upon it. She also appears as a force whose effect may or may not complete, or stand as complicit with, either nature or polis. and as both woman and force of nature. Antigone does not participate in the definition of human being as described in the ode to man. She is “neither” bird “nor” human, and her actions supplement “neither” whirlwind “nor” the formation of mounds, or marks, in the earth (See “Dusting” 896f, 900, 902-903).

Neither Antigone’s being, nor the provenance of her acts, can be contained or delimited by the polarity “neither-nor.” Or by the binary “both-and.” Jacobs shows how the several related etymologies attached to her name bring their meaning to bear in/on the bodies of Polyneices, Haemon, and Creon. Antigone participates in her deeds in a partial way, and the origin of their production cannot be defined in accordance with a binary scheme of opposition. The effect of her acts is produced by, and also produces, naming and appellation. Jacobs’ text performs a *khōra* rhythm that escapes binaries and that describes an oscillation between polarities. Antigone conceives according to her name rather than her body, and this conception disturbs the distinction between persons, genders, and genres.

#### **Four: Neither Preserving nor Reproducing**

Timaeus compares *khōra* to a winnowing basket, a receptacle that temporarily bears traces or impressions of what the cardinal elements—air, fire, earth, and water—will, or have already, become. As the winnowing basket agitates continually, the pre-elements sort and re-sort themselves, forming ephemeral patterns in a shifting articulation that allows for displacement and clustering (54b). Neither rhythm nor articulation can be predicted or predicated. As Derrida’s analysis shows, since it/she neither preserves nor reproduces the impressions it/she receives, *khōra* “would not submit to any reversal,” whether dialectical reversal or that of some other ordering ( “*Khōra*” 94, 92).

Jacobs’ text shows how *Antigone* stages the effect of traces that do not leave a mark. Unlike the human being of the choral ode to man, that universal human being retroactively recast as male in the wake of Creon’s comparison of (male) ploughing with (male) sexual possession (*Ant.* line 569), Antigone’s work of mourning leaves no mark of pick-axe or fingernail, no trace of wagon wheel, in the dust. The difference between male and female “borders on unreadable difference,” as Jacobs put it. The male is defined, described, in the ode to man; but what Jacobs calls “the force of the woman in the figure of Antigone” cannot be clearly identified (“Dusting” 899).

I remark an asymmetry: Men’s actions leave readable marks, thence the engendering of the modes of reproduction, transmission, and inheritance is made possible. But Antigone’s actions do not leave readable marks or signs. She conceives, but otherwise, in a way that neither reproduces what she finds, nor leaves a clear path for the

transmission of identity, property, or lineage. In Jacobs' rereading, Antigone conceives her brother as the irreplaceable child of a mother already dead; she defines her brother, and herself, as that "which cannot be reproduced" (909).

### **Five: Khōra, More Situating Than Situated**

According to Derrida, *khōra* is "more situating than situated," but this opposition "must be shielded from some grammatical or ontological alternative between the active and the passive" ("*Khōra*" 90). According to Jacobs' interpretation, both Hegel and Irigaray "place" Antigone. For Hegel, she belongs in the dark realm of the divine law of the family. By putting her action "in the place" of lower appetites and unconscious desires, Antigone provides her brother with the single completed shape and ensures his transition into the realm of light, the realm of the universal law of the community. For Irigaray, Antigone occupies with the place of woman as product of the male, or the place of woman whose exemplary devotion to maternal genealogy provides girls and women with a model worthy of emulation. For Jacobs, however, Antigone, without knowing it, performs "in the place of a mother" (Graves *The Greek Myths* 2:380; qtd. in Jacobs "Dusting" 890).

By dint of Jacobs' writing, which intercepts and connects the figuration she reads, Antigone can be seen to perform "in the place of a mother." Neither to Antigone's acts, nor to her consciousness of them; nor to the percipient figures of the blind seers; nor to Jacobs' own percipience, can the passive or active voice be unequivocally ascribed. Instead, or, as well, Jacobs' text inscribes a displacement of tropes and a juxtaposition of

figuration that recuse themselves from proprietary agency, and that display a conception of motherhood which interrogates the notion of conception and reproduction in relation to agency and power.

### **Six: Diremption *in medias res***

In mid-discourse Timaeus avers that, since the universe cannot be complete without *khōra*, it will be necessary, in and to the cosmo-ontology, to speak of “her” (48a). The discourse on *khōra* irrupts into the middle of the ontology. What does this “*in medias res*” signify? According to Derrida, *khōra* operates, not as a support or subject-ile for the impressions, but rather, giving place (*lieu*) to the determinations it removes it/herself from, as an “*au milieu*,” a “half place” (“*Khōra*” 94, 95, 116).

The French word “*milieu*” can mean “middle,” “environs,” or “environment.” Geoffrey Bennington, the translator of “*Khōra*,” reminds us that Derrida’s text plays on the meaning of the word “*milieu*,” “with its suggestion of ‘half-way place’ ‘something that is only half place,’ *mi-lieu*” (“*Khōra*” 116). Disrupting the logos and mythos structuration of the discourse of the ontology, *khōra*’s diremption *in medias res* displaces the law that orders its every section and inhabits the middle, the half place, of each of its sites, or “*lieux*” (94ff et passim).

The dramatic action of Sophocles’ *Antigone* takes place “in between”: after that of the first two plays of the trilogy, and before the denouement, which culminates in the surcease of the rulership of the house of Labdacus. However, *Antigone* was written and performed first, before an audience familiar with the elements of the myth cycle. The

sense of diremption *in medias res* which Jacobs' text conveys so well has to do with the half place, the *mi-lieu*, that her approach produces. An "*in medias res*" is inscribed in her text.

In case the figure of the guard did not alert us, writes Jacobs, then Tiresias' figure of intelligibility as/in the unreadable insides of polluted birds, gives us to realize that "we must turn to the birds in order to understand" where Antigone's performance of motherhood has brought us ("Dusting" 903). By moving our glance toward the ornament, by inviting us to read through the figure of the mother/carrion bird, Jacobs' essay displays a half place. It is a half place whose diremption into the accounts of Hegel and of Irigaray she also reads. Jacobs' text displays a half place in the figuration of motherhood: "There is no reproduction...before fragmentation and dispersal, which, as we have seen, is *bound* as well both to interpretation and unintelligibility" (910, emphasis added).

### **Seven: *Khōra Mise en Abyme***

As *khōra* effect: ordering, overprinting without a base; and the images they reflect and are reflected by, placed relative to one another in multiple reflection without bottom, precisely by overprinting/being overprinted, but without a base: *Mise en abyme*. Derrida writes, "If there is indeed a chasm in the middle of the book, a[n]...abyss 'in' which there is an attempt to think or say...*khōra*, the opening of a place 'in' which everything would...come to take *place* and *be reflected* (for these are images which are inscribed there), is it insignificant that a *mise en abyme* regulates a certain order of composition of the discourse?...*Mise en abyme* of the discourse on *khōra*, site [*lieu*] of politics, politics of

sites [*lieux*], such would be, then, the structure of an overprinting without a base” (“*Khōra*” 104).

According to my reading of Derrida’s interpretation, the ordering of the ordering of the *Timaeus* proceeds, as constrained already, in advance; and these constraints produce the analogies of its contours. And are affected by *khōra* displacement. The limits to the being-programme of Plato’s logic appear in the abyss, in the discourse *en abyme* on *khōra*. Two interrelated and co-implicated analogies. First, the being-programme of Plato’s logic has the structure of pre-inscription and of typographic prescription. Second, *khōra* is mother—and also nurse, that supplement of motherhood removed from biological generation by an abyss. It/she is receptacle that nevertheless does not contain and cannot be contained by the (law of) the proper. Receptacles that do not contain, narrative matrices that transmit and are transmitted by and to, logos and mythos; and which overflow one another “in” the *Timaeus* but also in “other” texts that interpret it: these (orderings of) images are reflected *en abyme*. Politology as well as cosmology, the dirempted and programmed ordering of the *Timaeus* pertains to political sites and to sites of the political, and irrecusably then to species of *genos*—guardian, cultivator, artisan, philosopher/raconteur, child, even woman/nurse (See “*Khōra*” 105-106).

As Derrida explains, the analogic constraints that structure the ordering of the discourse of the *Timaeus* show up in its programme, the programme that comes to Plato as though “in a dream.” The displacement of this ordering disrupts it at the same time that it shows up, not only the ordering of the ordering, but the curious effect, neither passive nor active, of the limit constraints that produce it analogies: By virtue of the *mise en abyme*. “[T]he general trait,” writes Derrida, “which both gathers and authorizes these

displacements...,too obvious even to be noticed...is precisely that of the *genos*, of the genus in all genders and genera, of sexual difference, of the generation of children, of the kinds of being and that *triton genos* which *khōra* is” (106).

The figure of mother: Mother bird, carrion bird; mother of dust, generator of unintelligible signs produced by birds of augury. In Jacobs’ rereading figuration opens onto figuration, and each image of motherhood is reflected in the next.

As Jacobs remarks, “*Antigone*...uses the fragmentation of the body, a transgression of enclosures, a corporeality that threatens simple intelligibility, that makes the Hegelian eye of the observer run for cover.” Jacobs’ text exposes the ways in which *Antigone*, occupying the place of a mother, “produce[s] herself and the male as incomplete and in suspension” (“Dusting” 907). By reading the figuration of the two blind seers, the Guard, and Tiresias, together, Jacobs has put “at risk” “not only the specific production of the negative that Hegel describes in passing from family to state but also the speculative movement of the *Antigone* as work, its promise of mimesis, catharsis, and resolution.” With Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jacobs wishes to write of a “caesura of the speculative” (911).

In Jacobs’ text, the figure of the mother/carrion bird reproduces itself, reflects itself, as *mise en abyme*. Here there is a non-position, an enigma that remains, as a possibility for the text and for the generation of exegesis which it produces. The figuration of the guard and of the seer, like receptacles that cannot be contained, reflect one another en abyme, in the half place where no marks remain, and no propriety of agency or production can be assigned. As I read Jacobs, the figures of the bird, that which



Antigone both “is” and “is not,” which “discover” her motherhood, but which produce her conception “otherwise”; and these figures, also reflected in acts whose sphere of agency cannot be contained: These figures produce a rhythm in the writing, a rhythm inscribed as though carried, by the wing-beat, or the gaping mouth of the bird, the gaping mouths of the corpse. The offspring of Antigone’s motherhood “undefines the human as either origin or product” (910). The beat de-centres; it generates, not a place, but a half place, reflected en abyme in the figures Jacobs re-marks, re-presents, and which move (in) her text.

Jacobs reads not the speculative movement of the *Antigone as work*, but rather the movement of the *Antigone as play*: as play of figures set *en abyme*, figures which, in dispersing their performance of conception “otherwise,” dirempt the tropo-logies of the Hegelian account.

## **Figuration**

There is much at stake in the matter of the figure. The integrity of body and state, of gender and genre as well. Figuration read side by side, affiliated together: This is the half place of Antigone’s *συμφιλεῖν* of line 523, which in English may read, “It is not my nature to join in hate, but to join in love.” The word “*συμφιλεῖν*” is translated by Andrew Brown and also by Reginald Gibbons and Charles Segal as “to join in love.” Binding friends together, relatives together, relations together, this “together” to which Antigone declares herself devoted: Here I would like to stress familial bonding as image in the word “*συμφιλεῖν*,” rather than the range of its emotive valency.

“The words of the play offer an ethical performance at odds with the concept that binds ethics to self-knowledge,” writes Jacobs in “Dusting Antigone” (896). Knowledge of self, knowledge of one’s own law. Getting out of, not being contained by a certain auto-affectivity bound to self-knowledge, an auto-affectivity relative to what binds or threads together. This is at stake in the transformation of the conception of ethics that Jacobs’ interpretation of Antigone proposes as possible.

As Jacobs points out, both Hegel and Irigaray “glide unproblematically from the figure of Antigone to the role of woman in general” (895). In Jacobs’ essay figuration plays, like a character of the drama; and therefore it will be all the more vital to refrain from gliding unproblematically from *Antigone* read through the half place of the figuration of motherhood, to Antigone as *khōra* character. At stake, among other things, is the import, and export, of the figure, and of “what takes place in *Antigone* that sidesteps...hierarchy” (896).

In the editor’s introduction to *On the Name*, the collection of Derrida’s essays in English translation that comprises “*Khōra*,” Thomas Dutoit cites the unbound insert, the *Prière d’inserer* pamphlet, which was included with each essay when published in French by Editions Galilée. It is the passage on *khōra* which interests me here. Its author writes, “[*Khōra*]...stands beyond every maternal, feminine—or theological—figure” (xvi). Is this Derrida’s statement? I could not discover a reference to authorship of this insert; perhaps it was written by a class or staff member, and Derrida overlooked the text before admitting it. The passage just cited overleaps a certain reticence that characterizes Derrida’s more nuanced approach to figuration in the essay “*Khōra*,” a paragraph of which I quote here:

“The discourse on *khōra*...plays for philosophy a role analogous to the role which *khōra* “herself” plays for that which philosophy speaks of, namely, the cosmos....Nevertheless, it is from this cosmos that the proper—but necessarily inadequate—figures will be taken for describing *khōra*: receptacle, imprint-bearer, mother, or nurse. These figures are not even true figures. Philosophy cannot speak directly, whether in the mode of vigilance or of truth...about what these figures approach ....Philosophy cannot speak philosophically of that which looks like its ‘mother,’ its ‘nurse,’ its ‘receptacle,’ or its ‘imprint-bearer.’ As such, it speaks only of the father and the son, as if the father engendered it all on his own” (126).

Might philosophy speak by way of “true figures,” the figures of father and son, the father having engendered philosophy all on his own, like the father of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Nature*? Receptacle, mother, nurse: In what sense do these images bear a kind of excess that overflows the “true”? What about figuration allows it to be dispersed, lost even as it is grasped, its images reflected *en abyme*, like the figure of motherhood in Jacobs’ essay? A figure which covers over the abyss between the lawful order of Hegelian and even Irigarayan tropology, and a conception of generation and motherhood that dirempts and fragments all of its segments?

Philosophy seems capable of mentioning *khōra*, of allowing its/her discourse to interrupt and intercept, *in medias res*, the discourse of the ontology. Philosophy allows that, for *khōra*, certain alien figures might be adopted. Through a relay of figuration, of familial figures, of figures of conception and reproduction. Perhaps it is more difficult, or more rare, to philosophize, to allow to interrupt, discourse figuring “sister.” Also, not a “true” figure, in the sense that Derrida indicates in the paragraph I cited above. No

metaphor completes the sister, since the sister does not return to the father, as the son does.

Jacobs' text about Antigone "in the place of a mother" inscribes "sister." The text makes the Hegelian eye of the observer run for cover, makes it run to close its lips and its eyelids, like the men guarding Polyneices' corpse. Heidegger too, orients his poetics by closing his eyes, by attempting to enclose a landscape behind the eyelids of a boy. Keep in mind the figure.

Jacobs offers an important lead when she writes, "Hegel notwithstanding, what is ethical need not be *actual*" ("Dusting" 911). Like *khōra*, Jacobs' ethical must lack; it must be capable of being "deprived of a real referent" (Derrida, "*Khōra*" 97). "No metaphor completes Antigone," writes Irigaray; and in this, but affiliated otherwise, Jacobs agrees with her (*Speculum* 229; qtd. in Jacobs "Dusting" 912). The play between this incompleteness of the figure, and what Jacobs calls the "unthinkable conflation" (904) of body and signification that occurs in *Antigone*: Here is where *khōra* rhythm beats, as half place, in her text.

## Chapter Three

### Heidegger Stages Antigone: Spectral and Ghostly Mourning in “Language in the Poem”

In “Language in the Poem: A Discussion on Georg Trakl’s Poetic Work,” Martin Heidegger proceeds along paths which spiral out and back onto one another, crossing one another circularly. Heidegger’s stated aim is to discuss or “place” the site of Trakl’s unique poetic statement, the site of the unique, unspoken saying of his poetic work. This unspoken saying, according to Heidegger, expresses itself, not in any one individual poem, or in any summary reading of Trakl’s oeuvre as a whole; rather, it is the statement to which each poem is attuned and from the site of which each poem proceeds, as from the source of a wave. In this chapter, I offer a reading of the essay as performance, a performance that not only offers a complex interpretation of poems and verses—those which attract and call Heidegger—but also stages a drama, a dramaturgical poetics. According to my reading, Heidegger’s *Erörterung* (“discussion,” literally “placement”) of Trakl’s poetry divides into strophic steps or pathways, each of which demonstrates his desire to clarify, to make solid or sound (*fest*) the fundamental par-meters, the measure, of his de-structive project. And at each turn, at each strophic step that the drama performs, Heidegger’s stage is haunted by the spectres of the onto-metaphysics his corpus purports to de-struct.

Engendering, genre, generation, and gender: All are foundational for theorizing inheritance, kinship, transmission, repetition, (sexual) difference, *τύπος* (“type”), and for

thinking what Heidegger would denominate as historial and categorial. Chapter three develops a reading of Heidegger's thinking of *Geschlecht* in relation to rhythm, spectrality, and haunting.

In a way that attempts to follow the convoluted and overdetermined paths that what I am terming the strophes of Heidegger's text describes, my reading in this chapter demonstrates both their haunted doubleness and their "ghostly" desistance. My work here builds on the distinction Jacques Derrida makes in the interview "Spectrographies," where he differentiates haunting by spectres (*spectres*) from haunting by ghosts (*revenants*). According to Derrida, the spectre (*spectrum* in French) is "first and foremost...of the visible, but of the invisible visible,...[of] the visibility of a body which is not present in flesh and blood"; "[the spectre] has a night visibility." In contrast, ghosts (*revenants*) are those phantoms that return (*reviennent*), "violently summoned by...[the] frustration" of their "desire to touch," of the "tactile effect or affect" (*Echographies of Television* 115). Elaborating a philosophy of "spirit," of "*Geist*," Heidegger's "Language in the Poem" both demes itself with visible-invisible spectres, and opens itself to the return of what comes back in the wake of partially satisfied desire, that is, to *revenants*.

"Language in the Poem" mourns in two modes. Insofar as it operates according to a rhythm which measures, which metes out intervallically, the near distance between the spiritual and the non-spiritual—and therefore that between animal and human and between man and woman—and which commends and points toward the disruption of the concept and the experience of time as Aristotelian chronicity in order to bring the essence of pre-Platonic thinking into an uncontaminated future-present, his text mourns in salutary mode. At the same time, or rather, via a simultaneity always already de-

sistancing itself from such intervallic rhythm, the text mourns according to a melancholic modality.

In order to highlight an approach that takes the doubled structuration of Heidegger's text as the scene of multiple performances of mourning, and as the scene of haunting by a multiplicity of phantoms, I have divided the text of this chapter into two intercalated tracks, into a set of dyads. Cued by Carol Jacobs' contrast between Odysseus' homecoming and its subsequent reinstatement of normative family structure and relations, and Antigone's perversion and displacement of these in Sophocles' play, I contrast Heidegger's *nostos*, his *Heimkehr*, in "Language in the Poem," and its haunted spectrality, with the ghostly de-sistance that opens his text to what returns, to *revenants*. Sections that analyze Heidegger's *Heimkehr* in terms which demonstrate its connection to the thematics of invisible-visible spectrality are labelled with an "A." Sections that offer commentary on the ghostly de-sistance his text also performs I have labelled "B." The contrast between dyads is meant to mark both the plurality and the dialogical interrelationship between the two thematic dimensions of my interpretation, and, by punning Heidegger's *Zwiesprache* between poet and thinker in "Language in the Poem," to expose the "literality" of his refusal of the mimetic.

But first, before turning to the dyadically structured part of my interpretation, I want to include a section on Heidegger's hermeneutical *Blicksprung*. The very term provides rich suggestions relative to both topographies: "*der Sprung*" can mean "leap," "vault," or "dive," in general parlance. It can also mean "crack," "fissure," or "flaw." For zoologists, and also for Heidegger, it may be argued, "*der Sprung*," can mean "copulation." *Der Sprung* can also refer to a "herd" of antlered animals, such as deer,

including the “wild game” of blue colour, those beings capable of heeding the stranger’s voice. “*Der Blick*” can mean “look,” “sight,” “view,” or “eye” (*Langenscheidt* 500, 112).

### **Gathering for a *Blicksprung***

*Geschlecht*: The *Geschlecht* of thought, and the thought of *Geschlecht*. As Derrida points out, Heidegger, while claiming for the word a polysemic openness, encompassing race, tribe, stock, family, generation, and gender, centres his discussion on the word in its reference to a human form. As Derrida points out, this human form is distinguished by a mark, a *τύπος*/type (“*Geschlecht II*” 184ff). Heidegger thinks the *Geschlechter* together with the *Schlag*, the imprinting blow that coins them into their essence. Another, fell, blow, later than the first, but always already having pre-empted, bisects the *Geschlechter* throughout (*überall*); by twining them, this fatal and anachronistic second stroke introduces (sexual) difference with and among the *Geschlechter* and unleashes the power of discord, of the curse.

In the introductory section of “Language in the Poem,” Heidegger describes his interpretive method as an *Erörterung*, a term that means both “discussion” and “placement.” Heidegger remarks that, although authentic dialogue occurs only between poets, he, as thinker, will enter into a dialogue with Trakl’s poeticizing. Heidegger will situate and heed its site, the source of its unique saying. Paying heed includes acknowledging a reciprocal relation between *Erörterung* (placement) and *Erläuterung* (clarification): Since all poems “derive their light and sound only from the poetic site” which is the source of the poet’s statement, their elucidation presupposes placement; at the same time, the discussion must make its way via a “precursory clarification of



individual poems” (160). As David Farrell Krell notes, this reciprocity (*Wechselbezug*) between placement and clarification is not symmetrical (“Marginalia” 178).

As Derrida remarks in “*Geschlecht II: Heidegger’s Hand*,” “gathering”—either as that which gathers (*Versammelnde*), or as the power or place where gathering occurs (*Versammlung*)—is a uniquely privileged signifier in Heidegger’s work (182). Called to heed the source of Trakl’s poetry, Heidegger jumps into a hermeneutical circle. Pretending to propitiate those readers who may object to a seemingly arbitrary selection of poems, lines, and motifs, he begins his placement by already moving, “by a sudden leap of insight” ‘*durch einen Blicksprung*’ (161E/39G), toward a site which gathers everything unto itself, as though on the point of a spear, “*die Spitze des Speers*” (omitted by the Hertz translation; see 37G). The word *Blicksprung* is suggestive: Heidegger’s leap, and the visual-aural regime his commentary instaurates, correspond.

## **Section One**

### **Part A: Heidegger’s Egyptian Moment: The Cornflower Sheaf**

I follow here the initial strophe, or turn, of Martin Heidegger’s spiral path. The first line from Georg Trakl’s poetry to attract him, incipiently, functioning as a leading motif, concerns the stranger: “Something strange is the soul on earth.” Who or what is this something strange? Heidegger answers: it departs from the *sens/e* (direction/meaning) of the soul as “miscast” ‘*nicht den rechten Schlag*’ or “castaway” ‘*verschlagen*’; it leaves behind the outworn Platonic *sens/e* of soul as the suprasensuous exiled within the sensuous, the spiritual/*geistig* within the material. Basing his interpretation of both the sense and the direction of the “something strange” on his derivation of the word *fremd*

(stranger) from the “Old High German” root *fram*, Heidegger explains that the stranger is the one who has taken his way in another direction. He is mad not in the sense of mental or spiritual (*geistlich*) illness; but in the sense of one who goes forward to an elsewhere kept in store for it, to a site (173, 161-62,163). Later, Heidegger will name this site “Apartness,” *Abgeschiedenheit*.

The blueing night that arches above the stranger’s pathway dusks “spiritually” (*geistlich*). The verses and motifs that attract Heidegger border his discussion, and his placement weaves them together, staging an occurrence of gathering in which the spectre of Hegel haunts. As the spiriting night gathers into a sheaf of/the colour of cornflowers, a female soul, that soul that is “something strange,” fulfills her nature by wandering. Unlike the exiled soul of Platonic metaphysical philosophy, the journeying soul of Trakl’s poetical work, the soul that wanders under the cornflower firmament, seeks earth as earth (164-65, 163). Her connection with the earth accords with that of the female element in Heidegger’s “The Origin of the Work of Art,” in which the material aspect of the setting-into-work of art correlates with the feminine, earthy side of the *Riß* between world and earth.

The female soul that Heidegger invokes in the first strophe will soon disappear. She makes a brief reappearance later, in the discussion of the soul’s relation to spirit-as-flame (180). I will argue that, in both sections, the spectre of Hegelian speculative dialectics haunts Heidegger’s performance of the sublation of the female. The female soul wanders, seeking earth as earth, in order that she may “poetically build and dwell” on it (163). That the female soul of the cornflower sheath proceeds according to a purpose “almost veiled from itself” ‘ihm selber kaum enthüllt’ (163E/41G), and that she wanders

where her “nature” draws her, assimilates her both to the Antigone of Heidegger’s reading in “The Greek Interpretation of Human Beings” and to Hegel’s Antigone, who, remaining in the realm of divine law and of the family, acts intuitively and without full consciousness of the ethical meaning and scope of her actions.

Reading “The Greek Interpretation of Human Beings in Sophocles’ *Antigone*” alongside the Trakl essay, I argue that Heidegger’s discussion of Antigone in the former text points to the feminine soul/stranger in a way that proliferates possible readings of her significance in the latter. Heidegger’s Antigone, as the supreme uncanny (*das Unheimlichste*) among beings, is the most un-homely (*das Unheim-ische*) being becoming homely (*heimische*) within being. Determined by that singular ground which is beyond both the upper and the lower gods, her essence is “the risk of distinguishing...between that being unhomely proper to human beings and a being unhomely that is inappropriate.” Taking on the task which is this risk within the realm of the uncanny, Antigone is shown to be “the purest poem” (“Greek” 117, 119).

The wandering soul and the sister who is the supreme uncanny are both “always underway.” Always seeking earth for the purpose of poetically building and dwelling on it, the soul wanders (“Language” 163). Taking on the risk of being un-homely in becoming homely, while never arriving at being homely, Antigone as the supreme uncanny fulfills her essence. Neither the soul nor the Antigone of “The Greek Interpretation” figures either an approach to, or a sheltering in, “the native home” ‘*das Einheimische*’ (167E/46G). And both are shortly to be sublated.

According to Heidegger’s account in “The Greek Interpretation of Human Beings,” the character Antigone personifies “risk,” the risk which remains (to be

accomplished) by humanity. The play *Antigone*, Sophocles' tragedy taken as a whole, accomplishes that risk. In order for the tragedy to accomplish its purpose, Antigone undergoes a "sublation" (*Aufhebung*) of her life. As Heidegger puts it, "[Antigone's] dying..., *if it is anything at all*,...[is]a belonging to being" (117, 103,104; emphasis added). The sublation of Antigone's life is not accomplished in her dying, which demonstrates only that the being of all human beings already belongs to death. Rather, according to my reading, the sublation of her life amounts to a negative which, like the sheltering earth of truth happening, safeguards this positive: Antigone names being by acting as a pointer that focuses on the distinction between the being un-homely proper to human beings, from the being un-homely which is inappropriate to them. The male chorus who enunciate the ode that is "the supreme poetic work of what is supremely worthy of being poeticized" have knowledge of the hearth in whose light and warmth all beings have already gathered, the hearth which is "being itself." Naming being without knowing being, Antigone figures what remains. Taking on the risk that exposes the distinction between proper being un-homely and improper being un-homely amounts to a sublation by virtue of which the tragedy as a whole "accomplishes" this risk, which is its purpose (121, 114, 117).

Both the Antigone of "The Greek Interpretation of Human Beings" and the feminine soul that is "something strange" bear a common relation to the *Heimkehr*, the turn toward home. Both are un-homely, both are "passing through...being unhomely amid all beings" (117). Juxtaposing "The Greek Interpretation" and "Language in the Poem" allows their metonymical linkages to enter Heidegger's staging of the gathering that occurs in the cornflower sheaf. The spectre of Hegelian speculative dialectics appears in

the drama, at the bordering of the bundling bond, as a presence in absence. The spectre comes and goes along a doubled path, both tracks of which expose its family resemblance to the Egyptian moment of Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel's philosophy of spirit-becoming-conscious in the realms of religion and art.

A fulcrum in the plot of Hegel's account of the history of spirit, the art and religion of Egypt represent a quintessentially important transformation in spirit's becoming conscious of itself. Although a clear advance over those of India, being more definitely taken up with representing life beyond mere physical demise, Egyptian art and religion, the most properly symbolic in the history of religion, remain mired in the realm of the natural, the realm of "unconscious power" (*Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* 323 fn. 339). Their universality has but little of the sensible stripped away. The colossal size of the figures themselves and the odious frequency of the representation of animals as deities attest to its not having arrived at the stage of free subjectivity. The symbol of the Egyptian moment, the symbol of the symbolic, is the Sphinx. Heavy, material, hybrid, half-female and half-animal, the Sphinx represents for Hegel a stage of development in which the inner meaning of the art, and hence, of the religion, remains spiritually unclarified: an enigma (*Lectures* 327 par. 532; *Aesthetics* 358-61). The elevation of the spiritual over the natural occurs during the next stage, that of Greek religion and art, whose spiritual beauty is attested not only by the representation of the human form in perfect proportion, but above all, "by making the validity of the substance and necessity of ethical life its essential basis" in dramatic tragedy (*Aesthetics* 1195ff, 1222). No longer mute, art and religion speak. The sign of the transition from the natural religion and its artwork, to the first spiritual religion, and the artwork belonging to it, is for Hegel the

slaying of the Sphinx by the Greek hero, Oedipus (See *Lectures* 320-27 pars. 526-532; *Aesthetics* 354-57).

The earth-seeking feminine soul and the unhomely Antigone both figure materiality, hybridity and the “unconscious.” The soul is “something strange on the earth, yet seeks earth as earth in order that she may dwell there.” Then, under the cornflower sky of the spiriting night, under that evening firmament which “exchanges image and sense,” the soul leaves the realm of the neuter and the feminine and transforms into a male stranger (“Language” 163, 172).

Early in the strophe, Heidegger notes the frequency of Trakl’s use of the neuter “something.” The question of the way in which Heidegger’s reading of Trakl’s use of the neuter relates to the distinction he draws, in the lectures given at Marburg in 1928, between *Mannigfaltigkeit*, simple multiplicity, and *Mannigfaltigung*, the potentiality for multiplication and dispersion that belongs to the being of Dasein in general, is implicated here.

## **Section One**

### **Part B: *Gegen* Movement: The Stranger Undergoes a Sex Change**

Trakl’s “is” copulating with the neuter “something” evokes for Heidegger a rocking movement. Heidegger’s reading rocks on the surface of the nighting pond, in a boat whose vacillating movement—rhyming with that of the sister’s vacillating shadow (the only uses of the verb *schwanken* in the essay)—displaces both grammatical and gender stability. Ripples spread, and the neuter, already marked with a more-than-dual potentiality, changes. The texts of “The Greek Interpretation” and of “Language in the

Poem” are embroidered with the prefix *gegen-*, which means “counter, against, that which responds in coming second to.” The counterturning (*das Gegenwendige*) that prevails in the uncanny (*τὸ δεινόν*), the counterturning abode of the polis, the counterturning character of being itself (*die Gegenwendigkeit des Seins*), the counterplay (*das Gegenspiel*) of the tragedy, *Antigone*: All these *gegen* movements point to ahead to the fulcrum moment of Heidegger’s *Blicksprung* in “Language in the Poem (“Greek” 67-68, 75, 79, 84 et passim: “Language” 82, 90, 96, 103 et passim). The countering glance exchanged by the blue hale and the animal that takes on the essence of that blue hale is that fulcrum.

The soul changes gender and becomes “the (male) stranger” as the human animal is about to become “*fest*.” The site of Trakl’s poetry already appears as the site set apart from a certain “feminine” from the hybrid, and from the seeking whose purpose remains hidden. At the same time, the *gegen*-’s that Heidegger cannot do without, displace his situating and create ripples in the pond. Heidegger’s re-marking of the importance of a grammatically neuter (copulative) structure, and the gender change itself, displace the bonds and the boundaries of Heidegger’s cornflower sheaf. This sheaf is not only the haunt of the spectre of the Hegelian *Aufhebung* of the material, the natural, the outsized, and anything wrought by the “myrmidon” or “animal” toiling that characterizes unconscious striving. It is also the place where a ghost returns: The ghost of a *Mannigfaltigung* which, in the moment between an advening and a prevening *Schlag*, appertains neither to one sex nor to the other (See Derrida, “*Geschlecht I*” 82-83).

In “The Greek Interpretation of Human Being,” Heidegger writes, “[T]he essence of uncanniness itself [is] presencing in the manner of an absencing” (75). Within the

cornflower sheaf, the site where in Heidegger the spectre of Hegelian dialectics haunts, *Unheimlichkeit* presences in the manner of an absencing. Antigone, the sister, returns to the open place that Heidegger erects in his account of “something strange.”

## **Section Two**

### **Part A: Specularity and Clarification: The Animality of the Human Safely**

#### **Enframed**

Heidegger’s first strophe, aiming for the poetic saying that “remains unspoken” ‘bleibt ungesprochen’ (160E/37G), describes a spiral that begins with the strange soul’s downgoing in peace and silence, and ends with the silence into which an animal, becoming “blue wild game” ‘das blaue Wild’, looks (165-66E/45-46G). In the radiant centre of the spiral’s arch, blueness dusks spiritually (*geistlich*). This dusking twilight heralds not the sinking of the day, but a rising, like the twilight of the morning. The silence of the poetic saying translates into the silence of an animal-becoming-human. This transmogrification, indexing neither the animality of the human nor the closeness of the human to other animals, signals rather that fulcrum moment when humans, thoughtfully heeding the stranger’s footfalls, depart from the vacillating indefiniteness Nietzsche ascribed to the *animal rationale* of Aristotelian anthropology: that moment when they become safely, soundly, defined, in a manner conforming essentially with the thought and being of the pre-Socratic Greeks. These humans enter into the *Fest-gestell*, the safe and sound enframing destined for them, into a place apart from the dis-essenced thought and being of modern man (166-67).



The first spiralic turn of Heidegger's text stages a transformation-purification-re-essencing of *Geschlecht*, of *Geschlechtlichkeit*. It is a performance he will repeat, at a stroke, at each strophic phase of the Trakl essay. In this first scene, in the circle bound by silence, the spiriting rising blueness of twilight heralds not only a transformation of (the definition) of the human, but also a new temporal mode. It is a performance haunted by the spectres of Hegelian philosophemes. Here, however, it is not a question of spirit's becoming ever more conscious of itself as it manifests itself historically in the art, religion, and philosophy of a "German" Occident that recognizes and realizes the apotheosis of Greek ethicality. For Heidegger, this thinking reduces spirit to the level of a mere "subject."

The blueing night whose twilit sky arches above the stranger's paths is not dark. Its blueness gathers into a sheaf of/the colour of cornflowers. Bundled into an essential gathering, fettered together in a rhythmic bond, beings appear; evening and image exchange and alter their sense and their directionality.

In the bluing twilight dawn, a haunted landscape opens before Heidegger's eye. Both in "Language in the Poem" and in Heidegger's lectures on Sophocles' play, a regnant aural-visual regime allocates to the sister a role that may be called "spectral." In the latter, Antigone neither sees nor hears. Speechless and bodiless, she undergoes a sublation (*Aufhebung*) of her life for the sake of accomplishing the risk that points to the difference between appropriate being un-homely in becoming homely, and inappropriate being un-homely in wandering about amidst beings ("Greek" 117).

In the space of the first strophe in "Language in the Poem," the feminine soul undergoes an eclipse that amounts to an *Aufhebung*. Seeking earth as earth, the soul as

“something strange” undertakes a journey away from Platonic-metaphysical thought and being and from the humanity vacillating in indeterminateness. On the journey she undergoes a phase of neutrality, a phase that echoes, in its use of the grammatical neuter, the reference to the human being in the famous second stasimon of Sophocles’ play, the ode to man. There the grammatically neuter pronoun of the second line, “*τοῦτο*,” meaning “this one” is used by the poet, and this pronoun links to the grammatically masculine noun of the first line, “*ἄνθρώπου*,” the genitive case of the word for “human being,” “*ὁ ἄνθρωπος*.” According to Andrew Brown’s commentary, Sophocles uses the neuter pronoun to express a sense of awed detachment regarding this human creature that the ode praises (155).

The soul as “something strange,” which Heidegger, according with Western tradition, genders female, enters a phase of neutrality, and then becomes a male stranger walking under the blueing sky. That this masculinization occurs during Heidegger’s reading of the Trakl’s “Ghostly Twilight” is accidental neither with regard to the sensory regime of the first strophe nor to its haunting by the spectre of Hegelian dialectics. Later in the reading, the female element will reappear in the form of a voice, the lunar voice of the sister. But, already, and concomitantly, the cornflower sheaf of night sets the scene for another, closely related, transformation, one which exposes Heidegger’s Hegel-haunted resolution of the animal-human opposition.

The sensory regime appertaining to the “spiritually” (“*geistlich*”) dusking evening operates in performance by providing the possibility of access, of confluence. Structurally analogous to that access to the being of things which belongs to Dasein by virtue of language and its thinking complement, the (always human and always single) hand,

hearing and seeing within the gathering of the spiriting night figure access to Dasein's authentic heritage. To its right *Geschlecht*, and to its proper (path) of inheriting. The spiriting night irradiates light and resonates with sound. Gathered by and into the cornflower sheaf of night, sound and light travel freely, becoming media for calling, hearing, and imbuing. The blue air, the black pond share the same limpidity, the same cool liquidity that facilitates the wave-like movement of confluence that joins stranger, sororal voice and fraternal friend, and that unites the essence of the stranger to the not-yet-determined animal.

Heidegger refers to the blue wild game as a human animal that barely emerges from a thicket of thorns which blur our sight—could those thorns be antlers, or horns? The blue wild game risks remaining in obscurity, in the November gloom of metaphysical epochality. Citing Nietzsche, Heidegger reminds us that the animality of this animal “schwankt...im Unbestimmten” ‘vacillates in the indefinite’ (45G/166E). Heidegger explicates: “Die Tierheit dieses Tieres ist noch nicht ins Feste, d. h. <<nach Haus>>, in das Einheimische ihres verhüllten Wesens gebracht” ‘The animality of this animal is not yet in security/solidity, that is, [not yet] “at home,” [not yet] brought into the native home of its veiled essence’ (45G, my translation; see 166E).

In the next strophe, Heidegger refers to the curse which has struck the decomposed form of man. Reminding his audience that the Greek word for blow or plague, *πληγή*, also means *der Schlag*, or “stroke,” Heidegger describes the *Geschlechter* stamped with the bifurcating *Schlag* that introduces (sexual) difference as liable to the curse of discord. Dark game, the human animal belonging to the decomposed kind of

man, remains deaf to the stranger's call. Blind to the radiance of the spiriting night, dark game degenerates into sheer wildness, into violence (168, 170-171).

Nonetheless—*jedoch!*—some animals of the cornflower sheaf give thought to (*gedenken*) the stranger's footfalls as they ring through the silvery blue night. Such giving thought allows for an enframing-defining encounter: Coming face to face with the blueness that is the holy or the hale, the animal's face "stiffens as with fright" ("*erstarrt*"), and retracts into gentleness. Giving heed to the stranger's steps, the animal transforms into blue wild game, into that humanity whose countering glance (*gegenblick*) is sighted by the night's blueness (167E/46G). By virtue of the countering look, the animal gaze assimilates a gathering character: "Its gaze gathers, so that, halting, it enters holiness and looks into the mirror of truth" 'Sein Aussehen sammelt sich, um, an sich haltend, dem Heiligen entgegen in den <<Spiegel der Wahrheit>>...zu schauen' (166E/45G). Significantly, the blue of the night and the countenance of the hearkening animal exchange glances in a mode that is neither active nor passive. Here Heidegger has recourse to his not infrequent practice of word division (*er-blickt*, perceive, discover), evoking a kind of middle voice.

Who is this animal, this wild blue game, endowed with the hearing and sight requisite for the transmogrification—not by chance, of its *face*, which "starts as if in fright, and so gathers into itself" '[i]m Erstarren fährt des Gesicht des Tieres zusammen'? In response to his question Heidegger writes: "The blue game is an animal whose animality presumably does not consist in its animal nature, but in that thoughtful recalling look for which the poet calls" 'Das blaue Wild ist ein Tier, dessen Tierheit vermutlich nicht im Tierischen, sondern in jenem schauenden Gedenken beruht, nach dem der

Dichter ruft' (166E/45G). Here Heidegger reverts to an exemplary form that, like his statement on the essence of technology, aims to keep an originary essence or experience of being or thought uncontaminated by the "material," or "natural."

As the animal face and blueness exchange counter-glances, the globular sensorium of the gathering blue, the sensorium which stands in synecdochical relation to the specular-speculative regime that enables relief/*Aufhebung* of the animality of the *animal rationale*, resonates with clarity. In the visual-aural regime that characterizes the cornflower sheath, seeing and hearing equate with gentleness and with the transformation of the (human) animal into its *Fest-gestell*, that is, into its safe and sound enframing, its definitive transformation into the authentically human. Blindness to the blue-hale and the deafness incapable of thoughtfully heeding the stranger equate with violence and with a dis-essencing of thought and of (human) being, a dis-essencing that places them as languishing within metaphysical epochality.

The meaning of "*Ge-stell*" (enframing) deserves elaboration. As used in Heidegger's "The Origin of the Work of Art," enframing refers to the way human beings comport themselves toward beings, and toward being. In his addendum to "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger explains that the noun *Ge-stell*, which, as the essence of modern technology "commandeer[s] everything into assured availability," in the process of representation "devotes itself to securing and fixing [everything] in place" ("The Origin" 208). In contrast, in "The Origin of the Work of Art," Heidegger notes that *Ge-stell* means "the gathering of the bringing-forth" which occurs in the setting-to-work of the work of art (208). According to my reading of the Trakl essay, *Fest-gestell* carries the sense of the safe security attached to Dasein's privileged position in the midst of beings,

as having access to the being of beings “as such.” As Heidegger avers in “The Greek Interpretation of Human Being,” humans are “homely in being,” and “being in general has opened itself to humans.” As homely, humans “see” the open that being is, and stand within it. The fundamental experience of this “seeing the open,” lost to modern man, is yet the distinction of the human being in general. In contrast, the animal, which is without the word ( *ἄλογον*), cannot see, and so is blind to “the open” (91).

At stake for Heidegger is the security of the privileged position of Dasein. Heidegger’s use of Nietzsche’s word *Fest-gestell* demonstrates his concern with securing, not the human *Geschlecht* in general, but a certain *Geschlecht* of this *Geschlecht*, a *Geschlecht* which stands in a privileged position in the midst of beings.

Stiffening, the animal face becomes “*fest*,” safe, solid, defined. Its humanness no longer vacillates. In another strophe, a few turns later, the *animal rationale Geschlecht*, will divide again, struck apart by a *Schlag*, or stroke, that separates the others (*die Anderen*) from those *Fest-gestell*ers who follow in the stranger’s train. Not by chance, the sister who returns during a still later strophe is summoned by reference to her “swaying/vacillating shadow,” ‘den<<schwankenden Schatten der Schwester>>’ (193E/76G).

## **Section Two**

### **Part B: Heidegger on Drugs; and *Ver-* moving**

I read the spiriting night and the performance that takes place in the cornflower sheaf as the nocturnal landscape of Heidegger’s imaginary. Its colours are those of twilight: Silver, black, deep blue, pale gold, and deep red. The landscape is “selenated” by a moon

whose light travels through the medium of resonant and limpid air. Actors and scenic elements play together, united in a quasi-amniotic confluence of light, of sound, and of essence. Drugged by nostalgic desire for the reserved purity of a *Geschlecht* intact and preserved from discord, Heidegger constructs, via metonymic linkages from verse to verse—and from *ver*-’s to other *ver*-’s—a landscape which is a *techne* of the image. Heidegger follows the stranger into this camera obscura, intending to release a stop bath into the developer, to fix the images in a pattern that would abreact his experience of grief over the lapses in his program. Nonetheless—*jedoch!*—a lunar voice enraptures him, and he falls prey. Heidegger desires the light bouncing from pond to sky to moon to boat, to interconnect them all. He desires them to touch, to enjoy the intimacy of the copulative bond, without either discordancy or hybrid mixing. A golden maiden and a youth, belonging to the same *Geschlechtlichkeit*, their radiant profiles indistinguishable. But a beat, like the beat of a bird’s wing, disperses the design of image imagined. The returning beat belongs to the sister, the rhythm of whose voice disturbs the clarity of Heidegger’s *Erläuterung*.

Here I would like to offer a very rapid sketch of the way the *ver*-’s move in “Language in the Poem.” The paths of their shifts deserve more careful reading than I may offer here. Let us imagine their movement as disturbing the borders of the globular sensorium I have described. First movement: The wandering soul does not belong to the “miscast” *Geschlecht*; she has not been struck in a way that Heidegger associates with dereliction or deformation. She is not “*verschlagene*.” The Platonic attribution of being exiled, of being “castaway” ‘*nicht den rechten Schlag*’ does not pertain to her (162E/40G). Does the spiritually blueing dusk amount to a darkening of the sunny day?

“*Nonetheless*, ‘dusk’ is no mere downgoing of the day into the dissolution of its brightness into obscurity” ‘<<Dämmerung>> ist *jedoch* kein blosses Untergehen des Tages als Verfall seiner Helle in die Finsternis’ (my translation, see 164E/42G; emphasis added). Here the prefix “*ver-*” has to do with an action or state having gone beyond the limit of an appropriate or desirable boundary, or of having continued until something has been used up or destroyed. No, Heidegger answers, the spiriting dusk is like the twilight of the morning (164). The double negative is either implied, or used outright: The soul is not not of the right cast; the dusk is not not a darkening, but rather a twilight which could be matitudinal.

Second movement: “The [cornflower] sheaf of blueness gathers the depth of the holy in the depths of its bond” ‘Das Bündel aus Bläue versammelt im Grunde seines Gebindes die Tiefe des Heiligen’ (165E/44G). “[The holy] bestows its arrival by reserving itself in its withholding withdrawal” ‘[Das Heilige] verschenkt seine Ankunft, indem es sich in den verhaltenden Entzug verwahrt’ (165E/44G). Heidegger now plays on another meaning of “*ver-*,” that of intensification of the meaning or scope of the action or thing. The many repetitions of the prefix remark this intensification. A flavour of the comparative/superlative or of a uniquely transformative intensification, attaches to the connotation of these lines.

Third movement: The gathering gathers so intensively, so uniquely, that the distance between “the veiling,” “*der Verhüllung*,” by which the blue gathers, and the haleness which is gathered, collapses. The borders between shining and veiling interpenetrate, breached as by the point of a spear. “Blue is not an image to indicate the sense of the holy” ‘Das Blau ist kein Bild für den Sinn des Heiligen.’ The blue of the



spiriting twilight of Heidegger's landscape does not interpose itself, does not mediate, haleness. "Blueness itself is the holy, in virtue of its gathering depth which shines forth only as it veils itself" 'Die Bläue selber ist ob ihrer versammelnden, in der Verhüllung erst scheinenden Tiefe das Heilige' (166E/44G).

After another passage into the region of the *ver-* as expressing deformation or vitiation, where Heidegger tells us that "man's 'decomposed form'" 'der <<verwesten Gestalt>> des Menschen' has been struck by a plague, a curse. It has been struck apart, by discord, among the *Geschlechter*. "Each one [that is, each *Geschlecht*] strives to escape from that discord into the unleashed turmoil of the always isolated and sheer wildness of the wild game" 'Aus ihr jedes der Geschlechter in den losgelassenen Aufruhr der je vereinzelt und blossen Wildheit des Wildes' (170E/50G). By now "*ver-*" has taken on another meaning, which has accrued to it, and this particular part or particle sticks to Heidegger's writing on *Geschlecht*. Here, not so much marking it or splitting it, as displaying through so many diapositives that its limpid clarity is troubled. "*Der verfallene Geschlecht*," the *Geschlecht* that has been fragmented, or made void, as a result of the second twining *Schlag*, arrives in Heidegger's text. Not accidentally, the verb "*verfallen*" can mean "to become addicted to, to take a fancy to" (*Langenscheidt* 569).

There is much more to discuss, to situate. In the spiriting blue twilight, poet and thinker converse. *Ver-* appears again, now in the "neuter," and intensified, as well as copulative position: "From another sense and another image, evening transmutes all saying of poetry and thinking, and their dialogue" 'Der Abend verwandelt aus anderem Bild und anderem Sinn die Sage des Dichtens und Denkens und ihre Zwiesprache'

(172E/51G). Evening transmutes, it changes scenes (“*Verwandlung*” can mean the shifting of scenes performed in the darkness of the theatre, behind the scenes); and now, thanks to the lunar voice of the sister, the scene where the stranger walks (“*wandeln*” can mean walk, wander, or vary) has been set. It can become a scene for the step of the stranger, in tune with the rhythm of the spiriting dusk, and with the evening that “*verwandelt,*” that “changes intensively by transforming.” Now the scene is set, and the friend can become the brother of the stranger, and vice-versa. “*Nonetheless* evening is like to do so only for the purpose that it, too, changes” ‘Dies vermag der Abend *jedoch* nur deshalb, weil er selbst wechselt’ (my translation, see 172E/51-52G; emphasis added). The *ver-* in “*vermag*” I take as a refraction, a bending, of the *ver-* that has already been refracted, bounced off of layers of shifting translucence, that has already walked, rhythmically, from deformation and decomposition, to intensification. Now, walking so to say more intensively, in a manner that conduces to a copulating exchange, as well as to ruin, to a *Blicksprung* of horned animals, as one might say: Heidegger has arrived at “*vermag.*” ‘Dies vermag der Abend jedoch nur...’ “The evening is only able to, only in a position to, only likes to, only is fond of, only has the predilection to...” “*Vermögen*” contains, retains, all of these meanings. From diapositive layering to catachresis. “*Ver-*” is the mark of desire in this stamp of/on *Geschlechter*; it is the mark of their decomposition, of that which bends or folds Heidegger’s writing. Neither simple onefold, nor twofold. A rhythm that corresponds to neither.

Does Heidegger’s falling prey to “*vermögen*” amount to an illness? Does his nostalgia for the “*Einheimische,*” the “one-home” for the early dead who are still unborn amount to a *Sehnsucht*, a languishing longing for a beloved of a divinely different order?

I will come back to this question, which deserves deliberation. Presently, Heidegger's *Sehnsucht* exposes itself as *Süchtigkeit*, addiction.

In "The Rhetoric of Drugs," Derrida writes of the "figures of dictations,...of the being given over to the other, of being as the prey of the other, of quasi-possession." Derrida describes these figures as "forms of originary alienation, in the most positive, productive, and irreducible sense of the word" and as "implicated in a history in which drugs...might...play the role of an enfeebled phantom..." The recognition of the figures of dictation that "compel a certain writing, perhaps all writing," and that articulate as well contemporary rhetoric on drug use, entails for Derrida a "methodological provocation": Inducing such being given over, such being as prey of the other, amounts to "a technique for calling the phantom...the spirit, the ghost (*Geist*)...[m]ore precisely,...a methodology of the contraphantom." Heidegger, compelled to follow the stranger, entranced alike by sororal voice and fraternal conversation, enters a place that is haunted not only by the *Geist* of Hegelian dialectics and by the spectre of his own pneumatological adventures, but also by the contraphantom, "the phantom that plays against another phantom...the phantom of the phantom, the alibi phantom" (*Echographies* 27-28). According to my reading there are two drug-induced dreams that compel Heidegger as drug-addict-writer in "Language in the Poem." Heidegger would prefer to interiorize the foreign, the "*fremd*" who inhabits the camera obscura, to domesticate it through placement in the purity of apartness, in the *Abgeschiedenheit* reserved for the yet unborn early dead of the hale *Geschlecht*. At stake is the divide between several conceptual oppositions, including that between emancipation and alienation, and between familiar and foreign (*Echographies* 29). The one who is alien, the stranger, turns out to be the one leading the

way into a *Heimat* reserved for the resurrection of a *Geschlecht* now re-formed of the true inheritors of the thinking of being experienced by the pre-Socratic Greeks. Wrapt, Heidegger, like the boy of Lecture Five of *What Calls for Thinking*, obeys the maternal voice that calls him, as well as the *Geschlecht* of the right coinage (*der rechte Schlag*), to a certain obedience. To his predilection, or, addiction, to “the drug of a German ‘destiny,’” as Avital Ronell puts it in *Crack Wars* (42).

Breaking apart, ingesting, inhaling the verses which feed his predilection, Heidegger desires to receive Trakl’s words, and to send them forth again, “in a sort of creative spontaneity or transcendental imagination” (*Echographies* 29-30). The reappropriation Heidegger desires is the ana-essencing of *der verwesende Geschlecht*/the decomposing *Geschlecht* (“Language” 170E/50G et passim). This ana-essencing—by which term I mean to point to an operation or activity of always already having been saved from dis-essencing; which cannot be expressed by re-essencing—will have taken place, in Heidegger’s imaginary, without discord. And without fluttering the serenely chaste eyelids of the boy Elis, behind whose bivalvular onefolds the globular spectrum of blueness and haleness rest secure (175-76).

In *Crack Wars* Ronell offers a reading of Heidegger’s analysis, in paragraphs 40 and 41 of *Being and Time*, of the being of Dasein as “care”. She notes that, for Heidegger, the addiction of Dasein evades presentation and works itself out in secrecy (*Crack Wars* 34ff). I engage her suggestion here: Heidegger is “on” the Trakl text, inhaling and ingesting it, de-composing it according to his predilection. In a perhaps more recondite manner, or, more precisely, in a way that responds to another rhythm, Heidegger’s text also moves in accordance with a tropic urge that binds and compels, that

threads together: *συνφιλεῖν*, literally, “joins in love”; but I read the “fil” in “*sumfilein*” differently (*Ant.* line 524).

Heidegger as writer-addict takes dictation from Sophocles’ *Antigone*. My hypothesis: Heidegger is “drugged” both by *Antigone* and by Trakl’s poetry. His desire, on the one hand, leads him underway onto a specular hermeneutical pathway: The fantasy of pure intimacy appertaining to the *Zwiesprache* between poet and thinker, where no contamination from either the bios of the poet, or from the tools of his “craft” enter the conversation, mirrors the imaginary speculative fantasy wherein the feminine-material, changing direction and sens(e), transforms into an histori(c)ally destined male bespeaking spiritual haleness. But, as Derrida writes of Heidegger’s Trakl essay, “[H]is text could not be homogeneous and is written with two hands, at least” (*Geschlecht II* 189). *On the other hand*, and spilling off of it, an urge takes Heidegger to the sister who is in the place of God (193E/76G) and who conjoins in a different rhythm. Taking dictation, his text opens onto a descent: Tellingly, “*der Hang*,” “predilection,” also means “slope, declivity, bent, proneness” (*Langenscheidt* 262).

Here the paths of Heidegger’s pneumatology cross with the trajectory of his use of the word-concept “*Gestell*.” In *Being and Time* Heidegger explains that addicted Dasein, as Being-ahead-of-itself, runs into insufficiency: Its ownmost possibilities for Being-in-the-world are crowded out by the urge to make use of what is to hand, of what is beside it at its disposal (239 par. 41). Being-in-the-world is impoverished, limited to the predilection for “*Gestell*.” Heidegger’s denunciation of what Derrida terms “technical supplementarity” (*Echographies* 35) announces itself already in *Being and Time*. This intolerance relays forward to his writing on *Gestell* in “The Essence of Technology”; and

rappelling further ahead to the *Gestell* of “The Origin of the Work of Art”; and then to a later edition of this essay, to which Heidegger appends an explanation of the distinction between these (“Origin” 209). Throughout this trajectory, “*Gestell*” names what for Heidegger amounts to a technical-material contamination, of the being of Dasein as care, of the essence of (Greek) knowing in metaphysics since Plato, and of the work of art considered merely as a thing that excites feeling through the senses. In the Trakl essay, *Gestell* undergoes another semantic drift as it links up with “*fest*.”

In *Crack Wars*, Ronell remarks that drugs are “excentric”: Drug use is “animated by an outside already inside,” activating endorphins that “relate internal secretion to the external chemical” (28-29). “Language in the Poem” cites Trakl: Elis-like, veiling his eyes from the *techne* of the supplement of the text, Heidegger claims that his *Zwiesprache* approaches not the poems but the source of their saying. Covering the tracks of his predilection with a pun (*un trait d’esprit*) he writes: Authentic (*eigentlich*) dialogue occurs only between poet and poet; but here, I announce it, I am engaging in a hybrid exercise (160). But, do not think thereby to catch me resorting to the poems at my disposal, in my *Ge-stell*; I am after the source of their Saying, which the thinker with access to a certain sensorium can perceive.

Following the stranger into the globular region of the cornflower sheaf, Heidegger essays out into “the supreme lucidity of intoxication,” which, as Ronell explains in *Crack Wars*, “arises when you have something in you that must be encrypted” (45). The limpid globe, dusking blueness and haleness, preserves within it an encrypted secret. Anxious about anxiety, about the matter of its disposal, of its disposition in the existential analytic of Dasein, in *Being and Time* Heidegger denominates “urge” as the derelict dependence

that blocks the way to authentic *Angst*. Blinded by addiction, Dasein “puts all possibilities into [its] service...In addiction,...care has always been bound” (240 par. 40). In *Angst*, or “anxiety,” “Being-free *for* one’s ownmost potentiality-for-Being, and therewith for the possibility of authenticity and inauthenticity...is shown” (236 par. 41). As Heidegger puts it, “These basic possibilities of Dasein...show themselves in anxiety as they are in themselves—undisguised by entities within-the-world, to which...for the most part, Dasein clings” (235 par. 40). Addiction tranquilizes Dasein, closing it off from the being-hale to which an undistorted view of its fundamental possibilities is the epistemological correlate.

In the Trakl essay, Heidegger demonstrates his dependency on “*Fest-gestell*,” now a disposition of *Geschlecht* and of *Geschlechtlichkeit* appertaining to Apartness. The proclivity takes Heidegger’s interpretation into a world apart, and protects it from encroaching decomposition. What enables the “hit”? Not the partially recognized and veiled materiality to which the poems could be said to correspond. Another supplementarity, connected and also disjunct from the technicity Heidegger wishes to eschew, is encrypted in the globular sensorium: The material-textual supplement of the text, the sister whom Heidegger’s interpretation cannot do without. Antigone as *monstre/monster* is the sister who, as the supreme uncanny, points out the distinction between inauthentic and authentic human being. Later in the Trakl essay Heidegger draws upon the sister again: Trakl’s evocation of the sister furnishes Heidegger with the pointer that distinguishes the inauthentic thinking of onto-theology and metaphysics from the authentic poetizing of *Abgeschiedenheit*.

In anxiety, as Ronell puts it, “Dasein is taken back to its sheer uncanniness” (*Crack Wars* 44). Antigone, as the supreme uncanny who takes unhomeliness-becoming-homely upon herself, demonstrates thereby the refusal to be tranquilized by predilection, by any habit of the socius that assimilates the human being to the everydayness of the they-self. But there is also an Antigone-effect in Heidegger’s reading of Trakl, and in the account of *Gestell* I am reading here. According to Heidegger the urge “to live” can impel Dasein in the same way as other predilections, and, like them, can crowd out Dasein’s ownmost possibilities. Significantly, Dasein shares this urge with all that is “living.” In *Being and Time* Heidegger explains: “[Urge and addiction] too are grounded in care so far as they can be exhibited in Dasein at all. This does not prevent them from being ontologically constitutive even for entities that merely ‘live.’ But the basic ontological state of ‘living’ is a problem in its own right and can be tackled only reductively and privatively in terms of the ontology of Dasein...In addiction,...care has always been bound. Addiction and urge are possibilities rooted in the thrownness of Dasein. The urge ‘to live’ is not to be annihilated; the addiction to becoming ‘lived’ by the world is not to be rooted out” (238, 240 par. 41).

Antigone as “purest poem” points metonymically to addicted Dasein as “lived” by the world, as quasi-animal. The supreme uncanny which points up the difference between inauthenticity and authenticity on a number of registers, is the entity also indistinguishable from the animal. She is the expositor of the limits against which Heidegger’s distinctions founder, and fall.

### **Section Three**



## **Part A: Fettered Temporality: The Blue and the Hale Refuse the *Τύπος***

In “Language in the Poem,” Martin Heidegger insists that “Blue is not an image for the meaning of the hale. Blueness itself is... the hale” ‘Das Blaue ist kein Bild für den Sinn des Heiligen. Die Bläue selber ist...das Heilige’ (166E/44G). David Farrell Krell has suggested that these statements indicate that, for Heidegger, blueness and the hale are to be thought together. In my reading they are “rhythmed” together, fettered together in a way consonant with Heidegger’s explication of rhythm in the *Heraclitus Seminar of 1966-67*, where he refers to the Aeschylus fragment from *Prometheus*, “ὦδ’ ἐρρῶθμισμαι,” translating it as “in this rhythm I am bound.” Heidegger remarks that “In the sentences of the archaic language, the state of affairs speaks, not the conceptual meaning” (*Heraclitus* 55). My hypothesis is that, for Heidegger, the rhythmic bond connecting the blue and the holy or hale enacts a temporality in which the gathering of essential being occurs. True time keeps rhythm with the walking/going that is the preveining advent of that which has been (“Language” 176). True time fetters the Greek world to Heidegger’s reading of Old High German, a linguistic (holy) remnant uniquely capable of bringing to presence the thought-world of the pre-Socratic Greeks. A certain Germanness, then, saved from the dereliction and multiple resignations of spirit which Heidegger lists in the *Introduction to Metaphysics* is the one kind, the “*E i n Geschlecht*” destined for earlier than vernal earliness. True time refuses the materiality of “the image,” fettering what was and what is to come in a bonding that Heidegger dreams cannot be struck apart. A fettering whose chains do not fall, which gives place neither to the retrait of metaphor nor to the translation beyond the borders of “*E i n Geschlecht*.”

## Section Three

### Part B: Rhythm Unbound

The existential solitariness of Dasein, which, as Krell points out, Heidegger holds to be positive in *Being and Time*, has now become a negative (“Marginalia” 191). The “unchained isolation” that plagues the decomposed form of man results from a degenerating blow, a *Schlag* that unfetters, that strikes apart, bringing dissension and discord into the relation between and among the twained *Geschlechter*.

Krell writes of the image of Antigone as Danaë: She holds the king of the gods in fetters, and teaches him, through painful rhythm, another experience of time (*Tragic Absolute* 347-48). As Antigone does in Sophocles’ play, Danaë conjoins, otherwise. On his bridal night, the young boy Elis, threatened by a sentence of madness, keeps his eyelids closed. These eyelids are the gentle twofold that is neither one nor two. Apparently, the eyelids of Elis, of the early dead, do not move. But the text that “surrounds” these eyelids, that environs the dream of the drugged Heidegger, does move.

In “Language in the Poem,” sections of the text mutually resonate. They resonate not only in concert with the metonymic linkages between the verses of Trakl’s poetry which attract Heidegger. As well, or, at the same time, Heidegger’s use of the near homophones “Helle-hallen-hüllen” sets up a ripple effect. The borders separating “brightness-resonating-veiling” shudder and breach one another. Their borders dance, refracted (165, 172, 183).

## Section Four

### Part A: *In medias res*: En-trainment and Salutary Mourning

In his essay “Mourning and Melancholia,” Sigmund Freud contrasts “normal” mourning and “pathological” or “melancholic” mourning. Both processes involve the expenditure of energy in the Unconscious system, the region of memory-traces of things, rather than of word cathexes; and both involve the gradual detachment of libidinal investment from a lost love-object, real or ideal. In mourning, the process concludes healthfully: The ego, which had hitherto turned away from the outside world, successfully decathects from the lost object, becoming free and uninhibited once more. Its energy can then be invested in new objects. In melancholia, the object-loss is withdrawn from consciousness and cannot be named by the sufferer. Whereas in mourning the world temporarily seems devoid of interest, in melancholia it is the ego itself which becomes impoverished. According to Freud, analysis reveals that the virulent self-reproaches that the melancholic expresses are aimed at a real or ideal lost love-object which has been internalized through a regression from narcissistic object-choice to “original” narcissism. The ego has internalized the unnameable loss, and cannot recuperate the energy drained into the cathexis, toward which the ego directs hostility (266, 252-54, 257, 258f).

“Language in the Poem” is a text that mourns. Through its architectonics, its predilection for the *Fest-gestell* drama under the cornflower sky, its imagined dream of a pure *Geschlecht* that is heir to authentic *Geschlechtlichkeit* and to the place of apartness, the essay, mourning, gives ground to the spectre. Martin Heidegger mourns the lapses in his program at the same time that he dreams of its recuperation for “our” *Geschlecht*. Here I read a doubled structuration in which an anticathecting motive belonging to “manic” mourning exposes itself, appearing amid the billows of melancholic binding (“Mourning and Melancholia” 263 et passim).

In the sense that he cannot do without recourse to the sister—I will come back to this point—and in the sense that his interpretation of Georg Trakl clings to the Hegelian schema it would unravel, Heidegger mourns in melancholy mode. But, in ecstasis, Heidegger exposes the motive of the drive: The joy deriving from the expulsion of the impure, of the decomposed. An opportunity for abreaction, for ensuring that the grave clothes binding Heidegger's corpus hold safe and *fest-fast*, so that “the essential rightness of the unborn” (176) may be preserved intact.

I refer to a twofold movement that occurs in the second strophic turn of Heidegger's text and that mourns in triumphal, or “manic,” mode. According to Heidegger, the advening second *Schlag* that strikes all the *Geschlechter* bifurcates them, making them liable to dissension, to the evil of discord that belongs to spirit. The dis-essenced, decomposing *Geschlechter* are “*die Anderen*,” “the others,” whom the stranger and the wanderers that follow him leave behind (170E/50G). Even so, love and reverence attach to these others, writes Heidegger. And then immediately there sounds a note of triumph: “*Jedoch!/Nonetheless!*” “Das dunkle Wandern im Gefolge des Fremdlings geleitet *jedoch* in die Bläue seiner Nacht. Die wandernde Seele wird zur <<blauen >>” “*But* the dark journey in the train of the stranger escorts into the blue of his night. The wandering soul becomes the “blue soul” (171E/50G; emphasis added). By inserting a “them” into the first sentence, thus, “But the dark journey in the stranger's train brings *them* into the blue of his night”, Peter D. Hertz's translation includes “the others” in the stranger's train. However, there is no “them” in Heidegger's German version. I am attributing much to what may be a mere ellipsis. However, or, nonetheless, the space of this ellipsis, or the *Blicksprung* which leaps over it, suggests as well that, experiencing a

“manic” phase, Heidegger has “got over the [lost] object itself” (“Mourning” 264).

Attaching love and reverence to “*die Andere*,” “the others,” he has, in effect, got “over” them.

According to my reading of this paragraph of the essay, Heidegger mourns the parting from “the others” of the decomposed *Geschlecht* by reminding himself and his readers that after all, nonetheless, (*jedoch!*), the dark journey of those in the stranger’s train will result in his escorting them into blue haleness. So the *jedoch* here heralds the pronouncement of a message of comfort to the people of *der rechte Schlag*. These will be preserved for another beginning, a stiller childhood, a place apart.

Second fold opening, exposing itself: In the midst of an interpretation of which, according to Jacques Derrida, ontology is not “the dominant regime,” Heidegger reveals his affiliation with Romanticist hermeneutics (Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question* 84). Commenting on “Grodek,” usually hailed as a war poem mourning the soldiers who died in battle during World War I, Heidegger identifies the “grandsons yet unborn” whom Trakl mourns as “another *Geschlecht*,” one of a kind “in keeping with its different essential origin in the earliness of what is still unborn.” If these unborn grandsons were merely the unbegotten sons of those killed in battle, they would be “the progeny of the decomposing *Geschlecht*.” “If that were all,” writes Heidegger, “merely an end to the procreation of earlier generations, our poet would have to rejoice over such an end.” Instead, according to Heidegger, “[H]e grieves, though with ‘prouder grief’ that flamingly contemplates the peace of the unborn” ‘[E]r trauert; freilich in einer<<stolzeren Trauer>>, die flammend die Ruhe des Ungeborenen anschaut’ (184E/65G). Heidegger assimilates Trakl’s grief to his own jubilant mourning, a mourning which, having

successfully disinvested his corpus from the decomposing *Geschlecht*, serenely contemplates the telos of its anticathexis.

The double structuration of Heidegger's writing, in which jubilant or manic mourning knots itself into the fabric of a certain melancholy, I read as homologous with one aspect of his poetics. I call this aspect "speculative en-trainment." Ontology, epistemology, and hermeneutics follow in the train of the stranger, journeying home to Apartness.

There is light in poems that speak of light; and Heidegger clarifies their meaning in his *Erläuterung*, his clarification. Knowledge of the hearth, and thereby of the being in the midst of beings, appertains to the Chorus who speak of that hearth. In the train of the stranger, following, while the others are left behind.

## **Section Four**

### **Part B: Melancholy Mourning and De-composition**

How does the sister de-compose the hermeneutic of triumphant jubilation? Intended by Heidegger, as by Hegel, to bind up, to preserve, whole and intact, the delicate corpse of the early dead, she decomposes the *Abgeschiedenheit* on which the dream of harmony depends.

Melancholy in a different key, according to a rhythm that escapes the veiled confines of the cornflower sheaf and that moves, parasitically, both inside and outside of it. Certainly, a rhythm that breaches. An encryption from which *Heimsuchen* enter and into which they go. *Heimsuchen*, as verb: "to visit," said of plagues, whether *πληγή* or *Schlagen*; "to haunt," said of ghosts; "to infest", said of vermin. *Heimsuchen*, as noun:

“vermin, pests.” Heidegger’s sickness for home, his *Heim-suchen*, has penetrated the veil of the mortuary bands, and the wholeness of the corpse, the totality of Dasein as care, the pure separation in connectivity which Heidegger ascribes to difference, the haleness of the preserved and protected *Geschlechter*: all these are breached. And the sister haunts, returning, invading, an inside that comes from outside.

## Chapter Four

### Strophic Pain: Sister Writing in “Language in the Poem”

#### Pain as Suspension in “Die Sprache” and in “Die Sprache im Gedicht”

In the essay entitled “Language,” Martin Heidegger interprets Georg Trakl’s poem “Winter Evening.” The poem features a wanderer who, having traversed a dark country, quietly steps over a stone threshold into a house where bread and wine are laid out on a table. A line which attracts Heidegger: “Pain has turned the threshold to stone.” Heidegger writes: “It is only by turning into stone that the threshold presences....[The] threshold sustains the middle, in which the two, outside and inside, penetrate each other....the threshold, as the settlement of the between, is hard because pain has petrified it....But what is pain? Pain rends. It is the rift....Pain indeed tears asunder, it separates, yet so that at the same time it draws everything to itself, gathers to itself....Pain joins the rift of the difference. Pain is the dif-ference itself” (“*Sprache*” 201-202). In pain, the intimacy of things and of world come together, yet remain separate.

In “Language in the Poem,” a meditation on pain inhabits the median that connects and separates Heidegger’s evocations of the sister. The sister speaks in the stones that bear and express pain. In *Of Spirit*, Jacques Derrida reminds us that Heidegger chooses stone to exemplify the worldlessness, “the absolute indifference of the Vorhanded entity” (20). Dasein is being-in-the-world. The animal, the merely “living” being, is poor in world. The stone is without world. In *Of Spirit*, Derrida’s commentary on “Language in the Poem” does not rest long on the role of *Schmerz* (pain) in Heidegger’s pneumatology.



In “Language in the Poem,” the wandering soul represents a feminine element in Heidegger’s *Erörterung* of Trakl’s poetic work. Like Antigone, the soul is “unhomely,” in the sense that she is perpetually wandering, seeking earth as earth. What interests me here is the question of the relation of the feminine-termed soul to pain, and of the relation of pain to the sister figure of the essay. Heidegger writes, “Dem Schmerz eignet ein in sich gegenwendiges Wesen,” ‘Inherent in pain itself is a counterturning nature’ (61G/my translation, see 180E). We are reminded that, in “The Greek Interpretation of Human Beings,” Heidegger attributes a “counterturning nature” to being. Spirit, as pain, shares this counterturning nature. “The spirit, which gives the ‘great soul,’ as pain, is the ensouler. But the soul, so gifted, is the giver of life” ‘Der Geist, der <<große Seele>> gibt, ist als Schmerz das Beseelende. Die also begabte Seele aber ist das Belebende’ (my translation, see 180E/ 62G). Here spirit “is” in the mode of pain, and as pain, it ensouls the soul. The soul, thus gifted by pain, gives life.

“What is spirit?” Heidegger asks. He finds the answer in a line from Trakl’s war poem, “Grodek,” which reads “hot flame of spirit,” ‘heissen Flame des Geistes’ (179E/59G). Heidegger explains, “‘Flaming’ pain tears away” ‘<<Flammend>> reißt der Schmerz fort’ (180E/61G). Pain has a rending force that, flaming, “tears away” and that, “tearing back” attains to a gentle mildness. Pain’s tearing movements sweep away and back; and as pain moves, it achieves not only mildness, but a “governing that unconceals and conveys,” ‘entbergend-geleitendes Walten’ (my translation, see 181E/62G).

For Heidegger, pain discloses, conveys. This disclosing the blue soul can share, when it takes upon itself the burden of pain. Like Antigone, the soul bears a kind of pain whose acceptance produces greatness. The soul feeds spirit by giving it flame. The

manner of this giving, which accords with the nature of the soul, Heidegger describes in words that could apply to a vassal investing the holder of a fief with feudal power:

“...[D]ie Seele die ihrem Wesen eigene Flamme dem Geist zu Lehen gibt...” (61G).

In “Marginalia,” Krell expresses the view that, “what rescues Heidegger’s thinking of spirit as flame, and flame as both gentle ardor and consuming malignancy, from the history of metaphysics and morals,...is that permeating sense of pain [Schmerz]” (192). This suggestion I find provocative. In my view, *Schmerz* is inscribed though not only as that which besouls the soul, as that which, by setting her on her wandering way, gifts her with her purpose. *Schmerz* is inscribed in the essay as a median, a suspension of the sister figure, a place of haunting where that figure returns, in the movement of a tearing, or incision. Tearing away, tearing back, in return. This is what the sister does, or writes, in the essay.

The soul bequeathes to spirit: sovereignty. I read the sister figure in the movement belonging to pain’s sweep in counterturning, the tearing movement that discloses the fault lines in Heidegger’s text. Stones speak, they moan, painfully. It is not only stranger and follower who become siblings, but feminine soul, which, Niobe-like, speaks in the stones, disturbing Heidegger’s design, his *Riß*. Worldless stones now behave like souls, whose fundamental trait is pain (181).

### **Something Stranger: Pain and *Umheimlichkeit***

In Heidegger’s placement of Trakl’s poetry, pain is the middle term, the integument which, like connective tissue, bind the first and third sections of the essay; and tears them

away from one another. Heidegger would like to make pain the repository of the heroic: The old stones groan with pain, vibrating in accordance with the soul's measure of greatness. The soul returns to the discussion coincidentally with the stones' appearance and the sister's disappearance. In dark patience, the soul reposes in pain.

If Heidegger's thought in "Language in the Poem" conforms to the shape of a dialectical phrase, then the sister intervenes, unfettering the oppositional jointure. For the sister haunts the median, returning as stones. The stones, like Antigone grieving over the uncovered corpse of her brother, emit piercing cries, the *Angstgeschrei* of the grieving mother bird, of the soul in pain. Attuned to *Angst*, the sister who is the exemplification of human being, cries as/in the stones. The supreme Uncanny, Antigone, ensouls the stones, disturbing the categories of Heidegger's (failed) life philosophy. The faultiness of which Heidegger acknowledges in a gesture of mourning: "The essence of the animal shatters in death."

The strangeness of the haunt, *das Unheimlichkeit* of the sister. The threshold breached, the polis corrupted.

### **Heidegger's *Heimkehr*: *Nostos*, *Fest-Geschlecht***

The trope that shapes the journey of the stranger is that of *Heimkehr*, of re-turn to a *Heimat*, a native home. The *Heimat* is promised, envisioned, desired. Following the stranger, giving thought to the sound of his footfalls, giving heed to the voice that unites him with his fraternal friend, the wanderers lose themselves in the dark night and then find themselves in the region of hale blueness, on the way to Apartness. The apotropaic veil protects the site from what decomposes, from what threatens the integrity of "*unsere*

*Geschlecht.*” More promising than the Eden of the experience of being belonging to the pre-Socratic Greeks, the site reserved for the stiller childhood beckons like Paradise.

Apartness reserves itself for the pure, the right *Geschlecht*.

Like that of Odysseus, Heidegger’s *nostos* ends in the violent establishment of a structure of kinship. Heidegger erects, not a nuclear family but a *Geschlechtlichkeit* that he imagines will end the “metaphysical” isolation of human being. The definition of the human *Geschlecht* will no longer vacillate in the indefiniteness of quasi-animality. Nor will human being languish in the blindness that ends in discord, or in the deaf-muteness that neither hears nor responds to the stranger’s call.

The *Geschlecht of der rechte Schlag* is pure, well-delineated, erect, well-bound up, properly wrapped in Heidegger’s text. Saved from the depredations to which spirit in the epoch of technology is susceptible, the *Geschlecht* of the right stamp enters its *Fest-gestell*, safe, hale/whole, intact. Mourned, bound up, wrapped in text by a sister whose singularity attests to the purity of her monstration. Fit to enter the polis, the site of being homely in the midst of beings, where, as Heidegger says in “The Greek Interpretation of Human Beings, “whatever is fitting determines destiny” (82).

### **Geschlecht of Sexual Difference: Antigone Haimon Creon**

Not safe and or intact, but broken, closed up, the tissue of neck and side torn, breached and bleeding. Like the tissue of the corpse Antigone neither fails nor succeeds in burying.

Antigone and Haimon are not twained, not kept like pearls within a bivalvular unfold twofold, not simply folded into unity. They each exhibit disturbing signals that index the ambiguity of sex, of sexual difference, of *Geschlechtlichkeit*. Haimon spills

virginal blood from a womb that arrives from elsewhere. Antigone argues like a man and inhabits the public space of a man. Having mourned her virginity in the traditional mode of a bride, she kills herself in the mode of a wife. And both inhabit a tomb which, neither outside nor inside the polis, haunts it in the mode of return.

Entering the tomb, Creon acknowledges his impiety and obtuseness. It has already cost him honour and perhaps the rulership of the polis. Coming out of the tomb where he has seen his son die, Creon receives the body of his dead wife, lamenting, “I see a second grief!” Later he will say, before the bodies of his family, “Lead me out of sight.....I know not which to look upon...” (*Ant.* lines 1295, 1340, 1341). A visual regime, and the way of knowing that accompanied it, has shattered.

### **The Sister in Heidegger’s “Language in the Poem”**

If the sister in “Language in the Poem” performs in a rhythm contrapuntal to the gathering which unifies the *Unterschied* ( the dif-ference in intimacy)between stranger and brother, between hale blueness and the stiller childhood of Apartness. There are a number of modalities by which her effect acts to create holes, wind, dispersement.

- 1) The *gegen*-movement of the sister’s effect acts to disrupt and disperse the reciprocal responding which a certain syn-harmonic hearing sets up in reciprocal movement, in going and coming, in the *Gegen-fahren* journey of the stranger’s paths.
- 2) Drugged by poppy and the foreign rhythm which the materiality of his text imposes results in his becoming prey to an animality whose world-poverty bars it from the site of spiriting night and of the earliness of the more

promising pre-dawn of essential being. Heidegger dreams of a site without *Kampf*, with struggle. The excess of Heidegger's use of the prefix *ver-* spills over, contaminating the site of Apartness, as it drifts from meaning accomplishment, fulfilling, or perfecting the action of the verb it modifies; to meaning exceeding, broaching a boundary, or perverting a shape or course. The sliding imbrications, the drift of the *ver-*'s sets up a rhythm that exceeds the force of "the gathering that precisely centers what it configures" ("Philopolemology" 187).

- 3) Drugged by poppy, by the imaginary that the *camera obscura* scene of the (ensheathed- congenered) cornflower sheath evokes for him, Heidegger dreams of a *Geschlecht* of Dasein to whose very structure discord does not belong. The sister effect unties the bond of the sheath, the bond that affiliates pure gender to purity of generation.
- 4) The sister counter-poses unbridled isolation to enchained rhythm; the later chains Prometheus, the former the malice of the spirit. In counterpoint, the sister effect disperses, unbinding rhythm.
- 5) A meditation on pain comprises the middle part of the essay; but pain does not sound its note, does not reappear in the essay's triumphant final figure, its final strophic turn. Pain is the analogue to discord, which here Heidegger desires to banish; for the capacity for pain is the measure of the female soul's greatness, and hence for her capacity to part from the loved ones, the others. Neither opposed to the soul, not at one with her, the sister's voice speaks, in the irruptive rhythm of pain. (Cf. Krell "Marginalia") Pain pertains to heroic

solitude and also to unbridled isolation of the sear wildness of the decaying *Geschlecht*. The sister's relation to pain involves both, in the mode of the non-dual.

- 6) The bird which called the boy Elis, the first of the early dead, to go under, is the blackbird. The sister's calls, the cries echoing strangely in the *Angstgeschrei* of the stones, have taken on the birdlike voice of the deathlike one. The sister's voice in bird cry conjoins differently. Not the voice of the friend, but that of a deathlike bird. The contrapuntal song, the rhythmic syncopative drop, that displaces the nocturnal wing-beat of the soul.

I read Heidegger's emplacement of Trakl's poetic work in the essay "Language in the Poem," as a staging of Sophocles' *Antigone*. It is divided into thirteen turns, or strophes, each linked metonymically by phrases or verses from the individual poems which attract Heidegger's interpretation. While each strophe treats a specific theme, the themes are interrelated by the textual threads of affiliation that knot Heidegger's reflections together. These threads weave together a text that commends a certain thinking of *Geschlecht* and *Geschlechtlichkeit*. A word that Heidegger defines as meaning generation, (human)kind, kin, race, tribe, kind, family, and gender, *Geschlecht* indicates a grouping that implies the mark or imprint or coinage that differentiates identity from difference, like from unlike. The difference which bifurcates all the *Geschlechter* in Heidegger's thinking is that of gender, a mark produced by a second imprinting *Schlag*, or blow.

"Language in the Poem" speaks of following, of the wanderers who follow the stranger whose descent in the spiritually bluing twilight leads to an ascent into the primal

earliness that shelters the early dead who are yet unborn. In order to hear and see according to regimes that differ from those regnant in the globular sensorium of the cornflower sheath that Heidegger's interpretation constructs, and which I described in Chapter Three, I propose to follow, in the present chapter, incipiently, the turns of the thirteen strophes which follow in each other's train.

The sister evoked in the early part of the essay as the one whose lunar voice resounds in the ghostly twilight of the landscape surrounding the paths of the stranger, drops out in its middle. The name "sister" reappears only in the penultimate strophes of the essay, but then subsequently disappears again. I read the sister as an agent in Heidegger's drama, a *dramatis persona* who arrives and expresses in various ways. All these ways I read as rhyming with the melancholic modality of mourning of the essay, a modality that sounds as counterpoint to the salutary mode of its syntagmatic expression.

The theme of the first strophe is that of journey of the soul who is "something strange on the earth," and her relation to the transmogrification of human *Geschlechtlichkeit*. Heidegger denominates "something strange" as "*fremd*," a word whose meaning he defines with reference to the Old High German "*fram*." The stranger is the one who is "*fram*," that is, "underway" to an elsewhere. The paths of the soul who is "something strange" lead it/her into the dark bluing twilight of the cornflower sheath, under whose sky clarity shines and resounds. The stranger's footfalls sound through the silvery gleam and the ringing of the blue night. The blueness of the night, shining forth as it veils itself, envelops the landscape through which the stranger's footfalls resound. This blueness is not an image of the holy, writes Heidegger. "Blueness is itself the holy" (166).



Into the landscape of the wandering soul enters blue wild game. Thoughtfully heeding the footfalls of the stranger, the face of the wild blue game starts, frozen as though by fright. Through this thoughtful heeding, the animality of the wild blue game ceases to consist of its “animal nature,” but rather in the look which it exchanges with blue holiness. Now hale, fixed in definition rather than vacillating in the indefinite, wild blue game transforms, coming to belong with those who follow in the stranger’s train. By looking, by exchanging glances with the blue hale, the wild blue game enters into silence.

In the middle of the strophe, Heidegger refers to pain for the first time. The power of silence sheltered in stones, the power of the silence into which transmogrified *Geschlecht* enters, Heidegger identifies with the soothing power of pain. Pain “stills” transfigured *Geschlecht* toward essential being; pain is “still with blueness.” As Krell reminds us, the German verb “*stillen*” can mean to quiet, to soothe, and also to nurse, to soothe at the breast.

The first strophe begins with the neuter, or at least non-gendered, soul, the soul who is “something strange.” The soul, wandering, incipiently takes on the feminine pronoun traditionally ascribed to it; and then changes *Geschlecht* to become a male “stranger,” a male who is underway to an elsewhere. Underway, in a landscape where wild blue game are transformed into mortals who will follow him; underway elsewhere; underway, home. I here interrupt my following of Heidegger’s strophic turns in “Language in the Poem” in order to listen to the sonorities it inscribes.

Trakl's "is" copulating with the neuter "something" evokes for Heidegger a rocking movement. Heidegger's reading rocks on the surface of the nighting pond, in a boat whose vacillating movement—rhyming with that of the sister's vacillating shadow (only boat and sororal shadow vacillate [schwanken] in the essay)—displaces both grammatical and gender stability. Ripples spread out from Heidegger's many uses of words which combine the prefix "gegen-" with verbal roots. The neuter "something strange," which I read as already marked with a more-than-dual potentiality, changes gender.

The *gegen-* movement integral to the parting of stranger from "the previous form" of human *Geschlecht* opens another site of haunting. This haunt is structured by the relation of the voice of the friend evoked in *Sein und Zeit*. In his essay "Geschlecht IV: Heidegger's Ear: Philopolemology," Derrida writes of the syn-harmony which characterizes the gathering of essential being, the homological harmony of *φιλεῖν* (*aimance*, lovence) and *λόγος*. The limpidity of the globular sensorium of the cornflower sheath gives, accords harmony (*gönnt*): Through its virtue counter-glances between blue hale and wild game imbue blue essence; and through its virtue, having thus learned to see clearly, the soul parted from the animal first hears the voice of the stranger. Hearing-heeding, the soul listens, listens by responding in song that consists of pure echo. As Heidegger writes in *What is Philosophy?* "Einklang ist 'αρμονία.'" Then later, "[T]his 'αρμονία characterizes *φιλεῖν* as Heraclitus thinks it, loving" (13; qtd. in "Philopolemology" 182). Of syn-harmony Derrida writes, "In this harmonization, a being (*Wesen*) is joined together or up with another. This syn-harmony perceptible to a

quasi-musical ear...supposes the reciprocity of the there-and-back, the going and coming of exchange (*wechselweise*)” (“Philopolemology” 183).

The *Einklang* which unites human *Geschlecht* with the blue hale, and soul and stranger in their conjoined song, partakes, on the one hand, of the structure of syn-harmony that Derrida analyses in his fourth *Geschlecht* essay. All the more so, a fortiori, since the *Kampf* that Heidegger, following his reading of Heraclitus, posits as originary to the uniting gathering of difference (*Unter-schied*), co-constitutes the gathering that resolves the decomposing *Geschlecht* into “the others” for whom the paths to earlier stillness of the twilight descent and ascent remains barred. The intimacy of gathering difference always entails a sacrifice; it always entails the violence of spirit’s force. The *Einklang* gathering, heard only by the ear attuned to the syn-harmony of *φιλεῖν*, *λόγος*, and *πόλεμος* (*Kampf*), this unity which, according to Derrida, “will never either be excluded or opposed in Heidegger’s path of thinking,” resounds in the cornflower sheath (179). The *gegen-* movement entails a law of reciprocity of the there-and-back, of going and coming, of exchange, all of which unite that which is essential to Heidegger’s path.

“What would be the political carrying distance of a thought or experience of *φιλεῖν* that would no longer respect this law of reciprocity and would appeal to dissemblance, disproportion, incommensurability, non-exchange, the excess of every measure and thus of all symmetry?” Derrida asks (183). With regard to the question of *Geschlecht*, of *Geschlechter*, the sister, Antigone conjoins differently. Her conjoining differs from Heidegger’s *φιλεῖν*, from the “loveness/aimance” he posits as the uniting what essentially gathers. The rhythm of her voice not only unites stranger and soul-turned-stranger, but espaces their non-dual difference that is first one gender, then another, then

both and neither. The trace of non-dual plurality remains in the track of Heidegger's paths in the Trakl essay. This trace, which is not one, both occludes and spreads the limpid clarity of the stranger's descent, setting up a beat, like the wingbeat of the birds flying through the night. This wingbeat performs a shift in rhythm that introduces a different economy, one not structured around exchange, but one whose traces remain in the non-identical repetition of mourning cries.

The second strophe of the essay asks and answers the question, "Who are they who begin such a journey [following in the paths of the stranger]?" (167). They are the ones, writes Heidegger, who leave the previous, decaying form of man behind. Previous man decays in that he loses his essence, his being. He is the decomposed form, the dark game, abandoned to searing torture and the pricking of thorns, languishing in the gloom of winter. But those who follow the stranger into the spiriting (*geistliche*) night, become strangers themselves, solitary, but not alone.

Citing Trakl's poem, "Spiritual Twilight," Heidegger connects blue twilight with the landscape described there. A nightingale pond and a starry sky reflect one another, and "Always the sister's lunar voice/ Sounds through the spiriting night." Hearing the sister's lunar voice, the one who follows the stranger's nocturnal voice becomes a brother. The poet addresses a reader, one who is in the vicinity, "You," Trakl apostrophizes, you, drunk with poppy, are travelling the nightingale pond. In Heidegger's reading this "you" becomes the poet, the brother riding a black cloud, trying to follow where the "golden radiance" of the stranger leads. Then the "you" becomes the soul, who only by following the course on the nightingale pond, the starry sky, comes to "experience[e] the earth in its cool

sap” (170). The soul, through its celestial journey, comes to experience the essence of what she/he seeks, the cool sap of the earth.

Once inscribed together as a non-opposed dual, the stranger and the soul have taken on a new *Geschlechtlichkeit*. By virtue of the lunar voice of the sister, they have become brothers, members of the same family, the same *Geschlecht*. Moreover, the wandering soul has been joined by other wanderers. This group who follow the stranger have become strangers themselves, strangers with regard to the loved ones, “the others” (170). The others belong to the cast of the decomposed form of the human *Geschlecht*, “cast away into this cast...” (170). Heidegger follows this characterization of the decomposed form with a first description of the word *Geschlecht*: a kin, of a kind, a generation of mankind as well as kinship. All these *Geschlechter*, first imprinted, marked, cast into their several types are struck, marked a second time by the duality of the *Geschlechter*, the sexes. The consequent, second blow delivers a curse: The *Geschlechter* have been struck apart by discord. Heidegger is explicit: “Not duality, discord is the curse.” The forenamed dual, the (neuter turned feminine then turned into masculine brother) soul and the (soul become) stranger, take on a definite, even an exemplary form: They have attained definition as fraternal pair. The transgendering agent, the agency setting up vacillation between and among gender/ing, between identity as seeker-wanderer and sought-wanderer, the vacillation between threesome and dual, I read as the effect of the sister figure in the essay.

According to the grammar of Heidegger’s interpretation, the transforming agency is neither the sister nor her voice. Rather, it is the evening itself, blue and hale. “Evening consummates a change” (172). This is the evening into whose decline the strangers, the

one leading, and those following, are called to go under. Following the decline of this evening whose twilight harbours a new beginning, the duality appertaining to the proper cast of human *Geschlecht* leaves “blind wildness” and discord behind. The cast, the imprint of this duality is what interests me here: It has become “a simple twofold,” connected as though levered together in the form of eyelids, the eyes which, veiled, see the twilit radiance even more clearly for being veiled. In contrast, the cast of the progeny of the decomposing kind, however, have fallen into an irreconcilable split. The irenic harmony of the proper dual contrasts vividly with the unbridled isolation of the fragmented (*verfallen*) cast of human *Geschlecht*.

Taking up a tone that seems, at first, coloured by a gentle mournful regret, Heidegger describes the proper cast’s parting from loved ones who have become “the others.” Love and reverence attach to the progeny of the decomposing *Geschlecht*. However (*jedoch*), those of the proper cast may console themselves after all; for their dark journey in the stranger’s train brings them into the blue of his night, into its spiriting haleness. The wandering soul-stranger, having parted from the decomposing *Geschlecht*, duly acknowledging the reverence due to it, partakes then of the blueness of the hale, “becomes blue/” (171).

The third strophe concerns the direction, the sense, of the paths of the stranger and the soul which follows/becomes him. For Heidegger the direction, the sens(e) of the journey leads the stranger into originary time, into true time. The descent into spiriting twilight consummates a change, an inauguration of a temporality in which poet and thinker, conversing, hear words and see shining appearances: Essential reality shines,

blooms, speaks, differently. As Heidegger puts it: “Evening transmutes all saying of poetry and thinking, and their dialogue” (172).

Stepping out into the night, slipping through November destruction, the stranger enters a decline that is not an end, but rather “the place where everything has come together in another way, where everything is sheltered and preserved for another ascent” (172). Having entered this new place and time, ostensibly pure of geographical or geopolitical reference, having made the necessary parting from those “modern” ones who are subject to what Derrida, reading Heidegger’s work on spirit in *The Introduction to Metaphysics*, called “the depredations of spirit,” the stranger and his train, parted, now arrive at the site of Trakl’s poetry: *Abgeschiedenheit*, Apartness.

“Let us follow the stranger’s path with clearer eyes,” enjoins Heidegger. (De)parting from decomposition, the stranger and his train enter “the lunar paths of the departed” (172). These lunar paths, those which Heidegger notes in the second strophe, always resound with the lunar voice of the sister, lead to a death that is not death, to a grave wherein the dead one lives, quiet, lost in thought, playing with his snakes. These snakes, Heidegger quickly informs us, as though to preclude obtrusion, have not been strangled. No need it seems, for, unlike the nest of scarlet snakes of the poem “Accursed,” rearing up lazily in the churned-up lap of the girl, the “malice” of the boy’s snakes “has been transformed” (173). Entuned to the lunar voice, the sexual/onanistic play of the boy quiets down, the red snakes, leaving the churned-up lap of the girl, turn moon-white.

The temporal rhythm of the stranger's paths involve then a transformation of the curse which afflicts the sexual division of the *Geschlechter*. Transformation occurs through a quietening, a stilling, a soothing which yet preserves the searing of the wilderness. Although called "mad," the stranger has simply taken a different sens(e), a different way. He is the one who, dying young, has passed through death and remains strangely ensheathed in his quieter childhood, a blue smile on his face (173).

Primeval, matitudinal earliness appertains to the blue smile and to the blue voice of Elis, the boy whose blue voice fore-tells something that has been forgotten. This earlier earliness is older than the decomposing kind of human *Geschlecht*. It is the earliness of a beginning that presages and that comes before the end of the decomposing kind. Older, because more mindful; more mindful in that it has greater power to still, to quieten, to make gentle, to soothe by nursing. Just as the primal earliness of the beginning contains and shelters the dark descent into twilight, so the boyishness of Elis shelters the gentle twofold of sex, the youth and the golden figure of the maiden. The white eyelids of Elis veil his vision, gleaming with the bridal adornment that promises the gentler twofold of the *Geschlechter*. The stiller childhood promises a transformation of the discord between the sexes (174).

Now the madman-stranger, whose footfalls mark the tempo of the spiriting night, the rhythm of the spiriting year, crosses the nighting pond, not on a black cloud like that of the brother, but in a golden boat, radiant with the vision of primal earliness. The earliness into which he died is an end, but not an end that is the sequel and fading echo of the beginning. This end that signals the end of the decaying *Geschlecht* precedes the beginning, which has always already overtaken it. The beginning that is primal earliness



preserves the still veiled nature of original time. True time does not pass and cannot be measured chronometrically or dynamically; true time is not the arrival of what is past, but the gathering of essential being (174-76).

Here I wish to highlight: The end which comes before the beginning “has its analogue in dark patience” (177). This patience which “bears everything toward its descent into the blue of the spiriting night,” Heidegger will ascribe to the soul in the discussion of pain. The stranger-soul accomplishes the end of the decaying *Geschlecht* by going down into darkness, patiently. While the end is dark, the beginning gleams golden, illuminated by the true, the true time, the gathering of what is essential. The golden boat of the stranger has become the boat of the boy Elis: “A golden boat sways, Elis, your boat against a lonely sky” (177). The boat which sways like the shadow of the sister whom Heidegger will invoke in the penultimate strophe of the essay, the strophe appropriately preveining at the end which is before the beginning, this boat belongs to those who follow the stranger “timorously.” The timorous boat goes down under the stars, the stars which are the silent face of the night. Essential being, gathered is silent (177).

The fourth strophe establishes the nature of the site of Trakl’s poetic work, the nature of Apartness. After remarking that the silence of the starlit night belongs to Apartness, Heidegger names the sequence of what belongs to its true time, to its essential gathering. As though from an advance that looks retrospectively upon what gathers, he names, in backward sequence, the earliness of the stiller childhood, the blue night, the stranger’s nighting paths, the soul’s nocturnal wingbeat, the twilight as gate to descent: All these belong to Apartness.

Apartness unfolds within the already established gathering of earliness, of blue night, of the stranger's nighting paths, of the soul's nocturnal wingbeat, of the bluing spiriting twilight (177). Always already gathered, they form an intimate unity which is yet divided by the abyss that separates the *Unter-schied*. Gold belongs to true time, and to the truth of essential being sheltered by that blue night that conceals its radiance within a darkness silvered by lunar gleams and inhabited by white snakes whose red malice, nesting in the upchurned lap of the feminine, has been gentled and transformed. Dark patience, red churning, and silver black clouds belong to the feminine soul, who bears what gathers in pain toward the descent. Bridal whiteness conjugates the transforming marriage, the transformative death of the early dead who lives in his grave. From silvered darkness, to redness, to whiteness, to the golden radiance of the primeval pre-dawn. Acting both within this traditionally gendered palette and within the "always already" temporality of gathering, the sister also performs via sonorities that exceed their boundaries. Although she is by one voice of the text "captured," like the bird whose deathlike voice her own resembles, she performs a rhythm that does not follow this law, but that spreads outward, forward and back, in time.

Apartness is "spiriting" (*geistliche*). The spiriting twilight, the spiriting night, the spiriting paths and years of the stranger: All these belong to Apartness. Heidegger aims to differentiate this "spirituality" from that belonging either to the realm of metaphysics or to the realm of Christianity. The truly spiritual is that which is free from the depredations of essence that plague modern human *Geschlechtlichkeit*. It is full of sap, of deep colour, not etiolated like the *geistliche* nature of either church or clergy. Nor does it participate in the metaphysical division between the sensuous and the suprasensuous,

according to which disposition *geistige* has come to name what is rational, intellectual, or ideological. For, writes Heidegger, “All this belongs to the world- view of the decaying kind of man” (178). “*Geistliche*” means “what stems from the spirit and follows its nature,” to which belong “the springtime of the soul promised by the earliness of the long dead” (178).

## Chapter Five

### **Antigone and the De-composition of Family Dialectics in *Glas***

Antigone as figure performs in writing, in the graphics of the text. Antigone figures the suspension of the thetic in two texts by Jacques Derrida, in *Glas*, and in “To Speculate—on ‘Freud.’” In chapters five and six, I show how Antigone figures a binding together of different elements in the scenes of writing that Derrida’s texts both analyze and re-enact. The sister figure whose effect I read in the graphics both texts perform not only binds; she loosens, as well. At issue in both chapters is the matter of strict-ure: The chain, the binding, the desmos, what holds together, or loosens, along a series or aggregate of the non-conformable. At issue as well is the question of rhythm, of the graphics that produces and disturbs sonorities and that refracts, glancing, in the manner of a spectre or *revenant*. Derrida’s invitation to consider the Hegelian account of the family as legend plays off both of these issues.

“Legend,” in the sense which Derrida develops in *Glas*, does not conform to what, by convention, readers may ascribe to referentiality. Conceptions of the relation between word and image cannot serve as keys to the interpretation of “legend,” except in a retrospect shaped by the axioms of a particular discipline. “Legend” is already hybrid, already before, or after the moment of its instauration. The sister as figure is already figured here. And, as Antigone.

The sister “remains” as figure. Not only in the sense that she figures what remain(s). She remains, “as figure,” a figure that only strays in a (double) genitive. Not as “figure of this or that thing or enchainment or family relationship”; but as “figure which, (representing limit), disperses/loosens as flight-attracted-and-falling.” But still, “figure.” As I elaborate below, “figure,” rather than “that which eludes all figuration,” is the question that animates my reading in chapters five and six.

My interpretation in these chapters relates to the work of Michael Naas in “*Comme si, comme ça: Phantasms of Self, State, and a Sovereign God.*” His essay “asks whether a deconstructive thinking of sovereignty can help...change for the better the deconstructive processes already at work in ourselves, our political systems, and our religious institutions” (1). Derrida’s *Glas* treats of these questions. My reading of the sister figure in *Glas* aims to show the way it which it operates to de-compose the family, the familial structuration, of dialectical speculation. The sister figure, as she operates in the graphics of the text, disturbs the specular relation which governs the erection, and protects the immunity, of the phantasm of sovereignty in Hegel’s account.

In “*Comme si, comme ça,*” Naas refers to Derrida’s evocation, in “Faith and Knowledge,” to what might be called “a ‘masculine’ phantasm,” the phallus which, as detachable from its own essence, becomes “its own *phantasm*, double, spectre, or fetish, a supplement...that presents itself as having...a surplus of life, a capacity to live on after life and in defiance of death” (15). Naas also discusses the appearance of Gradiva, the “feminine” phantasm that Derrida evokes in “Faith and Knowledge.” In Naas’s terms, the resurrected and ivory-cheeked Gradiva, whose story Sigmund Freud interprets in *The Future of an Illusion*, represents the phantasm of the female or maternal body that “goes

beyond life and death, endlessly resuscitated[,]...immaculately conceived at midday from the ashes of Pompeii” (19). For Naas, the case of *Khōra* is different, for it/she is “that which or the one who, while opening up the space for all phantasm,...constantly eludes and interrupts the phantasm phenomena” (14). In Naas’ interpretation of Derrida, “*Khōra*” is “the figure of what resists all figuration and all phantasm” (19).

For Derrida, *khōra* is not a proper figure, but rather that which eludes all figuration. It is a matter of writing. Is there a figure for rhythm? What interests me in chapter five is the way in which the sister-effect, effect of the sister figure, Antigone, operates in *Glas*, to expose the “masculine” and the “feminine” phantasm in Hegel’s philosophical speculation, without however “resisting all figuration” (Naas 19). The sister-effect whose graphics I read in *Glas* does not resist figuration, and yet it still disturbs the specular mutual representation-effacement that, according to Derrida, erects the phantasm of sovereignty in Hegel’s account of the family. My interpretation of the figure of Antigone as sister-effect, a figure inseparable from the question of family, must irrevocably question the conception of the “figural” itself.

### **Hegel’s Family Legend and Mater-iality**

In this section, taking a cue from Dawne McCance’s reading of the two-column structure of *Glas* as a legend, as a rebus of Hegel’s familial dialectics, I demonstrate the way in which this legend, through a figural propaedeutics conducive for interpretation, functions. The scrolls held high, the columns teach readers to read while involving them, luring them in the Old French sense of luring the hunting bird into the *Falle* or trap, luring them

into the purview of a teaching on law, the law dividing and joining family to community, nature to politics. Suspended apart but grafted, connected as by a sutured gash or wound. I read the legend of *Glas* as a scene, a *mis-en-scène* in which the reader is invited, lured, into the suturing and tearing action the graphics of the text stages. *Glas* invites interpretive strategy that mimes the enshrouding work of Hegel's Antigone. But in a way that foregrounds *différance* rather than the completion of a shape which Hegel would recognize.

As Dawne McCance shows in her book *Medusa's Ear: University Foundings from Kant to Chora L*, in *Glas* the materiality of the signifier *cannot be consumed*. In accord with this reading, I argue that the structuration of idealization-introjection upon which Hegel's account of the family and its production of *Sittlichkeit* depends becomes undone or unbound with each suturing gesture the reader performs. Reading *Glas*, McCance writes that the woman in Hegel's familial system organizes the space for the syllogism to move, for the *Übergang* of Spirit via *Aufhebung* of the female/material. As figure of woman, Antigone, the sister, performs this role.

In *Glas* Derrida writes, "the dialectic of language, of the tongue [*langue*], is a dialectophagy" (9a). *Medusa's Ear* offers a critical reading of modern ocularcentrism, suggesting that, while positing the centrality of a vision-centered, rigidly perspectival regime in modernity, it seeks to hold onto the voice as the essence of identity. According to McCance, modernity's subject remains haunted by the fear of an *os mutum* (literally, a mute face or mouth), and by the fantasy of a mouth that cannot speak and a voice that has been lost. In her reading of foundational texts on the modern university, McCance notes how the philosopher-subject recoils in fear from an othered object (body, woman) which

he designates as both mute and deaf. This recoil, claims McCance, has the effect—the Medusa-effect—of cutting off the philosopher’s, and the institution’s, ear and tongue (4).

In *Medusa’s Ear* McCance demonstrates the way Hegel’s dialectical philosophy consumes the tongue, the body, the woman, the signifier. She offers a reading of Derrida’s *Glas* which shows how this text re-embodies the ear.

According to Hegelian dialectical philosophy, history is a journey of Spirit through time. It is an account of the sun’s (outward, physical) progress from the East, from India through Egypt, toward the Occident, to Europe, the site where man has erected another (inner, spiritual) sun. The history of Spirit is at once the history of the idealization of matter and the concomitant development of sound: of the passage of noise into resonance, and of resonance, through the material heaviness of stone-carved hieroglyphs, into the ethereal transparency of phonetic speech. Spirit is the source of sound and of light. This Hegelian “photology,” as Derrida terms it, positing an immediate relation between the voice and the light of the mind, joins speech and sight to the ear, all fully interiorized and ideal.

In the phonocentric imaginary of modern ocularcentrism, a phonetic sound is first “heard”; and as “heard” it enables a concept to be made visible and present in the interior of the self or of the institution. This idealized speaking-hearing Derrida refers to as “hearing-oneself-speak.” McCance uses the term in two senses, to indicate phonocentrism’s idealization of the ear and disengagement from exteriority, that is, from writing, lip reading, props, prosthetics, etc.; and to designate phonocentrism’s collusion with hierarchical—racist, sexist, and colonialist—political structures.



According to Hegel's grand narrative, Spirit as ideal light and sound passes through material bodies. The narrative of Spirit's return to itself is an account of the idealizing relief/*Aufhebung* of sound. The history of Spirit, which in Hegel is also the history of language, religion, art, and *Sittlichkeit* (ethical life articulated by cultural norms), proceeds, as Derrida describes it, according to the rhythm of a "three-stroke engine," that is, in movements that are structured syllogistically, wherein the (material/mother/body/figural) middle gets crossed out, or "relieved." McCance's reading in *Medusa's Ear* focuses on two structurally analogous moments in Hegel's history-as-passage: the moment of the family, when freedom as Spirit begins to work in the institutions of the world; and the Egyptian moment in the history of religion, the passage through which enables the elevation of the "spiritual religion" above the "natural religion." Both of these determinate moments, both of these passages in which Spirit's freedom advances to work toward self-actualization in the realms of art, of religion, of language, and of the civic order, are founded on the consumption of a material middle (47-51).

By virtue of the woman's work of (gestation and) memorialization, the son leaves the family to be educated in the civic realm, to quit the singularity of the family for the universal realm of military duty, the state, and ultimately, death. The mother/sister/wife falls back into the familial realm, into its tomb, into the unconscious and necessary remains of the family (as) passage.

The Egyptian moment in the history of art, religion, and language is symbolized by the Sphinx, the symbol of "the symbolic." Enormous, hybrid, half-animal and half-woman, crouching rather than standing erect, the Sphinx embodies the resistant (female)

materiality that must be relieved by Spirit's inseminating and re-sounding passage through matter.

According to McCance's reading in *Medusa's Ear*, the voice that is founded on the relief or the crossing-out of the female middle gives rise to speech in the family, itself the moment in the dialectical advance when feeling rises to (male) thought. Barely responding to Spirit's penetrating oscillations, the Sphinx figures noise-becoming-voice. The hieroglyphs that cover its sides signify a hybrid stage between pictogram, on the one side, and German, that (most) fully phonetic, fully idealized, fully spiritualized language, that Hegel himself employs, on the other. Every *Übergang* (passage over), every Hegelian passage, every moment of the dialectic, puts the family's copulative structure back into place, a structure in which the figural is consumed, crossed out (61).

In *Medusa's Ear* McCance describes the way Derrida attempts to re-embody the ear in *Glas* by countersigning Hegel's text. She read its two-column structure as a legend, a layout, a rebus of Hegel's familial and pedagogical dialectics. The left column is the philosopher-father's, that of/about Hegel; the right column is that of Genet, the poet who takes on his (bastard) mother's name. In the middle, in the space between the two legs of the column, in between the scroll-like columns reminiscent of those of the Torah, in between these phallic columns, McCance locates the countersignature, the zigzagging "passage of Derrida's d-stroke, crossing back-and-forth between the columns" (62).

In the "monstrous collage of life-and-work genres" (61), the figure, the writing, the material signifier *cannot be consumed*. The columns spill undigested material into the middle: the grafted and spliced words that are disseminated throughout the text, the

scarring and tattooing of the judas-boxes incised into the columns, the d-words oscillating between them; all these are material signifiers which mark the passage of Derrida's countersignature and keep the closed circle of Hegel's speculative system open. "Open," McCance writes, "to the leftovers of Hegel's Last Supper Meal, to the remains of the woman he wants to disappear, and to the bodies of all others that the *Aufhebung* has helped to inter or incinerate" (61). *Glas* is a text which does not swallow the tongue. The tongue remains in the throat, clacking and gonging back and forth between the two columns, in zigzagging, catachrestic movement. The *glas* sound, the sound of *Glas*.

Where Hegel's signature signs, all exteriority disappears into *silence absolute*, into *Sa/savoir absolu*, into the Concept. According to McCance, *Sa* is "the idealized instance that deafens" (57). In McCance's reading, woman is "an element excluded from the system that assures the system's space of possibility" (62). I find McCance's reading suggestive for an interpretation of Antigone that posits the sister as the encrypted remain(s), the residue, of Hegel's family-shaped speculative dialectics. Antigone as remain(s) resists the crossing-out of the middle which enables each *Übergang*. She figures what cannot be consumed. Encrypted, leaking, she remain(s) to disrupt the oppositional symmetry of Hegel's philosophy. Encrypted, she leaks, even in spite of the noose that is meant to control and contain her too-open female body, the noose from which she hangs, swinging between philosopher-father and bastard poet.

### **The Antigone-effect: Phantasm and Sororal *Revenance***

What I am terming the Antigone-effect acts as a graphic vector that moves “what remain(s)” and that figures *restance*, both in Hegel’s dialectics and in the text of *Glas*. The Antigone-effect makes the graphics of the text “legible” in a way that de-composes the family of Hegel’s re-citation. As such the Antigone-effect destabilizes the enantiotic specular relation that subsists between *Sa* and *IC*, and thereby the axiomatics of the law of representation that governs the correspondence between the truth of *Sa* as phantasm and the phenomenality whose effect shows it up as “truth.” The Antigone-effect operates to throw a shadow on the perfect mirror of their specular relation; not to consign them to the realm of falsehood, but to expose them to an anamorphic dispersal.

In Derrida’s reading of Hegel’s dialectics in *Glas*, all matter, all that which is “other” to Spirit is but “heavy” Spirit. In Hegel’s system, the end has already inseminated the beginning; and the first texts of Hegel on the Holy Family contain the teleological seed that guarantees, in the mode of the future anterior, their future flowering into the fulsome articulation of the later texts on the philosophy of religion. Father to son, son to father, knowledge to knowledge. The son returns to the father by becoming like him, by becoming a being-for-itself, a being of Spirit. Like the father, the son enters first the realm of the community, of *Sittlichkeit*, and then, after death, into the realm of the universal. The son returns to the father only by virtue of the mourning and memorializing work of the sister.

In Derrida’s reading of Hegel’s family romance, the son returns to the father, “to me” the philosopher, to the one standing in as the father of the onto-logy, all by himself/myself. This is a circular turn, therefore. However, the daughter/sister does not return to me all by myself (224a). How does she return?

In my reading Antigone figures the non-return of the daughter. Derrida writes, “[The] phantasmatic would be the effect of mastery produced by the determination of difference as opposition[,]. . . of sexual difference as sexual opposition in which each term would secure itself the domination and absolute autonomy of the *IC* :the effect—the son (rather than the daughter) comes back to me all by myself. The ‘check’ of such a desire of the return to self, on the circle of double virginity, that would be the limit of the phantasm...at the term of the phenomenology of spirit. The phantasm is the phenomenon. The names indicate this....What is it to fail, to miscarry, in a case of absolute phantasm? The check’s value is weak and confused....Who would dare say that the phantasm of the *IC* has not succeeded?” (224a)

This passage represents one “voice” in which Derrida is writing. *Glas* includes many “voices.” Another: “It is necessary to give oneself time. Time’s remain(s)./ Time’s remain(s)—for the seminar(y) of Sa—that is nothing.” Spirit essays out into what is its other, and brings that other into the circle, the light centre. In this centre, just as at the moment when Antigone dies, time stops. In the seminar(y) located in those regions where the mastery produced by the determination of difference as opposition holds sway, the pupil is raised up, and time has no remains. But where difference is not collapsed or erected as opposition: That is what Derrida tries to “think.” It’s not possible to think a remain(s) of time, as both thinking and time remain within the circle without remainder. Antigone does not remain stuck (*collé*) to the circle in tangential fashion however. She “gl”s down. Remain(s), torn to pieces. “The remain(s) here suspends itself,” Derrida writes (226a).

As the title of the *Glassary* essay by John P. Leavey, Jr. implies, *Glas* is a text that is not a book. It is composed of two columns, each tattooed at irregular intervals with “judas-boxes” consisting of textual fragments that both interrupt and accompany the writing. *Glas* demonstrates the *glas* of signification through a textual performance in which the materiality of the signifier cannot be effaced. Setting a scene of writing that opens the enclosed circularity of Hegelian speculative dialectics and destabilizes its triangular, three-piston process, the text foregrounds, on the one side, the machine process that drives Hegel’s *re-cit* of the history of Spirit, and, on the other, the machinery that interposes itself in the tympanic, hymen(e)al dissemination the text performs. Reading *Glas* involves moving between the columns and weaving of a net of signification which, articulated along aleatory pathways, syncopates, anticipates, overlaps, and disseminates itself, resisting hermeneutical gathering into a single understanding or/of the concept.

*Glas* offers guidance for its own interpretation, making explicit what other texts often presume to be common ground between writer and reader. Derrida installs a signpost that distinguishes the mode of his writing and reading from that of Hegel’s narrative: “This is—a legend,” announces Derrida (1a). His dash “—” amplifies the “is,” and signals textually, figuratively that, in his interpretation, the copulative syllogism of Hegelian speculative philosophy will require supplementation.

At the outset Derrida declares that *Glas* will present an account of the historical that bears upon the putative founding of an “us,” a people-state; as well as a performance of representation that explicates itself with reference to at least two graphic or plastic scenarios. *Glas* demonstrates, in part, a kind of enframing, the enframing of a scene of

(the production of) writing. And, exposing and setting into play the figures that organize Hegel's account of the history of spiritual-religious-ethical life, exposing the way they efface each other by representing each other, it foregrounds the signifying machinery that effects a transgressive spilling, a breach of this enframing. The frame is a family-shaped structuration that the three-piston syllogism machine of speculative dialectics repeats, and repeats without reproducing self-identity, in each passage from/through dense materiality to ethereal translucency, in each passage in which Spirit actualizes itself. The spillage is what remain(s).

### **Hegel's Family Romance: Antigone-effect and/as the Double Figure**

But I anticipate. Backing up to Derrida's legend: "The legend does not pretend to afford a reading of Hegel's whole corpus, texts, and plans [*desseins*], just of two figures. More precisely, of two figures in the act of effacing themselves: two passages. "Two very determined, partial, and particular passages, two examples" (1a-2a). According to my reading of *Glas*, there are two sets of two figures, a doubled double, and each set represents the other. One set: The figure of the (Holy) family-shaped history of religion, its passage as/through Absolute Religion, to Absolute Knowledge (the Concept); and the figure of time as movement, as the movement of being lifted up, suspended, and then relieved as pure suspension, where the already of religion meets the not-yet of philosophy, where motion stops. The figure of the Holy Family that belongs to Absolute Religion in Hegel, and the figure of being lifted up (*Aufgehoben*) into Absolute Knowing, represent each other and, cancelling each other out, efface each other. What is left is the

Concept, the all in all. The text of *Glas*, the *glas* of the text of *Glas*, resists this effacement by producing a *glas*-effect that separates and joins the two spheres, that shows how they are related as the dehiscing foci of an ellipsis. Prime set: *Sa*, and *IC*.

My reading of *Glas* focuses on the effect of Antigone's performative role in the text. Antigone is what remain(s): Neither belonging to the Holy Family, nor emptied by the *Aufhebung* moment as passage that she enacts and makes way for, by remaining, the sister-figure re-marks the space for the movement of syllogistic passage that Hegel's account re-cites. At the same time, in a different modality of production that Derrida's *mise-en-scène* sets up, Antigone as remain(s) affects temporality and its representation. This passage from *Glas* describes the Antigone-effect and its doubled function:

Of the remain(s), after all there are always, overlapping each other, two functions[...].The first assures, guards, assimilates, interiorizes, idealizes, relieves the fall [*chute*] into the monument. {*La chute* can mean fall, failure, or the end or "send-off" (*envoi*) of a text. } There the fall maintains, embalms, and mummifies itself, monumemorializes and names itself—falls (to the tomb(stone)) [*tombe*][...].The other {function}—lets the remain(s) fall. *Running the risk of coming down to the same* [...].If Fall marks the case, the fall, decadence, failure or fissure, *Falle* equals trap, springe, the machine that grabs you by the neck [*cou*]{ *Le cou* rhymes homophonically with *le coup*, blow}[...].The remain(s) is indescribable, or almost so; not by means of an empiric approximation, but rigorously undecideable (1b-2b, italics added). Identifying Antigone as remain(s), my reading takes up Derrida's distinction between the two overlapping function of "what remain(s)," both in the scene of Hegel's family romance, and in the legend that Derrida's writing in *Glas* elaborates, performs, and countersigns.



In Hegel's family romance, Antigone represents the ideal and exemplary sister, the mourner par excellence. By virtue of her "desireless" relation to her brother, she enables his passage from the divine female realm of the family to the human male realm of the people-state. Just as the family constitutes a determinate first moment in the syllogism—passage from Abstract Right (abstract ethical law), through *Moralität* (subjective ethical law) to *Sittlichkeit* (the universal ethical life of the people-state), so the unique sister-brother relation constitutes the determinate moment in the passage of the family's child-son from the singularity of the family, via the *Aufhebung* of family property in the education which completes the son's alienation, to the universality of the people-state. As Derrida puts it, "The union of opposites, of man and woman [in marriage], has the form of a syllogistic copulation. More precisely, this syllogistic copulation unites two syllogisms into one single one and thus produces the ethical reign" (170a).

But the citizen-son's universality will be accomplished only when his form survives intact and "completed," that is, dead. The double syllogism proceeds by laps—from the lap of the (grand)mother to the lap of the sister(mother); and during each lap, natural desire undergoes relief, until, protected from those "lower" desires, the corpse of the brother remain(s) a completed monument.<sup>3</sup> The role of the sister(mother) is to bind up, to swaddle anew, to bandage, to erect the corpse, to memorialize it by erecting it in stone.

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<sup>3</sup> Colpos, or κόλπος, is a Greek word. According to the definition David Farrell Krell provides in *The Tragic Absolute*: "the bosom or lap upon which a child or domestic animal lies...[;]in medical literature the phrase τὰ ὑποκόλπου means the vagina or the hollow of the womb; in poetry it is a metaphor for the tomb" (318).

Like many fables, Hegel's family romance aims to offer, as truth (of the Concept), an apotropaic against "natural" desire. Only through the relieving suspension of desire can the passage to the realm of universality, and ultimately, to the realm of Absolute Knowledge, take place. In marriage, natural desire is relieved in the production of the child-son, whose desire for his parents and home is relieved, by virtue of the desireless propaedeutic relation to his sister, into the spiritual desire to pay duty to the state. The state (re)establishes itself by suppressing the woman/family and the natural desires which motivate them, and by demanding the life of its sons for the wars necessary to its maintenance.

Two sets of figures, two columns, two staffs. The figures which, representing each other efface each other: One figure: *Sa*: The representation of the erected monument to the final passage of Absolute Religion, the idealization and effacement of all its *Bildungen* (pictures, representations) into Absolute Knowledge. In the siglum *Sa*, *Savoir absolu*, *S'avoir absolu*, and the *sa* meaning "hers" resonate together; and McCance has added another resonance: *Silence absolute (Medusa's Ear 15, 57)*.

Prime figure: The self-swelling of the maternal belly, that which purely by its own action, without being touched by an outside, conceives (the Concept), produces, gives birth to (the Concept's) life, Derrida appellates by the siglum *IC*. The siglum *IC* signifies the relation of untouchability that pertains to the Immaculate Conception of (double genitive) a virgin mother with regard to any material affectivity. "The two staffs represent each other...[t]o exhibit the borders of a code." "Natural" desire, "natural" religion are both relieved in the erection of the phallic monument that is bound together with the archives of the history of Spirit. *Sa* and *IC* represent each other, and in doing so,

efface each other. All movement is suspended, and history stops. “Absolute virginity on both sides—no touching. The truth is phantasm itself” (223a). Antigone, the sister whose action does not partake of the enantiotic relation between *Sa* and *IC*, but creates a space which makes it possible, dies. She falls (to the tomb) [*tombe*]. She remain(s).

“Of the remain(s), after all, there are, always, overlapping each other, two functions” (1b). Antigone, or, more precisely, the Antigone effect, operates on the action of the syllogism, and on the relation of representability that pertains between the two staffs which guard its code by interrupting and syncopating the rhythm of their resonance. Not stopping the machine, but re-marking the tone of the philosophical utterance and of the romance that dreams of a philosophical discourse where “tone is inaudible, and with it a whole desire, affect, or scene...” (Derrida, “Of An Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted By Philosophy” 6; qtd. in Ulmer 119c). And, at the same time, re-marking the tonal changes, following the tonal changes, in the text, *Glas*, which, in turn, resonate with the tonal changes re-marked in my reading of Sophocles’ play. The Antigone effect in *Glas* foregrounds the machine-character, and the aleatory character, of the reading of the (material) text, and of the scene of writing in which *glas* performs.

“The other [function]—lets the remain(s) fall. Running the risk of coming down to the same” (2b). Antigone as remain(s) falls (to the tomb) [*tombe*]; and this fall “marks the case, the fall, the decadence, failure, or fissure...” of what falls (2b). De-cadence, fissure: These bear on the rhythm of/in what falls. And which risks coming down to the same; but which might not, in the case, in the particular case of the performance of the fall. How does Antigone’s fall as remain(s) put “coming down to the same” at risk? The following sections offer responses to this question.

### **Antigone's Fall: Re-currence of the Last**

Antigone's fall interrupts the passage of Spirit through dense materiality to the "ether" of its self-actualization. As Derrida points out, the two laws, the one appertaining to the divine, female, nocturnal realm of the family, and the one appertaining to the human, male, daylight realm of the people-state, are "fissured" and "notched in [their] inside,...already by the labor of the other within it" (147a). The logic of the human law, according to Derrida, contains within it the mark of the abjuration of military violence that belongs to the family law: "Preserve the family by abjuring military violence"; while at the same time commanding absolute obedience to the call to arms. In a corresponding way, the divine law, the law of singularity, is marked by the law of substitution the people-state enforces: "You, citizen are valuable, but only insofar as you are replaceable, able to be dispensed with." Even so, in Hegel's family schema, any sons and brothers (and husbands) will do for their sisters and mothers (and wives): it is not the singularity of the individual (men) that is at issue, but the fulfilling of roles, in a generalized sense. But Antigone marks the place of the irreplaceable relation, for she is the "last" one of her family who is able to fulfill the fulcrum role of mourner.

#### *Auto-immunity*

The Antigone effect operates, in Antigone's fall to the tomb as remain(s), to re-mark the fall of the phantasm of sovereignty that Hegel's family romance erects. The phantasm erects itself and reflects itself in the enantiotic relation between *Sa* and *IC*, the phantasm

of/as truth. The Antigone effect, the effect of Antigone's work, her aims, and her incestuous desire which threaten to pervert the family's syllogistic operation, contaminates the "absolute virginity" (223a), the splendid untouchability, on which the erection of the phantasm of sovereignty and/as truth depends. With regard to the fall of the phantasm into (its) phenomenality, the Antigone effect functions both as both histaminic and autoimmune (re)action.

### **Frame Exposure**

As Leavey reminds us in *Glassary*, the familial structuration of Hegel's double syllogism, the "family value [that] continues to transport itself on a horizon over a theological ground" (*Glas* 170a) constitutes a frame in *Glas*. The movement of the syllogism that founds this family value which extends its expanse over the speculative horizon, finds its limit in the enantiotic relation of *Sa* and *IC*. This enantiotic relation frames and borders their code and their susceptibility to codification. In Hegel, and well as in Derrida's reading in *Glas*, the frame that borders and puts to test their codifiability displays dehiscence and splitting from within. Following Leavey, I here schematize the frame, the code of the family structure: In Hegel, the father is the repository of knowledge, of consciousness. The son has knowledge of the father and retains consciousness of his father as the subject of knowledge. In contrast, the son, while feeling eternal love for his mother, cannot hold her as an object in his consciousness, because of the "unconsciousness" of—double genitive—the mother. Derrida's analysis of the Holy Family parallels this account: The father God, the seat of knowledge, belongs to a realm

beyond phenomenality, while the mother Virgin, deprived, cut off from [*sevréede*] knowledge, belongs to the “natural” realm, to a realm of unconscious exile from knowledge. Leavey suggests that “[t]he frame is the desire for/of the mother” (*Glassary* 70b). According to my reading of *Glas*, the family value(s) that Antigone displays act to dislodge this frame, which nonetheless remain glued to it. The effect of Antigone’s performance makes the frame resonate, vibrate; and the cadence of the fall she takes, as remain(s), the rhythm of this fall that risks falling to the same, exposes the frame as frame, and swings it off its hinges.

As in Hegel’s paradigm, there is dehiscence in Antigone’s family. Antigone’s suicide points catachrestically to the desire of/for the mother. The mother Jocasta is the repository of a terrible knowledge, a fore-knowledge of the origin and fate of her husband-son. So far from unconsciousness, she knows rather too much; and still attempts to preserve Oedipus in ignorance, and herself in the role of his wife. Jocasta represents a “beyond” relative to the realm of the phenomenal, in the sense of her accession to the height to which first, her nearly oracle-like pre-knowledge, and second, her noose, carry her. She remains “beyond” Antigone’s realm. Not only is she dead, but her actions remain almost impossible to approach while remaining in the realm of speech, of language. For Antigone there remain(s) nothing for it but to step into a crypt and be lifted up herself. An *Aufhebung*, but in catachresis.

But Oedipus’ relations to the phenomenal, and to Antigone, proliferate within a force-field that generates ambiguity and ambivalence, and that “debauch” them in transgressive ways. (However, the Antigone’s family has not yet arrived at the scene of Dionysian revelry.) But even while insisting on the irreplaceability of her brother

Polyneices—not for husband or child would she defy the edict of Creon—Antigone’s use of the term “brother” is always divided, parcelled out, bigamous, transgressive.

And the web of relations that constitute her familial bonds shimmers, shifts, rolls as though made of viscous material. Granddaughter of her mother; aunt to her brothers and sister, to whom she is also niece; according to Oedipus a son to him, and therefore brother of her sister; lover of her brother, who is also, according to Oedipus, her sister; and also perhaps, or, it is not decidable, lover of her father, who is also her brother: Antigone represents the indecipherability of the code. An indecipherability that exhibits the borders, the limit case of the code on the borders of which *Sa* and *IC* stand guard in speculative-specular relation, as staffs that never touch. Here there is generation, in the phenomenal sphere of the family whose incestuous filiation Hegel wants to cover over. And also generation that takes place only in the dramatic scene of Sophocles’ play, as well as in the scene of Derrida’s writing in *Glas*.

### **The Antigone-effect in/as Encryption**

Derrida tells his readers that his text is a “legend.” The materiality of the signifier remain(s). Forms represent each other, but then transgress the laws of representation by transversing space divided between incommensurate forms of signification. As in a legend, where valences of words and images interact, intertextual elements resonate together according to the pulsions of an interposed machine of reading.

This is one way, a partial way, of describing the *glas*-effect of *Glas*. The Antigone effect in *Glas* acts, not only to organize a space where the syllogistic machine operates,

but also to displace by ever overlapping and syncopating rhythm, what en-frames the systematicity in Hegel's dialectics and in the enantiotics of the philosophical mode it desires. Antigone's performance, in Sophocles' play, in Hegel's speculative philosophy, and in Derrida's text, remain(s) (the) indigestible, the unincorporable. Her remain(s) are what is spit out, re-swallowed, and re-vomited into a crypt. Hegel's system depends on the incorporability of this crypt, which remain(s) both inside and outside it.

Derrida's writing in *Glas* encrypts fragments into colposes whose signifying valency redounds on parts and on the whole of the text, leaking into them in a way that invites the reader to follow aleatory and dialogical paths of interpretation. In this way, Derrida's scene of writing deconstructs Hegel's dialectics. Derrida performs a textual encryption by inserting a selection of Hegel's letters into the middle of his reading of Hegel's family-shaped philosophy. The letters, written to Hegel's lover Nanette, to his fiancée Marie, and to his friend Niethammer, form a monster cyst, an *Ungeheuer* mode of signification, that is deposited, as remain(s), within Derrida's commentary but also, by extending over the horizon that interrogates the relation of life and work, within the Hegelian corpus of/on the family. In that they pervert and interrupt, but also perform the family values of the frame, they contaminate the system, causing it to fall, as it were, into a *Falle*, a trap. A trap that catches Hegel's family romance in a noose, that "grabs [it] by the neck [*cou*]" (2b). Like a "monster cyst" formed from all the tissues of the body, containing hair, teeth, organ tissue, and more, the letters incorporate and represent, not only the determinate moments of the family as passage, but their perversion. Operating as an introjection of what his system rejects, the encryption functions as a narcissistic wound in Hegel's systematics. The resonant effect, the Antigone effect, of the encryption,



brings precisely the inassimilable of Hegel's system to bear upon it, as part of its signifying force.

In the letters to his lover Nanette, for example, Hegel's attachment expresses itself in his diminutive address, as well as in an obsession with the darling smallness of her rosary, her cushion, and other signs of attachment to her home and to her Roman Catholic background. Behaving like the woman-enemy of the people-state, Hegel treats the badges of Nanette's honour like so many embellishments, bringing them into the purview both of his ironic condescension and of his fetishized desire. Hegel becomes a woman in order to become a (real) man. The letters to Nanette represent a contamination of the categorical discreteness, and the discretion, that ground sexual opposition.

However, in his letters to his fiancée Marie—it is not insignificant that to her belongs the name of the virgin mother of Jesus—Hegel imposes his masculine law upon the expression of her feelings, particularly with regard to the propriety of an early date for their marriage. Hegel imagines that Marie is hurt by Hegel's correcting her, by his teaching her how to contain her feelings and to shape them properly. However, Hegel writes, Marie should allow her fiancé's own better knowledge of the true nature of devotion to guide her. For Hegel, as the man, knows Marie's aptitudes and values better than she herself does. Accept my human law, Hegel says, so that your divine law, the law represented by the *IC*, can manifest itself. Incorporate *Sa*, and your true vocation as *IC*, will come to you. Even if marriage, with all its touching joys, has to be deferred.

Hegel's letters to his friend Niethammer offer a rationalization for the postponement of his marriage to Marie, one which exposes the ostensible reason as a

cover for an illicit, too “natural” desire. Hegel instructs his friend to care for Hegel’s sick sister Christiane by putting this unfortunately hysterical woman, tormented by a too intimate longing for her brother, under a form of house imprisonment. Hegel thereby reveals his desire to encrypt his sister, at once within his letters to the friend that helped him attain to university lectureships, and within a setting that will contain her desire. Heavy with the knowledge of the(ir) incestuous desire, Hegel postpones his marriage to Marie. Wishing however to preserve the introjection of that desire, Hegel conceives a monster cyst that encrypts his loss and which relieves itself in his philosophical-biographical denegation of Antigone’s incestuous origins and of her ambiguously incestuous expression of feeling. Pregnant with a kind of monster fetus, Hegel assimilates to the mother who, in the words of Genet that Derrida cites in *Glas*, “sheltered her daughter, a kind of hideous, misshapen monster, stupid and white, who walked on all fours” (166b). Derrida’s encryption, exposing Hegel’s denegation, unearths this hideous monster which Hegel’s heroine Antigone remain(s): A prison-child, the too natural “animal” whose consumption Hegel’s system, without success, attempts, unsuccessfully.

The name of Hegel’s sister, Christiane, is also significant: Anna is the name traditionally attributed to the mother of the Virgin Mary, so Hegel’s sister could be called, Anne, the grandmother of Christ. Hegel, as philosopher-father, as the progenitor of *Sa*, becomes the father of Christ, and thus—unlike Oedipus who is his sister Antigone’s father—his sister’s son. But, through his engagement to Marie, Hegel imagines a purified connection between himself, the father of Christ, and Marie, the mother of Christ: Hegel inseminates Marie with true knowledge (of herself), through words.

At the same time, when Derrida's citing of Genet is taken into account, Hegel becomes the mother who encrypts his sister-child within tomb and womb. His sister Christiane thus provides Hegel with the desire of/for the mother—the frame of his system—and, at the same time, with an occasion for the encryption of its loss.

As Anne, Christiane represents the maternal side of the *IC-Sa* enantiosis; for Anne conceived the Virgin Mary immaculately, without being touched by a (male) outside. At the same time, as Anne, Christiane is Hegel's true spouse. For if he is the father of *Sa*, then she is the mother of the *IC*, and both give birth to Christ, the true son.

In another way, Hegel's illegitimate son, and his illicit relation to that son's mother, come to stand in for Hegel's desire for his sister, whose second name is Louise. Hegel names his son Ludwig, the Latin feminine form of which is "Louise." Hegel's father's second name was Ludwig. By calling his illegitimate son Ludwig, Hegel surnames his father and his sister, and calls into question the legitimacy of his relation to both, and of their relation to one another. If Hegel identifies his father as illegitimate—the unconscious being structured like an orphan—then who is Hegel's true father? It is the son who guarantees the fatherhood of the father God, that is, Christ. But if Christ is Hegel's son (as well as his father), then Hegel's sister Christiane names/is Hegel's son. As Christiane Louise, Hegel's sister names Hegel's illegitimate father, his biological father, his daughter, his son, and his spouse.

### **Antigone Effect: The De-composition of Family Dialectics**

As text, *Glas* performs a deconstruction of Hegel's familial dialectics by de-composing its onto-logy. The tattooed pastiches and the two column structure of *Glas* perform mimetically, both to display and to disjoin the logos-sealed father-son relation inscribed in Hegel's speculative dialectics. Many occurrences and roles compose the de-composing scene: The columns set up a virtual telepathy, they shadow one another, and perform against one another, in the manner of a machine. They lure the reader, and the meanings of French word "lure," meaning pace, gait, and also trap, redound on the columns' intricacies and interrelationships. The columns interrelationships lure the reader to cut, suture, and tear; that is, to perform again, mimetically, to repeat the pasting, suturing, and tearing operation, virtually driven by the machine quality of the text, of its pace. Readerly desire also motivates, superadds, and permutates, the virtually unbound genetic combinatorial of the lure. An interrupted and constantly re-sutured ana-genealogy plays itself, stages itself, in *Glas*.

The inclusion of Hegel's letter to and pertaining to his sister and his fiancée, juxtaposed to those regarding his hope of appointment as philosopher-father, form an encryption within the left "Hegel" column. This encryption, this monster cyst within Derrida's analysis, points to the philosopher-father's incestuous desire, to the way in which his family-shaped dialectics serves as container for transgressive desire. The leaking of the container, the matter within which shimmers and flows out of it, like the jelly from the bastard son's container, or the spittle that binds "gl-" to tongue, performs to de-compose the dialectics. Too close, and "*tout court*," in this scene where the laws of family composition are put to trial. But also, in an overdetermined way, the leaking of the

cyst points as well to the the space in between the columns, to their character as wound or gash, at once attracting and displaying sutures, and tearing them apart.

Neither Hegel nor Derrida nor “the reader” can do without the singularity of the sister, and of her relation to the brother, who is also a son in perpetual need of a father. The Genet column, citing and therefore “written” by a bastard orphan, exceeds the father-son relation inscribed in Hegel’s onto-logy. According to Oliver, the aim of Hegel’s philosophy is to conceptualize consciousness; its aim will have been achieved when the logos of the philosopher arrives at its actualization, and the Concept will have been articulated and made real. Hegel aims to be the father of the logos about/of the Concept; which, having been fully articulated, at once retreats from its “origin” in the father-philosopher to become the Absolute Concept, to become Absolute Knowledge. That which Derrida writes of the logos in “Plato’s Pharmacy” applies as well to Hegel’s familial dialectics: The logos-about/of-the Concept, the conceptualization of consciousness, never “is” the father. Rather, “the origin of the logos is *its father*.” The logos is “a son, as son that would be destroyed in his very *presence* without the present attendance of his father” (77). It is writing itself which destroys this living relation that constitutes the logos. Through its graphics *Glas* displays the effect of writing on the father-son relation in the logos which the *Phaedrus* describes. For, in the *Phaedrus*, writing is the bastard son of the logos. In *Glas*, Genet, the bastard son, displays the “distress of the orphan” which Socrates describes in the *Phaedrus*: “[The orphan] always needs its father to attend to it, being quite unable to defend itself to attend to its own needs” (275e; qtd. in “Plato’s Pharmacy” 77).

Any discussion of logos entails one of sovereignty. In the *Phaedrus* it is a king who rejects the offer of writing as a mere aid to memory, as a mere device in contrast to the presence of speech to logos, the self-presencing of logos in speech. And the Hegelian/Platonic moment of reading holds a certain sway in the polis, in the community to which *Glas*, in part and *en morceau*, addresses itself. “Genet always wanted sovereignty,” cites the Genet column, showing its/Genet’s dependency in this reflexive way. Genet’s “misery,” that is, his abjection, his desire to be a mother, his hermaphroditic fantasies: all these demonstrate his unfitness as the logos-son of Hegel as father-philosopher.

If Hegel’s dialectics proceeds by producing a son who does (not) belong to a father, and by repressing or swallowing the woman, then how does the sister Antigone fit into his account, and into the graphics that *Glas* produces? These questions can only be articulated and responded to, together. It is not only that Antigone steps into the singular moment where the ethical relations of the family exceed the family and lead to the passage to the community as the locus of “ethical life,” of the actualization of the ethical in *Sittlichkeit*. Not only does she represent the incestuous and encrypted desire whereby she acts both as the progenitor, without conception, of Hegel’s familial schema, and as its subversion. Not only does she interrupt the filial dependency between phantasm and phenomenon whose untouching mutual (self)representation grounds Hegel’s Concept as Absolute Knowing. As well, and coming always after these effect, as an after-effect, Antigone as sister-figure operates, graphically, to move the columns’ stillness regarding one another. As she walks, they limp along, and every few steps they hold out their prosthetic stick to her. She guides by following, as on the road to Colonus.

I have in mind the graphics of *Glas*, and what they dramatize in relation to writing, interpretation, and sovereignty. Such a graphics entails a lure, a gait, called “sororal.” In his reading of Stéphane Mallarmé’s *Mimique* in “The Double Session,” Derrida writes on the undecideable value of the sign:

What counts here is not [its] lexical richness, [its] semantic infiniteness[,]...the sedimentation that has produced inside it two contradictory layers of signification (continuity and discontinuity, inside and outside, identity and difference, etc.). What counts here is the formal or syntactical praxis that composes and decomposes it...We have indeed been making believe that everything could be traced to the word hymen. But the irreplaceable character of this signifier, which everything seemed to grant it, was laid out like a trap....What holds for “hymen” also holds...for all other signs which, like *pharmakon*, *supplément*, *différance*, and others, have a double, contradictory, undecideable value that always derives from their syntax, whether the latter is in a sense ‘internal,’ articulating and combining under the same yoke...two incompatible meanings, or ‘external,’ dependent on the code in which the word is made to function. But the syntactical composition and decomposition of a sign renders this alternative between internal and external inoperative....Without reducing all these to the same,... it is possible to recognize a certain serial law in these points of indefinite pivoting; they mark the spots of what can never be mediated, mastered, sublimated, or dialecticized through any...*Aufhebung*. Is it by chance that all these play effects, these “words” that escape philosophical mastery, should have, in widely differing historical contexts, a very singular relation to writing? (220-21).

In my reading, the sister Antigone performs as such a graphic sign in the syntax of *Glas*, which is itself “undecideable,” both yoked and unyoked. She signs by remaining that which the *Aufhebung* operation leaves behind. She signs also as the slippage, the “gl,” between what belongs as proper to the artist, his elaboration of spirit, what is above his the work as object; and what remains as that part of the work he retains. It is the operation of this caesura, of this double-fold, that the sister signifies. It is neither the work of art nor the artist, neither what is proper to either, but in/as the movement of *restance* that relates these, that the Antigone as sister-figure operates.

McCance’s reading in *Medusa’s Ear* shows that each moment in Hegel’s history-as-passage is founded on the consumption of a (female) material middle. Her reading demonstrates that in “the monstrous collage of life-and-work genres” that comprise *Glas*, the figure, the material signifiers which Hegel genders female, mark the passage of Derrida’s countersignature and keep the closed circle of Hegel’s speculative system open (61). McCance’s work in *Medusa’s Ear*, on which I draw in my reading of *Glas*, demonstrates how Derrida’s text, by foregrounding the material signifier in such a way that it cannot be swallowed or consumed, de-composes the family-shaped syllogistic structuring of Hegelian dialectics.

According to my reading of *Glas*, the Antigone effect in Derrida’s text de-composes Hegelian family dialectics. Antigone’s fall interrupts the passage of Spirit through dense materiality to the “ether” of its self-actualization. In Antigone’s fall to the tomb as remain(s), the Antigone effect operates to re-mark the fall of the phantasm of sovereignty that Hegel’s family romance erects. The effect of Antigone’s work is to contaminate the “absolute virginity” (*Glas* 223a), the splendid untouchability, on which



the erection of the phantasm of sovereignty and/as truth depends. I concur with Leavey's reading in *Glassary*, according to which the familial structuration of Hegel's double syllogism constitutes a frame in *Glas*. The Antigone effect in *Glas* makes the frame resonate and vibrate; and the cadence of the fall Antigone takes exposes this frame as frame, and swings it off its hinges. Antigone's performance, in Sophocles' play, in Hegel's speculative philosophy, and in Derrida's text, remain(s) (the) indigestible, the unincorporable. Her remain(s) are what is spit out, re-swallowed, and vomited into a crypt. Derrida's writing in *Glas* encrypts fragments into colposes whose signifying valency redounds on the whole text, leaking out into it in ways that invite the reader to follow aleatory and dialogical paths of interpretation. In these ways, Derrida's scene of writing in *Glas* deconstructs and de-composes Hegel's family dialectics.

In "Acting Bits/Identity Talk," in order to name the back-and-forth oscillation that readers perform in *Glas*, Gayatri Spivak employs a word Derrida offers in that text: the action of a *navette*, a shuttle. She points out that *Glas* is "a kind of typographic miming" that is "written in bits and pieces" (794). To weave connections between the right column, "the homoerotic traditional tale of Western philosophy," and the left column, that of "the criminal male homosexual Jean Genet," the reader will become a *navette* in order to weave the two sides, and their many pieced-on tattoos, together "in order to find out what every extraordinary page might mean" (794).

The passage on the *navette* in *Glas* constitutes one of the clues Derrida provides for reading the text: "The word—*la navette*—is absolutely necessary....It concerns a small metal vessel in the form of a boat....And then the weaver's *navette*....coming and

going woven in a chain. The weave is in the *navette*...” (*Glas* 207-08; qtd. in Spivak 794).

Spivak points out that in Derrida’s early writing “the text is one of the master metaphors: the text as textile, through the Latin *texere*, to weave (794). In *Glas*, and then later as well, according to Spivak, Derrida temporarily abandons the metaphor of the text: “Yet we have mistrusted the textile metaphor. This is because it still keeps...a kind of...naturalness, primordiality, cleanliness [*propriété*]....[T]he textile metaphor is still more natural, more primordial, proper than the metaphor of sewing, of the seam [*couture*]” (*Glas* 208F; qtd. in Spivak 795). According to Spivak’s reading of Derrida, rather than thinking of textile or weave, we will have to think “of the kind of sewing and patching that betrays, exposes what it should hide, dis-simulates what it signals...” (795).

Spivak contrasts Derrida’s method of citation with what she calls “postmodern practice....[where] what is cited is emptied of its own historical texting or weaving” (795). Rather, Derrida’s citing in *Glas* “invokes the wound of the cutting from the staged origin” (795). According to my reading, the Antigone-effect lures the reader to co-perform, to sew patches that expose her distance, but that also monstrate her nearness to an “origin” that is hybrid, bastard, and impure. Her operations change, pervert, transform (*verändert, verwandelt, verkehrt*)—all those *ver-* prefixed words that Jacobs notes in the passage in the *Phenomenology* on the eternal irony of womankind—the weave of proper kinship relationality.

## Chapter Six

### **Antigone as Figure of Athesis: Sister Writing in Derrida's "To Speculate—on 'Freud'"**

Unlike the son, the sister does not return to the father. Sororal writing enacts a loosening of stricture: Returning as *revenge*, remaining as *restance*, and playing in repeating itself as *mouvance*. Sororal writing proceeds in the manner of an overlap whose fold or graft, conjoining, (*συνφιλεῖν*, or binding with), binds together, "but not in the manner of a system," as Jacques Derrida says in "To Speculate—on 'Freud'" (271). Antigone figures the relation of non-mastery between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, the non-mastery of the structure of detour, of relay, that pertains to athesis. She figures suspension between the life and death drives. She figures in the *pas de démonstration* that "transforms itself in the process without advancing the signifiable object of a discourse." She figures that play in speculative writing which risks non-return to self, and which interrupts and subverts the triangular structure of inheritance that pertains in the hetero-tautology of Hegelian speculative dialectics (271, 296f).

At the same time, or rather, in a rhythm that introduces the aneconomic into the economy of the drives, she figures the effect of a mourning which hollows out the proper and displaces "essence."

Antigone figures sister writing in a number of ways. Sister writing carries the allure of a “differential stricture,” of that stricture of which Derrida writes, “[I]t passes, like a lace, through both sides of the object, which is here, repetition itself.” She figures that loosening of stricture which is productive of a certain kind of writing, of writing that is “without an object that is detachable from its detaching operation” (“To Speculate” 351, 296).

Three exergues. First exergue: I begin from the *differance* between the cohabiting of two economies, that of the pleasure principle, the PP, and that of the reality principle, the RP. The RP is both a modulation of the PP, and its contracted lieutenant. The RP defers from the PP by making an *Umweg*, a detour. However, as Derrida explains, neither the length nor the structure of the detour can be mastered by the PP: “[R]ather than its length, its structure.” It is the structure of the *differance*/deferral, the structure of the temporal detour or gap, which lets or leaves, which unleashes an unbinding which “is” not. An *aneconomy* is unleashed or unbound, within the “one two three in one *differant* from itself” structure that obtains between pleasure and unpleasure (283ff). Antigone figures the catachrestic unleashing among the “one two three in one *diffé rant* from itself,” the unleashing that results in the structural change of the detour inscribed in Sigmund Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

Second exergue: I begin from Derrida’s use of “hypothesis,” which I read as miming that of Sigmund Freud. Strictly speaking, concerning Freud’s procedure in *Beyond...* no thesis is possible, no theoretical argument can be advanced regarding this text in which the death drives, enigmatic, appear disappear. The prefix “hypo-” is suggestive. According to the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, it carries three

meanings: “under,” “slight or partial,” and “less than normal” (1294). Antigone figures the slide of the “hypo-” which keeps the thetic in suspension.

Third exergue: I begin from an analysis of Derrida’s reading of the *démarche* of *Beyond...* as exemplified in propositions he makes at key junctures of his text. They remark what re-binds the elements of the scene of Freud’s writing of *Beyond...*, the contents of what Freud describes, and the procedure of his graphics. These propositions analyze the way in which what may no longer be called the “form” of the text, and what may no longer be called its “content,” and what may no longer be called its “object,” are overlapped together in the manner of a fold or graft that both separates and re-binds them. The following question provides an example of this structuration: “What happens when acts of performances (discourse of writing, analysis or description, etc.) are part of the objects they designate? When they can be given as examples of precisely that of which they speak or write?” (391). Antigone figures this overlap.

In his discussion of the traumatic neuroses in Chapter II of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud names two characteristics that “emerge” from the symptomatic picture: One, the factor of fright, the factor of the subject’s having being unprepared by anxiety for the trauma that intervened; and, two, the lack of a simultaneously inflicted wound or injury to the body of the subject (11). What interests me here is that the simultaneously inflicted injury or wound militates against the development of traumatic neurosis.

The binding and un-binding of repressed pleasure/unpleasure is what covers over the melancholic wound that threatens the energy reserves of the subject, the project, the institution, with all their motifs of affiliation and inheritance. Filaments run along what is

inscribed as “inheritance” or “genealogy”; and as the desire for “unthinkable conflation,” in the words of Carol Jacobs, that Antigone evokes. The sister, unnamed in “To Speculate,” plays the role of wound-cover, and also of that which re-binds the scenic elements in Derrida’s reading of Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. As well, Antigone as sister figure rallies the cells, the satellites of the writing, providing pathways for their differentiation. And for their *restance*, their *mouvance*, inscribing autoimmunity.

In the fifth chapter of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud re-examines the axis of the fourth: That is, the notion of death as the internal necessity of life, of life as the “proper” path toward death.<sup>4</sup> Is this notion of the familiarity of death to life but a consoling belief which, as the Poet writes, helps us “to bear the burden of existence”? What if it were the poem itself, asks Derrida, “the story one always tells oneself,...the poetics of the proper as reconciliation, consolation, serenity?” (“To Speculate” 363). Can the shadow of Hegel’s Antigone be offering shelter here?

Derrida notes that, after posing this question, Freud takes a detour into a discussion of the genetic model proposed by August Weismann. According to this model, the body is divided into the soma and the germ-plasm. In Derrida’s terms, the former stands for “the body’s body, to which nothing comes back, the one which is not inherited,” while the latter serves the life drives and insures the immortality of the species. Freud “seems to turn this model into a politico-psychoanalytic metaphor: the vital association of cells in order to preserve the life of the organism.” In the politico-psychoanalytic corpus, some cells associate and sacrifice themselves for the sake of the survival of the socius, of the State. These sacrificing cells, writes Derrida, come to

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<sup>4</sup> Derrida’s work in *The Gift of Death* relates to the question of “life death” and

resemble Freud's sons, whose death at the front he awaited. Other cells keep their libido for themselves, surviving to sublimate it in art, science, and other constructive and sublime activities of the polis. Still other cells, malignantly narcissistic, reproduce "in unleashed fashion," hiding behind the front lines in order to free themselves for proliferation in an autonomous way, and remaining unconcerned about the health of the whole. In Derrida's terms, the malignancy of these tumor cells disturbs "the networks of communication or of genetic information, the switch points and ciphers of its graphic code." It is perhaps significant that this detour, via the biologicistic model of Weismann, constituted the only portion of the text which Freud acknowledged he had not edited until after his daughter's death. Even eschewing any crushingly crude psychobiographical interpretation, Freud's daughter's death is of significance here. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* becomes, in part, a work of mourning ("To Speculate" 365-366f).

The sister has a particular function in the network of relays via which the cells associate. On the one hand, she "appeases" like the poem; more, she gets on stage to perform its appeasing poetics, to denegate the objectless anxiety death evokes. On the other, she figures (containment of) the monstrously, the egregiously proliferating tumorous mass, whose narcissistic auto-nomy threatens the totality of the socius-organism. Cells agglutinated, pulsating with unbound drive energy. Disrupting and exploiting, enjoying auto-nomous pleasure-unpleasure, the tumour-like association can neither be expelled nor incorporated/introjected. Its operation mimics that of the physical wound that protects the (individual) subject/corpus from traumatic neurosis (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 11).

Pleasure and death, the drives that construct and those that de-construct. Derrida's interest in Freud's speculation is heavily invested. The athesis "speaks of the death drive, enigmatic, appears disappears." The relation that pertains among the PP, the RP, and difference is a family relationship in which identity, rather than being founded on oppositional difference, is relayed, rather, and kept in suspension. The relaying operation belongs to the sister, Antigone. She figures that which is inscribed as "indefinitely suspended as concerns life death" ("To Speculate" 262).

In "To Speculate—on 'Freud,'" Derrida writes, "My 'hypothesis'...is that the speculative structure [of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*] has its place and its necessity" in its graphics. The term "hypothesis," set out in quotation marks, suggests a performance of the "hypo-" that conjures Antigone, the sister-daughter of Oedipus. In chapter six, I propose that Antigone is the sister who figures "athesis," the "*pas de thèse*" by which Freud's discourse mimes theoretical, autobio-graphical, and institutional advance.

In Derrida's text *Glas*, Antigone figures the limit of spirit's passage, the "*tel os*" against which its telos snags. As encrypted support and stay of the familial structuration of Hegel's speculative dialectics, an encryption whose residue survives the relief of Absolute Religion, Antigone figures what makes visible its law, the very relation to representation the *Aufhebung* is meant to abolish. Following Derrida's suggestion that his work in "To Speculate" can be read as an added "judas tattoo" from *Glas*, I offer in chapter six an interpretation of Antigone as a figure of the "athetical" processes by which, in Derrida's terms, Freud's graphics in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* "walk/*marche*" ("To Speculate" 259). These processes, which include strategies of overflow, relay, stricture (of attachment), reversion, and strangulation/double bind, operate performatively



in *Glas*. In/as each, the figure of the sister monstrates both toward suspension of the logic of opposition in deferral, and toward its opening to the wholly other. As figure of atesis, Antigone monstrates what (re)binds the pleasure principle to its modulation in the reality principle through a deferral whose temporality invites prosthetic supplementation. As well, she monstrates the breaching of the contract between the (master) pleasure principle and its (lieutenant) reality principle, in their service of the death drives. Pleasure belongs to death as an end without end, without term, without telos. In chapter six I elaborate on the theoretical implications of Derrida's "sororal" reading of Freud's speculative graphics.

In "Freud and the Scene of Writing," Derrida offers a reading of Freud's work in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and in "Note on the Mystic Writing Pad." Dreams and perceptions are "written" in the psychic apparatus, and the analogy of writing traverses Freud's theorization of perception, of dreams, and of memory. And hence, of representation. In the essay, Derrida interprets Freud's work in these fields as they apply to his theory of the trace, a theory with implications for thinking the ways in which temporality, writing, and memory are interconnected. "Freud and the Scene of Writing" develops Derrida's theory of the trace in the context of his critique of logocentrism, and of its representation of speech as analogous with presence and truth.

As Derrida makes clear from the outset of his text, "[T]he deconstruction of logocentrism is not a psychoanalysis of philosophy." There are appearances which might lead the reader into this mistaken reading: 1) "The analysis of a historical repression and suppression of writing since Plato; and 2) "This repression [which] constitutes the origin of philosophy as *epistēmē*, and of truth as the unity of *logos* and *phonē*." According to

Derrida, repression in the Freudian sense is neither the same as forgetting, nor as exclusion. “Repression, as Freud says, neither repels, not flees, nor excludes an exterior force; it contains an interior representation, laying out within itself a space of repression” (“Freud” 196).

For Derrida, writing is the metaphor that haunts European discourse. The repression of writing is symptomatic of “the repression of that which threatens presence and the mastering of absence.” The logocentric repression of Western philosophical discourse cannot be subsumed under the rubric of repression in the terms of Derrida’s reading of the Freudian discourse. According to Derrida, Freudian repression belongs to traditional concepts without being exhausted by them. Derrida’s reading of Freud’s concepts of writing and trace locates them as both complicit with metaphysics and positivism, and yet as “only uneasily...contained within logocentric closure, as this closure limits not only the history of philosophy but also the orientation of the ‘human sciences,’ notably of a certain linguistics” (“Freud” 197-98).

For Derrida, it is no accident that Freud has recourse to a metaphor of non-phonetic writing in his theoretical analysis of perception, memory, and the principles by which drives form interrelationships in psychic life. For, in traditional metaphysics, in Hegel for example, phonetic language is more “spiritual” than hieroglyphics or so-called “non-phonetic” forms of language. The phonetic as embodying the phonemic becomes for Hegel a metaphor for the presence to self of spirit, and thereby, for truth, substance, in a word, for the Concept.

As Derrida remarks, since Plato the figure of the script has been used “*to illustrate* the relationship between reason and experience, [and] between perception and memory.” According to my reading of Derrida, in the Western philosophical tradition, writing has been used as a metaphor of the distance between what is original, real, and true, hence, fully present-to-self, on the one hand; and what comes “after” as copy, simulacrum, representation, hence fissured or vitiated by absence, on the other. In contrast, Freud, in what Derrida calls “decisive moments in his itinerary,” does not make didactic use of the metaphor of non-phonetic writing. The metaphor of non-phonetic writing is that in which the figure of script has all but disappeared, and in which the figure of the pure (soundless, in Hegel as in Heidegger) voice homologizes with the harmony of the Concept, with the purity of full presence-to-self. Instead, Freud utilizes an analogy for perception and for psychic life which, according to Derrida, “opens up a new kind of question about metaphor, writing, and spacing in general.” The metaphoric investment in the analogy of the mystic writing pad “will eventually invade the entirety of the psyche[;] [p]sychical content will be represented by a text whose essence is irreducibly graphic.” A writing machine, the machine whose operation functions according to principles structured by the character of the mystic writing pad, comes to represent for Freud the structure of the psychical apparatus (“Freud”198-199).

In “Freud and the Scene of Writing,” Derrida notes a progression in Freud’s thought, beginning with the *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (1895), and ending with the “Note on a Mystic Writing Pad” (1925). The former text elaborates a theory that explains memory according to scientific principles of observation and deduction. Repudiating the then common distinction between “sense” and “memory” cells, Freud

elaborates the hypothesis of “breaching,” or “pathbreaking” (*Bahnung*). According to Freud’s *Project*, such pathbreaking, by breaching resistances, opens passageways for the conductivity of psychic energies. Permeable neurones ( $\varphi$ ) retain no mark, no trace of the impressions they conduct, while the other neurones ( $\psi$ ), which are “the vehicles of memory and so probably of psychological processes in general” oppose barriers to the quantities of excitation conducted, and so retain their traces. “Thus,” writes Freud, “[they] afford a possibility of representing (*darzustellen*) memory” (*SE I* 300, 299; qtd. in “Freud” 201).

According to Derrida’s reading of the *Project*, if Freud’s breaching hypothesis aims to remain within an opposition between quantity—pertaining to the  $\psi$  neurones—and quality—reserved for the transparency of perception without memory—it fails to do so. And this failure is productive and suggestive. It is the difference in *resistance* to breaching which produces the memory trace. As Derrida writes, “It is the difference between breaches which is the true origin of memory, and thus of the psyche....Trace as memory is not a pure breaching that might be reappropriated at any time as simple ‘presence’[;] it is rather the ungraspable and invisible difference between breaches” (201).

What interests Derrida in Freud’s hypothesis is not its utility and theoretical soundness as a scientific theory concerning the properties and functions of neurones, but rather its suggestiveness as a model of memory and psyche. If trace as memory cannot be reappropriated as pure presence, if it remains the invisible difference between breaches, then “psychic life” can neither be assimilated to “transparency of meaning” nor to “the

opacity of force.” Rather, memory is as a function of psychic life in which, breaching, while remaining analogous with the idea of quantity, is yet other...as well” (201).

However, the other of pure quantity is not quality, since quality is identified by Freud in the *Project* as appertaining to what Derrida terms as “translucid” perception; in other words, as appertaining to perception where reception of impressions is not resisted by/in the operation of breaching. According to Derrida’s reading, “neither the difference between full quantities, nor the interval between repetitions of the identical, nor breaching itself, may be thought of in terms of the opposition between quantity and quality.” What Derrida finds so productive in the hypothesis of memory is that “all the differences in the production of the trace may be reinterpreted as moments of deferring.” The motif of deferring becomes more and more significant in Freud’s theory of psychic life: Life exerts energy in order to protect itself from dangerous connectivity and investment, from potentially harmful cathexes. An exemplary case for Derrida: In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, the reality principle does not oppose the release or relaxation of tension that the psyche experiences as pleasure; rather, the reality principle functions to delay, to detour, such release or relaxation, in the face of demand, threat, or future gratification. Far from functioning as the opposite of the pleasure principle, the reality principle actually functions to serve it, through delay and deferral (202ff).

Within the speculative schema that conforms to that of the dominant philosophical discourse of the West, the pleasure principle, the PP, functions as master relative to the reality principle, the RP, its slave. For the deferral does not diminish pleasure, but delays it. The relation of PP and RP are analogous, to a certain point, with Hegel’s schema of the relation between master and slave. But Freud’s work does not stop

there. I will return to this point in relation to Derrida's writing in "To Speculate—on Freud" and in *Glas*.

Writing of the movement of deferral by which the psyche protects itself, Derrida questions whether its programme already anticipates the relation between life and death drives which Freud theorizes in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: "Is this not already the detour...which institutes the relation of pleasure to reality (*Beyond...*, *SE XVIII*)? Is it not already death at the origin of a life which can defend itself against death only through an *economy* of death, through deferment, repetition, reserve?...Resistance itself is possible only if the opposition of forces lasts and is repeated at the beginning....[I]n the *first time* of the contact between *two* forces, repetition has begun. Life is already threatened by the origin of the memory which constitutes it, and by the breaching which it resists, the effraction which it can contain only by repeating it" (202).

This beginning of psychic process, where the economy of death installs itself, is characterized by pain. As Derrida reminds us, in the *Project Freud* "accords a privilege to pain." It is pain which, like death, must be deferred. As Freud writes, "[P]ain leaves behind it particularly rich breaches". Both pain and death can "ruin" the organization of the psyche, so they must be deferred (*SE I 301*; qtd. in "Freud" 202). The breaching function of the psyche belongs, according to Freud, to the primary process. Here Derrida reads a difficulty, since the primary process is "timeless" ("Freud" 202). How then to account for the repetition (of) breaching, which occurs in this process?

In my reading, Antigone haunts Derrida's interpretation of Freud's scene of writing. She represents death in life, death at the origin of life. There is Antigone's self-

naming, her self-representation of character: Antigone names herself as the one who lives only to serve the dead. She names herself as the one for whom death would be a gain, not according to an absolute conception that tends to valorize death over life; but because her life is filled with pain. What is the significance of this life, already in death, of this death in life, which overflows with pain? From the first, that is, from the first lines of the play, those lines of Antigone's, those lines which, in Sophocles itinerary, come first in (the trilogy of) Thebes? "Do you know of any evil," she asks Ismene, "among those which stem from Oedipus, that Zeus is not bringing to pass for us while we still live? For there is no pain, no calamity [?], no shame, no dishonor, that I have not seen among your miseries and mine" (lines 2-6). I would like to highlight four points. First, the beginning it will already be a matter of inheritance. The painful evils Antigone experiences are those which stem from Oedipus. Second, there is no pain, there exists no pain, that Antigone has not seen, has not perceived. The string of negative constructions in the Greek of the fourth and fifth lines of the play is worth remarking, for it questions the existence of the perception at the same time that it claims appurtenance to all of life. Third: Not only is pain inherited, from a past that is yet to come; but also, this pain ties Antigone to the last living member of her house. Fourth, Antigone says, "Your miseries and mine." The pain constitutes both memory and kinship. In the terms of Derrida's reading of Freud's hypothesis of memory, in which pain is privileged: "There is no breaching without a beginning of pain," writes Derrida. "[P]ain leaves behind it particularly rich breaches," writes Freud in the *Project*. But, beyond a certain quantity, pain can "ruin" "psychical organization" (*SE* I 301; qtd. in "Freud" 202). *Antigone*

fictionalizes the fiction of the concept of “primariness,” of the concept of a pure breachless beginning (“Freud” 202-203).

For Derrida, Freud’s hypothesis concerning breaching, concerning the movement with/as resistance which makes pathways through the neurological system when the psyche protects itself against dangerous cathexes, and against death; this hypothesis suggests a theory of trace, repetition, of *différance*. Derrida expostulates: “[T]here is no life present *at first* which would *then* come to protect, postpone, or reserve itself in *difference*.” Rather, *différance* itself constitutes life, not as an essence, but as trace, “before Being may be determined as presence.” Life thought as trace, writes Derrida, is “the only condition on which we can say that life is death.” Both the compulsion to repeat associated with the death drives, the compulsion that Freud brings to bear in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, and the beyond of the pleasure principle are “native and congenital to that which they transgress” (203).

There is a structural similarity between the way Derrida is theorizing the relation which obtains between the pleasure principle and the reality principle, and that attributed by Freud to the relation between *das Heimliche* and *das Unheimliche*. In “To Speculate—on Freud,” Derrida points out the interconnections between Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and his essay, “The Uncanny.” In each case, it is a matter both of economy, of that which belongs to the same “*οἶκος*”; and, of an-economy, of that which strays or acts or invades a spacing that is beyond the “*οἶκος*.” The ways in which *Antigone* figures this structuration-and-beyond will exercise my approach to Derrida’s reading in “Freud and the Scene of Writing,” and in “To Speculate—on ‘Freud.’”



As Derrida notes, although the *Project* does not mention writing, Freud moves toward identifying the trace with writing in a series of works that follow it. In the *Project*, Freud conceives of memory as having been laid down in a series of stratifications of different types of signs, in at least three registers: Perception, whose neurones do not retain trace of effrayage, or breaching; Unconscious; and Preconscious, which is attached to word-representations and associated with the conscious ego. A letter to Wilhelm Fliess dated 6 December, 1896, constitutes the first movement toward the “Note on the Mystic Writing Pad.” “From now on,” writes Derrida, “starting with the *Traumdeutung* (1900), the metaphor of writing will appropriate simultaneously the problems of the psychic apparatus in its structure and that of the psychic text in its fabric” (“Freud” 206).

One way to read *Glas* is to read it as demonstration of this statement. In the text of *Glas*, Antigone’s performance operates to expose the *restance*, the *revenge*, and the *différance*, active in the text’s apparatus, the structuration of which mimes that of Freud’s psychic apparatus. *Glas* stages a scene of writing which involves an overlap, a layering which structures in advance the graphics it produces/self-produces. My reading hinges *Glas* and Derrida’s reading of Freud’s speculative procedure together. And Antigone is necessary to the graphics of this text, of the text *Glas*.

The psychic text in its fabric; the text of *Glas* in its miming of this fabric. Which mimes, in part, by writing a riposte to Jacques Lacan. Textiles, supports, folds, subjectiles, all incised, all affected and made open to affect, to the crossing and interlacing of networks, all these come to play. As does the relation of woman to the representation of Repression, of a certain stricture, as for example in the work of Suzanne Gearhart in “The Remnants of Philosophy: Psychoanalysis after *Glas*.”

Here I come to the matter of the sister figure, and, through it, to the matter of figuration, more generally. To engage the question of figuration, to rely on figuration at all, is to broach the question of sexual difference. Since the lineaments of the opposition “male-female” replicate themselves in all oppositional binaries, the question of the figure is key to any mode of deconstruction. The graphics of *Glas* as well as those of “To Speculate—on ‘Freud’” are inextricably bound to the figuration of text as textile: of that which is woven or knit together, and which can be frayed, looped, unravelled. I note that, in “To Speculate,” in the midst of his description, precisely, of the curtains in the scene of the fort/da game, the bed-post curtains through which the grandson Ernst throws his spool, Derrida refers to the series of textile and textile-related figures “with which I have concerned myself for so long.” The bed constitutes for the grandson a figure for the presence of the mother, Derrida suggests. Relative to the curtains of this bed Derrida writes, “All the comings and goings...will have to pass before the curtain” (now a theatre curtain, in the singular) (“To Speculate” 308). And in the next paragraph, set off, Derrida writes,

I myself will not open this curtain—I leave this to you—onto all the others, the words and things (curtains, canvases, veils, hymens, umbrellas, etc.) with which I have concerned myself for so long. One could attempt to relate all these fabrics to one another, according to the same law. I have neither the time nor the taste for this task, which can be accomplished by itself or done without. (308-309)

This paragraph sounds a note of ennui. For one thing, why search for the common law for these fabrics, these *Bilder* or *Vorbilder*, those metaphoric investments without which no translation, no fiction, and no law would be possible? The curtain of the

unconscious—not as reservoir of unthought or repressed contents, but as a modality that overflows whatever law would bind these figures, figures precisely of the feminine, together—this curtain Derrida will not open. It is up to other thinkers to analyze what lies beyond the curtain, or to take into account the laws of the assemblage of these *Vorbilder*, having concerned himself with which so long, Derrida is ready to leave to others as an inheritance. It is as though he entrusts, or speculates, that the interrelationship of the figures will “write itself.”

In the next sentence, Derrida avers that what matters now is Freud’s curtain, along with the strings pulled by the grandfather. In other words, what matters now is the scene of a graphics that Derrida will insist lays the foundation for, makes possible, the fictive, the literary, and for all the operations requiring metaphoric investment. Derrida seems to want to say that he is now engaging a scene of writing in which graphics, as performance, comes “before” all metaphor. A movement of, or toward, the *arché* of writing.

To relate curtain, canvas, veil, and hymen to one another, according to the same law, can be done without. Or done by itself. That the figures are related somehow seems obvious, and, inclusion in the same parentheses, their commonality seems at once admitted and dismissed. The hymen is not “feminine” according to Derrida. Does it matter that the curtains veil a bed that stands for the presence of the mother? The fort/da game has to do, not only with “the supplementary complex constituted by the maternal breast and [the grandson’s] own penis, allowing the parents...to reassemble themselves, but not for long, in order to reassemble what he wants to dissociate,...but not for long[;]...it is indeed himself or his image that the child ‘plays’ at making appear-

disappear also” (310). But then why mention the series, the series of figures whose curtain, Derrida volunteers, or warns, that he will not open; as though someone had asked him to—and perhaps someone had—in the context of a *mise-en-scène* in which a bed represents the presence of the feminine? A question to return to.

“The metaphor of path-breaking, so frequently used in Freud’s descriptions, is always in communication with the theme of the supplementary delay and with the reconstitution of meaning through deferral, after a mole-like progression, after the subterranean toil of an impression. This impression has left behind a laborious trace which has never been perceived, whose meaning has never been lived in the present” (“Freud” 214). According to my reading of *Glas*, laborious traces, made by myrmidons onto Egyptian steles, or by Antigone as she incises anarchitectural colposes—laps, not to say, beds—into its columns, follow a logic of obsequence that constitutes one stage of the performance of reading-writing which Derrida enacts in the text.

In “Note on the Mystic Writing Pad,” Freud presents three analogies of writing. Derrida considers these to be demonstrated in three progressive steps. In the first step, Freud, like Western philosophers since Plato, considers writing as subservient to memory, not as memory itself but as that which recalls particular contents to memory, as *hypomnesis*, not *mnemne*. As Derrida points out, in this step Freud accords with Plato in the *Phaedrus*. But writing is understood as a “materialized” representation of what has occurred. The celluloid acts as a protective layer for the waxed paper, a kind of sheath that protects it from being ripped. As Derrida remarks, “There is no writing which does not devise some means of protection, to protect against itself, against the writing by

which the 'subject' is himself threatened as he lets himself be written: *as he exposes himself*" ("Freud" 224).

But the conditions under which this mnemonic supplement are produced do not, according to Derrida's reading, satisfy the theoretical requirements of Freud's thinking since the *Project*. These requirements are: "A potential for indefinite preservation and an unlimited capacity for reception. But the Mystic Pad meets these requirements, and so the second analogy includes them. For Perception, the layer which receives the stimuli, like the double surface of celluloid and wax paper, does not preserve the traces which the neurones pass on. Instead, "the foundations of memory come about in other, supplementary systems." Writing is that which supplements perception even before perception becomes conscious. The wax slab represents the unconscious (*SE XIX* 230-31; qtd. in "Freud" 224-25).

In the third and final analogy, Freud introduces temporality. For the operations constitutive of writing on the Mystic Pad cannot be reduced to simultaneity. These operations involve the multiplicity of the layers of the pad, the ephemeral dark marks that appear on the celluloid and which fleetingly attach to the waxed paper, and the impressions in the wax itself, which remain legible under certain conditions. So not only spacing, but periodicity, belongs to writing. Thus, Freud will henceforth "link a discontinuist conception of time, as the periodicity and spacing of writing, to a whole chain of hypotheses which stretch from the *Letters to Fliess* to *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, and which...are constructed, consolidated, confirmed, and solidified in the Mystic Pad." Freud's hypothesis posits discontinuous excitations or cathexes, which, temporarily impressing the unconscious through periodic impulses, move from the inside

outward, toward conscious perception, from which they withdraw or remove. Our concept of time, according to Freud, derives from the “periodic non-excitability...th[e] discontinuous method of functioning of the system Pcpt.-Cs.” (*SE* XIX 231; qtd. in “Freud” 226). As Derrida writes, “Time is the economy of a system of writing.”

Derrida notes that “The machine does not run by itself....And it is not held with only one hand.” Two hands are needed. Martin Heidegger’s authentic human, the being with only one hand, would find himself at a loss here. “We must be several in order to write, and even to ‘perceive,’” writes Derrida, “...[t]he simple structure of maintenance and manuscption, like every intuition of origin, is a myth, a ‘fiction,’ as ‘theoretical’ as the idea of the primary process.” The idea of the primary process is contradicted by that of primal repression, the repression without which writing is unthinkable. For the contacts between stylus, celluloid, waxed paper, and wax block occur at discontinuous periodic intervals. There is neither pure break, nor pure contact, between or among, any of the strata of the writing machine (“Freud” 225-26).

Hence, the “subject” of writing is neither a solitude nor a sovereign entity, but rather a “system of relations between strata: the Mystic Pad, the psyche, society, the world.” Within this “world” writing is a drama. And at the origin of the machine that articulates writing, there is death. “The machine is dead. It is death. Not because we risk death in playing with machines, but because the origin of machines is the relation to death” (227).

In “To Speculate—on ‘Freud,’” Derrida offers a reading of Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. The graphics of *Beyond...* is characterized by “athesis.” Its

argumentation, the development of its hypotheses, proceeds by no-steps (*pas*). In each chapter Freud proposes a hypothesis only to withdraw it, only to speculate on the impossibility of confirming it. Derrida writes, “It is not fortuitous that the athesis is indefinitely suspended as concerns *life death*.” In *Beyond...* the death drive presents itself as theme, and performs itself in the way that the steps of the argumentation “appear disappear, appear only in disappearing and disappear even ‘before’ appearing.” In this suspension, a drama unfolds, “an entire descendance that is fabulous or mythical” (262).

The speculation whose theoretical return Freud puts at risk, on which he bets, does not resemble that of classical Western philosophy, according to Derrida. Freud’s text enacts involves the denegation of his debt to the philosophy of Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. In his attempts at metapsychology in “Instincts and their Vicissitudes,” “Repression,” “The Unconscious,” and “Mourning and Melancholia,” Freud insists that he has “fully avoided any contact with philosophy proper” (*SE* XX 59; qtd. in “To Speculate” 266). Freud owes nothing to philosophy; he refuses the inheritance from Nietzsche at the same time that he notes similarities of construct or idea. He can then “pass off the anteriority of a concept as the already-there of a word,” for example the dualism of instinctual life, a dualism which Freud partly ascribes to Hering. In his *Selbstdarstellung*, his self-representation of the genealogy and import of the theory he claims as his own, Freud refuses affiliation with philosophy (266ff).

Does Freud’s mode of speculation, of risk, of betting and hazard, bear any systematicity that would bind it, despite denegation, to philosophical speculation? According to Derrida, it is a question of what binds or rebinds together three registers or networks: the newly introduced and elaborated question of death in psychoanalysis,

Freud's "autobiography," and the history of the analytic movement. But that which holds these networks together does not function in the mode of a system. If the question of death can be maintained ephemerally in the form of a concept, this concept would be an effect of the assemblage of these registers, rather than their producer or progenitor (272).

Freud's theorizing reaches out its feelers, its unanalyzed sheds a phosphorescent light. Within its penumbra, Derrida analyses the not-steps (*pas*) of Freud's speculation in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Freud advances the sovereign authority of the pleasure principle only to withdraw it, only to speculate on the death drives that infiltrate without opposing. In psychoanalysis, in "autobiography," and in the history of the psychoanalytic movement. Freud privileges the economic point of view of the interrelation of the drives, only to rescind it. The sensation of pleasure-unpleasure remains mysterious.

From the economic point of view, the functioning of the psychic apparatus, with its articulation of the drives in accordance with the reality principle's acting as the servant or lieutenant of the sovereign pleasure principle, this functioning regulates itself in a structure with one-two-three terms. The limits of this structure are fictive: Pure pleasure and pure reality. Between the two, "the *différant* detour forms the very actuality of...the 'psychic' process as a 'living' process." But at whichever end one approaches this structure, there is death. Death does not oppose, does not differ, from the two principles and "their" *différance*, according to Derrida's reading. Rather, "[*Différance*] is inscribed, although non-inscribable, in the process of this structure—which we will later call stricture." "If death is not opposable it is, already, *life death*" (284-85).



If either reality or pleasure impinges upon their (fictive) limits, whether in the psychic process, or in Freud's speculation, or in the bios of his autobiography, they meet with an *arrêt de mort*, a sentence which both condemns to death and interrupts or suspends its own condemnation. Death belongs to pleasure, differing from it without opposing it (285).

### **To Speculate on *Glas***

I am interested in the terms of "stricture," in the way that the principles of pleasure and reality are bound together. My hypothesis is that, although, in Derrida's reading, psychic life depends upon, and consists in, the play of the *différance* between these two principles, that still, a fourth term, or, more precisely, a force which from a certain point of view already inheres in their interplay, comes onto the scene. Stricture as the relay of this fourth, of this force, I identify with the figure of Antigone. In *Glas*, as well as in Derrida's reading of Freud's speculation. "Everything play[s] itself out...in the modification of [the] descendance" that overflows the topological economy that organizes the drives and their relations ("To Speculate" 286-87).

Already, from the first line in Sophocles' play, through her address to her sister Ismene, Antigone attempts an en-trainment according to a certain play in the structure of kinship. As Freud in *Beyond...* would have her do, as grandson (of Oedipus, by marriage), Antigone attempts to play "train" with the spool. At the same time, her address to her sister Ismene adumbrates and encapsulates the way her performance will have demonstrated *restance*, *revenge*, and *différance*. These "movements" will operate to

differantiate, to waylay this en-trainment, in ways that figure the singular productivity of “athesis.” And then, after this precipient address that prefigures both her pulling a train of inheritance behind her, kept on a thread of a certain length, and also her dropping it by implicating herself in a different tempo, she goes on to perform, as she says, by “conjoining otherwise.” From the first line, a doubledness of performance adumbrated; from the first act, doubledness doubled.

In these times, according to Derrida, we inhabit psychoanalysis, and it inhabits us. If we are to take Freud’s writing on life death seriously, as for example in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, if we attentively read the speculative structuration of the writing of *Beyond...*, then the oppositions on which classical philosophy and science found themselves, and which they recognize as fundamental to the purviews of their logic, arrive at their limits. Affiliation, inheritance, classification, all these, necessarily, must be differentially conceived. In this chapter, through an interpretation of Derrida’s reading of Freud’s writing—of the operation of his writing, rather than of what Freud may or may not have intended to say—and through linking this interpretation, to the scene of Antigone’s performance in Derrida’s text *Glas*, I approach her as figuring atthesis and *life death*.

As cue, I begin again, with two statements by Derrida which come at the beginning of “To Speculate—on ‘Freud.’” One indicates what is at stake for Derrida under the title (of the section), “Athesis”: “The issue...rather is to rebind [*relier*], but precisely by means of the analysis of the notions of binding, *nexum*, *desmos* or stricture, the question of life death to the question of the position (*Setzung*), the question of positionality in general, of positional (oppositional or juxtapositional) logic, of the theme

or the thesis.” The other indicates Derrida’s conception of the way his reading of Freud’s speculative writing in *Beyond...* links up with his writing in *Glas*: “These three words [binding, *nexum*, *desmos*/stricture] refer to the most obsessive motif of *Glas*. Let us say that here I am adding or relating a supplementary ‘judas’ from *Glas*. An incision tattooed, for example, between pages 270/272 [243a/245a] in the English translation]” (fn. 2, 259). Derrida thus denominates his reading of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as supplementary to his work in *Glas*. As supplement, it is that which cannot be severed from the text *Glas*, that which, by supplementing, shows its irreducible relation to it. I am reading the function of the “judas” constituted by Derrida’s work in “To Speculate” as that pertaining to supplementarity rather than to that of the “fetish,” per se. Concomitantly, my reading of this supplementarity concerns itself with the “beyond” structured by repression, with the “beyond” of that process whose relation to the laws by which Freud’s writing in *Beyond...* “walks” “concerns the specificity...of something like psychoanalysis *itself*” (259, 287).

You will notice the enchainment: The suspension of thethetic that pertains and “constitutes” the relation between the question of positionality in general, and the question of life death; between this suspension and the athetical structuration which Derrida reads in/as the drama of the scene of Freud’s writing in *Beyond...*; and between the laws of this structuration, whose topical differentiation is “inseparable from Repression in its very possibility” (290).

Repression lies at the heart of that which makes possible and necessary the splitting of/in the subject, whether of philosophy, science, or psychoanalysis. In Derrida’s terms, the split Freud describes in the third chapter of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* shows that “certain drive components” are “incompatible with other ones,” and that

“these impossibles find themselves split apart by the process called Repression.” These impossibles “do not participate in the synthesis of the Ego, remaining at an interior or archaic level of psychic organization, more or less deprived of satisfaction....Repression upsets the logic implicit in all philosophy” it makes it possible for a pleasure to be experienced—by the Ego—as unpleasure....[The topical differentiation inseparable from Repression] is an ineluctable consequence of *différance*” (289). Another link in the chain of the “beyond” of the logic of philosophy and science: *différance*.

The first line of Sophocles’ play is Antigone’s. She laments to her sister, asking, “[D]o you know of any evil, among those which stem from Oedipus, that Zeus is not bringing to pass for us while we still live?” (lines 2-3). What interests me here is the manner of her address to Ismene, an address that portends, that performs two operations. I read the difference between these as demonstrating what differentiates the logic of opposition and the affiliative bond it invokes, from the structuration of speculative writing Derrida reads in “To Speculate” and the “contra-band” that pertains to the *différent* performance of kinship which Antigone also enacts. Here I remain in what Derrida would call a hermeneutical circle, but one that I think laces up with the scene of writing Derrida analyses in “To Speculate.” “Self-sister of common [stock, womb, *Geschlecht*]” ‘*Ὀκοινὸν ἀντάδελφον*,’ Antigone says, and her compounding the word for “self” with that for sister augments the sense of the hybrid and incestuous excess of their kinship. Ismene is Antigone’s self-sister: These two are aunt and niece to one another, as well as sister. Their relations encompass the excessively distant, in that they cross generations; they combine the excessively close, in that the mother of these sisters was

also their grandmother. And, as Butler convincingly demonstrates, the sisters, already claimed as sons by the words of Oedipus at Colonus, in the scene from a past that is still to come in the itinerary of Sophocles' writing. By dint of a future anterior, the two sisters have already become brothers; and never has their fraternal relation become so clear, as in this scene where Antigone, a few lines later, recapitulates a fraternal murder by calling her sister her enemy.

But also, in her first address to Ismene, in the first line of the play, Antigone calls her sister "head of Ismene" *'Ισμήνης κάρα,* a locution denoting kinship that puts Antigone into relation with the head of her self-sister. A kind of fort/da game is here enacted, in which Antigone wishes to keep her own identity on a string of affiliation with the head of her sister, the self-head of her sister. En-training it, to fulfill her own desires, to do what that head, Ismene, a few lines later, will proclaim "a quest for the impossible [that] should not even be begun" (line 92).

The question of the address comes up, not fortuitously. Like Freud's grandson, Antigone is not lacking in "address." The relays and postings by which her kinship writes itself, addresses itself in relays to the decedence of her inheritance, and of her relation to the polis whose laws she wishes to deny or avoid, are at issue here. In address ("To Speculate" 312).

In Derrida's reading of *Beyond...*, it is in chapter four of this work that Freud "announc[es] the speculation of great breadth, that [he] envisages a function of the psychic apparatus which, without being opposed to the PP [pleasure principle/ *Pépé*, or "Grandpa"] would be no less independent from it, and more originary than the tendency

(as distinct from the function) to seek pleasure and to avoid unpleasure: the first exception before which, in sum, ‘speculation’ would never have begun.” Here is where “the speculative overflowing waits,” where the “hypothesis” concerning the drives said to be of death will be given. Nothetic advancement, only a “hypothesis” given. But these drives, said to be of death, “were they not already at work in the logic” Derrida has just recognized, the logic of the 1-2-3 three-in-one of speculation? (290-91).

“Repression,” writes Derrida, “upsets the logic implicit in all philosophy: it makes it possible for a pleasure to be experienced by the Ego as unpleasure.” Freud’s speculation admits of paradox, that of pleasure being lived by the Ego as unpleasure. It is possible, especially when reading what is predicated of (un)pleasure in the French text of the first chapter of *Beyond...*, which translates the German “pleasure that cannot be felt as such,” as “pleasure that is not experienced as such.” Derrida suggests that this translation possibly conforms to a Freudian radicalization of Repression, which anticipates the “speculation of great breadth” Freud’s writing will come to only in the fourth chapter, the speculation which is “not yet brought to term” in the first chapter. Not yet brought to term, because the *arrêts demort* are already at work in speculation, those suspensions of death which are also the suspensions of the sentence of death. The *arrêts de mort* both stop death and stop its termination; they stop death stopping death. Speculation, and the athesis by which it (fails) to advance, by which it mimes advancing, writes Freud writing to himself, writes also his death to himself, and writes as well, in this very process of the writing, of its graphics—not a mark on paper but that which precedes all such marks—makes himself (to be) pleasure, interminably (289ff).

Antigone is the figure which heralds the *arrêts de mort*, of these *arrêts* that stop death and that pronounce a sentence of death, interminably. She figures the linkage between impossibles that Freud bravely, and also with pleasure not unrelated to what might be called his paternalistic view, makes. She does not figure Repression itself, or its process, but instead that which opens the topological and economic differentiability, which organizes the terms and programs of the graphics of *Beyond...*, to a more radical differentiability. To a differentiability where Repression inscribes itself differentially—without being inscribable, as Derrida insists. Judith Butler is right, in my view, when she writes that the laws Antigone invokes and performs are “unwriteable.” Figuring atesis, Antigone points to the operational play that occurs in the dynamism of the speculative graphics, in that which opens the graphics of Freud’s speculation to the interminable. And to the *relation* between the alterity of the death drives relative to the erotic drives. Too often, most often, the figure of Antigone has been conflated with the death drives. She lives to serve the dead, she says; to die is gain. In Andrew Brown’s translation, she even says, “So for me to meet this fate [that of her death by order of her uncle Creon] is a trivial grief” (lines 465-466).

Antigone as figure has also been conflated with the erotic drives, or the erotic pull of the death drives, the life or erotic drives which, according to Gearhart’s interpretation of Lacan, derive their energy from the death drives. I am interested in the aneconomic overflow that “is” not, but which, in the play of *restance*, *revenge*, and *différance*, creates a cadential rhythm in which the drives are figured as differing without opposing.

*Glas* as text reads the figure of Antigone: her role as exemplary sister and mourner in the work of Hegel, her role as the mother who comes “before” and “follows”

all burials, her role as the figure for (the logic of) obsequence. *Glas* is also a text “of” Antigone, a text which moves in saccadic rhythm. It is a text that sends a notice to Heidegger’s emplacement of Trakl’s poesy and to its globular sensorium.

I am interested in relating Derrida’s work in “To Speculate” to the motif of banding, of stricture, a motif that includes the senses of *nexum* and *desmos*. In Roman Civil Law of the era before the third century CE, *nexum* referred to the process of pledging ownership of either one’s possessions or one’s service to a creditor as security. A person who became “*nexus*” placed himself in a servile condition relative to the creditor or contract, without however losing his citizenship. In the case of breach of contract, the civic status of the nexus debtor was held in suspension, in “*ingenuitas*.” Having submitted to service to pay the debt, the *nexus*, neither slave nor citizen, performed his work in a shadowy place in between these stations; or rather, as displaced from the realm of either. Usually unable to free himself, the nexus continued in bonds which nevertheless did not reduce him to slavery.

*Desmos* means “chain” in Greek. Enchainment is a motif that links debt, suspension, and rhythm, in *Glas*. There Antigone figures the rhythm of enchainment, the rhythm of that which binds and sends, of that which displaces the circular stricture of the annular, of (re)appropriation.

In “To Speculate—on ‘Freud,’” Derrida analyzes Freud’s *Selbstdarstellung*, the self-representation which Freud composes. The writing here, according to Derrida’s interpretation, interlaces several relations, in a mode neither active nor passive, but rather that which appertains to *mouvance*, to *restance*. The terms *mouvance* and *restance* express



that which moves in neither subsisting nor existing, but which remaining, moving, retain the non-reducible. In *Glas* Derrida describes the economy and structure of the annulus, of the circle which gives, keeps, and guards, and which, in giving, keeping, and guarding, moves in contraction; and its contraction, its economic restriction “forms the annulus of the selfsame, of the self-return, of reappropriation” (244a). The annular economy however, restricts itself in “(con)striction”:

The (con)striction no longer lets itself be circumscribed [*cerner*] as an ontological category...even were it a trans-category, a transcendental. The (con)striction...is then...also in the position of transcendental trans-category, the transcendental transcendental....There is no choosing here: each time a discourse *contra* the transcendental is held, a matrix—the (con)striction itself—constrains the discourse to place the nontranscendental, the outside of the transcendental field, the excluded, in the structuring position. The matrix in question constitutes the excluded as transcendental of the transcendental, as imitation transcendental, transcendental contra-band {*contra-bande*}. The contra-band is *not yet* dialectical contradiction. To be sure, the contra-band necessarily becomes that, but its not-yet is not-yet the teleological anticipation, which results in it never becoming dialectical contradiction. The contra-band remains something other than what, necessarily, it is to become....Such would be the (nondialectical) law of the (dialectical) stricture, of the bond, of the ligature, of the garrotte, of the *desmos* in general when it comes to clench tightly {*serrer*} in order to make be. (*Glas* 244a)

## Antigone Figuring Athesis

Constitutive of a-thesis: “Anchoring, stricture of attachment or mooring, places of reversion, strangulation” (“To Speculate” 261). “The relation of the pleasure principle and its other, to wit, the reality principle, the death drive as its other: a structure of alteration without opposition....There is no thesis of this *différance*. The thesis would be the death sentence (*arrêt de mort*) of *différance* (285). “[T]he unexpected structure of [Freud’s] text, of the movements within it which...do not correspond to any genre, to any philosophical or scientific model. Nor to any literary, poetic, or mythological model.. These genres, models, codes are certainly present within the text...exploited, maneuvered, interpreted like pieces. But thereby overflowed. Such is the hypothesis or the athesis of the athesis” (“To Speculate” 278).

“I am alleging that what [Freud] writes as concerns (philosophical or non-philosophical) speculation has something to do with this sense of intolerable inheritance. Something to do, in other words not to do” (266). Antigone, figuring athesis, walks the scene of intolerable inheritance.

“Freud sees a relation of opposition...between the process of constructive assimilation and the process of deconstructive dissimulation. This is what would impose a limit on the translation, if one agreed to consider that deconstruction does not simply oppose itself, but works otherwise (and *without* working, if work is determined as opposition)” (268). Antigone binds, otherwise.

“Death, the ‘proper result’ and therefore the end of life, the end without end, the strategy without finality of the living—all this is not solely a statement of

Schopenhauer's" (269). Antigone figures the strategy without finality of the living, death understood in this sense.

"[A] structure of alteration without opposition. That which seems, then, to make the belonging—a belonging without interiority—of death to pleasure more continuous, more immanent, and more natural too, also makes it more scandalous as concerns a dialectics of a logic of opposition, of position, or of thesis" (285). Antigone figures the belonging of death to pleasure, a belonging without interiority.

"The PR is the PP modified...everything playing itself out...in the modification of such a descendance" (287). The play *Antigone* stages a playing out of the modification of the descendance of the relation between the PR and the PP.

"Where are we? The authority of the PP is intact [at the end of the first chapter of *Beyond...*]....It is only in chapter IV, announcing the speculation of great breadth, that Freud envisages a function of the psychic apparatus which, without being opposed to the PP would be no less independent from it, and more originary than the tendency (as distinct from the function) to seek pleasure and to avoid unpleasure....Thus, the speculative overflowing still awaits...It will lead to another 'hypothesis': drives 'in the service of which' the absolute master, the PP, would work. The drives said to be of death. But were they not already at work in the logic we have just recognized?" (290-91). Antigone, figuring atesis, operates in the *arrêts de mort* which Derrida analyzes here.

"[I]n Freud's discourse, let us say in the discourse of a certain speculator, on the subject of the PP which never quits itself, and therefore always speaks of it(him)self, nothing has yet contradicted the authority of the first principle....What is done without it

(him), if anything is, will not contradict: first because it will not oppose itself to the PP (it will be done without him in him, with his own step without him), and then because it will be done without him by not saying anything, by stifling itself, inscribing itself in silence....At the end of the first chapter the PP is thus confirmed in its absolute sovereignty” (293). Antigone’s being stifled, as figure for the stifling of what opposes, without opposing, of what ventriloquates in the PP: the hanging which gives pleasure of a certain kind to the spectator and to the speculator. And her remaining, haunting the edge of the polis, the region of sovereignty. Stepping off the rock, into the snare/noose, over and over again, a segment of film repeating.

The absolute authority of the PP: the question which occupies the speculator. Derrida disagrees with those readers of the second chapter of *Beyond...* who claim that the scene of the spool and the *fort/da* game offers a demonstration of the so-called death drive. However, according to Derrida, Freud succeeds in explaining the scene “within the space of the PP and under its authority.” “[I]ts import is not inscribed in the register of demonstration,” according to Derrida. It is inscribed in the register of the *mouvance* of the speculative writing in which Freud is engaged (294). “Mouvance,” as Alan Bass’s note reminds us, can refer to both “the relation of dependence between two fiefs, and to the state of being in movement” (294 fn. 3). Antigone as figure of atesis relates to the interconnection between the two realms: The realm in the society of the drives where the pleasure principle, and the specular return to self that Freud writes, as *Pépé*—an annular return obeying the laws of both band and contra-band; and the “realm” of saccadic rhythm, where the relay and sending between generations, produces repetition. The stricture-economy, itself already subject to *arrêts de mort*, and an an-economy of

repetition, wherein the PP serves the death drives, and the *différance* between them, are at issue here.

“A supplement of generation always finds here reason to employ or deploy its desire” (301). In *Glas*, as well as in Derrida’s reading in “To Speculate,” Antigone figures the supplement of generation, the supplement of the “gen-”that deploys desire.

“[I must be pardoned all these parentheses, the (grand)father or the daughter (mother), they are necessary in order to mark the syntax in erasure of the genealogical scene, the occupation of all the places and the ultimate mainspring of what I began by calling the athesis of *Beyond...*]” (“To Speculate” 315). The term “nexus,” which, in Roman Civil Law, referred to the person who had bound himself over to the service of a creditor, the perpetual debtor whose civic status was forever suspended, “*ingenuitas*,” also refers to a group of words expressing an indeterminate predicative relation, a relation whose syntax would be susceptible to *mouvance*.

## Concluding Remarks: Antigone Figures

What is the future of the family, and what has this future to do with sisters, with the figure of the sister? In *For What Tomorrow*, Derrida says, “What is unalterable, what will continue to traverse History, is that there *be, something of a family*, some social bond organized around procreation.” Because Antigone figures that which is not immediately organized around procreation; and because she figures transgression relative to the codification of this organization, she provides a lure for thinking. And for writing, for writing about writing that shapes itself, motivates itself, in accordance with the codifications of its taxonomies, and with their transgression. According to Derrida, “[D]econstruction has always been, ‘of the family,’ ‘deconstruction of the family...’” (36).

Antigone is a character in a play by Sophocles. She is a member of one of those few families that, according to Aristotle, are suited to tragedy. This thesis offers a reading of the way in which what I term “Antigone writing” moves. I show how it moves, by overflowing dialectical structuration of thought, in the graphics of the texts I examine. This structuration conforms to a certain law of the family, a law that Antigone, figuring a movement inscribed in the graphics of text, operates to pervert and subvert. Carol Jacobs’ “Dusting Antigone” and Jacques Derrida’s *Glas* interpret Antigone in a direct and ostensible way. In Martin Heidegger’s staging of *Antigone* in “Language in the Poem,” the eponymous sister figure appears disappears in the text, haunting it in two modes.

Derrida's "To Speculate—on 'Freud'" inscribes Antigone writing as it reads the differential relay at play in the graphics of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

Critical theoretical interpretation of "Antigone writing" can contribute to ethical and political discussion relative to the current shifting and reformation of "the family." In *For What Tomorrow*, Derrida says that he "would prefer not to let [himself] get trapped in an alternative between naturalism and constructivism." My work in this thesis aims to contribute to critical theoretical discussion of the figure of Antigone, of Antigone as figure, discussion which demonstrates how writing opens onto a scene where neither alternative, where neither naturalism nor constructivism, prevails. It aims as well to show how "Antigone writing," Antigone figuring movement in the graphics of texts, inscribes "life death." In *For What Tomorrow*, Derrida remarks that, "In Freud, the relation of the psychical to the biological is...always suspended, set aside to be worked out later, in future generations..." (39). "Antigone writing" inscribes this suspension. It is a matter of supplementarity, or what supplements the hetero-tautological family of Western metaphysics exemplified in Hegel. It is also a matter of the dynamic inscription of what exceeds the combinatorial logic of the family, in such a way that a particular phantasm of "the absolute" gets exposed.

### **Figuration and *Khōra* Rhythm: Sister Writing in "Dusting Antigone"**

Carol Jacobs' "Dusting Antigone," performing *khōra* rhythm through tropological play, intercepts and re-connects the figuration she reads in Sophocles' play. Her text inscribes Antigone as sister through a displacement of tropes and a figurative *mise en abyme* that

interrogates the notions of conception, reproduction, and motherhood. In Jacobs' writing, the figuration of the guard and of the seer, like receptacles that cannot be contained, reflect one another *en abyme*, in the half place where no marks remain, and no propriety of agency or production can be assigned. Jacobs' writing shows how Antigone, performing "in the place of a mother," "undefines the human as either origin or product" (910).

### **Antigone Conjoins Otherwise: Rhythm and Mourning in Heidegger's "Language in the Poem"**

The sister upon whom Heidegger calls in his discussion of Trakl's poetic work does not fulfill her proper function as mourner-preserved. In the scene of emplacement, which is also a staging of proper family relationship, of proper *Geschlechtlichkeit*, Antigone as sister conjoins "otherwise" in the graphics of the text. Doubly haunted, the strophic movements of the text founder upon the aporia of Heidegger's fundamental de-structive project. Through her performance of af-filiative movements, the sister figure exhibits rhythmicity that is plural, or, more precisely, that is not delimited by duality.

Antigone as figure operates in the graphics of "Language in the Poem," performing in a rhythm contrapuntal to that which unifies the *Unter-schied*, the "difference in intimacy," between stranger and brother, between hale blueness and the stiller childhood of Apartness. Antigone writing also performs in ways that fall from the contrapuntal. The *gegen*-movement of the sister figure's effect acts to disrupt and disperse the syn-harmonic hearing and seeing that are installed in Heidegger's globular



sensorium. Heidegger's use of the prefix "ver-" spills over, contaminating the site of Apartness, as it drifts from its meanings of accomplishment, fulfilling, or perfection of the action of the verb it attaches, to its meaning of exceeding, broaching a boundary, or perverting a shape or course. The sliding imbrication, the drift of the *ver-*'s, sets up a rhythm that exceeds the force of "the gathering that precisely centers what it configures" (Derrida, "Philopolemology" 187). The sister figure, Antigone as figure, performs in contrapuntal rhythm, and performs by dispersing the counterpoint.

A meditation on pain comprises the middle part of the essay. Neither opposed to the soul, nor at one with her, the sister effect speaks in the "irruptive" rhythm of pain (Krell, "Marginalia" 186). Pain pertains to heroic solitude and also to the unchained isolation of the decaying *Geschlecht*. Antigone, as sister figure, operates to disperse and to re-mark the modality pertaining to jubilant, triumphal mourning of "Language in the Poem."

### **Antigone Writing as *Allure*: Graphics of *Restance* and *Mouvance* in *Glas***

The graphics of *Glas* dramatize an allure, a gait, in which Antigone as sister figure performs. She signs by remaining, by operating as the *restance* in/of the text.

Representing incestuous and encrypted desire, she performs both as progenitor, without conception, of Hegel's familial schema, and as a vector of its subversion. Her performance interrupts the filial dependency between phantasm and phenomenon whose enantiotic mutual (self)representation grounds Hegel's Concept as *Sa*. As well, and coming always after these effects, as after-effect, Antigone as sister figure operates, in the

graphics of *Glas*, to move the columns' stillness regarding one another. As she walks, they limp along, and every few steps, they hold out their prosthetic stick to her. She guides by following, as on the road to Colonus.

### **Antigone: Sister Writing and Athesis in Derrida's "To Speculate—on 'Freud'"**

According to my reading of Derrida's analysis of the graphics of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Antigone as sister figure carries the allure—the gait, or bearing—of “differantial stricture.” Antigone figures as/ in “strict-ure” in a way that is productive of writing that performs by miming, or by advocating, the operation of its object. The graphics of “To Speculate” gains momentum by capitalizing, Antigone-like, on the singular unthinkable (non) conflation that strict-ure produces. There are several locutions that exemplify this (non) conflation. Here I cite two examples:

What happens when acts or performances (discourse or writing, analysis or description, etc.) are part of the objects they designate? When they can be given as examples of precisely that of which they speak or write? Certainly, one does not gain an auto-reflective transparency, on the contrary. A reckoning is no longer possible, nor is an account, and the borders of the set are then neither closed nor open. Their trait is divided, and the interlacings can no longer be undone. (391)

Freud's story of the fort/da game places into “*abyme*” the writing of the relation (let us say the history, *Historie*, of the relation, and even the history, *Geschichte*, of the relater relating it. Therefore the related is related to the relating. (304)

These propositions are exemplary of an analysis of a graphics of a text that is “without an object that is detachable from its detaching operation...” They analyze the way in which what may no longer be called the “form” of a text, what may no longer be called its “content,” and what may no longer be called its “object,” are overlapped together in the manner of a graft that both separates and re-binds them. Antigone as figure of atthesis moves both in Derrida’s analysis, and in the graphics of the text he reads. In/as graphic overlap, she disturbs auto-reflective transparency (304, 296).

Suspended, hanging, and swinging in accordance with a saccadic rhythm, Antigone as sister figure operates in the play of the speculative graphics. Antigone figures the catachrestic unleashing that results in the structural modulation of the detour by which the reality principle defers from the pleasure principle. Derrida’s use of “hypothesis” in his analysis mimes Freud’s procedure in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, concerning which, and in which, no thesis is possible, no theoretical argument can be advanced. “Hypo-” means “under,” “slight or partial,” and “less than normal.” Antigone figures the slide of the “hypo-” which keeps the thetic in suspension.

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