IN/POSSIBLE RELATION: BEING, TIME, DEATH

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Because they were pressing me
to my body
and to the very body
and it was then
that I exploded everything
because my body
can never be touched.
[Antonin Artaud]

Dis/embodiments

Because my body can never be touched, because to touch my body is to touch some body else, always, this beginning will be, first and foremost, on the un-touch-ability of the body, of every body, of everybody; this beginning, as if there could be a beginning, will commence, then, with the question: "*Comment toucher*? And as the question or program of rhetoric, of an art of speech, is it only metaphorical? What does a word touch, if not a body? But there you have it: How can one get hold of the body?"[1]

There we[2] have it: elsewhere, always somewhere else, as we will see. And how can one get hold of the body if there is no body, but only my body—there is always a singular mine-ness involved with the body—how can one, then, touch, or, rather, how does a—there is no *the/re* for it—body touch? How to touch that which touches, and how to touch that which cannot be touched? How, then, to think, how to think the body, how, then, to think no body? And what does a body touch if not itself, no body, that is, for there is no body for the body, and how to word this world[3] — "a world in which nothing is either present or absent, where there is neither proximity nor distance, where everything

escapes, leaving us the illusion of having everything"?[4] How, then, to word within this world, without any body to word?

The body, a no body, does not belong, the body belongs nowhere, now here, no where; and not only does it "not belong; it is mortal immortal; it is unreal, imaginary, fragmentary. Patient. In its patientness the body is thought already—still just thought."[5] The body, and what is a body—we cannot and perhaps even must not know—"[t]he body does not know; but it is not ignorant either. Quite simply, it is elsewhere. It is from elsewhere, another place, another regime, another register".[6]

Elsewhere, always, the body, being merely a medium, being, perhaps, in and as itself, being, maybe, some body else, someone else's body, cannot be embodied by us. Thus "[w]hat if the body was simply there, given, abandoned, without presupposition, simply posited, weighed, weighty?"[7] What if the body was simply there, out there, untouchable, what if the body eluded its appropriation? What, then, if all there is was a *there is*, a Blanchotian *il y a*? And, most importantly, what if it was *precisely the body* to de-signate such given?

Perhaps the body, as as-signed by Nancy,[8] is indeed to be seen as "the articulation, or better yet, the *organ* or *organon* of the sign: it is, for our entire tradition, that *in which* sense is given and *out of which* sense emerges." It *makes*, and it is to be *made*: "*[s]ign of itself* and *being-itself of the sign*", formulates Nancy[9] "the double formula of the body in all its states, in all its possibilities." This double formula of the body makes for the body, makes the body to be first and last, makes it "total signifier, for everything has a body, or everything is a body (this distinction loses its importance here), and *body* is the last signifier, the limit of the signifier".[10]

All this implies, however, that there could be signification, and this is, after all, how we tend to speak of it: taking away its fundamentally origin-al mode, we grant it a meaning. But, we must not forget, "[a]ll this would be possible only if we had access to bodies, only if they were not impenetrable, as physics defines them. Bodies impenetrable to language, and languages impenetrable to bodies, bodies themselves, like this word 'body,' which already withholds itself and incorporates its own entry."[11]

It is from this very impass(e)ability of the body that Nancy[12] deduces that the body "never ceases to contradict itself. It is the place of contradiction *par excellence.* Either it is by the body and through it that signification occurs, and then signification falls within its boundaries […], or it is from the body and on it that signification takes shape and is deposited, and signification never stops reaching toward this proper locus where it should endlessly curl up into itself."

By the body, from the body, on the body: all this implies the possibility of proximity, of a certain intimacy to be had, and such is the site where contradiction takes place. To name the body a place of contradiction is precisely this: the body is to be imagined (*there is no is for it*), and there is no proximity that were not bodily. There is no proximity that were not bodily, for there is nothing outside the body, any body, and no body that were no(t at a) distance. In distance, and perhaps only in distance, can there be relation, can there be relation of touch, can there be relation that touches.

(How) to touch: such is to form a(s) distance. In order to be touchable, the body must remain a(s) distance: as that which can/not be touched. For there is no relation that were not from a distance, no distance that would not bear relation.

> There
> our looking lead us
> with this
> half
> we keep up relations
> *[Paul Celan]*

No(t) wholes, but halves, eternally divided by and through difference. For, and to re-iterate Nancy[13] once more, "[t]here can only be relation (the return, the appropriation of a subject to itself or between subjects, it amounts to much the same thing) if we start with an absolute distancing, without which there would be no possibility of proximity, of identity or strangeness, of subjectivity or thinghood. First and foremost, however, this distancing distends relation to the point of exposition: scarcely am I born before I am outside myself at an infinite distance, outside simply turned out, exposed to the rest of the world, to

all things. And the same goes for everything, each one exposing universal exposition differently."

And what is an exposition but an ex-position? Never from with/in, always at the edge, at an outside yet to be made, the close is a(s) closure; what is closest is the most distant, and this is why every touch, every body, bears its closure in and as itself. For only with,in such closure lies there an opening; and this is not a saying. To say is a saying of difference, to say is to say in difference.

Thence every relation is as ex-position, a(s) dis-appropriation of the self, always already different, always in difference. In difference: the only form of relation possible. "Difference: the non-identity of the same, the movement of distance; that which carries, by carrying off, the becoming of interruption. Difference bears in its prefix the detour wherein all power to give meaning seeks its origin in the distance that holds it from this origin."[14]
An origin-al difference inscribed in,to difference itself, and how to say this closure, how to say this closure that proximity is? Proximity is (as) approximation, it is the process of appropriation, and how to say this nearness, this nearest, the nearest, how to say it in and as nearness; and nearness is (as) distance, how to bring distance into relation, how to relate distance to relation, how to re-store (the etymological origin of "relate") distance (origin/ally a "standing apart")?

To say distance as and through distance without appropriating it and/or making nearness out of it: such must be the aim here. "The distant calls to the near, repelling it, not to define itself in it by opposition, nor to form a couple with it by resemblance and difference, but in such a way that the separation between the two still belongs to the distant."[15]
A doubled distance, a separation of and in distance, then.

Thus what must be thought is this: that there is nothing that could be thought, that both body and that which is closest (to it), are not, but are only in relation to each other; that both elude their think-ability, that both are what cannot be appropriated.

Thus what must be said is this: that both relate to each other as that which is most distant; that all there is are distances, because there is no nearness for the body, no body for such nearness, but only dis/embodied distances.

In order for there to be relation, there is to be a relation that relates to its difference: it is to "have a relation to that which excludes itself from any relation and which nevertheless indicates itself as absolute only in the relative mode (of the relation itself, multiple)."[16]

A relation en route, en passant, bearing witness to the almost, to the inchoateness of relation/ality, to the fact that there is no close, and yet that such close is all there is. Hence relation is possible only as an approaching, always yet a(t) distance, an such relation is, evidently, a relation of and in Otherness, for such Other is the site where they assemble.

Such is, certainly, "a thinking that is more than a thought one can think, more than a thought can think":[17] for such un-thinkability is what means to think, such is to think the Other without thinking it as Same. And such is, after all, "a matter of thinking the heteronomy of the Other in the Same, where the Other does not subjugate the Same but awakens it and sobers it up. The Other sobers the Same by way of a sobering that is a thought more thoughtful than the thought of the Same, in a waking up that disturbs the astronomic repose of the world."[18]
No reconciliation but a relating of different relations ("[t]o cross the distant, to turn the distant back toward the distant without approach")[19]; Levinasian experiences of alterity, always.

There ought, then, to be a distance, always. In order for there to be relation, distance must be kept. And for there to be relation, such relation must remain outside relation. Such relation is to remain different, is to remain a(s) different relation, a(s) relation of difference and in,difference. Neither one nor the other, but the Other, always.

In order for there to be relation, there needs to be a fracture, and there needs to be a rupture, always.

"'Always, I come again.'—'In as much as you find in yourself the ability to remain at the furthest remove.'—'It is only here that I would find the distant.'"[20]

An absolute closeness: a distance to one's self. For the self "has its originarity in the loss of self";[21] for the self is to remain Other, for the "identification of the self as such […] can only take place once the subject finds itself or poses itself originarily as other than itself".[22] For there can be no other self than anOther self: such must be the relation thought

here. From one to the other, "[f]rom the other to the one, there is a relation, even if it is a relation without a link".[23]

There is a nearness, always, a nearness without nearness to be given. As Paul Celan "I insert–I have no choice–I insert the acute",[24] or, to describe it with Blanchot,[25] I insert (I have no choice) the immediate—"a word that designates what is so close that it destroys all proximity—a word before which we once again find ourselves […] the immediate that allows no mediation, the absence of separation that is absence of relation as well as infinite separation because this separation does not reserve for us the distance and the future we need in order to be able to relate ourselves to it, to come about in it. Thus we can begin to surmise that "impossibility"—that which escapes, without there being any means of escaping it—would be not the privilege of some exceptional experience, but behind each one and as though its other dimension."

It is thus that we enter the in/possibility[26] of relation. In/possibility: a possibility/not. The prefix "in" designates closeness and distance at the same time; a within, and yet also a without: neither, and nor. A possibility that is not yet given, but that might be inherent, a possibility always yet to be-come. As such, is has no presence.

It is thus that we enter what Blanchot[27] names "the relation of the third kind (the first being a mediate relation of dialectical or objective identification, the second a relation demanding immediate unity). Now what 'founds' this third relation, leaving it still unfounded, is no longer proximity—proximity of struggle, of services, of essence, of knowledge, or of recognition, not even of solitude—but rather the *strangeness* between us: a strangeness it will not suffice to characterize as a separation or even as a distance.

— Rather an interruption.

— An interruption escaping all measure. But—and here is the strangeness of this strangeness—such an interruption (one that neither includes nor excludes) would be nevertheless a relation; at least if I take it upon myself not to reduce it, not to reconcile it, even by comprehending it, that is, not to seek to consider it as the 'faltering' mode of a still unitary relation."

It is thus that we might enter relation as such.

Death

"Let us enter into this relation.

To death we are not accustomed."[28]

To death we are not accustomed, for death, as the body, is that which cannot be owned, that which cannot be appropriated and that is yet ours. Death: that which we own (without which we cannot *be*), that which is *ours*, and that, at the same time, is Other, always Other. Death, it is well known, is the endless Other that cannot be attained. Its ending is endless, and yet always already ending. There is no presence for the end.

To death we are not accustomed.

Death: the utmost ex-posure to distance, and, at the same time, to that which is closest.

We are with,in death, always already, to live is to die, for death does not *take place*. Death: a Blanchotian *pas*, a step, not, a step not beyond. Death cannot be done (with); each time, death must be faced, one time.

"They do not think of death, having no other relation but with death."[29]

Let us, then, enter into this relation. Let us enter into this relation where there is no relation, for it is death that opens the in/possibility of relation. It does so by being in/possible: as possibility of impossibility (Heidegger) *and* as impossibility of possibility (Blanchot). And if, argues the latter,[30] "if possibility has its source in our very end […] it is from this same source that "impossibility" originates, though now sealed originarily and refusing itself to all our resources: there where dying means losing the time in which one can still come to an end and entering into the infinite "present" of a death impossible to die".

And yet, as pointed out by Levinas,[31] "[i]t is not with the nothingness of death, of which we precisely know nothing, that the analysis must begin, but with the situation where something absolutely unknowable appears. Absolutely unknowable means foreign to all light, rendering every assumption of possibility impossible".

Let us enter into this (non-)relation, let us enter into this momentary site where distance and proximity meet.

Time

It is time it were time.
It is time

, reminds us Paul Celan in *Corona*. It is time it were about time, here, here, within time, as if there was an outside of, to time. And yet such outside of time is all there is.

For time is retarded. Time is remembrance, is anticipated remembrance, and we need to remember: Time does not take place, time *is* not, time [is]. Time is nothing but an 'as if'; there is no witness for time. Time, then, passes, and it origin/ates from this its passing.[32]

Here, we will follow Nancy[33] once more and try to ex-pose ourselves "to what happens with time, in time". Such ex-posure, such *ex* (forth) *ponere* (to put, to place), such putting forth then, is certainly itself an origination, and it is only within such ex-position to time that time, "the element of thinking", can be thought. To think time from within time (and there is no inside of time):

This is to think, this is the task to be thought. A difficult task, certainly, and perhaps the only task ever given—maybe precisely because, as Derrida[34] reminds us, it is always already too late "to ask the question of time. The latter has already appeared". Its appearance is, of course, a dis/appearance.

À la recherche du temps perdu: For time, always unique, always out of (its) time, remains untimely. For time is behind the times, for time is a(s) beyond, is a(s its) withdrawal. Time is only when it is not; time is, to recall Bergson,[35] "what hinders everything from being given at once. It retards, or rather it is retardation. It must, therefore, be elaboration. Would it not then be a vehicle of creation and choice? Would not the existence of time prove that there is indetermination in things? Would not time be that indetermination itself?"

And would not indetermination prove that there is time? Would not indetermination be the only way of experiencing time?

The experience of time, we are well aware of this, is tied to the idea and, consequently, to the representation and/or represenciation of presence: „From Parmenides to Husserl, the privilege of the present has never been put into question. It could not have been […] no thought seems possible outside its element. Nonpresence is always thought in the form of presence […]. The past and the future are always determined as past presents or as future presents".[36]

This is "the enigma of the now";[37] these are the indeterminable im-passes to be addressed here.

Far from being original—after all, origination does not possess an origin: the origin is nothing but origination itself—, far from being co-herent—we will only touch on the impasse of touching some of the im-passes it touches—, we shall thus continue to make up something that *is* not, something that is not even as 'is not', that is only as in/possibility.

The first point, or rather text, of origin here is Derrida's relatively early 'Ousia and Gramme: Note on a note from *Being and Time*', wherein he, as Derrida himself traces his text in *Aporias*,[38] "treated the question of the present, of presence and of the presentation of the present, of time, of being, and above all of nonbeing, more precisely of a certain *impossibility* as nonviability, as nontrack or barred path".

In the very beginning of the note that Derrida aims to extend—the longest in *Being and Time*—, Heidegger notes that Hegel, for prioritising the now, remains "under the sway of the *traditional* conception of time", a vulgar conception that is, and, as he excitedly adds, "[it] can even be shown that his conception of time has been drawn *directly* from the 'physics' of Aristotle".

This being quoted, we cannot and perhaps do not even wish to further elaborate on Derrida's subsequent detailed elaborations on Hegel and Aristotle. Let us just note that already for Aristotle the now does by no means represent a present presence—rather, it is to be conceived as something that *is not*: "In one sense it has been and is no longer, and in another sense, it will be and is not yet", as he is quoted by Derrida.[39] Yet, as the latter[40] rightly asks, "is not what Heidegger designates beneath these points of reference that which is most simple? […] Has not the entire history of philosophy been authorized by the 'extraordinary right' of the present?"

It is obvious, perhaps all too obvious, what Derrida attempts to demonstrate here: pre-cipitating his conclusion that time is metaphysical, he suggests that Heidegger (at least in Being and Time) remains metaphysical himself and that there might be no vulgar conception of time—for, as he states, the concept of time "names the domination of presence. Therefore we can only conclude that the entire system of metaphysical concepts [...], develops the so-called 'vulgarity' of the concept of time [...], but also that an *other* concept of time cannot be opposed to it, since time in general belongs to metaphysical conceptuality".[41]

And yet it is precisely the ordinary that is itself always already "exceptional, however little we understand its character as origin. What we receive most communally as 'strange' is that the ordinary itself is originary", as Jean-Luc Nancy reminds us.[42] The ordinary, seen as such, is always-already extra-ordinary; the ordinary is always originating an Other (access), just as time is always an Other. And just as the "desire for the exception presupposes disdain for the ordinary",[43] the metaphysical (desire for a) conception of time assumes that time itself were extraordinary.

However, as there indeed can be no *other* concept of time, we must not succumb to the temptation of a mere *overcoming* of such thinking,[44] as such overcoming falls back into the same thinking it tries to overcome: *tà metà tà metàphysiká: metàphysiká*, or: *Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose.* It was, after all, Heidegger himself to remind us that each reversion of metaphysics remains metaphysical.[45] But it was also Heidegger who coined the term *Verwindung*: a concept somewhat similar to the term 'overcoming' (*Überwindung*), while at the same time replacing this dialectic connotation by two meanings, namely *Genesung*/convalescence and *Verdrehung*/distortion.[46] There is no way out of metaphysics; the only way out is through.

To think presence differently is, therefore, not to be based on a reversion of the metaphysical concept of time, but it is to be a tracing—and it is thus that we enter Derrida's second motif regarding his extension of the footnote,[47] namely "[t]o indicate [...] a direction not opened by Heidegger's mediation: the hidden passageway that makes the problem of presence communicate with the problem of the written trace."

Certainly the *idea* of the trace is by no means post-metaphysical; the metaphysical *traces* remain, remain within the trace itself, as the very

names given to the trace "belong as such to the text of metaphysics that shelters the trace, and not to the trace itself";[48] there is no presence for this trace: being a trace, presence "could not appear or be named *as such*, that is, in its presence. It is the *as such* which precisely, and as such, evades us forever". Like Barthes'[49] third or obtuse meaning, presence "is a signifier without a signified, hence the difficulty in naming it".[50]

And this very impasse of naming reflects the impasse of thinking; the task of thought, one might dare to name it philosophy, is to trespass this impasse. Probably the most non-metaphysical gesture, if it were possible at all, would be to name: To name is to release the name from an impossible meaning—to name is to name the metaphysical trace that cannot be named. *We are already beyond whatever we have words for*, reminds us Nietzsche;[51] and thus it has to be named as such, as the very naming of that which cannot be named: presence, and time as such.

And such time, it seems certain, must be a time beyond time; for it is outside time that presence takes place. To be in time is to be elsewhere.

Being

"Non-present, non-absent; it tempts us in the manner of that which we would not know how to meet, save in situations which we are no longer in".[52]

Death, we remember, remains an in/possibility, the possibility yet to be/come. As such, what we are facing is not a Heideggerian being-toward-death, but rather a being-toward-the-end, always. Our being "is in the mode of being-toward-the-end, and that what constitutes an event in this being [*Dasein*] is to go to its end. The energy or the very power of being is already the power of its end. There is a new and irreducible relationship here: it is irreducible to a distance in regard to what remains outside of and distinct from a ripening."[53]

It is in finitude that being is, and being itself is finite. Being is (in) time, and this time, the time of being, is (in) finitude: finitude designates the horizon of time, the origin/ation of time; original time is finite, as elucidated by the early Heidegger.

Here, being shall be thought in and from the end: a(s) *passage* towards the limit, a(s) relation not/beyond, but elsewhere, always some-

where else. In order to think the time of being, absence must be thought beyond its own presence— beyond its absence, that is. A with-drawal of its relation to—(presence), a thinking-it *as* such. We must, therefore, by no means invent a different presence for this absence that *is* not. For such absence, as Derrida reminds us, would either "give us nothing to think or it still would be a negative mode of presence. Therefore the sign of this excess must be absolutely excessive as concerns all possible presence-absence, […] and yet, *in some manner* it must still signify, in a manner unthinkable by metaphysics as such. In order to exceed metaphysics it is necessary that a trace be inscribed within the text of metaphysics, a trace that continues to signal […] in the direction of an entirely other text. […] The mode of inscription of such a trace in the text of metaphysics is so unthinkable that it must be described as an erasure of the trace itself. The trace is produced by its own erasure".[54]

Such inscription is, then, to inscribe a presence that is not is to inscribe only to withdraw. Thus, to inscribe a presence "not to (re)present it or to signify it, but to let come to one and over one what merely presents itself at the limit where inscription itself withdraws".[55]

Consequently, *ousia* or *Wesen* shall no longer be conceived in terms of (its) presence, but thought (of) as *ap_ousiai*,[56] literally un-presences: In contrast to *parousia*,[57] de-signating the presence of that which has already arrived, *ap_ousiai*, still bearing the metaphysical trace of the idea of presence and absence, is to de-signate the presence of absence, the absence of presence, and yet something situated beyond both.

For it is only here, within this very (non)passage of and towards such beyond, that the in/possibility of presence is opened, and it is, then, only through an ab-sense of sense that (its) presence is witnessed—a presence which, to write with Nancy,[58] "is not essence, but […] birth to presence: birth and death to the infinite presentation of the fact that there is no ultimate sense, only a finite sense, finite senses, a multiplication of singular bursts of sense resting on no unity or substance. And the fact, too, that there is no established sense, no establishment, institution or foundation of sense, only a coming, and comings-to-be of sense."

What is of relevance here is the gap between: its mode of relation is that of a *Verwindung*. The blank, the gap, or, in German, *Leerzeichen,* literally an empty sign, an empty character, designates the only relation

possible. *Ap_ousiai* are beyond, yet they are tracing themselves, and, as *la différance*, they might allow for "a writing without presence and without absence".[59] Situated beyond this opposition presence: absence, beyond themselves and, therefore also situated beyond the postmodern *novum*, they are both fracture and co-relation. Here, we obviously face the same impasse as is the case with *différance*: such fissure cannot be heard, but only written. Within the empty sign, without a signifier, presence is no longer thought (of) as (its) and through presenciation.

Presence, it should be clear by now, presence is an empty sign. And "[p]resence, then, far from being […] *what* the sign signifies, what a trace refers to, presence, then, is the trace of the trace, the trace of the erasure of the trace".[60]

What we still face, towards this ending, as if there was an end, is the impasse; what we still face is the in/possibility, or shall we say potential?, of and for presence, that is. We must thus insert, we have no choice, we must insert "the old, worn-out Greek term *aporia*".[61]

We remember: *aporos*, without passage, "indeed the nonpassage, which can in fact be something else, the event of a coming or of a future advent, which no longer has the form of the movement that consists in passing, traversing, or transiting".[62] Having "come to pass", always, "the aporia, that is, the impossible, the impossibility", that which "cannot pass […] or come to pass",[63] the aporia might indeed attest to "the fact that the impossibility would be possible and would appear *as such*, as impossible, as an impossibility that can nevertheless appear or announce itself *as such*"[64] —
it is *as* such that the aporia *is.*

There is in fact no possibility without impossibility, for such possibility would not be possible. The possibility of presence would be past or future, for "[s]uch is the logic of the present: at this precise moment, the moment erases itself, and this is how it is a moment."[65] Such is "the paradox of the present: to constitute time while passing in the time constituted".[66] Such is the impasse of the present: a poiesis *of* the only once, *as* the only once. Such is to be thought: To think the once at once; only one time: the *only* time.

But can we even pose the question of an in/possibility of presence?[67] Is not every saying of presence a pre-supposition, an anticipation of

something that is no(t) yet? And yet is within presence, and maybe within presence alone, that in/possibility occurs, for "it concerns the impossibility of [time] itself, and not merely the impossibility of this or that"?[68]

Presence is the ultimate aporia. And this is why presence "*can never […] be endured as such. The ultimate aporia* is the impossibility of aporia *as such*".[69] Can one then, Derrida[70] asks, "[c]an one speak […] of an *experience* […] *of the aporia as such*? Or vice versa: Is an experience possible that would not be an experience of the aporia?"

We know that we cannot know about the aporia: this might be its first, its only condition. The aporia can be experienced only *as* such: as aporia. And it is precisely because of this its impossibility that the aporia, that presence can be experienced. Like presence, it is (possible) only when it is not: when remaining impossible. Simultaneously witnessing and anticipating a presence that is always already a no longer, this trace re-presents a trace always already erasing itself.

And so it might be the *no longer* that bears witness to the present, and its presence presents itself as the very trace of the presence that it is pre-tend-ing to present.

There is, in this end, as if there was an end, no presence for proximity, no presence for the close.
Neither present nor absent, proximity is as approximation, relates to that which is furthest, is "the ability to remain at the furthest remove".[71] Every attempt to im-pose a presence external to it, every effort of making it a with—, violates its only once, its in/possibility of presence, that is. Touch, relation, proximity: a relating to and as presence, a simulation of the in/possible experience of the *aporia*.

There is no presence for relation. Neither present nor absent, relation is (as) impass(e)ability: the ability to bear the impossible, the impasse, the *aporia*: such must be the closeness of relation, each time. Only thus can there be opened a possibility of in/possibility, only thus can there be proximity. In/possibility: the only form of possibility possible. Such must be the condition for our being-in-time, for our being-toward-the-end.

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N o t e s

[1]   Nancy, J.-L. (1993), "Corpus" (tr. by Claudette Sartiliot). In: J.-L. Nancy, *The Birth to Presence* (tr. by B. Holmes & others). Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 190 (pp. 189–207).

[2]   "We": here by no means to be seen as violent appropriation, but rather to be understood in terms of a *Being Singular Plural* sensu Jean-Luc Nancy.

[3]   And what do we, after all, "know of the being-being of the body, and of the being-body of being? Perhaps nothing yet. Philosophy is certainly not the one to tell us." (Nancy, J-L., "Corpus", p. 196).

[4]   Blanchot, M. (1993), *The Infinite Conversation* (translation and foreword by S. Hanson). Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, p. 96.

[5]   Blanchot, M. (1995), *The Writing of the Disaster* (tr. by A. Smock). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, p. 45.

[6]   Nancy, J.-L., "Corpus", p. 199.

[7]   Ibid., p. 199f.

[8]   Ibid., p. 192.

[9]   Ibid., p. 194.

[10]   Ibid., p. 195.

[11]   Ibid., p. 189.

[12]   Ibid., p. 192f.

[13]   Nancy, J.-L. (2003), "Res ipsa et ultima" (tr. by Steven Miller). In: J.-L. Nancy, *A Finite Thinking* (ed. Simon Sparks). Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 315 (pp. 311–318).

[14]   Blanchot, M., *Infinite Conversation*, p. 170.

[15]   Blanchot, M. (1992), *The Step Not Beyond* (translated and with an introduction by Lycette Nelson). New York: State University of New York Press, p. 69f.

[16]   Ibid., p. 6.

[17]   Levinas, E. (2000), *God, Death, and Time* (tr. by Bettina Bergo, edited and annotated by Jacques Rolland). Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 141.

[18]   Ibid., p. 143.

[19]   Blanchot, M., *Step Not Beyond*, p. 69.

[20]   Ibid., p. 33.

[21]   Nancy, J.-L. (2000), "Of Being singular plural". In: *Being singular plural* (tr. by R. D. Richardson and A. E. O'Bryne). Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 78 (pp. 1–99).

[22]   Ibid., p. 77.

[23]   Levinas, E., *God, Death, and Time*, p. 140.

[24]   Celan, P. (2005), "The Meridian" (tr. by J. Glenn). In: J. Derrida, *Sovereignties in Question. The Poetics of Paul Celan* (eds. T. Dutoit and O. Pasanen). New York: Fordham University Press, p. 175 (pp. 173–185).

[25]   Blanchot, M., *Infinite Conversation*, p. 44f.

[26]   In: "not, opposite of, without" (see http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=in-&allowed_in_frame=0).

[27]   Blanchot, M., *Infinite Conversation*, p. 68.

[28] Thus begins Blanchot "The Step Not Beyond".

[29] Blanchot, M., *Writing of the Disaster*, p. 40.

[30] Blanchot, M., *Infinite Conversation,* p. 44f.

[31] Levinas, E. (1989), "Time and the Other" (tr. by R. A. Cohen). In: E. Levinas, *The Levinas Reader* (ed. S. Hand), Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, p. 41 (pp. 37–58).

[32] To re-call Heidegger's question [Heidegger, M. (2006), M., *Sein und Zeit.* Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, p. 425]: Why do we say that time passes and not that it originates? (We will not dwell on his answer here, which reads as: it is said to pass in order to re-tain it. The emphasis on the passing of time, Heidegger asserts in *Sein und Zeit*, expresses our experience that it cannot be retained—at the same time, this very experience is possible only because of our desire to retain time).

[33] Nancy, J.-L. (2003), "The *Kategorein* of Excess" (tr. by J. Gilbert-Walsh and S. Sparks). In: J.-L. Nancy, Finite Thinking, pp. 136 (pp. 133–151).

[34] Derrida, J. (1982), "*Ousia* and *Grammē*: Note on a Note from *Being and Time*". In: J. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy* (tr. by Alan Bass). Chicago: Harvester Press, p. 42 (pp. 29–67).

[35] Bergson, H. (2005), "The Possible and the Real" (tr. by M. L. Andison). In: Bergson, H., *Key Writings* (eds. Keith Ansell Pearson and John Mullarkey). New York and London: Continuum, p. 224 (pp. 223–232).

[36] Derrida, J. "*Ousia* and *Grammē*", p. 34.

[37] Ibid., p. 61.

[38] Derrida, J. (1993), *Aporias* (tr. by T. Dutoit). Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 13.

[39] Derrida, J., *Ousia* and *Grammē*", p. 39 (217b).

[40] Ibid., p. 38.

[41] Ibid., p. 63.

[42] J.-L. Nancy, "Being singular plural", p. 10.

[43] Ibid.

[44] See also Heidegger [Heidegger, M. (1989), *Gesamtausgabe* (ed. by F.-W. von Herrmann), III. Abteilung: Unveröffentlichte Abhandlungen, Vorträge-Gedachtes, Band 65, Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis). Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann: p. 173]: "Eben deshalb darf aber auch das übergängliche Denken nicht der Versuchung verfallen, das, was es als Ende und im Ende begriffen hat, nun einfach hinter sich zu lassen, statt dieses hinter sich zu *bringen*, d.h. jetzt erst in seinem Wesen zu fassen und dieses gewandelt in die Wahrheit des Seyns einspielen zu lassen."

[45] See Heidegger [Heidegger, M. (2000), *Über den Humanismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, p. 20]: "Aber die Umkehrung eines metaphysischen Satzes bleibt ein metaphysischer Satz".

[46] See Vattimo, G. (1994), "Nihilismus und Postmoderne in der Philosophie" (tr. by W. Welsch, assisted by B. Hesse). In: *Wege aus der Moderne. Schlüsseltexte der Postmoderne-Diskussion* (ed. W. Welsch). Berlin: Akademie Verlag, p. 240 (pp. 233–246).

[47] Whereas the first one is "[t]o read in it […] the Heideggerian question about *presence* as the ontotheological determination of the meaning of Being" (J. Derrida, "*Ousia* and *Grammē*", p. 33ff.).

[48] Ibid., p. 66.

[49] Barthes, R. (1978), "The Third Meaning. Research notes on some Eisenstein stills". In: Barthes, R., *Image Music Text* (tr. by S. Heath). New York: Hill and Wang, p. 61 (pp. 52–68).

[50] As Barthes states for the *obtuse* meaning (=and idea of the letter *a* is neither a first definition nor a prophetic announcement of a forth-coming and yet unheard naming: see Derrida,

[50] J. (2004), "Die différance" (tr. by E. Pfaffenberger-Brückner). In: Derrida, J., *Die différance. Ausgewählte Texte* (ed. P. Engelmann), Stuttgart: Reclam, p. 146 (pp. 110–149).

[51] Freely adapted from his *Götzen-Dämmerung* [Nietzsche, F. (2005), *Gesammelte Werke* (eds. W. Deninger and W. Linden), Bindlach: Gondrom, p. 1086/§26, (pp. 1051–1101)]: "Wofür wir Worte haben, darüber sind wir auch schon hinaus".

[52] Blanchot, M., *Step Not Beyond*, p. 6.

[53] Levinas, E., *God, Death, and Time*, p. 44.

[54] Derrida, J., "*Ousia* and *Grammē*", p. 65.

[55] Nancy, J.-L. (2003), "Elliptical Sense" (tr. by J. Derbyshire). In: J.-L. Nancy, *Finite Thinking*, p. 110 (pp. 91–111).

[56] In relation to Heidegger's conception (*Sein und Zeit,* p. 25 of a "Bestimmung des Sinnes von Sein als Παρουσία, bzw. οὐσία", which means *Anwesenheit*, presence.

[57] 8. Parousia: the second coming, the arrival of presence—the ultimate re-presentation.

[58] Nancy, J.-L. (2003), "A Finite Thinking" (tr. by E. Bullard, J. Derbyshire, and S. Sparks). In: J-L. Nancy, *Finite Thinking*, p. 27 (pp. 3–30).

[59] Derrida, J., "*Ousia* and *Grammē*", p. 67.

[60] Ibid., p. 66.

[61] Derrida, J., *Aporias*, p. 12.

[62] Ibid., p. 8.

[63] Ibid. p. 23.

[64] Ibid., p. 73.

[65] Nancy, J.-L., (1997), *The Technique of the Present. Lecture given at the Nouveau Musée during the exposition of On Kawara's works "Whole and Parts—1964–1995" (January 1997)*, available at www.egs.edu/faculty/jean-luc-nancy/articles/the-technique-of-the-present/.

[66] Deleuze, G. (2004), *Difference and Repetition* (tr. by P. Patton). London and New York: Continuum, p. 100. Though we must avoid his *"necessary conclusion—* that there must be another time in which the first synthesis of time can occur".

[67] As Derrida (*Aporias,* p. 21 asks about the question of (his) death.

[68] Ibid., p. 72.

[69] Ibid., p. 78.

[70] Ibid., p. 15.

[71] Blanchot, M., *Step Not Beyond*, p. 33.

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